



# CITY OF SARASOTA

## COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

### NEWTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN



Prepared by RMA: July 2020

Approved: April 20, 2021

REINVENTING YOUR CITY

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

---



## **Prepared for**

City of Sarasota, FL  
NEWTOWN CRA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN



REINVENTING YOUR CITY

---

## **Prepared by**

Redevelopment Management Associates

## **With Assistance for Legal Description From**

Stantec, Sarasota, FL

## **Thanks to**

Newtown CRA, Sarasota, FL  
The Newtown community who participated in the workshops, meetings, and surveys.

# DEDICATION

---

**THIS PLAN IS DEDICATED TO THE CITIZENS OF THE HISTORIC NEWTOWN COMMUNITY.**

## **Vision Statement:**

The Vision of the Newtown CRA Redevelopment Plan: to create and maintain a safe community with financially stable and prosperous residents, a thriving "main street" corridor, diverse housing options, and a positive brand centered on the celebration of the area's history and cultural arts.

# Contents

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## DEDICATION

## SECTION 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the CRA Redevelopment Plan	1
1.2 Organization	2
1.3 Newtown CRA History	3
1.4 Community Input	6
1.5 Florida Statute 163.362 Check List for Required Items in Community Redevelopment Plan	9

## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND

2.1 Demographics	11
2.2 Market Conditions	14
2.3 Neighborhood Conditions	14
2.4 Transportation & Roadway Conditions	19
2.5 Parks	28
2.6 Cultural Facilities	31
2.7 Infrastructure Conditions	34

## SECTION 3.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES & PROGRAMS

3.1 General Overview	36
3.2 Recommendations for Existing CRA Programs and Projects	36
3.3 Recommended New CRA Programs and Projects	46

## SECTION 4.0 BRANDING, MARKETING, TOURISM & COMMUNICATIONS

4.1 General Overview	50
4.2 Recommendations for Existing CRA Programs and Projects	50
4.3 Recommended New CRA Programs and Projects	52

## SECTION 5.0 HOUSING

5.1 General Overview	57
5.2 Recommendations for Existing CRA Programs and Projects	58
5.3 Recommended New CRA Programs and Projects	61

## SECTION 6.0 LAND USE & ZONING

6.1 General Overview	63
6.2 Recommendations for Existing Zoning on Major Corridors (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Way, US 41, & US 301)	64
6.3 Recommended New CRA Programs and Projects	69

## SECTION 7.0 INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORTATION & CONNECTIVITY

7.1 General Overview	73
7.2 Recommendations for Existing Projects in the CRA	73
7.3 Recommended New CRA Projects	81



# Contents

## SECTION 8.0 QUALITY OF LIFE

8.1 General Overview	83
8.2 Recommendations for Existing Projects in the CRA	83
8.3 Recommended New CRA Programs	84

## SECTION 9.0 ADMINISTRATION & GOVERNANCE

9.1 General Overview	90
9.2 Recommendations for Existing CRA Programs	90
9.3 Recommended New CRA Programs	91

## SECTION 10.0 CONCLUSION & IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY 95

## SECTION 11.0 TECHNICAL MEMOS & REPORTS 98

11.1 Technical Memo 1
11.2 Technical Memo 2
11.3 Technical Memo 3
11.4 Technical Memo 4
11.5 Technical Memo 5
11.6 Report 1
11.7 Report 2
11.8 Report 3
11.9 Report 4

## SECTION 12.0 APPENDIX 99

12.1 Resolution No. 21R-2985 Approval by the City Commission of the CRA Redevelopment Plan of 2021
12.2 Resolution No. 08R-2037 Approval by the City Commission of the CRA Redevelopment Plan of 2008
12.3 Resolution No. 06R-1901 Approval by the City Commission of the Creation of the Newtown CRA
12.4 CRA Boundary Legal Description
Exhibit 1: Neighborhood Ambassador Program

# SECTION 1.0 INTRODUCTION

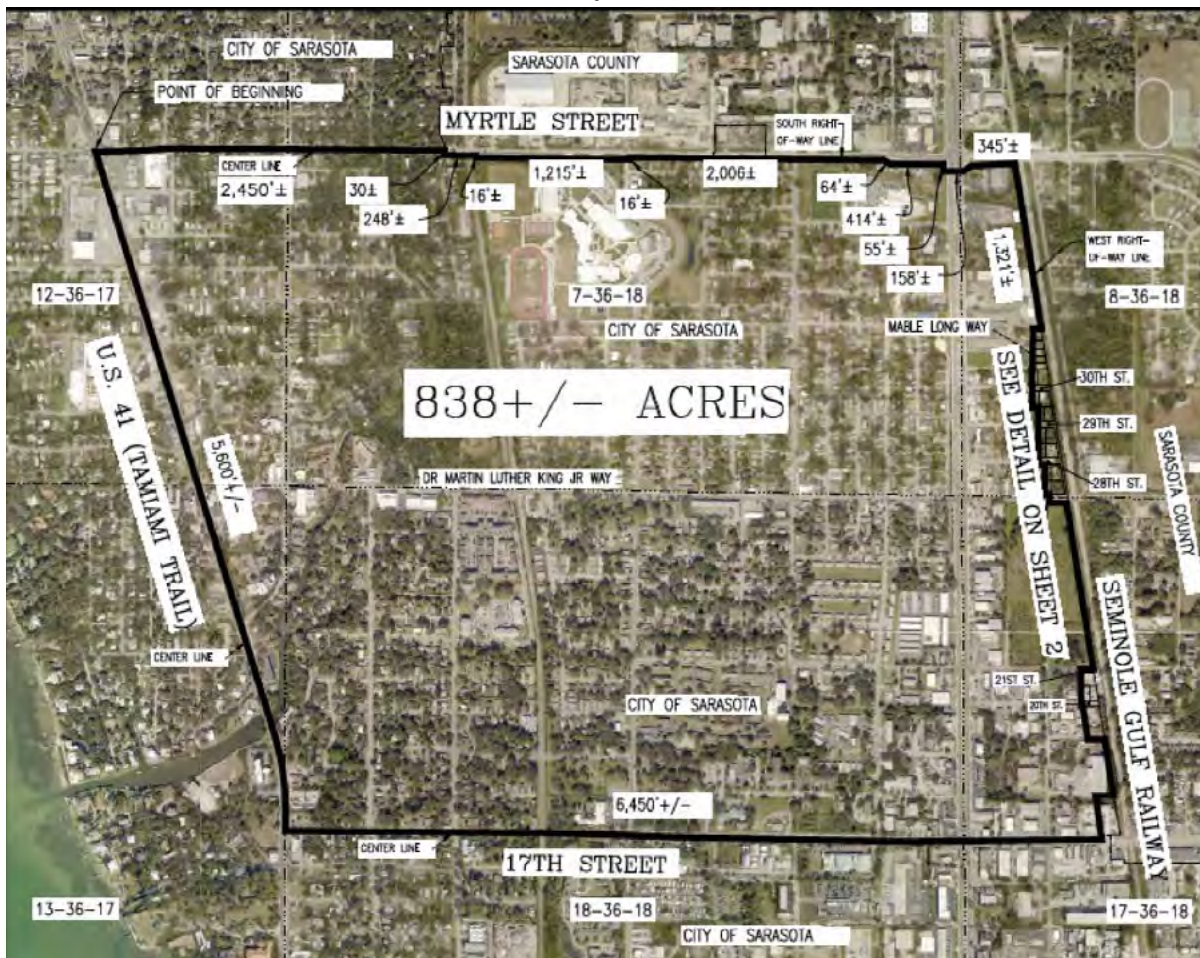
## 1.1 Purpose of the CRA Redevelopment Plan

### Prioritizing Existing Residents in Newtown's Redevelopment

Many cities struggle with how to initiate the redevelopment of historic areas and improve lives for existing community members, while not inadvertently making the neighborhood unaffordable through subsequent increased rents and property taxes. This affordability challenge can be coupled with private and public investments that create exclusive (or not culturally appropriate) spaces to culminate in a perfect storm of making existing community members feel unwelcomed over time. The Newtown CRA Plan aims to address these complex challenges head-on by prioritizing redevelopment that honors the historical legacy of Newtown and invests in strategies for affordable housing, workforce training, and poverty alleviation for its residents.

**Newtown CRA Map**

*February 2020*



The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) for the City of Sarasota's Newtown Community Redevelopment Area, containing approximately 838 acres, was established in June 2006 by City Resolution 06R-1901, and the Newtown Community Redevelopment Plan was approved via a separate resolution in May 2008 by City Resolution No. 08R-2037. The Newtown CRA is located in the northern part of the City of Sarasota (the City) and generally bounded on the north by Myrtle Street; bounded on the south by 17th Street; bounded on the west by the North Tamiami Trail (US 41); and bounded on the east by the City limits. The Newtown CRA has a total life of 40 years. In 2019, the City of Sarasota Economic Development staff engaged a CRA redevelopment planning firm to conduct extensive community outreach and assist the City in updating the original plan, given that a great deal of change has occurred in the Newtown CRA as well the surrounding areas of the downtown, Rosemary District, bayfront cultural area, and US 41. The tax increment financing (TIF) was reset for the CRA to re-establish the base year as 2017 because the previous base year that was set ten years prior saw property values at their height and the City was concerned it would be several more years of value increases before the CRA ever collected its first penny since the values did not recover quickly after the recession.

# SECTION 1.0 INTRODUCTION

---

**The purpose of the updated plan is to identify and initiate new programs and projects that will take the CRA district into a new redevelopment phase and ensure the preservation of the historic Newtown community.**

The major initiatives of this Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 are focused on economic development, including job training, job creation, branding of the historic community, building new housing to create more demand for retail, promoting the cultural arts, and more. A foundational principle of this plan is to outline programs for redevelopment and economic growth for the residents of Newtown while prioritizing the preservation of community heritage.

The updated Newtown CRA Plan was adopted on April, 20, 2021, by Resolution No. 21R-2985.

## 1.2 Organization

The Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 is organized into ten sections, complemented by technical memorandums, reports, and an appendix containing key documents including the City Resolution adopting this Plan. The Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 sections include:

Section 1.0	Introduction
Section 2.0	Existing Conditions and Background
Section 3.0	Economic Development
Section 4.0	Branding, Marketing, Tourism, and Communications
Section 5.0	Housing
Section 6.0	Land Use and Zoning
Section 7.0	Infrastructure, Transportation, and Connectivity
Section 8.0	Quality of Life
Section 9.0	Administration and Governance
Section 10.0	Conclusion and Implementation Summary
Section 11.0	Technical Memos and Reports
Section 12.0	Appendix



## SECTION 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.3 Newtown CRA History

The Newtown community is extremely proud of its history, and in 2014 the City of Sarasota guided the creation of a report called *Newtown Alive*, which was compiled to document the history of the area between 1914-2014 coinciding with the community's centennial. That document provides an extensive history of the area and the 2008 Newtown CRA Plan highlighted some of the history of Newtown as well.

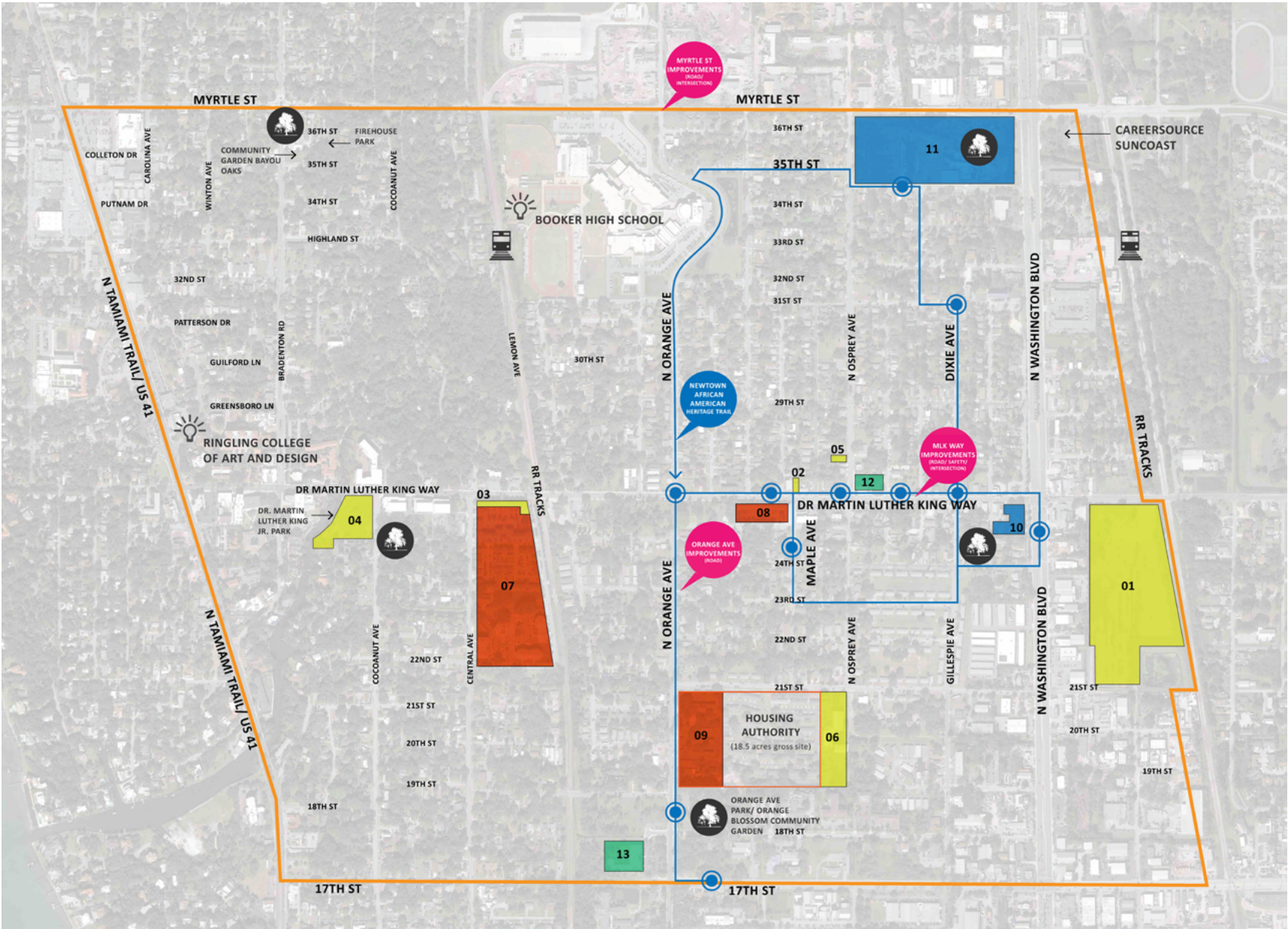


*Photo Credit: Newtown Alive and Overtown Plaque standing in Rosemary District*

In 2006, the City Commission approved a resolution to establish the Newtown CRA district as an effort to remedy the blighted conditions of the area. Many projects identified in the 2008 Newtown CRA Plan have been completed, as shown in the map of completed projects below, including the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way Streetscape project, the Robert L. Taylor Community Complex, and the Newtown Alive Trail. Please refer to Technical Memo 1 for more information about Newtown CRA completed and current projects.

The Newtown community has fought to preserve its history while also striving to implement projects that improve the quality of life for community members. As redevelopment continues, the CRA will continue to respect the heritage of the area. Newtown is an important part of the history of the City and Sarasota County (the County) and deserves to be conserved and improved.

NEWTOWN CRA PROJECTS MAP  
January 2020





# SECTION 1.0 INTRODUCTION

## LEGEND

NEWTOWN CRA BOUNDARY



### Categories + Projects

#### Administration

- CRA Advisory Board, North Sarasota Workforce Initiative
- Newtown Business Organization
- Cultural Special Event Grant Program
- Newtown Digital Message Board
- Newtown Land Assemblage
- Newtown CRA Plan Update

#### Economic Development

- 01** Marian Anderson Place  
(13.2 acres gross site)
- 02** Miss Susie's Newtown Kitchen  
(0.1 acres gross site)
- 03** Janie's Marketplace Commercial Storefronts  
(17,600 square feet +/-)
- 04** Newtown Nation Farmers Market/  
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Park Facilities Renovation  
(2.1 acres gross site)
- 05** Jetson's Creative Trends/ Business Assistance  
Grant Program  
(0.1 acres gross site)
- 06** HVAC Maintenance 1010 Fast-Track Training/  
Boys & Girls Club of Sarasota/ Owned by City of  
Sarasota Housing Authority  
(18.5 acres gross site)

#### Other Programs/ Projects:

- Opportunity Zone, HUB Zone
- North Trail Economic Redevelopment Plan
- Newtown Business Assistance Grant Program,
- Legacy Business Program
- Community Entrepreneurial Opportunity (CEO) Program
- Newtown Workforce Program #2: "JC Workforce"
- Newtown Workforce Program #3: "Brotherhood of Men Technical Skills Initiative
- Boot-Strap Business School
- Newtown Banking Facility, Sarasota Orchestra relocation
- Newtown Newsletters

#### Housing

- 07** Janie's Garden (226 units)  
(11.5 acres gross site)
- 08** King Stone Apartments (28 units)  
(1.4 acres gross site)
- 09** Amaryllis Park Place (Anticipated Completion 2021)
  - Newtown Historic Structure Rehabilitation Program
  - Title Assistance Program "No Place Like Home"

#### Transportation and Infrastructure

- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) Way Improvements
- Orange Ave. Improvements
- Myrtle Street Improvements

#### Community Health, Safety, and Welfare

- 12** Sarasota Memorial Healthcare
- 13** Children First
  - Sarasota County School District, Multicultural Health Institute

#### Land Use

- CBN, Planning Dept. Neighborhood Resources
- Central Coconut & Bayou Oaks Neighborhood Plans

#### Urban Design/ Parks

- 10** Fredd "Glossie" Atkins Park  
(0.8 acres gross site)
- 11** Robert L. Taylor Community Complex
  - Newtown Historic Conservation Trail/African American heritage Trail
  - Newtown Historic Conservation District
  - Leonard Reid House
  - Newtown Cultural Arts and History Center

**\*\*Note:** Projects and Programs may apply to multiple categories, but shown in the one most applicable.

## SECTION 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.4 Community Input

The creation of this Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 relied heavily on input received from community workshops, one-on-one stakeholder meetings, and an online survey. The CRA invited community stakeholders to attend topic-specific meetings on September 9, 2019. On that day and throughout the plan development process, multiple one-on-one and group interviews were conducted where residents, business owners, and community groups provided input on the existing challenges in Newtown and shared ways to improve the existing conditions. Then on September 13, 2019, an online survey for Newtown residents, business owners, and other interested parties was launched. The community survey was offered in English and Spanish. Respondents were asked to provide information on what type of businesses they would like to see, what they felt the top CRA priorities should be, as well as identify challenges and opportunities related to quality of life. The survey remained active until December 31, 2019, with a total of 60 survey responses collected.



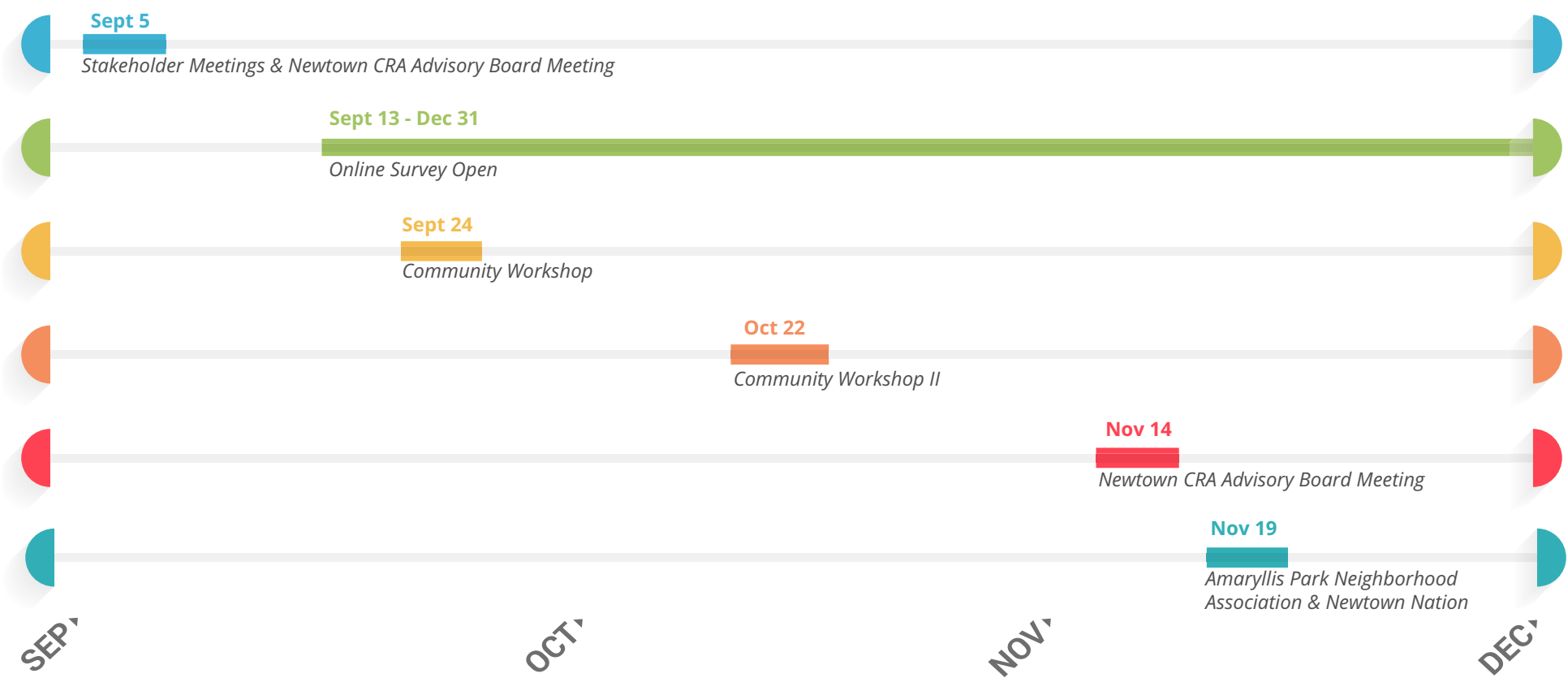
*Community Workshop*



*Amaryllis Park Neighborhood Association Meeting*

In addition, there were two major public meetings that provided the community an opportunity to offer input. The initial workshop held on September 24, 2019, was held to gather residents' ideas and for projects and programs. The second workshop held on October 22, 2019, presented preliminary recommendations based on the collected community and stakeholder input. These public meetings were advertised, along with the online survey, through multiple communication methods, including social media posts, email blasts, postcards mailed to Newtown households, a press release distributed to local media, and flyers posted throughout the area. The team also consulted with other local leaders and organizations based on the suggestions of community members from the October 22, 2019, meeting. Meetings with Amaryllis Park Neighborhood Association and Newtown Nation were held on November 19, 2019.

2019 PUBLIC INPUT MEETING TIMELINE



## SECTION 1.0 INTRODUCTION

---

### Community Input Overview

- ▶ 13 stakeholders interviewed (business owners, property owners, or community groups)
- ▶ 50 people (estimated) attended the community workshops and/or public meetings
- ▶ 60 online survey responses received
- ▶ The top activity survey respondents said they would like to see the CRA engage in is attracting new businesses
- ▶ Survey respondents indicated perception of crime was affecting their quality of life
- ▶ Most survey respondents said the best way to communicate CRA events and programs was through social media
- ▶ The top capital project survey respondents said they wanted was road and transportation improvements
- ▶ Job training in the technology industry was the most desired
- ▶ In all community input methods, the public generally commented that they wanted more entertainment options, neighborhood services in the community, and neighborhood retail on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way
- ▶ In meetings, the public voiced their desire for allowing use of food trucks
- ▶ Residents said there is an immediate need for lighting to be installed on neighborhood streets and indicated that tree canopies were also desired for pedestrian and bicycle commutes
- ▶ Residents expressed their desire to have anticipated projects like Miss Susie's and Marian Anderson completed

The recommendations throughout this Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 are based on the public input received as well as best practices in the redevelopment industry and experience of the plan development team. Technical Memo 3 contains notes from each stakeholder meeting, public meetings, and the community workshops along with the results of the online survey.

## SECTION 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.5 Florida Statute 163.362 Check List for Required Items in Community Redevelopment Plan

The following chart is a list of items that are required to be included in a Community Redevelopment Plan. Its intent is to ensure that the reader and Governing Body (City Commission) understand that all regulations have been strictly followed in this Newtown CRA Plan of 2021.

Florida Statute 163.362 Contents of Community Redevelopment Plan Chart for Newtown CRA Plan of 2021		
No.	Requirement	Location in Plan
(1)	Contain a legal description of the boundaries of the community redevelopment area and the reasons for establishing such boundaries shown in the plan	Technical Memo 2, Appendix, and Resolution 06R-1901
(2)	<i>Show by diagram and in general terms:</i> a. The approximate amount of open space to be provided and the street layout. b. Limitations on the type, size, height, number, and proposed use of buildings. c. The approximate number of dwelling units. d. Such property as is intended for use as public parks, recreation areas, streets, public utilities, and public improvements of any nature.	Report 1, Section 2, Section 5, Section 6, Section 7, and Section 8
(3)	If the redevelopment area contains low or moderate income housing, contain a neighborhood impact element which describes in detail the impact of the redevelopment upon the residents of the redevelopment area and the surrounding areas in terms of relocation, traffic circulation, environmental quality, availability of community facilities and services, effect on school population, and other matters affecting the physical and social quality of the neighborhood.	Section 5, Section 6, Section 7, Section 8
(4)	Identify specifically any publicly funded capital projects to be undertaken within the community redevelopment area.	Report 4 and Section 10
(5)	Contain adequate safeguards that the work of redevelopment will be carried out pursuant to the plan.	Section 9
(6)	Provide for the retention of controls and the establishment of any restrictions or covenants running with land sold or leased for private use for such periods of time and under such conditions as the governing body deems necessary to effectuate the purposes of this part.	Section 3
(7)	Provide assurances that there will be replacement housing for the relocation of persons temporarily or permanently displaced from housing facilities within the community redevelopment area.	Section 3



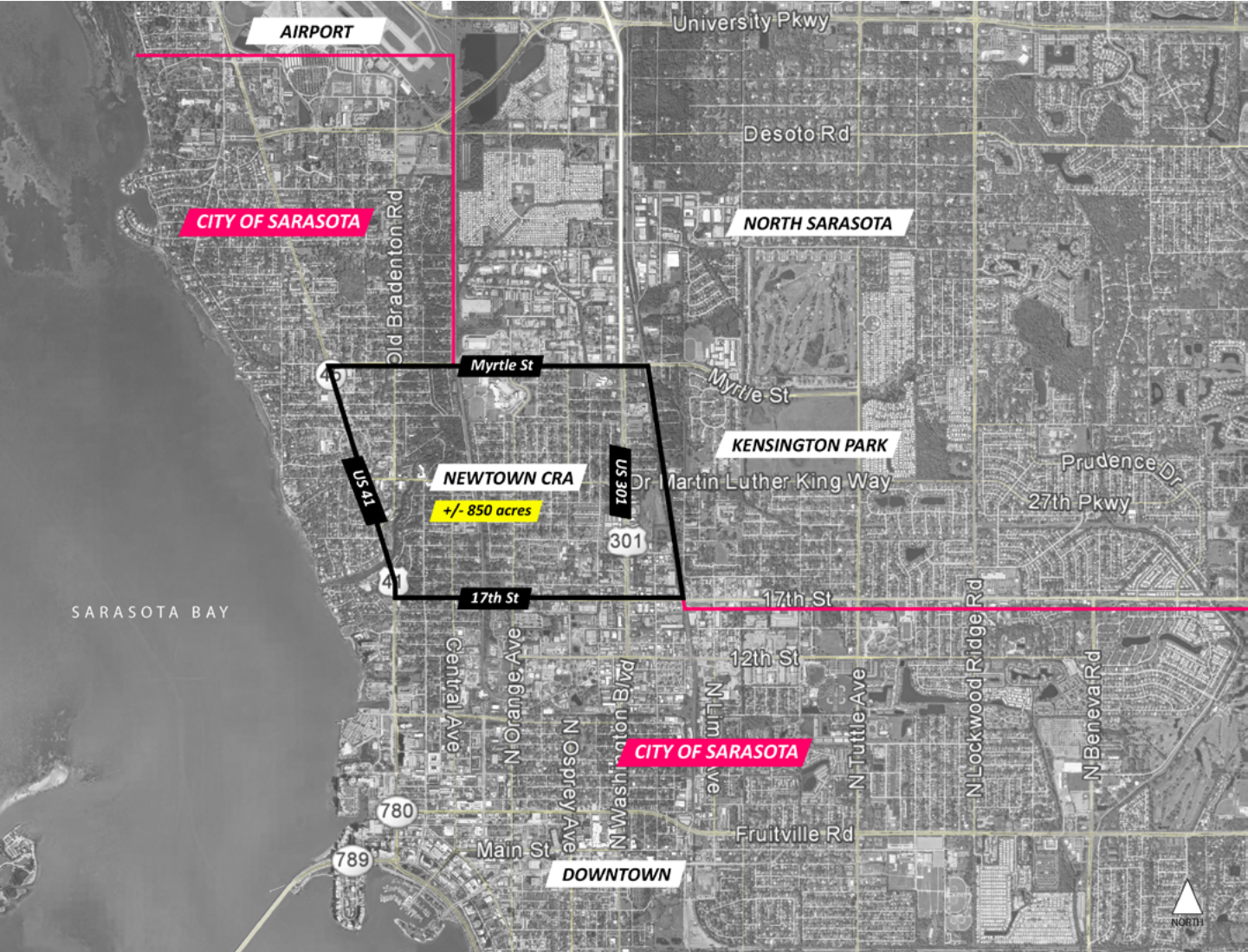
## SECTION 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Florida Statute 163.362 Contents of Community Redevelopment Plan Chart for Newtown CRA Plan of 2021		
(8)	Provide an element of residential use in the redevelopment area if such use exists in the area prior to the adoption of the plan or if the plan is intended to remedy a shortage of housing affordable to residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly, or if the plan is not intended to remedy such shortage, the reasons therefor.	Section 5
(9)	Contain a detailed statement of the projected costs of the redevelopment, including the amount to be expended on publicly funded capital projects in the community redevelopment area and any indebtedness of the community redevelopment agency, the county, or the municipality proposed to be incurred for such redevelopment if such indebtedness is to be repaid with increment revenues.	Report 4
(10)	Provide a time certain for completing all redevelopment financed by increment revenues. Such time certain shall occur no later than 30 years after the fiscal year in which the plan is approved, adopted, or amended pursuant to s. 163.361(1). However, for any agency created after July 1, 2002, the time certain for completing all redevelopment financed by increment revenues must occur within 40 years after the fiscal year in which the plan is approved or adopted.	Report 4 and Section 10

SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND

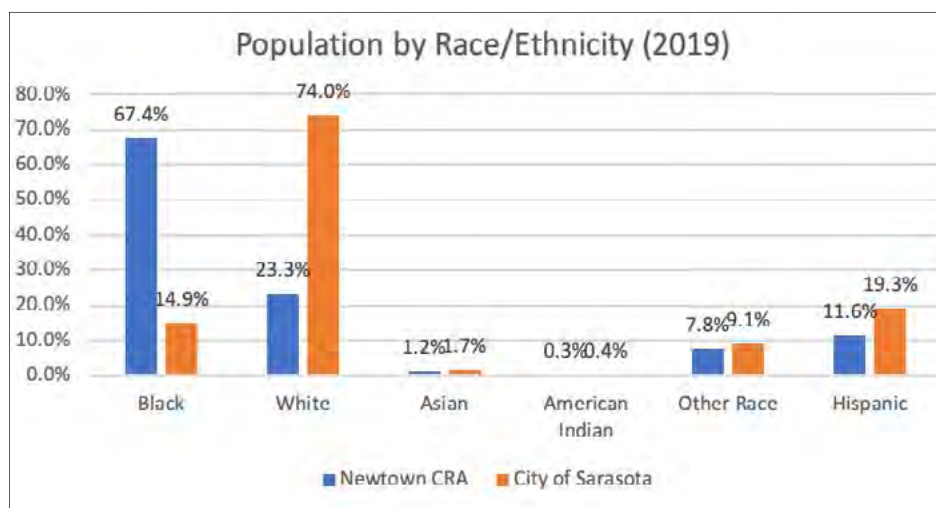
2.1 Demographics

Newtown CRA Regional Map  
January 2020

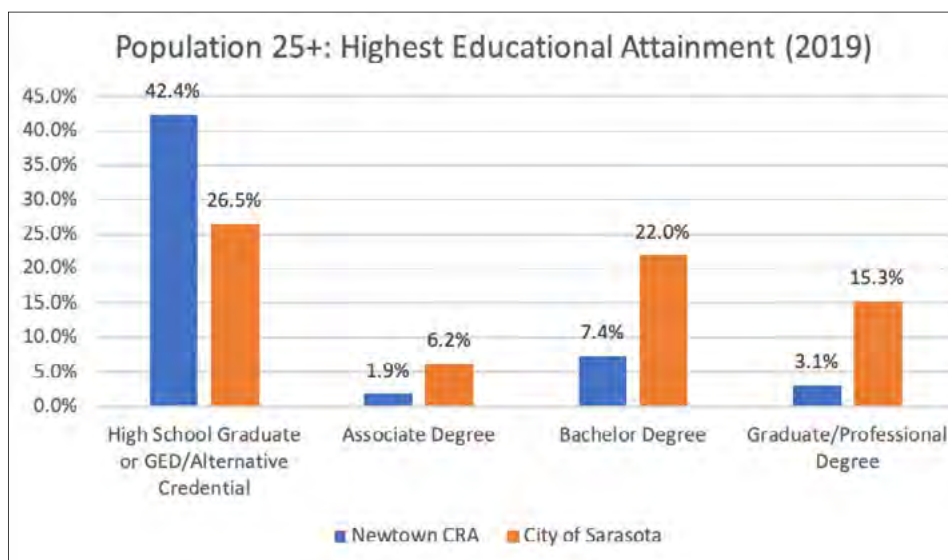


## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND

The City of Sarasota has over 57,000 residents and is centrally located an hour north of Fort Myers and an hour south of Tampa. The Newtown CRA District is in the northern part of the City. Within Newtown, there are approximately 7,376 residents and the workforce is centered around services, retail, transportation/utilities, and construction. The median age in the Newtown CRA District is 29.4 years, the median household income is \$23,877, and the median home value is \$132,177. The population in the CRA is 67.4% Black, 23.3% White, and the remaining 9.3% are other races. 11% of the population is of Hispanic origin. For highest educational attainment, 42.4% are high school graduates or have GED certification, 21.1% have some college, 9.3% have Associate or Bachelor Degrees, and 3.1% have a Graduate/Professional Degree<sup>1</sup>. According to the Sarasota Laborshed<sup>2</sup> there are 31,194 people employed in Sarasota but living outside of City limits. A Laborshed is defined as the area or region from which an employment center draws its commuting workers. In contrast, there are 13,786 people that live in Sarasota, but are employed outside of the City. This Laborshed indicates that there are workers in Sarasota that could benefit from residing in the City but cannot find housing; this presents an opportunity to position Newtown as the place to invest resources for construction of additional new housing.



Source: ESRI 2019

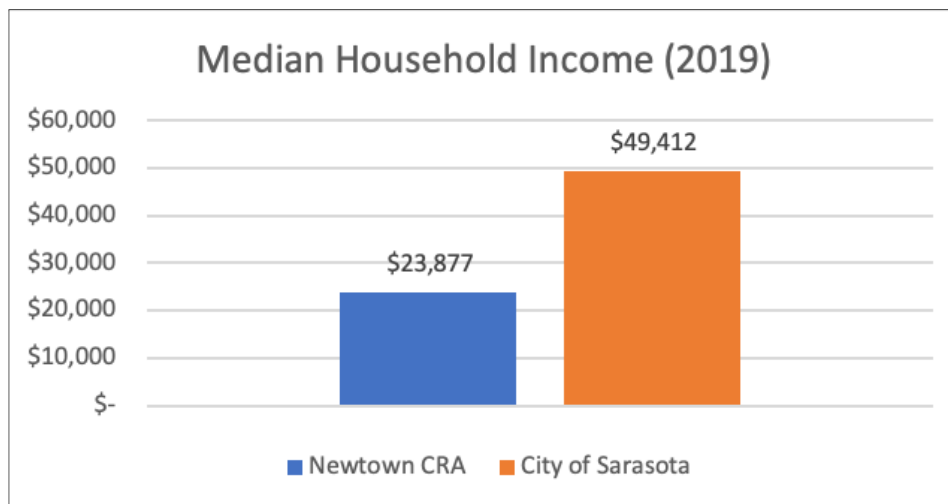


Source: ESRI 2019

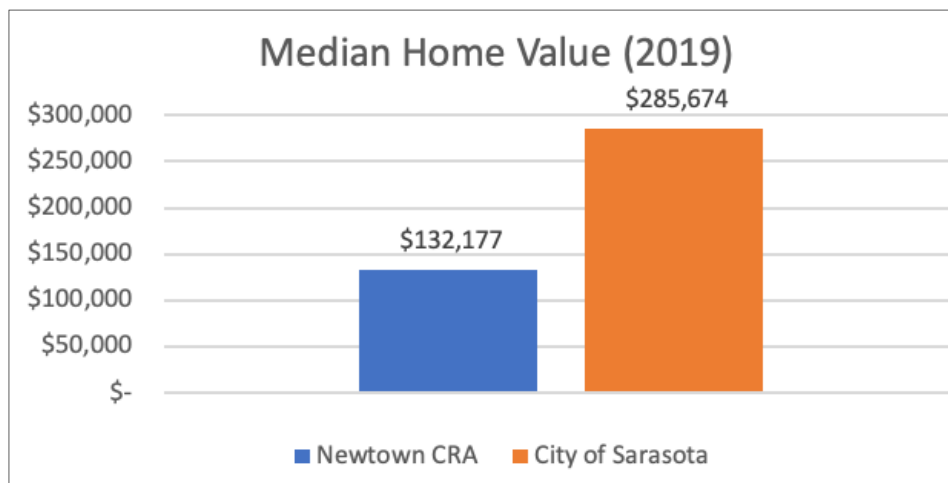
<sup>1</sup>Source: ESRI (Environmental Systems Research Institute) Inc. ESRI data used in this report is from the U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010. For 2019 and 2024 forecasts, ESRI converted Census 2000 data into 2010 geography. For more information regarding ESRI Methodology, please visit [https://downloads.esri.com/esri\\_content\\_doc/dbl/us/J10268\\_Methodology\\_Statement\\_2019-2024\\_Esri\\_US\\_Demographic\\_Updates.pdf](https://downloads.esri.com/esri_content_doc/dbl/us/J10268_Methodology_Statement_2019-2024_Esri_US_Demographic_Updates.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>Source: Laborshed, US Census On the Map 2017

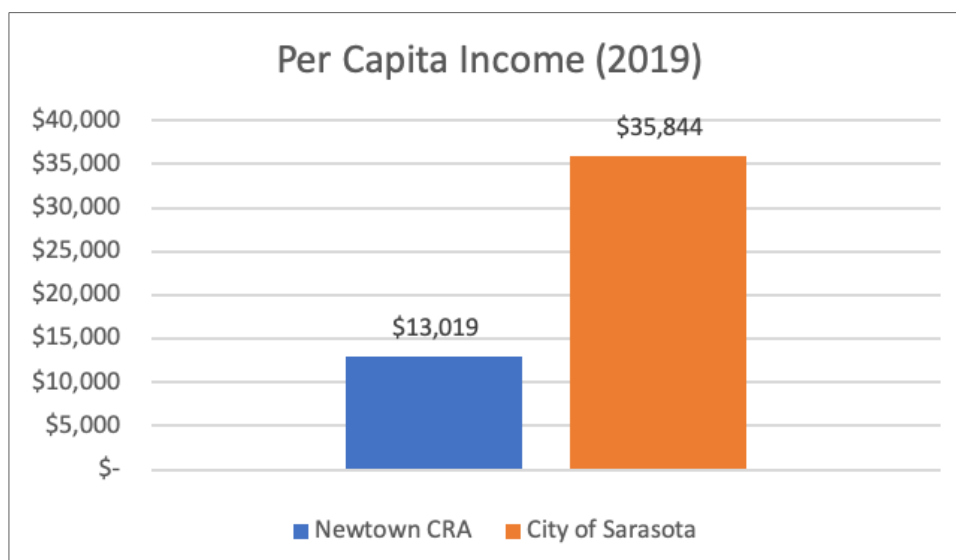
## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND



Source: ESRI 2019



Source: ESRI 2019



Source: ESRI 2019



## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND

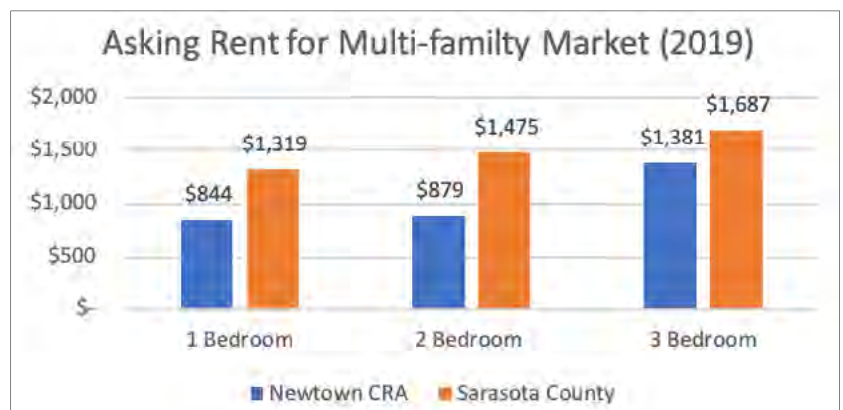
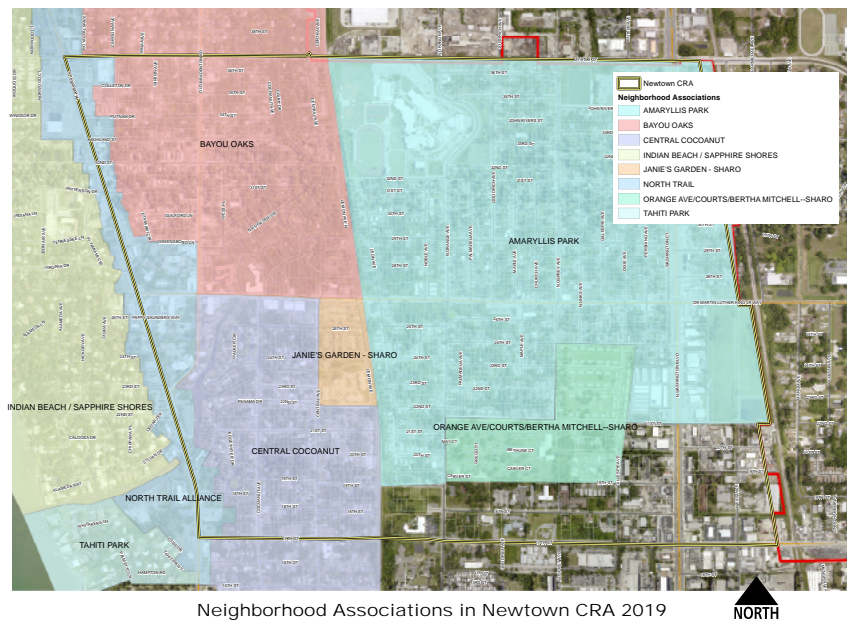
### 2.2 Market Conditions

According to an analysis of Costar data, the retail sector presented the most potential for new investment in Newtown. As of September 2019, there was over 8,000 sf (square feet) of available retail and restaurant space in the market<sup>3</sup>. This is an opportunity to attract new businesses to existing spaces. Retail was also the only major real estate sector to see new construction over the past 12 months. The office sector showed the least potential and activity of the major sectors. Over the past 12 months there has been no office market activity as it relates to leasing space or sales. Currently, the existing industrial product is 100% leased indicating that additional industrial space is needed. There could be a potential to add light industrial space to the market with a target audience of businesses within art, technology, and co-working related companies. According to Costar data, as of September 2019, there has been no new multi-family delivered or under construction from the private sector since 2013. Newly constructed market rate multi-family could be challenging for an investor to develop in the Newtown area because the capitalization rates (cap rates) are rather high, and the rents are on the lower end. The cap rate helps determine the rate of return for an investor by examining the property's value and its potential to generate income. Notwithstanding the review of office space above, it should be noted that the Ringling College of Art + Design has been a supplier of new educational space, some of which is leased to private sector film and video production companies, such as the video production facility on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way. More information can be found in [Section 11](#) Technical Memos and Reports.

### 2.3 Neighborhood Conditions

There are six main neighborhood associations in the Newtown CRA: Amaryllis Park (the largest), Bayou Oaks, Central Cocanut, Janie's Garden - SHARO, Orange Ave/Courts/Bertha Mitchell-SHARO, and North Trail. Central Cocanut and Bayou Oaks have created Neighborhood Plans and the City has a Neighborhoods division within the Planning Department. The City will continue coordinating with neighborhoods over time and as the Newtown CRA redevelopment projects are implemented. Other conditions in CRA neighborhoods are described below.

**Housing.** Newtown housing stock includes original homes from the early 1900's with most of the existing residential property built in the 1950s and 1960s. According to ESRI data<sup>1</sup>, there are 2,844 housing units in the Newtown CRA. The housing character is predominately single-family residential and low scale multi-family including 454 units from the Sarasota Housing Authority. Much of the existing single-family housing stock could benefit from renovations. According to Costar data, as of September 2019, the multi-family market in Newtown is comprised of 813 units, which includes Sarasota Housing Authority's 454 multi-family units. The existing one, two, and three-bedroom average rents in Newtown are more affordable than the average Sarasota County rents.



<sup>3</sup> Source: 2019 Costar Group, Inc. Costar data used in this report is the survey of the existing real estate markets. Data is compiled by the Costar real estate research team. Data is confirmed by calling brokers and public record information from property appraisers' website. Updated and analyzed daily to reflect accurate current conditions.



## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND

Citywide, the retail and multi-family markets are showing the most positive growth trends. There has been a large amount of new construction, increased sales volume, and lower cap rates. These positive characteristics are all signs of the private sector investing in Sarasota and seeing the potential for continued growth in the market. Even though the market indicates some challenges in bringing new developments to Newtown, the CRA can position itself to build on the City's growth.

Although there has been no new private sector multi-family delivered since 2013, the Sarasota Housing Authority (SHA) plans to construct a three-story building with 84 new units in the Amaryllis Park Place (Orange Ave.) project in Newtown, as well as Lemon Lofts in the nearby Rosemary District. The SHA is a major property owner in the CRA with just over 46 acres (approximately 7% of the acreage in the CRA) per information provided by Sarasota County Property Appraiser's office. The SHA has been proactive in redeveloping their aging housing stock with the latest phase of Janie's Garden (226 residential units) redevelopment being completed in 2016.



*Janie's Garden, SHA mixed-use development along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Photo credit: Tandem Construction*



*Single-family houses along Orange Avenue*

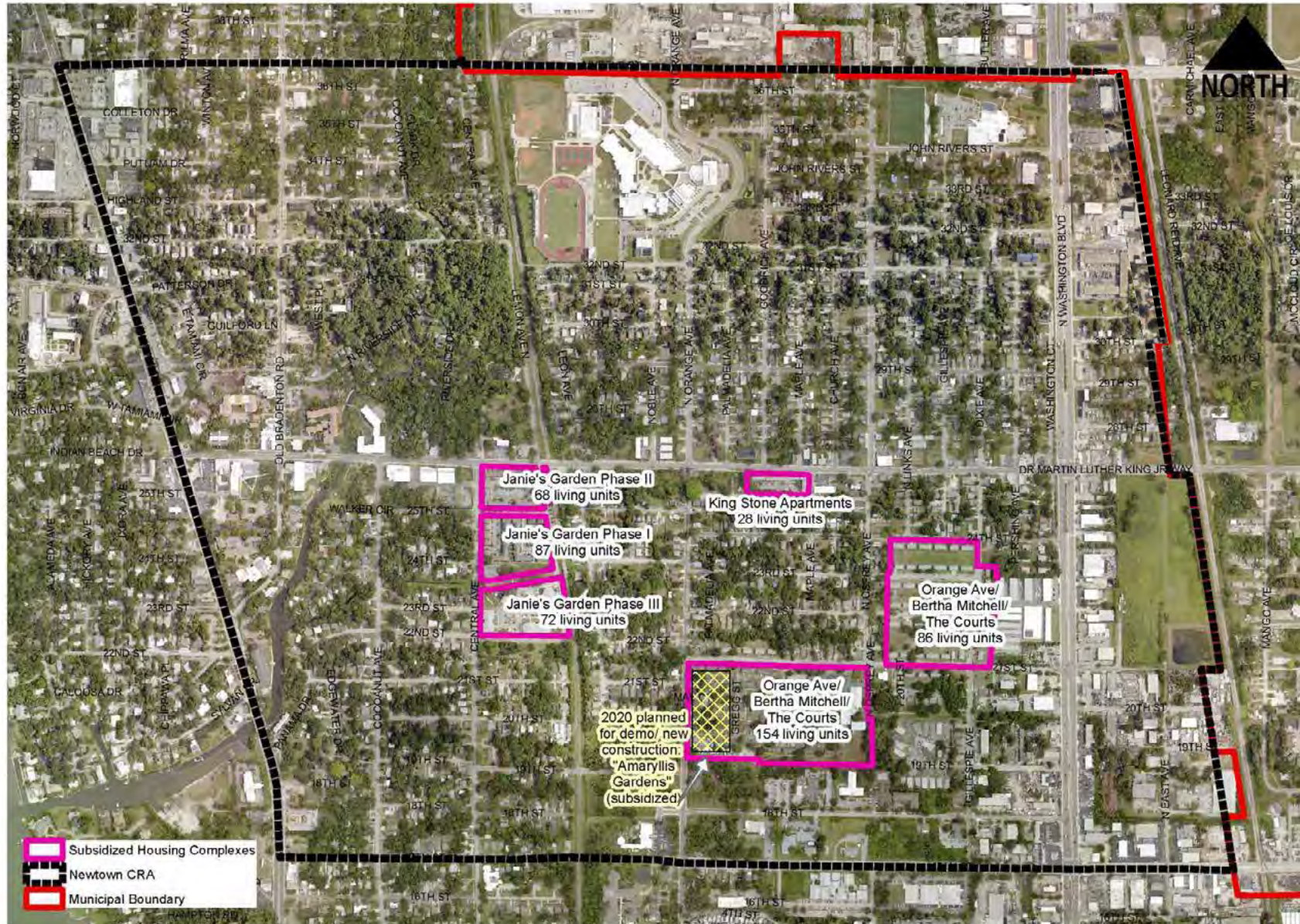
**Tax Credit Housing Completed and Planned.** Referring to a location map below titled, "NCRA Subsidized Multi-Family Complexes 2019," five projects illustrated are clustered south of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and include 1) Janie's Garden (3 phases) containing 226 units some of which provide a very good frontage connection on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, 2) King Stone Apartments, 28 units, fronting on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, 3) Orange Avenue Apartments, 60 units on Orange Ave. (these units have been demolished recently), 4) Bertha Mitchell, 100 units, off of Orange Ave., 5) The Courts, 100 units, off of Orange Ave.; all of which total 454 units. The new project at the site of Orange Ave/Bertha Mitchell/The Courts called Amaryllis Park Place is planned to front Orange Avenue, with 84 units to serve the elderly and the disabled.

Below is a list of the tax credit housing built, existing, or planned in the Newtown community. The affordable housing, especially by the Sarasota Housing Authority, is in high demand and serves a great need in the community. However, it is recommended in this Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 that subsidized housing should not be the only housing provided; workforce housing (60% to 120% of the County's median income or incomes between approximately \$46,000-\$92,000 based on a family of 4) will be needed in the next ten years as affordability in the downtown becomes more severe. The CRA will need to participate in a public/private partnership (P3) with workforce housing in order to help subsidize the cost of construction of workforce apartments. **One method of participating is to provide a share of the tax increment generated by a project with the developer or owner.**

This method has been used successfully in other communities in Florida in order to stimulate redevelopment. An example of such a P3 is the 300 unit mixed income project called 500 Ocean in Boynton Beach. This was a P3 with the CRA in which the CRA returned 10 years of TIF to the developer not to exceed \$4,500,000 total. Each payment of \$450,000 is made annually, commencing in 2021. The project is completed and also contains 18,000 sf of commercial space. In addition the CRA required that the developer build on-street parking on a State Road, US 1.



## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND



**NCRA: Subsidized Multi-Family Complexes 2019**  
(<http://www.sarasotahousing.org/public.aspx>)



## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND

---

### Sarasota Housing Authority Properties in the Newtown CRA (by type)

#### REDEVELOPMENT PROPERTIES

Through public/private partnerships and generous investment by the City of Sarasota and Sarasota County, the Sarasota Housing Authority (SHA) has completed a three-phase redevelopment of the former Janie Poe public housing community into what is now Janie's Garden.

**Property:** Janie's Garden Phase I

**Address:** 2300 Central Avenue, Sarasota, FL 34234

**Completed:** 2009

**Sources:** 9% LIHTC (Low-Income Housing Tax Credit), City/County Funds

**Units by Program:** 86 Total; 26 Project-Based Vouchers, 40 LIHTC and 20 Market Rate

**Development Team:** SHA, Michaels Development Company, Torti Gallas, Clark Construction

**LIHTC Investor/Syndicator:** NEF

**Property:** Janie's Garden Phase II

**Address:** SE Corner of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way & Central Ave, Sarasota, FL 34234

**Completed:** 2011

**Sources:** 4% LIHTC/Bonds, HUD (Department of Housing & Urban Development) Stimulus Grants, HUD, RHF (Replacement Housing Factor), City/County Funds

**Units by Program:** 68 Total; 35 Project-Based Vouchers, 33 LIHTC

**Development Team:** SHA, Michaels Development Company, Torti Gallas, Tandem Construction, ACT Engineering

**LIHTC Investor/Syndicator:** Richman Asset Management

**Property:** Janie's Garden Phase III

**Address:** 2350 Central Avenue, Sarasota, FL 34234

**Completed:** 2016

**Sources:** 9% LIHTC, City/County Funds, HUD RHF

**Units by Program:** 72 Total; 21 Public Housing, 14 Project-Based Vouchers, 18 LIHTC and 14 Market Rate

**Development Team:** SHA, Michaels Development Company, Slocum Platts Architects, Saterfield & Pontikes Construction Inc., ACT Engineering

**LIHTC Investor/Syndicator:** Raymond James

**Total Cost for all three phases of Janie's Garden redevelopment project:** \$40 million

#### AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROPERTIES

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has encouraged housing authorities to create non-profit affiliates to expand the potential funding sources needed to develop and expand the supply of affordable housing in their jurisdiction as well as to expand services for residents. The formation of the Sarasota Housing Funding Corp (SHFC) as a 501c3 affiliate of the Sarasota Housing Authority (SHA) was a major step in the entrepreneurial growth and vision of SHA. SHFC has partnered with the City of Sarasota and Sarasota County governments to develop and/or acquire 67 affordable apartments and homes in Sarasota that are owned and managed by SHFC and leased to low and very-low income families. SHFC is now looking to continue addressing affordable housing challenges locally. These housing needs and challenges should be community efforts addressed through community partnerships, not just depending on HUD subsidy, which has seen real reductions over the last ten years.

**Property:** King Stone Town Homes

**Address:** 1720 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Sarasota, FL 34234

**Completed:** 2013

**Units:** 28 Total; income restrictions apply

**Sources:** Neighborhood Stabilization Program 2 grant

## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND

---

### PUBLIC HOUSING PROPERTIES

The Sarasota Housing Authority currently owns and operates 200 units of public housing. These units are reserved for low-income families. Residents who live in SHA public housing units pay 30% of the monthly adjusted income for rent and utilities. Subsidy from HUD provides the additional funding required to operate the property. These public housing units are for families located in the Newtown area of Sarasota. In order to be eligible for Public Housing, one must be considered low-income in accordance with HUD's income limits for Sarasota/Bradenton.

**Properties:** Orange Avenue, The Courts and Bertha Mitchell (OCB)

**Address:** 1912 N Orange Avenue, Sarasota, FL 34234

#### Located in Historic Newtown Sarasota, OCB consists of three distinct properties:

- ▶ Orange Avenue Apartments – Once known as Newtown Heights, these 60 apartments that were home to OCB's only two-floor apartments have been demolished recently to make way for the new Amaryllis Park Place with 84 units.
- ▶ The Courts – 100 duplex-style apartments, many with off-street parking at your front door.
- ▶ Bertha Mitchell – 100 duplex-style apartments, many with off street parking; new kitchens, new central air conditioning, new energy efficient windows and exterior doors.

Full-time, on-site resident services staff facilitate getting residents training and education, and completing volunteer community service hour requirements. Orange Avenue Grocery, a community convenience store, is on-site. Bus stops on-site, directly in front of the Housing Authority office. A portion of this property will be redeveloped as Amaryllis Park Place.

### FUNDED/PENDING DEVELOPMENTS

SHA has now partnered with Fortis Development (a joint venture of Smith & Henzy and Calston Advisors) to redevelop two more SHA properties, Orange Ave in Newtown and Cohen Way, both of which will be redeveloped with 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credit equity.

**Property:** Amaryllis Park Place II

**Address:** Located at 21<sup>st</sup> Street, approximately 250 feet Southeast of the intersection of 21<sup>st</sup> St. and Palmadelia Ave., Sarasota, FL

**Sources:** 9% LIHTC (2020 Award), City of Sarasota Funds

**Units by Program:** 84 Total; 80 LIHTC

**Development Team:** SHA, Fortis Development (Smith & Henzy and Calston), Hoyt Architects

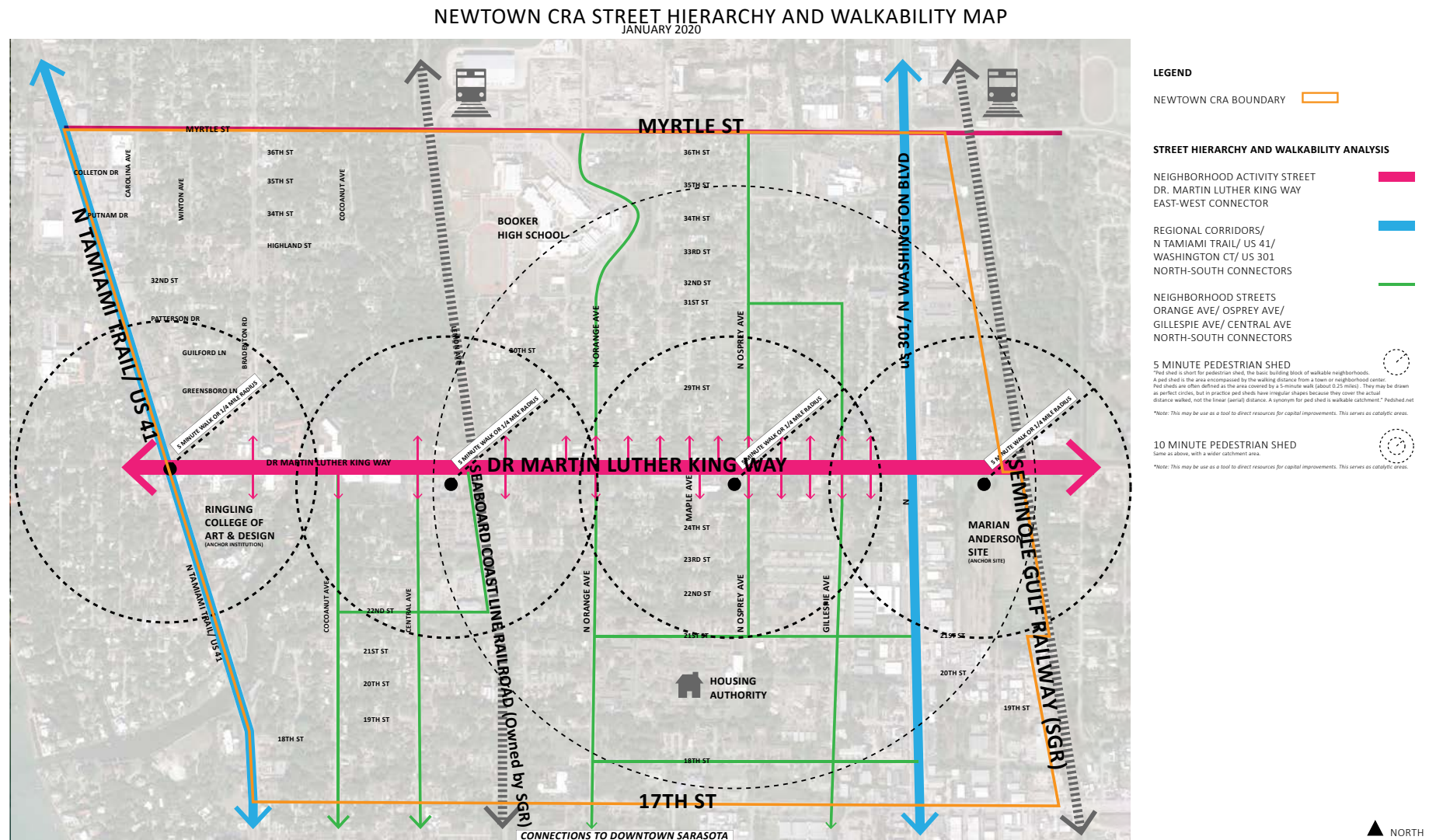
**Sidewalks.** There are sidewalks along most of the primary and secondary streets running throughout the CRA, including Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Central Avenue, Coconut Avenue, and Orange Avenue. However, many of the residential streets do not have sidewalks, only have sidewalks on one side of the street, or the widths do not meet modern standards. The sidewalks along the primary and secondary streets are minimum widths between 3 feet and 5 feet. The City's Sidewalk Connectivity Plan considers a street "covered" if a street has a sidewalk on one side and shows Newtown has better sidewalk coverage overall than other parts of the City.

**Lots sizes.** Lot depths along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way range from 40 feet (smaller lots) and 260 ft (large lots, such as in Janie's Garden area). The median lot size is approximately 145 ft deep; therefore, it limits the size and density of potential mixed-use development. Single-family lots in Newtown generally are on 50 feet wide by 100-125 feet deep.

## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND

## 2.4 Transportation & Roadway Conditions

Major roadways within or bordering the Newtown CRA consist of State Roads US 41 and US 301, Myrtle Street, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) Way, and Orange Avenue. Sarasota County maintains Myrtle Street from Old Bradenton Road east past the CRA boundary, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and 17<sup>th</sup> Street from US 301 east past the CRA Boundary. There are several other secondary streets within Newtown that connect to other neighborhoods of the City like Coconut Avenue, Central Avenue, Osprey Avenue. Please refer to [Report 1](#), in which roadways are organized into street classifications.

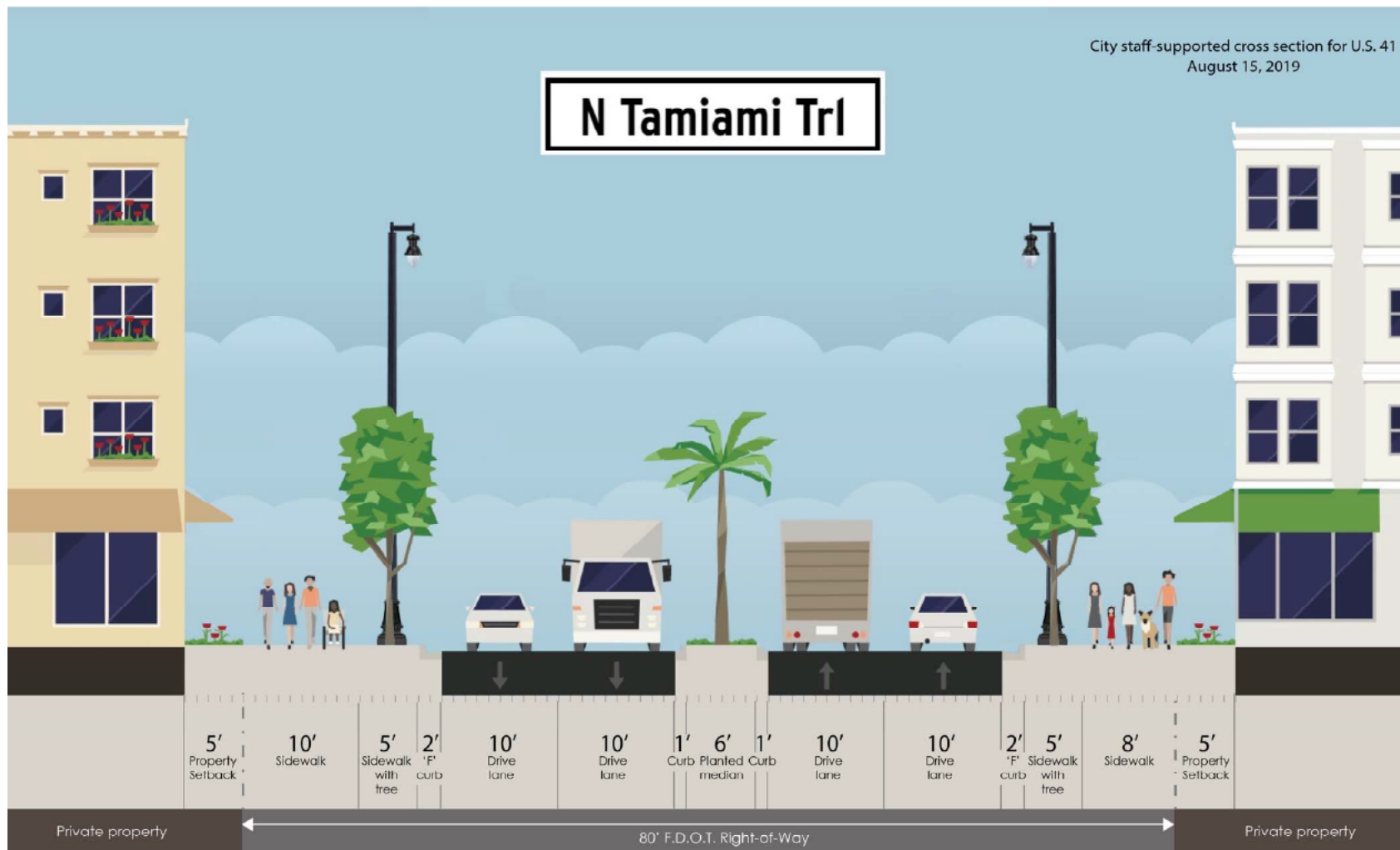




## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND

### FDOT (Florida Department of Transportation) Roads

There are two FDOT owned roads that traverse through or border Newtown in a north to south orientation, US 41 (also known as Tamiami Trail) and US 301 (also known as Washington Boulevard). These roads serve as local and regional connectors, connecting Newtown to Sarasota Bradenton Airport (on the north) and Downtown Sarasota (on the south). FDOT has plans to construct roundabouts at the intersections of Myrtle Street & US 41 and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way & US 41. FDOT's plan was to construct partial two-lane roundabouts at both intersections and to include buffered bicycle lanes between the intersections with 8-foot sidewalks and a landscaped median. The City is advocating for even wider sidewalks with street trees and lighting rather than the buffered bike lanes based on community feedback and endorsements from North Trail neighborhood associations and community organizations.



## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND



*US 41 Southbound near Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way*

### US 41 Road Conditions

- ▶ Four (4) lane arterial road with a centered median and/or turning lanes at some intervals
- ▶ Narrow sidewalks
- ▶ No bicycle lanes
- ▶ Typical right-of way is 80 ft
- ▶ The land use of a majority of parcels along US 41 is composed of individual commercial pads surrounded by parking lots
- ▶ Significant higher education facility along this corridor; Ringling College of Art + Design
- ▶ Multiple curb cut entry points from the arterial thoroughfare
- ▶ No on-street parking

### US 301 Road Conditions

- ▶ Six (6) lane arterial road with a centered median and/or turning lanes at some intervals
- ▶ Narrow sidewalks
- ▶ Bicycle lanes
- ▶ Typical right-of way ranges from 120 ft. to 170 ft. (section with frontage road at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way intersection)
- ▶ The land use of the majority of parcels along US 301 is composed of individual commercial and industrial pads surrounded in parking lots
- ▶ Multiple curb cut entry points from the arterial thoroughfare
- ▶ No on-street parking



*US 301 Southbound near 19th Street*

## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND

### Major Neighborhood Streets: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Orange Avenue and Myrtle Street

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way is an east-west neighborhood street at the core of the Newtown community. It serves as a local connector, connecting the railroad tracks near the Marian Anderson Site (Seminole Gulf Railway) and US 301 (on the east) to US 41 near Ringling College of Art + Design (on the west). Orange Avenue is a north-south neighborhood street connecting Newtown to the downtown. It transverses from Myrtle Street near Booker High School (on the north) through Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way at the core, and to the downtown (on the south). Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way was the “main street” for the community with businesses in the mid-century and should be continued to be redeveloped as the “main street.” Sarasota County maintains Myrtle Street from Old Bradenton Road east past the CRA boundary, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and 17th Street from US 301 east past the CRA Boundary.



*Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way eastbound at Osprey Avenue*

### Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way Road Conditions

- ▶ Two (2) lane collector road with turning lanes at major intersections
- ▶ Sidewalks typically 5-6 ft. (considered narrow for a Main Street)
- ▶ Portion of street has bicycle lanes (Cocoanut Ave. to US 41)
- ▶ Typical right-of-way ranges from 50 ft. to 60 ft.
- ▶ The land use of a majority of parcels along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way is composed of small individual commercial pads surrounded by parking lots
- ▶ Significant higher education facility and public facilities along this corridor; Ringling College of Art + Design (near US 41), Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park (near Ringling College), and Freddie “Glossie” Atkins Park (near US 301)
- ▶ Multiple curb cut entry points from the collector thoroughfare
- ▶ Portion of road has on-street parking



## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND



*Orange Avenue northbound near park*

### **Orange Avenue Road Conditions**

- ▶ Two (2) lane collector road with turning lanes at major intersections
- ▶ Sidewalks (typically 5-6 ft.)
- ▶ Bicycle lanes
- ▶ Typical right-of-way is 40 ft.
- ▶ The land use of the majority of parcels along Orange Ave. is composed of residential units with front driveways
- ▶ Significant public facilities along this corridor; Booker High School, Sarasota Housing Authority and Orange Avenue Park
- ▶ Multiple curb cut entry points from the collector thoroughfare
- ▶ No on-street parking

## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND

---



*Myrtle Street*

### **Myrtle Street Road Conditions**

- ▶ Two (2) lane road with turning lanes at major intersections
- ▶ Narrow sidewalks (3ft. to 7 ft.) or no sidewalks
- ▶ Bicycle lanes on small portions of the road
- ▶ Right-of-way ranges from 50 ft. to 70 ft.
- ▶ The land use along Myrtle Street includes industrial, residential, institutional uses including Booker High School
- ▶ Multiple curb cut entry points from the collector thoroughfare
- ▶ No on-street parking

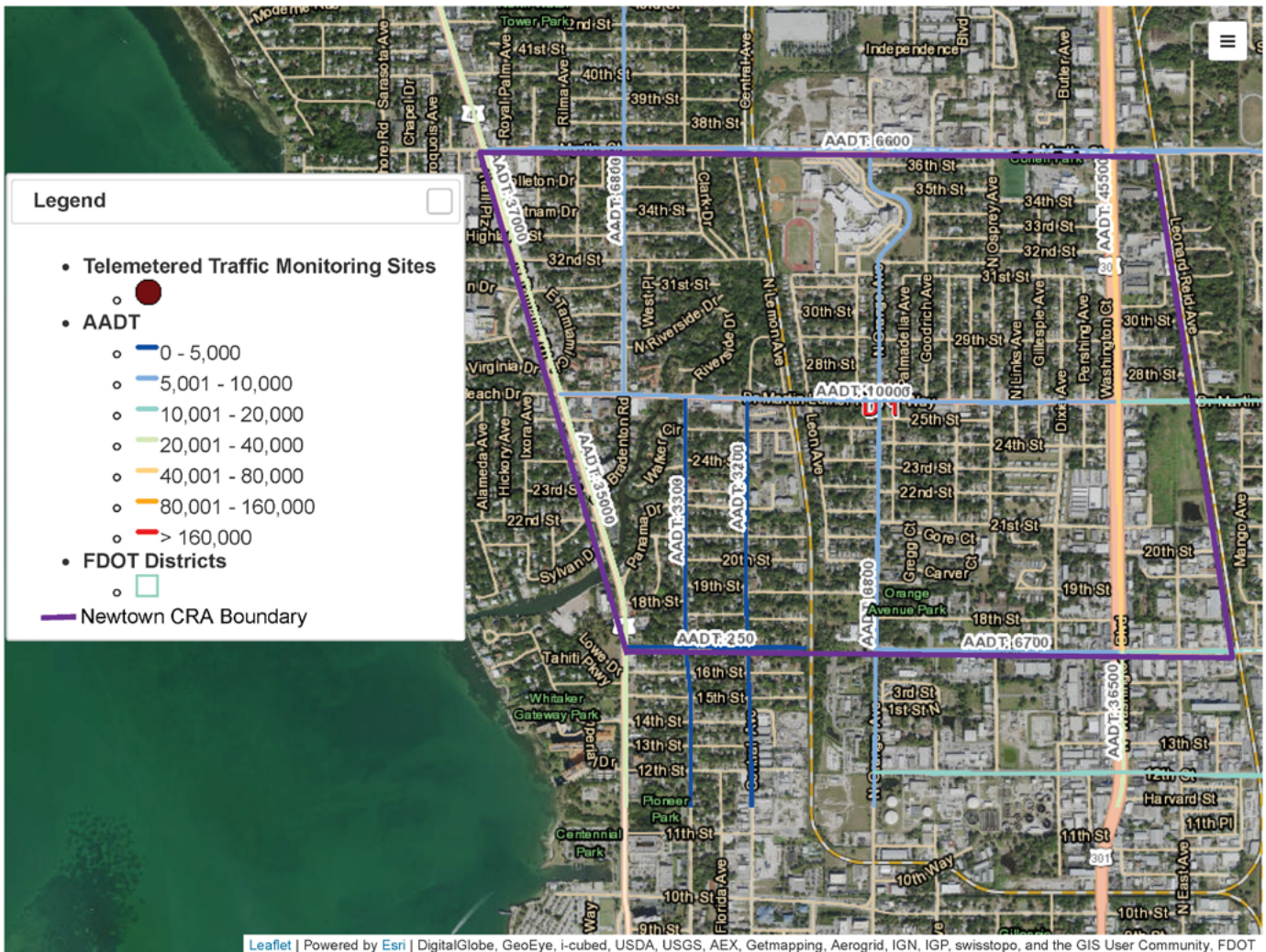
Sarasota County has a capital improvement project in the works for Myrtle Street. This project consists of widening the existing two-lane Myrtle Street with shoulders, bicycle lanes, closed drainage, sidewalks, and lighting. The construction of Myrtle Street is being completed in three phases. Phase 2A has been completed from US 41 to Central Avenue. Phase 2B from Central Avenue to N. Orange Avenue includes the Seminole Gulf Railway (SGLR) design of the crossing improvements, which has been completed. The SGLR has ordered the materials and started the site clearing in September 2019 for the construction of its track replacement. The contractor has begun the planning and scheduling of Phase 2B construction as of the drafting of this report. Phase 2C from N. Orange Avenue to west of US 301 started construction in November 2020 and the estimated completion will be in July 2021.



## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND

### Traffic Counts

The map below illustrates the annual average daily traffic (AADT), or number of vehicles that cross a certain point of a street location. In addition to population and income level, retailers analyze traffic counts during the site selection process. Many retailers prefer to locate in areas with a minimum of 20,000-30,000 AADT. In the Newtown CRA area, heavy traffic volume exists along US 301 (36,500 – 45,500 AADT) and US 41 (35,000-37,000 AADT). There is moderate traffic volume along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way (10,000 AADT, which is typical for a “main street”), Myrtle Street (6,600 AADT), and Orange Avenue (6,800 AADT).



Source: <https://tdaappsprod.dot.state.fl.us/fto/>

January 2020

## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND

### Railroads

The railroad in the CRA includes Seminole Gulf Railway formally known as Seaboard Coast Line Railroad, owned by the Seminole Gulf Railway, which is between Central Avenue and Orange Avenue. This railroad is referred to throughout this document as the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad to distinguish between the other railroad owned by Seminole Gulf Railway that borders the eastern CRA boundary, which is just east of US 301.

**Seaboard Coast Line Railroad.** This railroad is east of US 41 and the railroad tracks right-of-way is 100 ft with 1 track. According to Sarasota History Alive!, “The railroad provided great impetus to the town’s turn-of-the-century progress. Trains brought passengers and manufactured goods to Sarasota and took local products such as fish, citrus, lumber, and vegetables to northern markets. The tracks entered the town along Lemon Avenue, crossed Main Street and curved south to terminate on a pier extending into the bay where commercial fish houses were built. In 1905 and 1912, tracks were built to the agricultural and commercial centers of Fruitville, Bee Ridge, and Venice. When Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus established winter quarters in Sarasota in 1927, tracks were extended to the circus grounds east of the City. Daily train and sleeper service from Sarasota to points north ultimately succumbed to the convenience of the automobile. The Seaboard Air Line Railway and Atlantic Coast Line Railroad merged in 1967 to form the Seaboard Coast Line which continued train service at its station on east Main Street.”

From a CRA redevelopment perspective, the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad offers an opportunity to service as it has in the past as a commuter short distance line between the airport and the downtown, passing through the Newtown CRA. The Line could not only be an economic generator for attracting tourists, but it could serve as an inexpensive method of transporting the valuable labor force of the Newtown CRA to the airport and back.



*Seaboard Coast Line Railroad owned by Seminole Gulf Railway at westbound Myrtle Street*



## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND

**Seminole Gulf Railway.** This railway is east of US 301 with the right-of-way of the railroad tracks at 130 ft. and 1 track. According to the Seminole Gulf Railway, “In November 1987, Seminole Gulf Railway (SGLR) acquired 118 miles of CSX trackage between North Naples and Arcadia, as well as, between Oneco (Bradenton) and Sarasota. SGLR now hauls much of the region’s building materials, newsprint, LP gas, plastics, stone, recycled materials, steel, and other commodities. The railroad owns and manages a fleet of railcars rolling throughout North America. In addition to providing traditional rail freight transportation, Seminole Gulf’s related companies provide other vital supply chain solutions for Southwest Florida, including regional trucking and logistical services, as well as warehousing and distribution from its 1.6 million cubic foot, frozen, refrigerated food and dry goods distribution center located in North Fort Myers.”

The Seminole Gulf Railway may provide an opportunity of linking its transportation purpose of hauling materials and its potential influence on new demand for additional warehousing and secondary distribution centers near the line. The industrial properties within the Newtown CRA, such as the properties clustered between 17<sup>th</sup> Street to 21<sup>st</sup> Street west of US 301, along with those just outside of the Newtown CRA boundaries and in the County boundary north of Myrtle Street, may provide an important logistical partnership with the Railway to create additional warehousing and distribution.



*Seminole Gulf Railway looking northbound & southbound*

### Airports

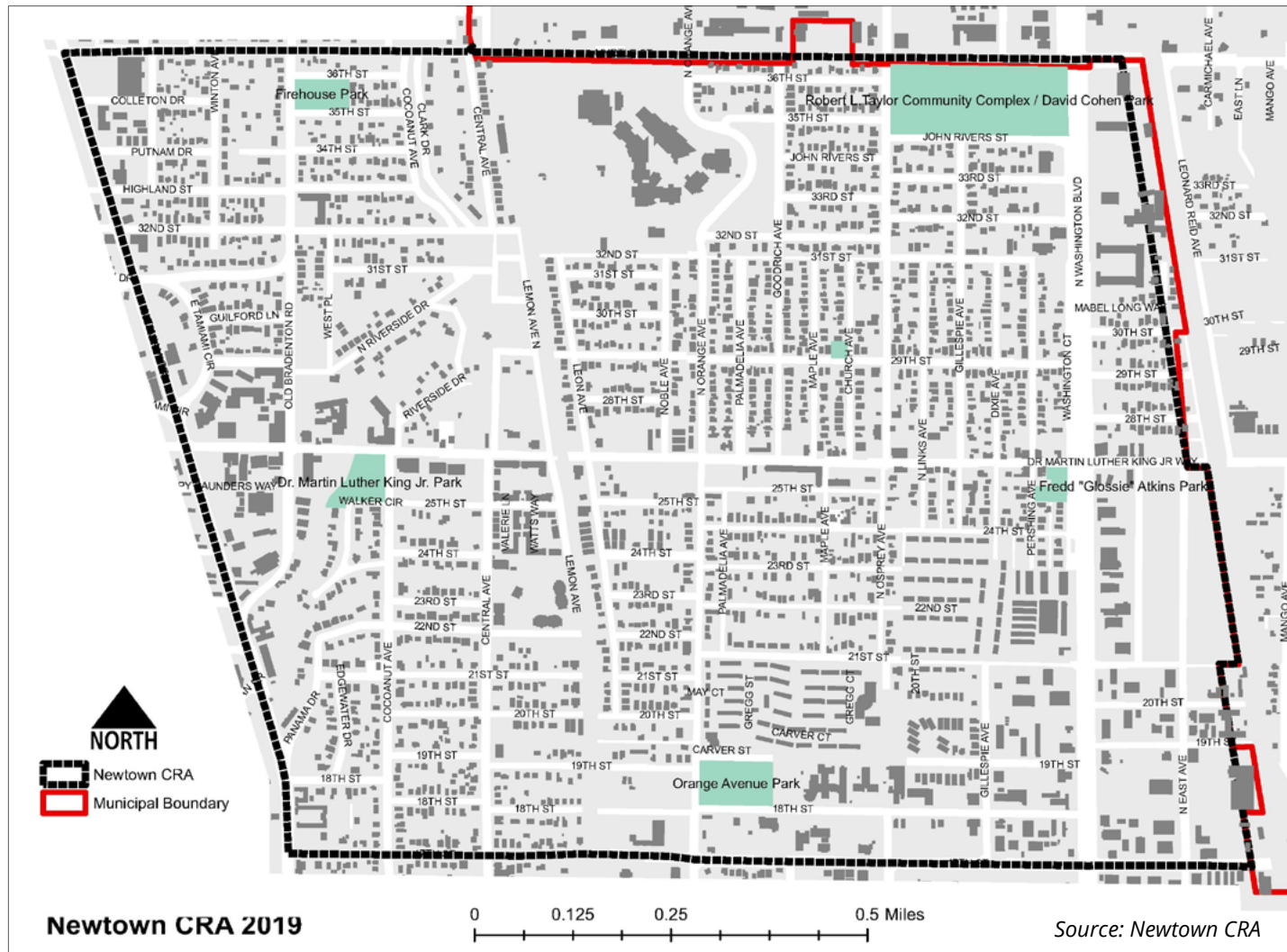
**Sarasota Bradenton International Airport.** The region’s airport, Sarasota Bradenton International Airport (SRQ), is just 2.1 miles (or a six-minute drive) from the Newtown CRA. In 2018, there were 119,560 total aircraft operations (the airborne movement of aircraft), up 16.45% from the previous year and 1.37 million total airline passengers, per Sarasota Bradenton International Airport reporting. Although the airport is located outside of the CRA district, it is an asset for the region.

The importance of the airport is that it is a significant economic development facility not only because it carries many tourists to the area, but it also provides important jobs to the residents of the two counties. As the airport grows and adds additional gates for major airlines, demand for hotel rooms and food and beverage will likewise increase. SRQ has been actively advertising development opportunities on the property, constructing new hotels and has plans for Manatee Technical College, an aircraft manufacturing service center, and an industrial park on SRQ property. SRQ is also exploring commercial development on airport grounds. There are several old car rental buildings on the portion of the property of the City, however redevelopment of this area, as reported by SRQ staff, might run into issues with the tree protection requirements in the City’s zoning code.

## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND

### 2.5 Parks

The Newtown CRA contains several recreational and green spaces area in the district including four parks: Fredd "Glossie" Atkins Park, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park, Orange Avenue Park, and Firehouse Station Park. There is also a newer community complex in the northeast corner of the CRA, the Robert L. Taylor Community Complex along with David Cohen Park. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan analysis shows that within the Newtown CRA there's a park within a 10-minute walk for the residents, the target according to the National Recreation and Park Association and the Urban Land Institute. Additionally Mary Dean Park, while just outside the boundaries of the CRA, also serves the Newtown residents' leisure needs. These facilities are vital to creating a healthy community and good quality of life.





## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND



*Fredd "Glossie" Atkins Park, photo credit: City of Sarasota*

### **Fredd "Glossie" Atkins Park**

- ▶ Located at the southwest corner of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and US 301
- ▶ Size is approximately 0.8 acres
- ▶ Named after Fredd "Glossie" Atkins, the first African-American Sarasota City Commissioner and first African-American Mayor
- ▶ There are picnic tables under fabric shades and seating throughout the park
- ▶ In 2018, the park underwent renovations to remove some structures to make way for new seating and enhanced landscaping
- ▶ There is on-street parking along the adjacent service road
- ▶ The Parks & Recreation Department has \$21,000 in proposed funding for improvements to the park in FY 2023



*Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park*

### **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park (MLK Park)**

- ▶ Located along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way near US 41 across from Ringling College
- ▶ Size is approximately 2.1 acres
- ▶ Dedicated to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
- ▶ The park has 3 small shelters with picnic tables and grills. There is a public building with a kitchen, electrical outlets, a paved brick performing circle and restrooms
- ▶ Adjacent to Ringling College provides an important open space for students
- ▶ Small parking lot on-site with overflow parking across the street
- ▶ The Parks & Recreation Department has \$225,000 in proposed funding for improvements to the park in FY 2021



## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND



Orange Avenue Park, photo credit: City of Sarasota

### Orange Avenue Park

- ▶ Located at the intersection of Orange Avenue and 18th Street
- ▶ Size is approximately 3.2 acres
- ▶ There are picnic tables, a basketball court, a playground, swing-set, and benches
- ▶ The park serves a large area of the Newtown community particularly in the southeastern quadrant
- ▶ No dedicated parking, but Sarasota Housing Authority parking is nearby
- ▶ The Parks & Recreation Department has \$150,000 in proposed funding for improvements to the park in FY 2022



Firehouse Park, photo credit: City of Sarasota

### Firehouse Park

- ▶ Located along Old Bradenton Road near Myrtle Street
- ▶ Size is approximately 1.6 acres
- ▶ Has a fun “Firefighter” inspired design
- ▶ There is a playground, swing-set, picnic tables & grill and leashed pets are allowed
- ▶ The park serves a large area of the Newtown community particularly in the northwest quadrant
- ▶ No dedicated parking, however gated parking lot for adjacent fire station nearby
- ▶ The Parks & Recreation Department has \$36,000 in proposed funding for improvements to the park in FY 2022



Robert L. Taylor Community Complex, photo credit: Robert L. Taylor Community Complex

### Robert L. Taylor Community Complex & David Cohen Park

Located on the southwest corner of US 301 and Myrtle Street, the 13-acre campus houses a 44,000 square-foot, state-of-the-art facility with a fitness center, gymnasium, game room, computer lab, family pool, and much more. The outdoor park space makes the complex complete and features a fitness trail, picnic shelters, lit basketball court, covered playgrounds and will soon host Sarasota’s only public turf multi-sport field. In 2011, a massive \$10 million, extensive transformation project, from a 5,000 sq. ft. building to a 44,000 sq. ft. interactive campus was completed.

The Parks & Recreation Department has \$650,000 in proposed funding for improvements to the park in FY 2025.

## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND

---

### 2.6 Cultural Facilities

In addition to parks and greenspace, cultural facilities play an important role in creating a positive quality of life for residents. In the Knight Foundation's Community Ties Report released in 2020, people who say their neighborhood has easy access to quality arts and cultural activities tend to be more satisfied, identify more with local lifestyle and culture, and invest more of their time and resources in their communities. Art is also a powerful tool in redeveloping communities:

- ▶ Art institutions have a unique role in telling our stories, reflecting our cultures, and helping us understand the world around us. And to remain relevant, they must adapt to the way people participate in culture today. The arts bring people together and create community, fostering ideas, participation, and inclusionary societies.
- ▶ Arts and culture are at the core of a strong community and local economic vitality and can also be incorporated into a Marketing & Events Program strategy. A thriving community must offer stimulating attractions and events that challenge its citizens to participate and contribute to their success.
- ▶ The activities of the arts and culture sector and local economic vitality are connected in many ways. Arts, culture, and creativity can:
  - ▶ Improve a community's competitive edge;
  - ▶ Create a foundation for defining a sense of place and brand;
  - ▶ Attract new and visiting populations;
  - ▶ Integrate the visions of community and business leaders;
  - ▶ Contribute to the development of a skilled workforce.



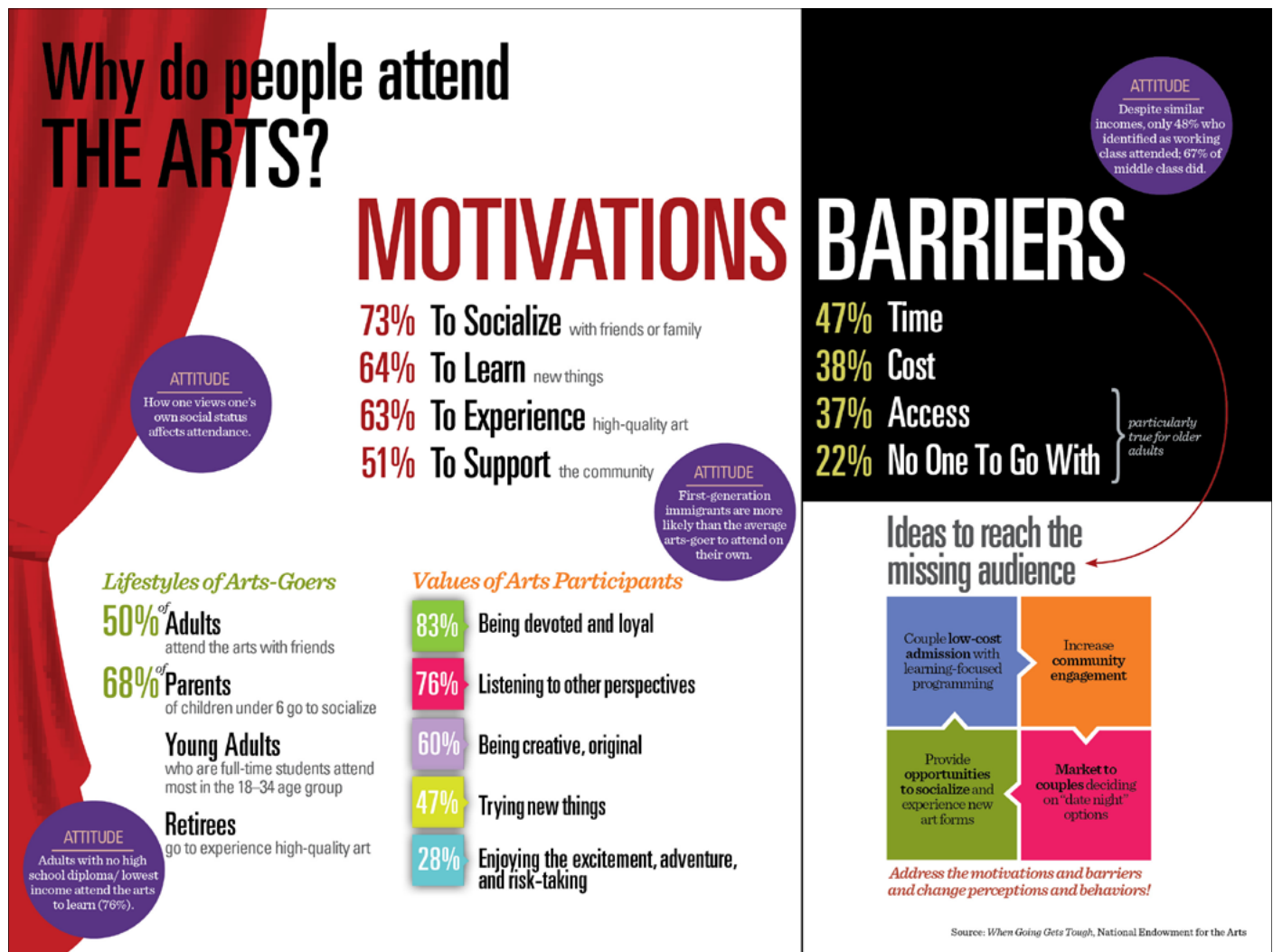
**“The arts have the rare power to bring diverse communities together, provoke personal reflection, and inspire new ways of thinking,” said Victoria Rogers, Knight Foundation Vice President for the arts.**



## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND

In January of 2015, the National Endowment for the Arts revealed new findings about the impact of arts and cultural industries on GDP, as well as how and why Americans participate in certain arts activities. Their findings from three separate reports shows a comprehensive view of a single year in the life of the arts and cultural sector from three different angles: supply, demand, and motivations for consumer behavior. This information can help arts providers, cities and CRA's more effectively understand and develop strategies to engage individuals and communities in the arts.

The following infographics are a summary of the report.



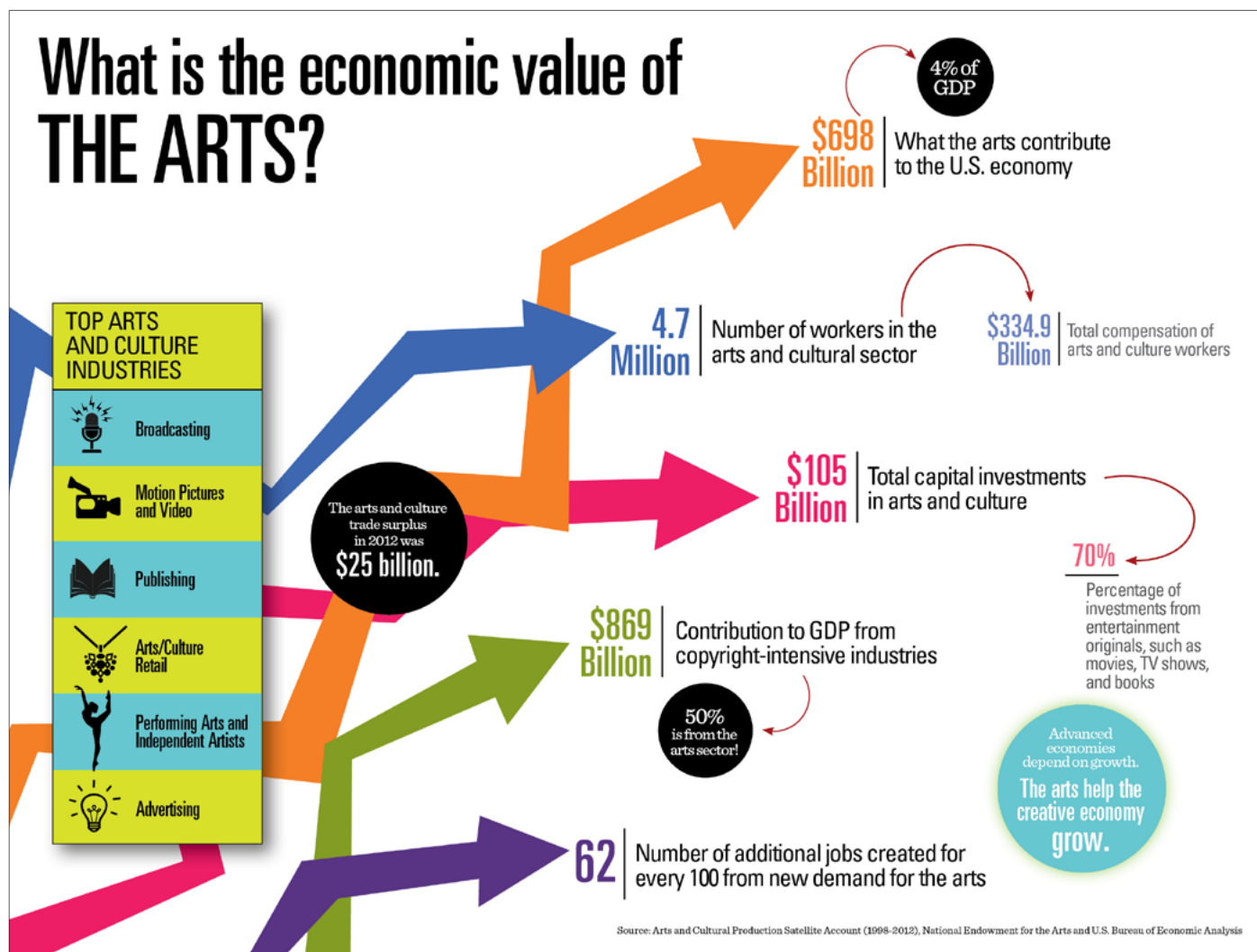
## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND

### Economic Impact of Event-Related Audience Spending

"The arts, unlike most industries, leverage significant amounts of event-related spending by their audiences. For example, part of the arts experience may include dining out, paying for parking, shopping in local retail stores, enjoying dessert after the show, and returning home to pay the babysitter. Based on the 212,691 audience-intercept surveys conducted for this study, the typical arts attendee spends \$31.47 per person, per event, beyond the cost of admission. Nationally, total event-related spending was an estimated \$102.5 billion during 2015. This spending supported 2.3 million jobs, provided \$46.6 billion in household income, and generated \$15.7 billion in total government revenue."

Americans for the Arts – Arts & Economic Prosperity 5 is the fifth study of the nonprofit arts and culture industry's impact on the economy. AEP5 is the most comprehensive economic impact study of the nonprofit arts and culture industry ever conducted.

The report includes the following data:





## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND

### 2.7 Infrastructure Conditions

According to the City's Engineering Department, there have been recent upgrades to water and sewer lines in the Newtown CRA. There are capacity challenges for US 41, since the lines are not sized for increase in use that may result from redevelopment, but there is sufficient water storage and sufficient sanitary sewer capacity in the North Water Tower. Upgrading the water and sewer lines along US 41 will be done in coordination with the State and County. However, as recommended in this Newtown CRA Plan of 2021, a US 41 Master Plan would be best to be started in the next 5 years. There are no drainage districts providing storm water storage services for US 41 watershed, however the Newtown CRA may need a drainage district to address watershed of new development. The City of Sarasota has an Interlocal agreement with Sarasota County to maintain all storm water systems located in the City of Sarasota. The only known County capital improvement project in Newtown at the time this Plan was drafted, is the Myrtle Street project that is described in [Section 2.4](#).

The City's Public Works Department oversees infrastructure maintenance and solid waste services. There is a challenge in Newtown concerning illegal dumping and the solid waste department assists in cleaning up the dumping of items such as tires, refrigerators, and furniture left on vacant lots and on the right-of-way of City streets. In Newtown, the City is scheduled to add more pedestrian lighting to the public streets. The City also recently completed a water main replacement along Orange Avenue between Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and 19<sup>th</sup> Street. The following are current Public Works Department and Utility Department Capital Improvement Projects for Fiscal Years 2020-2024 or 2020-2030 located in the Newtown CRA. For more information and details about the City's Five-Year Capital Improvements Plan (Fiscal Years 2020-2024), the plan can be found at: <https://en.calameo.com/read/004102509ea1825b1ddd2>.

#### Public Works Department Capital Projects

The following is a list of current capital projects in the Newtown CRA being planned by the City's Public Works Department. The City's capital improvement project list is updated annually based on fiscal priorities and City Commission direction. The items listed below are current as of June 2020 but may change in future years.

- ▶ **Myrtle Street - Osprey to US 41**  
This Phase 2C of Myrtle Street improvements includes design and construction of closed drainage, lighting and sidewalk on south side. This Project will be managed by Sarasota County.
- ▶ **Intersection Improvements - ADA Ramps and Pedestrian Signals**  
This project includes installation of ADA Accessible ramps and pedestrian signals at various locations within the City as needed.
- ▶ **Intersection Lighting to Meet FDOT Requirements**  
This project includes intersections improvements to implement full ADA/Pedestrian standards lighting at various locations within the CRA area.
- ▶ **Traffic Signal Rebuilds**  
This project includes upgrades of traffic signals to meet current standards for pedestrian and ADA compliance. The following intersections are programmed for this rebuild/upgrade: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Way and Old Bradenton Road.
- ▶ **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Way Pedestrian Crossing @ Cocoanut Ave.**  
This project will include the installation of a pedestrian crosswalk, buttons and signals on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Way and Cocoanut Ave.
- ▶ **US 41 and Myrtle Street Roundabout**  
This project includes replacing the existing traffic signal with a multi-lane roundabout at US 41 and Myrtle St. with landscaping and improved pedestrian and transit facilities. See Section 2.4.1 of this Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 for more information.
- ▶ **US 41 and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Way Roundabout**  
This project includes replacing the existing traffic signal with a multi-lane roundabout at US 41 and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Way with landscaping and improved pedestrian and transit facilities. See [Section 2.4.1](#) of this Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 for more information.

## SECTION 2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS & BACKGROUND

---

### ▶ **Fredd “Glossie” Atkins Park Improvements - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way**

This project includes enhancements to the existing parking to stimulate business and economic development and connectivity with surrounding businesses.

### ▶ **US 41/Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way Roundabout**

The project at the US 41 and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way Intersection includes relocating the 12” Gravity Sewer.

### Utilities Department Proposed Capital Improvement Program FY’s 2020-2030, Potable Water System

The following is a list of the Utility Department’s Proposed Capital Improvement projects for the potable water system. As with the capital improvement plan from the City’s Public works Department, utility upgrades are updated annually and City Commission direction. The items listed below are current as of June 2020 but may change in future years.

- ▶ **36th Street 3”AC Water Main Replacement** from Cocoanut Ave. to Old Bradenton Rd.
- ▶ **34th Street 3”AC Water Main Replacement** from Cocoanut Ave. to Old Bradenton Rd.
- ▶ **Highland Street 3”AC Water Main Replacement** from Cocoanut Ave. to Old Bradenton Rd.
- ▶ **Myrtle St. 12 ”WM Extension of the Existing 16” Line** from North Tower along US 41 To Osprey Ave.
- ▶ **US41 North AC WM Replacement** from 14<sup>th</sup> Street to University Pkwy; also accommodates Roundabouts at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way & Myrtle St.

### Utilities Department Proposed Capital Improvement Program FY’s 2020-2030, Wastewater System

- ▶ **The US 41/Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way Roundabout project** at the intersection of US 41 and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Includes relocating the 12” Gravity Sewer
- ▶ **The 17<sup>th</sup> Street 16” AC Force Main Along Replacement project** from intersection of Cocoanut Ave. and 17<sup>th</sup> St. along 17<sup>th</sup> under the Railroad to Orange Ave.

### Infrastructure Summary Needs Assessment

The City is slowly rebuilding the infrastructure of the Newtown CRA and each year evaluates its five-year capital improvement program needs for the area. As redevelopment begins to accelerate, infrastructure needs will increase, which will require assistance from the City, and possibly the County, to fund new facilities.

- ▶ Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way’s infrastructure needs to accommodate the demand for utility services, including water, sewer, stormwater, trees, streetlights, and other infrastructure
- ▶ Any future projects like the US 41 North Trail and US 301, would require a utility needs assessment as part of the master plan for the redevelopment of those major roadways
- ▶ Rebuilding US 41’s infrastructure from the northern City limits to the downtown will require major funding and a new revenue vehicle. The inclusion of a new Tax Increment District for the Bay redevelopment project, is a large step forward to being able to fund road improvements, utilities, and other infrastructure
- ▶ To rebuild US 301’s infrastructure from the southern limit at Mound Street to the northern limit at Myrtle Street, will require first a new plan for the future of the roadway and a new funding source
- ▶ The City already has a water main extension on Myrtle Street in the works, however infrastructure needs may increase in the future and may need to be reevaluated
- ▶ It is suggested the City work with a consultant to conduct a two-phased process to install lighting in residential neighborhoods throughout Newtown: 1) conduct a photometric assessment of lighting in residential neighborhoods and 2) develop a master plan of lights to meet the photometric needs identified throughout the area. Work closely with FPL to assess installation options associated with FPL-owned lights and City-owned lights.

## SECTION 3.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES & PROGRAMS

---

### 3.1 General Overview

Economic Development initiatives are the major emphasis of this Newtown CRA Plan of 2021, since a great deal of work has to be accomplished over the next 26 years to redevelop the Newtown CRA. The community indicated in interviews, meetings, and the online survey that job creation and establishing retail, entertainment, and neighborhood service businesses in Newtown is important to the revitalization of the area. The Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 focuses on economic development initiatives to accomplish its goal of enhancing the quality of life of its residents through improving physical spaces, business growth, and bringing new housing stock to the area. Below are economic development initiatives for the CRA to accomplish in the next 26 years.

### 3.2 Recommendations for Existing CRA Programs and Projects

There are many existing CRA programs and projects that are working to provide economic development opportunities for residents and businesses. These programs should continue.

#### ► **Community Entrepreneurial Opportunity (CEO) Program**

**Overview:** This program is a 10-week business development course; Sarasota Career Source provides the business training services free-of-charge twice a year for Sarasota and Manatee Counties.

**Recommendation:** The CRA may want to work with CareerSource to create a “Phase 2” to the CEO program that connects the graduates to small business funding through Financial Access Federal Credit Union (MCFCU). The CRA and MCFCU already have a partnership with the Financial Services Program, and that program includes a loan fund for entrepreneurs (Building Bridges for Entrepreneurs). Also, the CRA could utilize Career Source’s four designated target industries of Technology, Construction, Manufacturing, and Healthcare, along with CleanTech (a County targeted industry), to provide apprenticeship and mentorship opportunities to Newtown residents that graduate from the program. The CRA should highlight program success stories in newsletters, email blasts, social media, and other communications. It is recommended that the CRA, develop and revise additional programs as needed to increase entrepreneurship in Newtown.

#### ► **Newtown Job Training Program**

**Overview:** The Newtown Job Training Program was created to enhance residents’ skill set in plumbing, electrical, mechanical, and technical trades. The HVAC job training program has been implemented and eight participants were in the first class in 2019.

**Recommendation:** As a way to enhance participation in the job training program, the Newtown CRA could diversify training programs that are offered to residents. Healthcare and Technology were two of the top industries residents were interested in receiving training.

#### ► **Miss Susie's Kitchen and Culinary Arts**

**Overview:** To increase the number of food service options available along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, the CRA should continue their project, Miss Susie’s, to re-create an iconic Newtown-based restaurant at 1741 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Way to act as a training ground for Newtown residents to develop restaurant-industry skills and experience.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended to work with area colleges or local business to complete Miss Susie’s Kitchen, particularly if affiliated with culinary arts or hospitality programs, restaurateurs, food production, or food service and to include a commercial kitchen component so that residents that may want to start a food service business can get their start at Miss Susie’s. The CRA could rent out the space during the restaurant’s non-operational hours to food businesses that need a commercial kitchen to expand their capacity. A program manager for this endeavor is recommended to be hired and could offer training in conjunction with the CEO Program to educate the community on how to start a food service business.



## SECTION 3.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES & PROGRAMS

---

### ► Newtown Business Assistance Grant Program

**Overview:** This program was established to assist with rehabilitation of new and existing businesses along commercial corridors in Newtown.

**Recommendation:** The CRA could increase the promotion of the grant to alumni of the CEO Program and Career Source's existing database.

### ► Janie's Marketplace Commercial Space

**Overview:** This program includes efforts to attract businesses to the commercial space at Janie's Garden.

**Recommendation:** The CRA may want to consider completing vanilla box improvements (HVAC, lights, walls, and ceilings) for a local resident business owner, potentially one that completes the CEO Program, and subsidizing rent for one year.

### ► North Trail Economic Development Plan

**Overview:** Although US 41 is not within the district, the properties along the western CRA Boundary are located on US 41 (North Trail). The CRA should continue its effort to develop the North Trail Economic Development Plan for the area as it is the main corridor from the Airport to the Bay cultural area.

**Recommendation:** The North Trail Plan should strive to coalesce with the adopted CRA Plan, including consideration of coordinated infrastructure improvements and zoning amendments when appropriate. Additional consideration may be needed for the North Trail Plan if the area west of the US 41 corridor is included in an expanded CRA boundary at a future date.

### ► Banking Services and Banking Facility

**Overview:** The CRA has entered into an agreement with Financial Access Federal Credit Union (FAFCU) to provide banking services for Newtown residents, as well as offer financial education workshops. Ultimately the CRA would like the bank to have a brick-and-mortar location in Newtown. The services offered by FAFCU address a number of needs in the community and include the following notable programs:

#### ► Reliable Ride Program

This program assists citizens within the community who ordinarily would not qualify for a traditional car loan without exceedingly high interest rates. The CRA could host literacy workshops.

#### ► Building Bridges for Entrepreneurs

The purpose of this loan fund is to grow businesses, increase profits, increase employment, and increase economic impact and eliminate poverty especially in economically challenged communities. This program seeks to provide small business loans, lines of credit, and other programs to Newtown businesses and entrepreneurs that qualify.

**Recommendation:** The CRA could reach out to additional local banks and non-profits to host financial literacy workshops on credit, managing personal finances, and how to accumulate wealth through investments, as well as provide loan funds for car buying, small businesses, and entrepreneurs. In addition, the CRA could consider the following programs and projects:

#### ► Banking Facility

Since major banks are rethinking the use of branch banking systems, contacting local credit unions or community banks to gauge their interest in establishing a branch may be more successful. The bank location could be within a mixed-use development fronting Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and containing adequate parking for customers and employees. If a drive through is required, a more challenging requirement in an urban context, a solution may be to establish access to an ATM banking machine that provides the functions of cash withdrawals and cash/check deposits. This Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 suggests the acquisition site of the vacant gas station at 1909 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Janie's Garden storefront, or future mixed-use development on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way as an opportunity for a banking facility.

## SECTION 3.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES & PROGRAMS

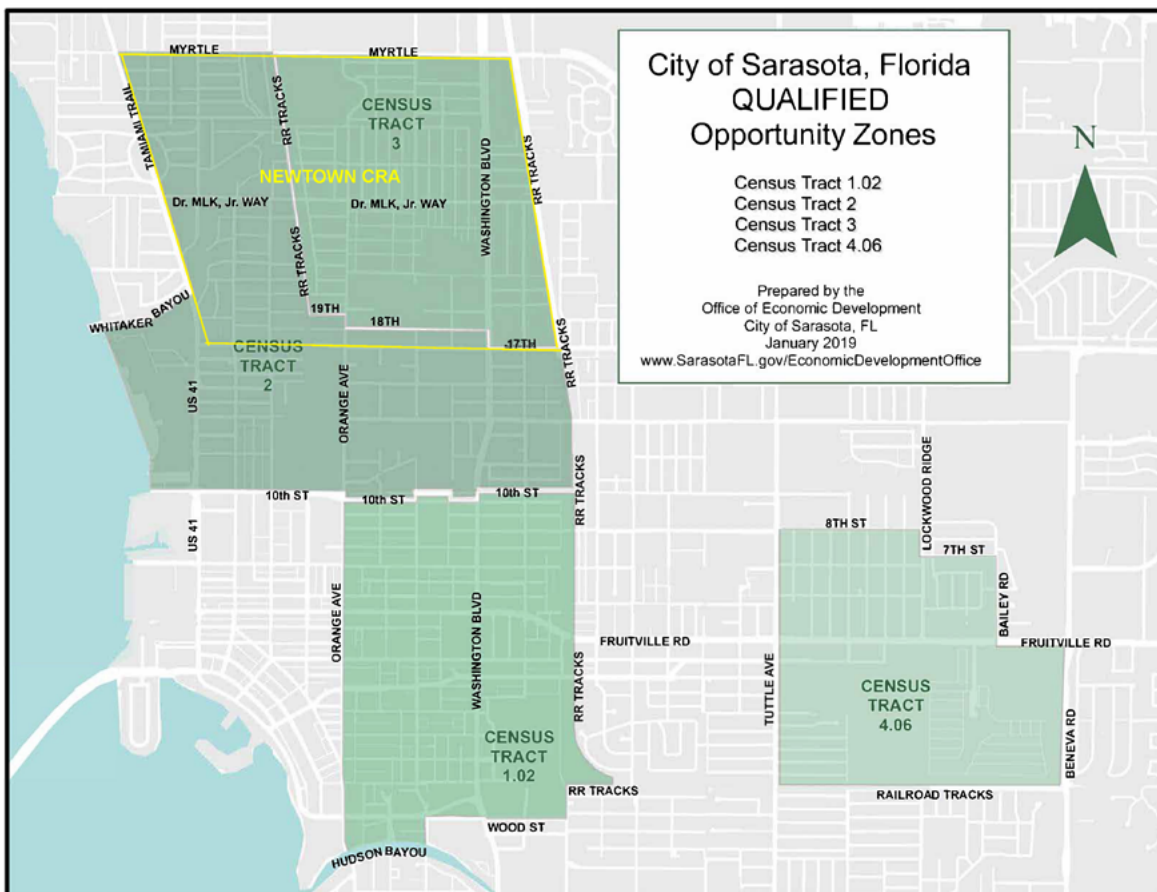
### ► Financing for Sustainability Initiatives

The CRA could recruit financial institutions to the Newtown CRA area to provide financing options for residential and commercial energy and water efficiency, renewable energy and water quality projects. Financing products could be made available for a wide variety of socio-economic levels and credit backgrounds. The CRA could work with Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD) and other partners to educate community members on the options available for grants and financing for home improvement projects. A goal of powering 10% of Newtown households with renewable energy should be pursued.

### ► Opportunity Zone Redevelopment

**Overview:** The Federal Government passed legislation in 2017 to create opportunity zones as an incentive for the private sector to invest in blighted areas. The State of Florida adopted maps for each City and County in the state within which the tax incentives would apply. Generally, the tax incentives reduce the tax rate of capital gains depending on the length of time the funds are invested in an opportunity zone project or are reinvested after the project is complete and are invested in another opportunity zone project. The investor/developer may not be required to pay any capital gains if the entity leaves its funds in an opportunity zone for ten years. The yield on the investment would increase with the added benefit of paying reduced capital gains taxes or none at all. For the Newtown CRA, the entire district falls within an approved Opportunity Zone and therefore qualifies as an area for enhanced investment yields.

**Recommendation:** Because of the current market conditions of the Newtown CRA, the program may need more time for it to become an attractive area for opportunity zone capital investment. If the Marian Anderson site were to be successfully developed as a mixed-use project, it would certainly qualify for the incentive. Other vacant sites in the CRA would likewise qualify, such as a project assembled on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way for a housing development. Any new Opportunity Zone development should include community outreach to vet the proposed project.



## SECTION 3.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES & PROGRAMS

### ► Land Acquisition

Every successful CRA acquires land in order to assemble sites for redevelopment for retail, housing, education, mixed-use or other needs. This Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 recommends acquiring property for redevelopment purposes including a few highly blighted structures that need demolition or rehabilitation in order to preserve and maintain the historic character of Newtown. Furthermore, the CRA should consider the acquisition and aggregation of properties for a significant, transformative project such as multi-family housing. The group of recommended acquisitions fall into three time-frame categories: 1) immediate, one to five years, 2) mid-term, five to fifteen years, and 3) long-term, fifteen to twenty years. The most important acquisitions should occur on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) Way so that its redevelopment contributes quickly to improve the appearance and economics of the main corridor. The CRA shall implement their Relocation Policy for any relocation needed of housing and/or persons for the acquisition of parcels.

### ► Short-Term Acquisitions (One to Five Years)

The following properties are recommended by the Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 for immediate acquisition in order to eliminate severe blight by demolition or adaptive reuse; however, the properties offer an excellent opportunity for economic development, for example as a location for a new small business to operate. Property owners may not be amenable to selling their properties, so if a purchase is not possible then the CRA can work with the owners and entice them to participate in the CRA's property renovation programs and implement adaptive reuse.

#### 2518 Links Avenue



**Stats:** 822 sf. single-family building, 5,000 sf. lot, 2019 Assessed value of \$23,931

**Observations and Recommendations:** Severely blighted, demolition action required, coordinate with the Office of Housing for a new single-family home to be constructed



## SECTION 3.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES & PROGRAMS

### 1901 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way



**Stats:** 1,861 sf vacant gas station, 6,890 sf lot, 2019 Assessed value of \$89,700

**Observations and Recommendations:** Study for adaptive reuse for food and beverage provider, art gallery and studio, community bank. Explore acquisition or ways to support existing owner with adaptive reuse.

## SECTION 3.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES & PROGRAMS

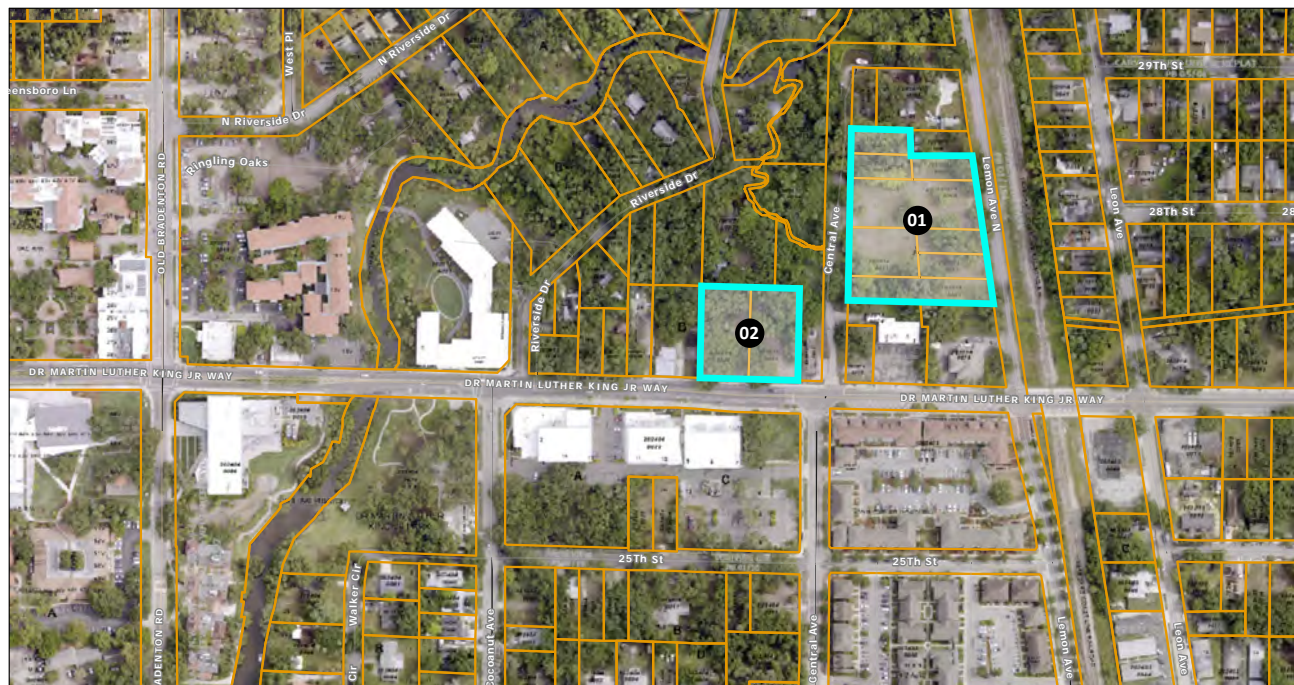
### ► Mid-Term Acquisitions (Five to fifteen years)

The following property types are recommended by the CRA for mid-term acquisition.

- Acquire sites along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way that have uses incompatible with creating pedestrian friendly environment or perpetuate nuisance issues
- Under the Comprehensive Plan these sites are limited to 25 dwelling units per acre
- Acquire properties fronting on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and parcels between Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and the next street in order to aggregate a site sufficiently large to joint venture with the Sarasota Housing Authority to construct a tax credit funded housing project that is tailored for artists and other related to the art industry such as teachers and students. A more complete discussion of this initiative can be found in Section 5, Housing. The property location will be key: locate on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and be located as close to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park as possible. Some of the opportunity sites for acquisition are included below:

### Acquisition Opportunity Site 1

Sarasota County Property Appraiser

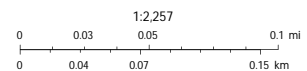


11/18/2019, 11:48:24 AM

Parcel Private Public

#### LEGEND

01	OWNER:	PRIVATE (SINGLE OWNER) (BETHLEHEM BAPTIST CHURCH)
	CURRENT USE:	0000 - RESIDENTIAL VACANT SITE
	CURRENT ZONING:	RMFI - RESIDENTIAL, MULTI FAMILY
	GROSS LAND AREA:	2.0 ACRES (+/-)
02	OWNER:	PRIVATE (SINGLE OWNER)
	CURRENT USE:	1000 - VACANT COMMERCIAL LAND AND 0000 - RESIDENTIAL VACANT SITE
	CURRENT ZONING:	CBN - COMMERCIAL BUSINESS NEWTOWN
	GROSS LAND AREA:	0.8 ACRES (+/-)



Map created by the Sarasota County Property Appraiser  
Created by the Sarasota County Property Appraiser

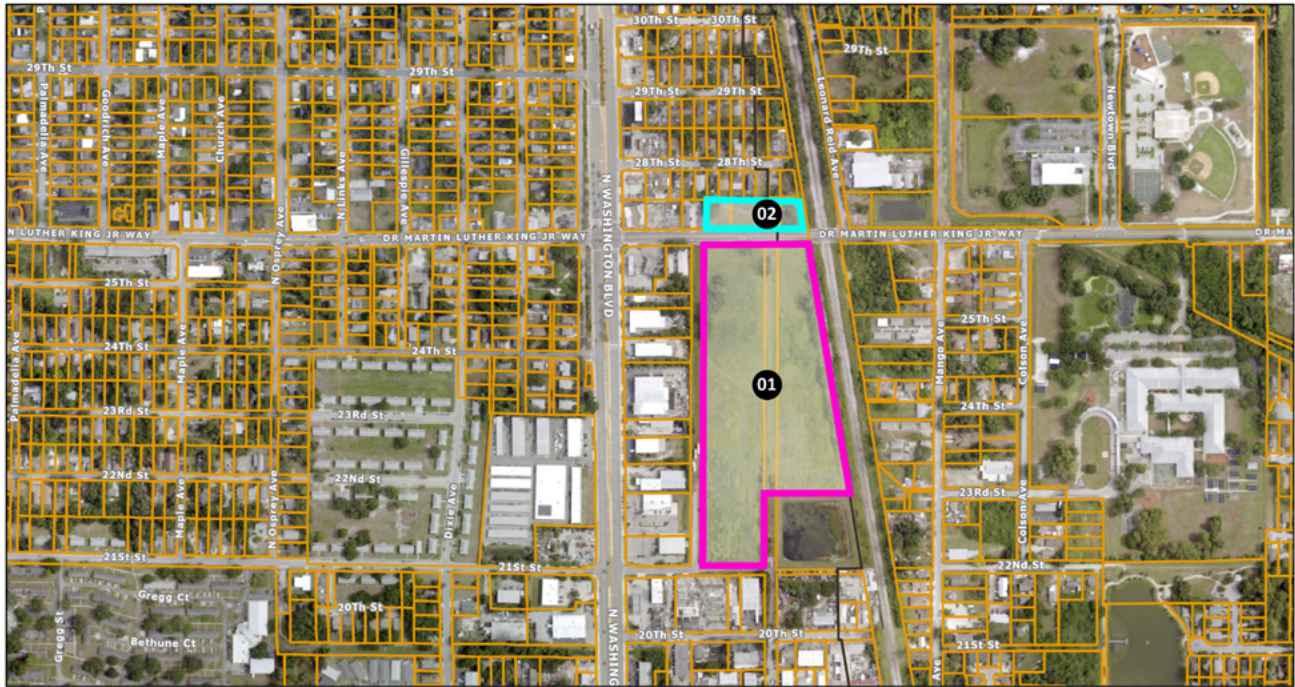






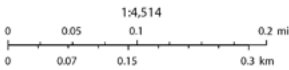
Acquisition Opportunity Site 3

Sarasota County Property Appraiser



11/18/2019, 1:34:05 PM, REVISED SEPTEMBER 2020  
Parcel Private Public

- LEGEND**
- 01** OWNER: PUBLIC (SINGLE OWNER)  
(CITY OF SARASOTA)(MARIAN ANDERSON SITE)  
CURRENT USE: 9600 - SOLID WASTE (FUTURE LAND USE COMMUNITY/COMMERCIAL)  
CURRENT ZONING: CRD - COMMERCIAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT  
GROSS LAND AREA: 13.1 ACRES (+/-)
- 02** OWNER: PRIVATE (MULTIPLE OWNER)  
CURRENT USE: 1000 - VACANT COMMERCIAL LAND  
CURRENT ZONING: CGD - COMMERCIAL GENERAL DISTRICT  
GROSS LAND AREA: 1.0 ACRES (+/-)



Map created by the Sarasota County Property Appraiser  
Created by the Sarasota County Property Appraiser

## SECTION 3.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES & PROGRAMS

### ► Long-Term Acquisitions (fifteen to twenty years)

The following properties are recommended by the CRA for long term acquisition in order to assist in providing opportunities for development and attracting new businesses. The acquisitions will require significant funds and time is required to save sufficient capital for acquisition.

#### ► US 301 Assemblage.

The properties listed below are located along US 301 (Washington Boulevard), west of the Marian Anderson site. Having US 301 frontage with its traffic count of 45,500 AADT (see [Section 2.4](#)) for the Marian Anderson site would be beneficial and more attractive for the development of the site as it would provide access from a major thoroughfare. Additionally, having less automotive intensive uses along the corridor can help change perception of the area from somewhere to go through to somewhere to go to.

**US 301 & Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way**



*View looking southeast of US 301 and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way*



## SECTION 3.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES & PROGRAMS



Number	1	2	3
Address	2530 WASHINGTON BLVD	2512 WASHINGTON BLVD	2418 WASHINGTON BLVD
Owner	UNIVERSAL ENTERPRISES OF SARASOTA LLC	B & E BROTHERS LLC	2418 N WASHINGTON ASSOCIATES LLC
2019 Value (Assessed)	\$738,000	\$246,900	\$587,400
Building Gross SF	3,914	1,754	9,880
Land Area (SF)	32,377	16,770	33,426
Business	Sunoco	Cutt City, B&B-N-MOM Soul Food, Beer- Beverage	Good Deal Auto Center

### ► Tax Deed Acquisitions and Sarasota County Escheat Foreclosures

Acquiring commercial or unoccupied residential properties in the CRA through tax deed acquisitions and through the County's foreclosures on property in significant arrears in back taxes is an inexpensive method of building an inventory of redevelopment property. Acquiring property from the County will require an ownership transfer from the County to the City and then to the CRA. Many properties may be single-family lots and blighted homes, which the CRA can use in partnership with either the City's Office of Housing and Community Development, the Sarasota Housing Authority, or Habitat for Humanity to build infill housing.

The sites could become future new homes for Newtown CRA residents or could be added to aggregated property being considered for redevelopment.



## SECTION 3.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES & PROGRAMS

### 3.3 Recommended New CRA Programs and Projects

It is recommended that additional programs be implemented to develop vacant land within the CRA, bring new businesses to the district, and provide employment opportunities to residents.

#### Public-Private Partnerships (P3)

The National Council for Public-Private Partnerships (NCP3P) defines a public-private partnership as “a contractual agreement between a public agency (federal, state, or local) and a private sector entity. Through this agreement, the skills and assets of each sector (public and private) are shared in delivering a service or facility for the use of the general public. In addition to the sharing of resources, each party shares in the risks and rewards potential in the delivery of the service and/or facility.” It is recommended the CRA engage in Public-Private Partnerships (P3) to develop sites in the district and bring economic vitality back to the community. Below are recommendations to create an environment conducive to public-private partnerships.

#### Recommendations for CRA:

- ▶ Create an opportunity sites brochure of CRA and City owned land or underutilized buildings for potential retail and mixed-use Public Private Partnerships (P3s)
- ▶ Collaborate with stakeholders in the community that own land and encourage them to enhance the community by bringing developers or tenants that can provide additional services (i.e. housing, restaurants, stores, daycare) to residents
- ▶ Work with the City to establish a streamlined process for interested residents and investors who want to open businesses
- ▶ Proactively research real estate trends and contact developers. Identify potential investors that would be a good fit for Newtown
- ▶ Pursue a Public-Private Partnership (P3) to construct a mixed-use development to include retail, food & beverage, market rate and artists housing on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way
- ▶ Explore a Public-Private Partnership (P3) to construct a mixed-use development or commercial development like a grocery store along US 301 assemblage sites
- ▶ Consider providing a share of the tax increment generated by a project with the developer or owner
- ▶ Consider requiring site-specific Community Benefit Agreements for P3's with input from community stakeholders



#### Targeted Industries

CareerSource Suncoast has identified targeted job classifications which include healthcare, technology, construction, manufacturing, and hospitality industries. Additionally, the Sarasota County Economic Development Corporation has also identified the fastest growing industries including InfoTech, Financial/Professional Services, Corporate Headquarters, Life Sciences, CleanTech, and Manufacturing. New job training programs may be targeted for these industries and partners with ties to training programs in these fields could be pursued, especially with the Airport. Below are recommendations for some of these industries.

#### Construction

The CRA already has a few construction related programs to train residents in a particular discipline and it is recommended those programs continue. With the rate of construction in Sarasota, it is recommended to partner with local technical colleges, job placement organizations like CareerSource, construction related organizations like Habitat for Humanity and Association of General Contractors, the Office of Housing and Community Development, and area businesses to bring a new general contracting training program for home renovations or rehabilitation with on-the-job training at single-family homes in Newtown like the one located at 2518 Links Avenue ([see section 3.2](#)).

## SECTION 3.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES & PROGRAMS

---

### ► **Green Jobs/CleanTech**

The City of Sarasota is committed to environmental sustainability and approved the Roadmap to 100 Report to transition to 100% renewable energy City-wide. To accomplish City-wide sustainability goals, strong workforce training programs will need to be developed. The CRA may benefit by partnering with technical colleges, job placement organizations like Goodwill Job Connection, green building related organizations like Florida Green Building Coalition, and green building businesses in the area to bring new programs related to the sustainability industry to Newtown like solar panel installation, environmental consulting services, and energy assessments.

### ► **Healthcare**

According to the CareerSource Suncoast, the healthcare industry is the largest employer. Additionally, the Sarasota Memorial Hospital opened a clinic in the Newtown community in 2017, and the Multicultural Health Institute operates in the Goodwill building as well. The CRA could partner with area colleges, job placement organizations, and the nearby healthcare organizations to bring new programs related to the healthcare industry to Newtown.

### ► **Early Childhood Education**

The Newtown CRA has several low or no-cost early childhood education programs that prefer to hire within the community and need more qualified staff with required certifications. The CRA could partner with area colleges and job placement organizations to provide this early childhood education certification for residents and provide certification classes in Newtown.

### ► **Technology**

Relationships with Sarasota Memorial Healthcare and area colleges could be built to educate residents on how technology is used in art and healthcare. This could be executed through various training series, internship programs, and interactive community demonstrations.

### **Coworking/Incubator**

It is recommended for the CRA to bring a coworking/incubator space to Newtown, preferably along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way either in Janie's Garden, a new development, or acquisition site. Coworking spaces are an inexpensive way to provide office amenities without incurring prohibitive overhead costs for new small businesses. The CRA can find a space for the operations and solicit a management company or can have staff reach out to existing coworking companies looking to expand so they may locate in Newtown. Including a makers lab in an incubator may also be viable in the community and help promote the arts and culture in the district.

### **Job Placement and Job Fairs**

Helping residents find jobs will decrease the unemployment rate of a community. Given this, the CRA can expand its collaboration with Goodwill's Job Connection, host job fairs at Robert L. Taylor Community Complex, or partner with other agencies to host targeted job fairs. It is recommended to send direct mailers to Newtown residents and increase digital advertisements (i.e. e-newsletters, social media, etc.).

### ► **Job Fair for Employment with Area Major Employers**

Since there are a number of higher education organizations (Ringling College of Art + Design, New College of Florida, University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee, Suncoast Technical College), area hotels, and the Sarasota Bradenton International Airport in close proximity to the Newtown CRA, the CRA can work with these agencies to host a job fair for Newtown residents. Having employment positions nearby will reduce transportation costs for residents and traffic in the area. This job fair can be done in partnership with CareerSource Suncoast or other similar organizations.

### ► **Mini Job Fairs**

The CRA could partner with the City and have mini-job fairs with companies working on City or CRA projects to hire residents. These events can be held in the job site trailers by the companies.

## SECTION 3.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES & PROGRAMS

---

### Business Attraction and Retention

The CRA already has many business assistance programs aimed at attracting new businesses and rehabilitating existing businesses. This section identifies new recommendations to implement over the next 26 years.

#### It is recommended the CRA:

- ▶ Engage with existing business owners to understand the needs of their businesses (need for employees, marketing/promotion of business, etc.)
- ▶ Implement a campaign that highlights the benefits of shopping “local”
- ▶ Create a “business spotlight” program where a different business in Newtown is highlighted every month to create awareness
- ▶ Establish a local participation goal of Newtown residents or businesses for City and CRA projects
- ▶ Host quarterly events with the broker community that highlight vacant land and retail, office and industrial properties in Newtown
- ▶ Organize community businesses and property owners to work together to make Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way a great neighborhood commercial activity street, with mom and pop shops, boutique stores, jazz lounges, traditional food places, arts and crafts stores, and mixed-uses that contain two-story professional offices and co-working spaces as well as third story living units with rooftop access. Diverse activity types will bring positive economic development, which leverages quality of life and more economic development
- ▶ Attract businesses to Newtown that fill the retail gap found in the market analysis like Specialty Food Stores, Shoe Stores, Book/Periodical/Music Stores, Office Supplies, Stationary, and Gift Stores. Also, the CRA could focus on attracting businesses that fill needs of the community for entertainment (like a jazz club), food & beverage (restaurants, coffee shops, grocery store), and culture (i.e. African American art)
- ▶ Create an incentive program to encourage residents to start new commercial businesses (i.e. restaurants, retail, galleries) with brick-and-mortar locations, with the priority along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Grant funding can be provided to help with start-up costs and/or provide funding for rent subsidies over 1-year. Applicants should be required to go through the CEO program or similar program that teaches residents about starting a new business. Since residents may not have upfront funds or collateral, consider the CRA receiving a portion of sales after year one. A 2020 survey by Shopify found small business owners spend an average of \$40,000 in their first full year of business.\* Therefore, it is recommended that the grant amount awarded be \$20,000-\$40,000.
- ▶ Provide administrative assistance to Newtown residents in establishing new businesses. Ideally this would be implemented in conjunction with the CRA’s business programs, the City’s New Business Guide, local financial institutions, Small Business Administration, and other governmental entities related to business development.
- ▶ Initiate an emergency business assistance program in the event of a declared emergency with significant adverse economic impacts.

\*Shopify’s 2020 Cost of Starting a Business, <https://www.shopify.com/blog/cost-to-start-business>



## SECTION 3.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES & PROGRAMS

### Industrial Property Redevelopment

The Newtown CRA has a concentrated pocket of industrial property in its district, mostly located between 17<sup>th</sup> Street and 21<sup>st</sup> Street from US 301 to Gillespie Avenue. The area is an active industrial center and should be encouraged to be maintained and upgraded. Most of the industrial buildings are in poor condition and in need of upgrades. The area is not contributing to enhancing the nearby residential areas with one building in the area qualifying as unblighted. New infrastructure is needed, including dedicated areas for employee parking, upgrading the streets and providing on-street parking. The tenant uses provide valuable services to the City's and County's construction industry, but they can make an effort to improve their buildings and landscaping. A study of the industrial area could be conducted in order to evaluate the area's ability to upgrade the facilities and develop an Industrial Improvement Plan for the area. This area is currently not a candidate for creating industrial arts warehousing within which art galleries and institutions related to the arts become an attraction to the public; but someday the area could be transformed and be a benefit to its neighbors.



*Gillespie Ave Industrial*



## SECTION 4.0 BRANDING, MARKETING, TOURISM & COMMUNICATIONS

### 4.1 General Overview

The Newtown community has many great attributes to justify a strong and exciting marketing strategy with a focus on attracting new businesses, particularly retail and entertainment; preserving and enhancing the existing community; attracting new workforce housing opportunities; and developing a thriving arts district within which artists live, work and play a role in the redevelopment of the Newtown CRA. These attributes include the following: a well-known and respected historic community founded over 100 years ago; a community of residents that provide important work skills to many of the employers in the Sarasota County; a neighborhood containing several important parks and public facilities such as the Robert L. Taylor Community Complex; the location of a respected college of Art and Design; and a strategic location that is situated between the Sarasota Bradenton International Airport and the City's booming downtown. Newtown can be part of, and contribute to, the City's renowned cultural arts facilities. In fact, Newtown has established a cultural heritage tour for visitors from all over to enjoy.

### 4.2 Recommendations for Existing CRA Programs and Projects

There are many existing CRA programs and projects that work to provide cultural offerings and facilities to Newtown residents. It would be valuable to the community for these programs to continue.

#### ► Newtown Cultural Arts & History Center

**Overview:** This project includes the design and construction of a Cultural Arts & History Center showcasing Newtown's history, heritage, and cultural achievements. Currently, the CRA has an agreement with the Sarasota African American Cultural Coalition (SAACC) to support the initial planning for a Newtown Cultural Arts Center in the Newtown CRA Area. This agreement requires SAACC to work with community stakeholders and an Advisory Board to research site locations, conduct conceptual site plans, and develop fundraising strategies for a permanent center.

**Recommendation:** The CRA should continue work to bring Newtown Cultural Arts & History Center to fruition by working with SAACC, local arts organizations and nearby schools to educate and celebrate the history of the community.

#### ► Leonard Reid House

**Overview:** This project includes relocating the Leonard Reid House to Newtown. According to Sarasota History Alive, "the Reid House is a single-family Frame Vernacular residence that was completed in 1926. The house is historically significant for its association with Leonard Reid, who was a highly respected early Sarasota African American pioneer who played an important role in the establishment and settlement of Sarasota's earliest African-American community, Overtown, its religious organization, and in various fraternal organizations in the City." Although this 1,472 square foot house is located in Overtown at 1435 7<sup>th</sup> Street, it has been approved by local elected officials to be moved to Newtown. The current owner wished to develop the site and the preservation of the Leonard Reid House has been expressed as a significant public priority.



*Leonard Reid House, 1435 7th Street, Sarasota, FL*

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that this house, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, be moved to the corner of the City-owned property at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and Orange Ave. Placing a historic home at this central location to serve as a historical and cultural center, restaurant, entertainment venue, or other commercial use can illustrate the CRA's commitment to historic preservation while also encouraging economic development along the corridor.

## SECTION 4.0 BRANDING, MARKETING, TOURISM & COMMUNICATIONS

---

### ► Newtown Farmers Market

**Overview:** The CRA along with Newtown Nation has successfully conducted a farmers market on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way. This market could be enhanced with the opportunity to include a maker's market/mini maker fair (incubating small local businesses and supporting the growing maker economy - <https://makerfaire.com/maker-movement/>). Farmers markets can serve as an incubator for local residents to start a business, for example the sale of homemade food products at farmers market can turn into a brick-and-mortar restaurant.

**Recommendation:** To support incubation at the farmers market, there are several recommendations for the CRA.

- A special events fund could be established to assist in covering the cost of vendor operations at the Newtown Farmer's Market. The CRA could also subsidize or waive the vendor's fee for vendors that have participated in the CEO Program
- To attract new vendors, the CRA could target residents with existing gardens that grow their own vegetables and fruits to see if they would like to participate or contribute to the farmers market
- Once Miss Susie's Commercial Kitchen is open, the CRA could require that the food vendor business participate at the Newtown Farmer's Market once a month and include the vendor fee in any kitchen use fees
- The market may want to partner with the local schools and promote the farmers market as not only a place to buy goods but an "outdoor classroom" where students can be exposed to gardening, sales transactions, event management, and other business management activities

### ► Cultural Special Event Program

**Overview:** This program encourages residents to showcase their culture and service to the community. This special events program is a matching grant established to create more events in areas of Sarasota that are under-visited. Two grants have been awarded at a total of \$20,000. An example of an event that has been approved is the Greatness Beyond Measure Teen Summit, which is designed to help teens and young adults realize their maximum potential: academically, socially and artistically.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the CRA partner with local small businesses and educational institutions to raise funding for matching grant that will create events in Newtown. Targeted events could include an arts or business retention focus like a "Arts in the Park" theme that showcases local talent of all ages in music, dance, painting/sculpture, culinary, spoken word, etc. Events that could be executed under the "Arts in the Park" theme are art walks, poetry slams, dance showcases, music festivals, etc. For any event, applicants are encouraged to procure local vendors and artists so that these vendors can grow their business to brick-and-mortar locations.

### ► Newtown Alive Trail

**Overview:** This program promotes Newtown's unique history and creates a clear and defined trail looping around places of interest. It connects to historical landmarks, parks and open spaces, commercial activity, transportation hubs, and educational centers.

**Recommendation:** The CRA would greatly benefit from continued partnership with Newtown Alive and could work with the organization to expand and promote the Newtown Alive Trail. It is also recommended the CRA encourage Newtown Alive to partner with existing businesses to bring special events like a Tour, Dine, and Shop activity.

### ► Newtown Historic District Designation

**Overview:** This effort is to preserve and celebrate history by identifying clearly defined neighborhood character.

**Recommendation:** The CRA should continue working with the Planning Department to establish Newtown as an historic district to preserve and elevate the African American community but could encourage flexibility with restrictions to ensure Newtown residents can participate.



### 4.3 Recommended New CRA Programs and Projects

It is recommended that additional programs and projects be implemented to develop a cultural arts brand for the CRA, bring new businesses to the district, and increase the number of cultural offerings and facilities for residents.

#### ► Newtown Arts District

Focusing on cultural arts branding and opportunities is a proven economic development strategy. To accomplish this, it is recommended the CRA establish a Newtown Arts District. Art generates tangible and intangible benefits, and in the most successful instances, it becomes an integral and beloved part of the community. Enhancing its environment, art enriches residents' lives, instills a sense of civic pride, creates a shared history, connects communities, and provides opportunities for dialogue, engagement, and learning. By promoting cultural participation, public art stimulates cultural industries and the creative economy. The economic impacts benefit residents directly, driving spending to local businesses and creating jobs and opportunities for artists and residents alike.

**Below is a list of recommendations for the CRA to advance a Newtown Arts District:**

- Brand and market Newtown as a special historical and cultural place with a given name such as the Newtown Arts District or the Newtown Arts & Cultural District.
- Feature additional arts related activities and facilities over time including destinations such as a theatre, visual arts venues and installations, and performing arts venues. Newtown includes the well-respected arts college, Ringling College of Art +Design and local talent, therefore has the opportunity to capitalize on this asset as well as other nearby colleges to build a distinguished and exciting cultural arts brand.
- Partner with area arts organizations to bring arts programming to Newtown, possibly during special events

#### ► Cultural & Heritage Tourism

Cultural & Heritage Tourism is an economic driver for cities and destinations like the Newtown Alive Trail present the Newtown CRA an opportunity to capitalize on this economic driver through a variety of activities, including but not limited to the recommendations outlined below:

- Explore opportunities to capitalize on County and State tourism co-op marketing programs, or encourage tourism programs within Newtown to reach out to those entities
- Ensure investment opportunities are included in tourism marketing messages (focus on investment tourism). Investment Tourism is the process of identifying and marketing to visitors traveling to or already within a destination who may be potential investors in economic opportunities – from buying a second home, to opening or relocating a business, to investing in major development or redevelopment projects
- Explore opportunities to partner or collaborate with organizations such as CHAT (Cultural Heritage Alliance for Tourism, <https://chatsouthflorida.com/>)

## SECTION 4.0 BRANDING, MARKETING, TOURISM & COMMUNICATIONS

---

### ► **District Brand Development and Identity & Market Positioning**

The CRA would benefit economically by promoting community identity and brand positioning Newtown's unique assets and opportunities. The following are recommended strategies for the CRA's brand development:

- Develop a logo and campaign strategy, wayfinding, and banner program
- Produce a full marketing campaign that "tells the story" of Newtown's aspirational identity, brand, position and opportunities utilizing the adopted logo, tagline/campaign strategy and brand standards
- Host a brand launch for the community and a banker & broker event
- Develop a banner program for target areas
- Design and install branded light-pole banners in strategic areas that express the "brand message" and highlight the strategic area's unique position
- Design and implement a comprehensive wayfinding signage program, including but not limited to, lighted street name signs, entry and exit wayfinding signs visible at night, lighted public art that serves as wayfinding and district identity
- Review and modify architectural guidelines and update as needed to support the new brand identity
- Identify locations for "district identity" physical landmarks and gateways
- Capitalize on Newtown's history and cultural tours like the Newtown Trail, positioning the district for additional cultural and heritage tourism
- Promote area restaurants and retail with the Newtown Trail

### ► **Communications**

Initiatives to effectively communicate the vision for the district as a vibrant destination for culture, arts, and activities could be implemented to broaden the appeal of living, working, and shopping in Newtown. It is recommended the CRA execute the following strategies to drive their communication efforts:

- Develop a logo and campaign strategy, wayfinding, and banner program
- Update the Communications Newsletter (printed and digital), Social Media and Website to effectively promote the work of the CRA to residents.
- Encourage advocacy of the vision and brand promise. The CRA could hire or assign a dedicated CRA Marketing and Communications Manager or contract with a local marketing and public relations firm to market and promote Newtown's stories, milestones, community events and opportunities.
- Develop an annual strategic marketing plan that identifies goals and objectives for a comprehensive marketing and communications plan supporting the specific redevelopment projects and programs outlined in this plan.
- Launch a comprehensive social media campaign on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube or other social media platforms that may come into existence or trend during the implementation of this Newtown CRA Plan of 2021.
- Update the CRA's website per Florida Statute 189.069 and increase digital presence utilizing the new brand standards guide, keywords and comprehensive messaging strategy.
- Build a resident and visitor database (at events, online, etc.) and continually update for the CRA's e-newsletter (at least monthly is recommended, although weekly is ideal). The content developed for the monthly newsletter can be repurposed for the CRA's quarterly printed newsletters as needed.
- Include a multilingual communications program for outreach and relationship building to the various Newtown CRA's stakeholders and communications outlets, including, but not limited to residents, homeowner associations, neighborhood associations, business owners, tourist attractions and tourists, regional and statewide welcome centers, government leadership, law enforcement offices, real estate owners and developers, bankers and financial institutions, etc.
- Address safety perceptions intentionally as part of the brand repositioning and ensure an effective crisis communications plan is adhered to for safety.

## SECTION 4.0 BRANDING, MARKETING, TOURISM & COMMUNICATIONS

- ▶ Include positive stories in the citizen e-newsletter about solved crimes, police officer's community involvement, City improvements, job opportunities, labor force training, cultural events, etc.
- ▶ Monitor Google Alerts and other third-party websites regularly to respond to negative comments and/or add positive stories/comments about Newtown.

### ▶ **Community Engagement and Collaborations**

Successful redevelopment requires collaboration with other entities that share common goals with the Newtown CRA, including the City, County Tourism, colleges in the area, and local homeowner associations. Programs that could be implemented to spur community engagement and collaborations are outlined below:

#### ▶ **Neighborhood Ambassador Program**

The CRA could create "Cheerleaders for the CRA" and grow a strong database of people interested in the work in the district so that they can share news about what is going on. These volunteers could meet monthly and attend special events on behalf of the CRA to promote what is going on in the CRA. CRA Advisory Board members should be highly encouraged to become a part of this program. An example guide is attached as *Exhibit 1*.

#### ▶ **Quarterly Neighborhood Ambassador Event**

The CRA can work with their ambassadors to host a quarterly event at businesses throughout the CRA to showcase projects and programs that are being implemented. The goal of this would be to get residents involved and take pride in the community and then spread the word about all the work the CRA is conducting.

#### ▶ **Newtown Events**

The CRA could encourage Neighborhood Ambassadors and CRA Advisory Board to participate in neighborhood events on behalf of the CRA like the Collard Green Festival, Christmas activities, and other community events.

### ▶ **Promotional Activities and Events**

The CRA should continue producing events and activities that further the work outlined in this Plan to increase awareness about the area's aspirational brand and position itself to attract new businesses, development and cultural arts venues/installations. The Newtown CRA does not have sufficient monetary resources to redevelop on its own without forming partnerships. The Ringling College of Art +Design is situated within the Newtown CRA, whose front door is on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Although many residents expressed their hesitation to collaborate with the College in community outreach interviews, the Newtown CRA could work to influence Ringling and all area colleges on programs that enhance the CRA, some of which are listed below:

#### ▶ **Community Events**

The CRA has supported community events and celebrations like the Christmas Tree Lighting in Fredd Atkins Park, Collard Green Festival, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day festivities, which are recommended to continue and the CRA may want to bring additional events that promote community pride especially if they encourage participation throughout the district. Examples of unique community events from other communities that promote civic pride include the Sanford Porchfest, Big Picnic Day in Kansas City, and Streets Alive in SWFL. Events should also include economic development efforts during the celebrations like having area mobile food vendors and retail vendors participate to create a client base for their businesses, along with community gardens and other healthy food related businesses. Family-oriented movie nights to accentuate community aspect can also be included. If the CRA has a signature event, then it can be used to educate the community about the work the CRA has done during the year and the projects in the pipeline.



**"Tourism is too important a resource to be left to the tourism professionals. Tourism needs to be part of a community mobilization strategy that can reinvent the role of heritage so that it serves the needs of everyone," said Bob McNulty, President, Partners for Livable Communities<sup>4</sup>**



<sup>4</sup> <http://livable.org/storage/documents/reports/CBC/culturalheritagetourism.pdf>



## SECTION 4.0 BRANDING, MARKETING, TOURISM & COMMUNICATIONS

The CRA may also want to develop additional special event programs that build on the arts and culture brand for the Newtown CRA such as the following recommended programs and events:

► **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way Art Walk**

In the early 2000s Sarasota established a highly successful art walk on US 41 called Season of Sculpture, just south of Gulfstream along Bayshore Drive down to the Selby Gardens, and utilizing a bayfront park to install several dozen large sculptures to create a dynamic experience for art enthusiasts. In fact, the art walk was so successful, the event attracted people into the walk that had never been fans of outdoor art. Art can inspire, entertain and create social interaction. Sarasota currently has a monthly art walk on Palm Avenue every first Friday of the month. The art walk has branded Palm Avenue as a place for art, food, entertainment and socializing.

With the assistance of arts organizations, like the Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County, the CRA could launch an art walk along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Art and murals created by local students attending schools nearby or artists within the Newtown CRA could be highlighted alongside professional artists. The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way Art Walk may eventually encourage gallery entrepreneurs to rent space along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and others to open artistic shops. Research shows consumers often search for undiscovered experience and activities. A consistent opening time, much like Palm Avenue's first Friday would assist in creating economic growth over time. A Newtown Art Walk could be part of a larger arts activities program organized by the non-profit arts organization.

### Art Walk Example



*coralspringstalk and Mural Example, photo credit: Pamela Williams Photography*



*Sculpture example, Sailor Kissing Nurse, Photo credit: Fine Art America*

## SECTION 4.0 BRANDING, MARKETING, TOURISM & COMMUNICATIONS

---

### ▶ **Music Festival**

The suggested brand for Newtown is a place for the arts and music. Including music within the Newtown brand will create an opportunity to acknowledge the legacy and culture of the historic African American community. The CRA could work directly with stakeholders to determine the best event site, establish a budget, work with local organizations like the Sarasota Music Club, and could start out at a small-scale with focus on local musical acts.

### ▶ **Pop-up Retail on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park**

The CRA may want to create a program to encourage local businesses to offer their products with temporal structures on specific days and times. This should be regulated and programmed in a strategic manner by the CRA. This space activation technique can bring foot traffic and improve economic vitality for the corridor and can be done in partnership with area colleges.

### ▶ **Art Fair**

The CRA could promote an “Annual Community Art Fair”. This may be accomplished with collaboration of local businesses, arts departments of area colleges, and artists. The ideal location for this type of event would be on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way with a portion of this street closed for the event. The art fair could have a focus on African American art and up-and-coming artists emerging from local colleges. The CRA could hire an event manager or encourage other local organizations like the Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County to put on this event.

### ▶ **Celebrate History**

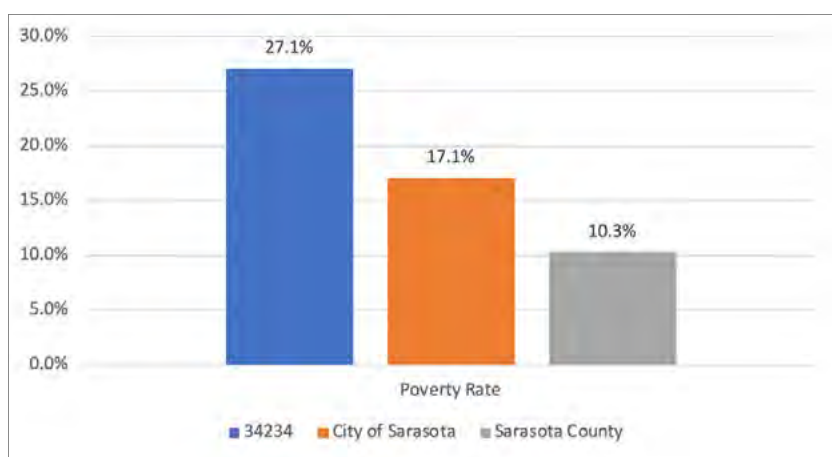
It is recommended the CRA create a Celebrate History event. The CRA could partner with Newtown Alive, Newtown Farmer’s Market, and local arts organizations like Westcoast Black Theatre Group to create an event to celebrate the history of Newtown. The event could include readings of the oral history interviews from the Newtown Alive report, plays inspired from local stories, and other arts related activities. May be done in partnership with the Collard Green Festival, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Festival, or as special event for the Farmer’s Market.

## SECTION 5.0 HOUSING

### 5.1 General Overview

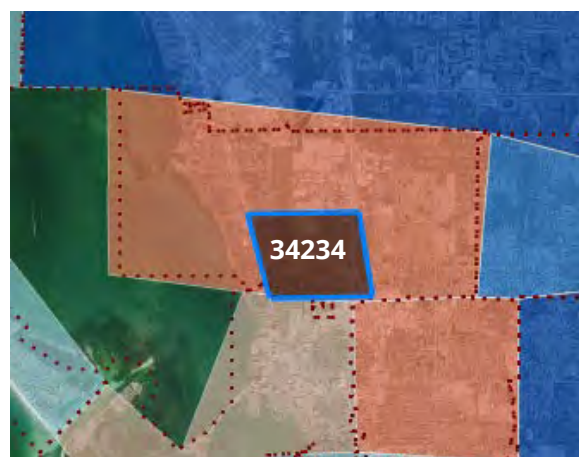
The current demographics of the Newtown CRA related to housing include the following: median age of residents is 29 years; median household income is \$23,877, which represents 40% of Sarasota County median income (\$59,128); the percentage of rental units in the community is 52% and owner-occupied units is 33%, and the median value of homes is approximately \$132,177<sup>5</sup>. Simply stated, Newtown is a young community, the majority of residents are renters, household income is low, and the housing is affordable. The CRA could encourage the City, Sarasota Housing Authority, and County to construct affordable housing projects throughout the City and County as well as provide homeownership programs and education so renters can become homeowners. The average household size in the area in 2018 was 2.29 for property owners and 2.58 for renters, which indicates that most households have a child present. The 2018 Poverty Thresholds indicate that a three-person household meets the poverty threshold with an income ranging \$19,642 to \$20,231. The 2018 (current) median household income for the 34234-zip code (the zip code of the Newtown CRA) is \$35,891, which ranks low both locally and within the state, and is only 80% above the poverty threshold<sup>6</sup>.

**Income in the Past 12 Months below the Poverty Level (2018)**



Source: [Censusreporter.org](https://censusreporter.org), ACS Table B17001

**34234 Zip Code Map**



With Newtown CRA highlighted in blue

According to ESRI data, there are 2,844 housing units in the Newtown CRA. Rehabilitating existing housing and building new housing, including single-family and multi-family, are a very important initiatives for the Newtown CRA for several reasons. First, new housing meets a strong demand in the marketplace for households whose incomes range from thirty percent (30% or approximately \$17,700 annual household income) to eighty percent (80% or approximately \$47,300 household income) of Sarasota County household median income (\$59,128 in 2019)<sup>5</sup>. Note that the income range above is based upon the use of State Housing Agency Tax Credits to deliver affordable housing. Housing could be for sale or for rent. Secondly, for Newtown CRA's retail businesses to thrive, there needs to be a new pool of consumers acting as customers to the area's retail and providers of professional services. Thirdly, the appearance of newly rehabilitated homes and newly constructed homes change the appearance of a neighborhood, as a community improving changing for the better. Studies show that programs to support exterior home investment can result in a "domino" effect of nearby additional home investment. Lastly, it is important to focus on housing in order to increase the number of homeowners, particularly in the Newtown CRA.

There is an opportunity to incorporate and promote "missing middle" housing diversity, such as, single-family homes with "granny flats" (also known as accessory dwelling units) that can be rented to students for an affordable price while providing an extra income to the homeowner. Other housing typology diversity may include duplex, triplex, fourplex, courtyard apartments, bungalow courts, and townhomes but all these housing types need to have strong design guidelines.

Source: <sup>5</sup>[ESRI \(Environmental Systems Research Institute\) Inc. ESRI data used in this report is from the U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010. For 2019 and 2024 forecasts, ESRI converted Census 2000 data into 2010 geography. For more information regarding ESRI Methodology, please visit https://downloads.esri.com/esri\\_content\\_doc/dbl/us/j10268\\_Methodology\\_Statement\\_2019-2024\\_Esri\\_US\\_Demographic\\_Updates.pdf](https://www.esri.com/en-us/about/esri-newsroom/esri-content-doc/dbl/us/j10268_Methodology_Statement_2019-2024_Esri_US_Demographic_Updates.pdf)

<sup>6</sup><https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/historical-poverty-thresholds.html>



### 5.2 Recommendations for Existing CRA Programs and Projects

There are many existing programs within the CRA that are working to provide affordable and improved housing. To help address housing needs, the CRA may desire to continue and improve these programs.

#### ► **Additional Tax Credit Housing and the Florida Housing Finance Corporation (“Florida Housing”)**

**Overview:** Affordable housing, mostly provided by the Sarasota Housing Authority in Newtown, is in high demand and serves a great need in the community. The State of Florida Housing Department in charge of allocating federal subsidies for tax credit housing has been very successful in stimulating the building of affordable housing in almost every county in the state. Sarasota County is no exception to the success of the program and is currently working on a project for example in the Rosemary District, south of the Newtown CRA, with the Sarasota Housing authority (“SHA”). SHA expects to partner with a private developer to build an approximately 130-unit housing project, whose rents will range from 30% to 80% of median income, averaging approximately 60% of AMI. In addition, the SHA is redeveloping its property on Orange Avenue for a project called Amaryllis Park Place as a tax credit financed housing project containing approximately 84 apartments for elderly and disabled persons. The Amaryllis project is slated for demolition as of February 2020.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that subsidized housing should not be the only housing provided; workforce housing (60% to 120% of the County's median income or incomes between approximately \$47,000 to \$70,000) will be needed in the next ten years as affordability in the downtown becomes more severe. The CRA will need to participate in a public/private partnership with workforce housing in order to help subsidize the cost of construction of workforce apartments. One method of participating is to provide a share of the tax increment generated by a project with the developer or owner. This method has been used successfully in other communities in Florida in order to stimulate redevelopment.

An important goal of the CRA is to begin to add to the district income groups that are higher in income than the current median household of \$23,900 per year. A healthy community should have a mix of incomes from low to middle, or 30% to 120%, in other words from a range of affordable to workforce housing. And increasing home ownership should be another goal.

With regard to new housing, one concept is to combine both affordability and the need for housing for artists. This Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 recommends that it consider joint venturing with SHA and develop a tax credit housing project located on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way for the purpose of constructing a 100-unit project whose preference for renters would be artists. In April 2019, the IRS issued Revenue Procedure 2019-17 (Rev. Proc.), offering additional guidance on the public use requirement applicable to multifamily housing bonds under Section 142(d) of the Internal Revenue Code. This new guidance provides that a qualified residential rental project will satisfy the public use requirement, and thus qualify for tax-exempt financing, even if the project contains units that are reserved for, or are prioritized for, certain specified groups, such as veterans and artists. Sarasota, a City of many artistic institutions is an ideal City to initiate such a program. However, building a tax credit housing project for artists will require the City to meet with Florida Housing and seek prior confirmation to proceed with the concept of such an initiative. Artists hopefully could be defined broadly to include performing artists, visual artists, culinary artists, musical artists, and arts professional support persons such as stagehands, sound engineers, musicians, electricians, and others. Faculty, staff, and students at art institutions or departments of educational institutions such as public and private schools, should be able to qualify as well. A local Sarasota non-profit, officing in close proximity to the Newtown CRA, The Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County (“The Alliance”), has been for the last ten years promoting affordable housing for artists, many of whom experience long commutes from the distant suburbs to their places of employment located in the downtown and cultural center. An artists’ multi-family apartment building could become a catalyst for other housing proposals.

## SECTION 5.0 HOUSING

---

### ► Single-family Lot Infill

**Overview:** Single-family housing lot infill is important in improving the appearance of a community such as Newtown, and new infill housing starts slowly adding to the consumer base of the area, which in turn support local businesses. An earlier discussion was presented in [Section 3.2](#), Land Acquisition, discussing the merits of improving the quality of housing in Newtown CRA.

**Recommendation:** The CRA could work with the City of Sarasota and Sarasota County, through the Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD). The OHCD had been awarded \$23 million in NSP funds, which were expended to acquire and rehabilitate 100 abandoned or foreclosed homes, demolish 10 blighted structures and create 85 housing units on demolished or vacant land. These activities help provide affordable housing to households earning at or below 100 percent of the area median income with 25 percent of the funds going to those earning less than 50% of the area median income. The CRA should encourage that the housing units are built on vacant land within the single-family neighborhoods of Newtown.

### ► Title Clean-Up and Assistance Program

**Overview:** The CRA is currently providing funding for the legal costs associated with Newtown residents' title reconciliation efforts – including the costs of recording official documents, completing title searches, and archiving property records.

**Recommendation:** Cities often experience the problem of acquiring single-family or vacant land to increase their housing stock, eliminate blight, and improve the visual appearance. But cities are often thwarted by the fact that property cannot be conveyed because of the lack of good title. It is important that the CRA together with the City continue cleaning up the title on property that either the CRA or City desire to acquire for its programs. This program should also be continued to keep residents as homeowners.

### ► Historic Preservation of Newtown Structures

**Overview:** Important to the preservation of Newtown is the preservation of historic structures, both residential and commercial. The CRA's Newtown Historic Structure Rehabilitation Program provides funding for improving or restoring properties within Newtown to help stabilize the tax base.

**Recommendation:** Identification of strategic locations and buildings to participate in the program would be beneficial to target structures that will complement the heritage trail and add to Newtown's reference points and landmarks.

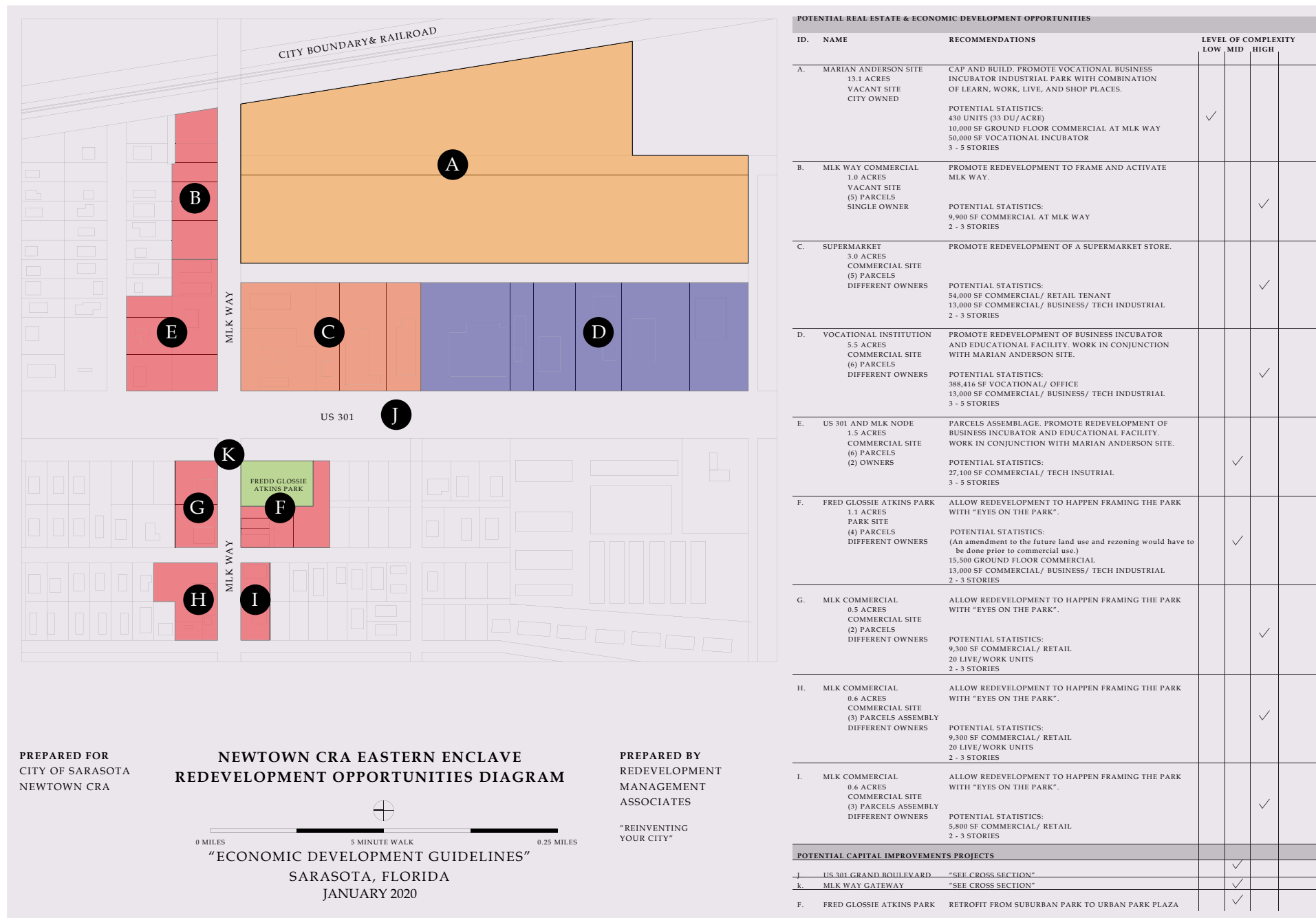
### ► Marian Anderson Redevelopment Site

**Overview:** The Marian Anderson redevelopment site is approximately 13.19 acres and was the subject of a March 2017 Invitation to Negotiate. A developer was selected in May 2018, and proposed approximately 4 acres of mixed-use commercial, retail, and office; approximately 7.5 acres for a vocational-technical school and industrial park; and approximately 1.5 acres of passive recreational space. However, after much study by the approved proposer, the developer elected to not proceed with the development.

**Recommendation:** A new RFP could be issued in 2021 and the CRA Plan should be referenced in the RFP to suggest concepts for the proposed redevelopment. The site is a designated brownfield and as such is a challenge to address environmental issues. An environmental contamination report was conducted for the site, which indicated that the site could be redeveloped but outside of the geographic limits of the contamination, except if hard surfaces such as parking lots are used for those areas. This CRA Plan suggests a mixed use of residential, office, institutional, and commercial for the site. If residential is to be considered, then Low Income Housing Tax Credit financing may be considered and the Sarasota Housing Authority could be a co-sponsor.

During the public meetings with residents, several suggestions were made concerning the use of the Marian Anderson site. The Community Redevelopment Advisory Board recommended that the site be redeveloped as a location to build an educational institution which would train residents for jobs in four key industries: health, technology, construction, and manufacturing. The Advisory Board also suggested that part of the site could be used for student housing. The CRA should determine if the feasibility study and market analysis conducted by the previous respondent is viable. Below is a proposed diagram for the Marian Anderson site, which presents conceptual ideas for the use of the property and other surrounding parcels. The concept plan will require acquisition of other properties. It is suggested in the concept plan that housing be an important component of the project but all together the project would be a mix of uses. Note that the diagram suggests a window on US 301, which begins to define a different kind of State Road, one that has a softer image and more habitable. The City is currently exploring unsolicited proposals for P3 partnerships.

SECTION 5.0 HOUSING





### 5.3 Recommended New CRA Programs and Projects

In addition to the existing CRA Programs, it is recommended that additional programs be implemented to develop vacant land within the CRA and provide additional housing options.

#### ► **Market Rate Workforce Housing Redevelopment and P3**

Workforce housing, defined as housing rented or sold to households whose incomes range from 60% to 120% of Sarasota County median income, is important to introduce into the market along with affordable housing in order to begin to obtain a mix of housing incomes in the community. A mix of incomes in a community is healthier for promoting economic initiatives. Incomes affect the amount of disposable income and directly affect retail sales. Note that approximately 20 residential units in the Phase 1 of Janie's Garden Sarasota Housing project were market rate, which translates to households whose incomes are between 60% and 120% and even higher. To increase the number of both workforce and market rate housing units, the latter of which are sold or rented to households over 120% of Sarasota County median incomes, the CRA will need to partner with entities such as the Sarasota Housing Authority and private developers in a P3 in order to provide incentives and additional funds for the development.

#### ► **Accessory Dwelling Units Additions to Existing Single-Family Homes**

The concept of allowing granny flats (also known as accessory dwelling units) to be built on single-family home lots as a free standing structure or attached to a free standing garage or added to the existing house is an innovative method of increasing the housing stock in neighborhoods that would accommodate small studios or one bedroom residences. It allows the existing homeowner to add a garage apartment or a small addition to the rear of their lot. The additional income from renting the accessory dwelling unit would boost the homeowner's desire to maintain and improve their own home. Granny flats, the popular term for accessory dwelling units geared toward aging parents, can also be an important solution to allow older residents to age in place near family caretakers. If the City were to consider a zoning change in the Newtown CRA area, the zoning code would need to be written to ensure that the accessory dwelling units met good design standards.

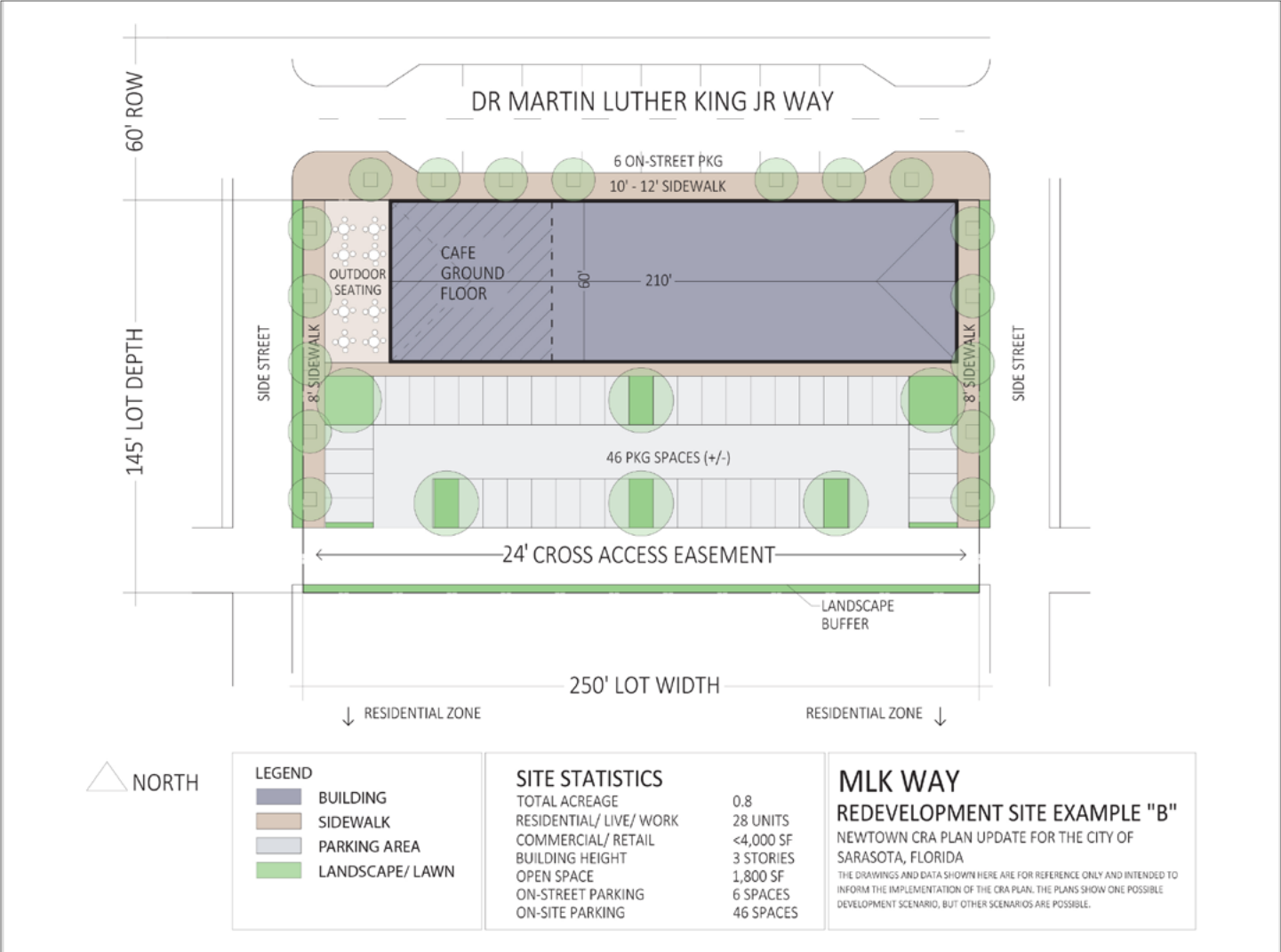
#### ► **Homeownership Programs & Education**

As discussed earlier, a majority of residents are renters and it is important to focus on housing to increase the number of homeowners. The CRA should encourage the City's Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD) as well as their financial institutional partner to provide homeownership education and financial programs to help Newtown residents become homeowners.

#### ► **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way Redevelopment Sites**

As discussed above in [Paragraph 3.3](#), it is recommended that the CRA create a Public-Private Partnership (P3) to construct a mixed-use development to include retail, food & beverage, commercial, office, along with affordable, workforce and market rate housing for artists and teachers of the visual, culinary, and performing arts on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Suggested partners include the Sarasota Housing Authority (SHA), colleges and an experienced real estate developer. Both SHA and Ringling organizations have developed multiple housing projects in Newtown. There are several infill opportunity sites along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way where an assemblage can be aggregated; however, in some cases a developer may need to acquire sites or partner with existing property owners. It is recommended that the first mixed-use development be constructed on a site close to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park, and then have small infill development continue assemblages along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way.

The concept of the CRA organizing a P3 entity for redevelopment in the Newtown CRA as suggested above for artists' housing on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way could also apply to the redevelopment of the Marian Anderson site. If these two suggested sites could be accomplished, the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. artist housing and Marian Anderson, then the Newtown CRA could become a well-known and attractive area for investment by others, particularly those seeking to take advantage of the Opportunity Zone ([see Section 3.2](#)) tax incentives. The diagram below is an example of a development that is recommended on the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Redevelopment Site.



January 2020

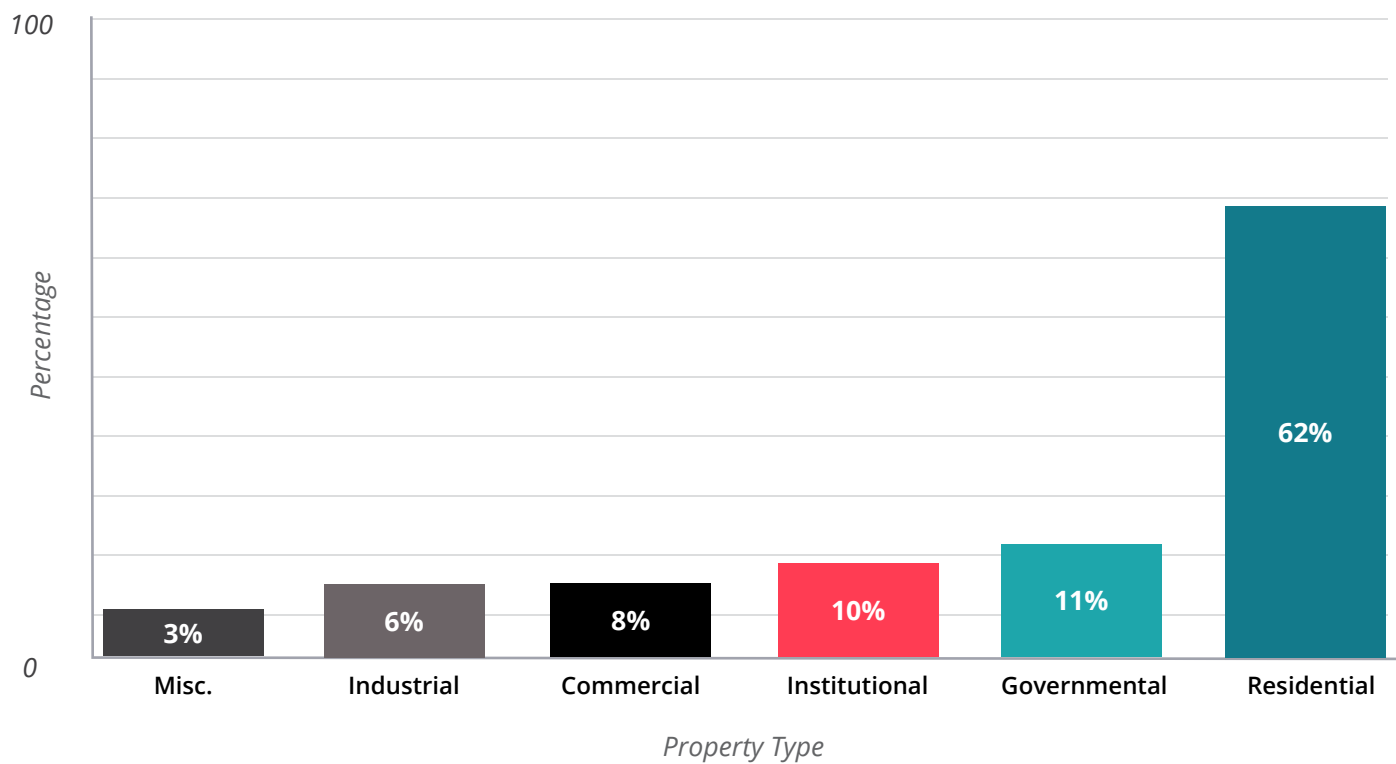
# SECTION 6.0 LAND USE & ZONING

## 6.1 General Overview

The principal land uses in the Newtown CRA consist of single-family homes (the predominant use), multi-family complexes, educational facilities such as the Ringling College of Art + Design and Booker High School, several important parks, government and entertainment buildings such as the Robert Taylor Community Complex and commercial buildings lining important roadways such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, and state-owned US 41 and US 301. In general, the land uses are typical of an older community. One important and significant feature of the land use is that the “main street” of the Newtown CRA is Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, a two lane, local street comprised of approximately 17 blocks between US 41 and US 301. The roadway was the focus and center of life in the community in the past, and this Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 strongly recommends that the goal is to redevelop Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way into a vibrant pedestrian oriented street where residents of Newtown shop and live. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way features two significant small neighborhood parks fronting the corridor, each one anchored on the east and west ends of the roadway. Refer to [Report 1](#), “Newtown CRA Land Use and Zoning Recommendations” for additional data and refer also to the land use and zoning maps in the report. Note that several of the comments in [Report 1](#) are repeated in this Section.

According to data provided by the Sarasota County Property Appraiser, in the CRA the parcels by acreage:

Tax Year 2019



Additionally, 53% of the Newtown CRA’s Assessed Value is fully tax-exempt.



## SECTION 6.0 LAND USE & ZONING

---

### 6.2 Recommendations for Existing Zoning on Major Corridors (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, US 41, and US 301)

#### ► Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way Zoning

Encouraging the City to continue to promote moderate density and building form on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, would highlight Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way as the most important east-west corridor in Newtown. The building form, density, height, setbacks, and other regulations must be more intense than a quieter secondary street of noncommercial structures. The intensity must be more moderate than building forms on US 301 or US 41, since these corridors are wider and carry much more automobile traffic. The objective for the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way corridor is to create a walkable, active, neighborhood “main street” environment. The following is a list of current regulatory conditions and recommendations for zoning overlay regulations for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way.

#### ► Current Conditions:

Zoning District: “CBN” (Commercial Business Newtown), which allows for a maximum height of 45 feet along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and a density of 12 units per acre for single-family and 25 units per acre for multi-family.

Right of Way: Varies from 55 feet to 62 feet, two lane roadway, narrow sidewalks between 5 feet and 10 feet.

#### ► Recommendations:

Height and Density: If in the future there is community support, it is recommended to explore an increase in height and the number of units per acre along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way based on economic development principles. Any changes will most likely require a Comprehensive Plan amendment, zoning text amendment, and rezoning. It is also suggested to evaluate microunits as 0.5 units per acre in density unit counts as a means to help address affordable housing.

No single family residential should be permitted fronting Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way unless an historic structure exists such as the Wright Bush House. Another historic structure along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way is the old gas station at 1909 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, although it is not a residential building.

Ground Floor Uses: The uses facing the corridor are advised to be retail, commercial, civic, and supporting uses such as a gym, lobby for an apartment building, building services, we-work type uses, and other creative uses. Uses not facing the corridor can be residential.

Parking: On-street parking may be built and receive credit for adding to the parking supply; one parking space per unit required by zoning. Parking may be either in a well landscaped surface parking lot in the rear of the property or in a garage. If a garage is built, then a density bonus will provide for up to two additional floors and 20 additional units per acre. Such structure shall be properly buffered from any single-family area bordering the property being developed. No parking lot can face the main corridor, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, of the district but must be hidden in the rear of buildings, not highly visible from the public sidewalk.

Curb Cuts: Access to parking lots should be by side streets; however, a curb cut shall be allowed if none is available in order to access rear parking. One curb cut per block front.

Residential Unit Sizes: Studios not less than 350 square feet, micro-units not less than 250 square feet, one-bedroom units not less than 500 square feet and two-bedroom units not less than 650 square feet. Small units could be promoted for students, young professionals and artists and rental rates correspondingly lower than larger market rate units in the downtown; therefore, more affordable.

## SECTION 6.0 LAND USE & ZONING

---

Setbacks and Build-to Lines: In order to create a minimum continuous ten (10) ft. sidewalk and provide on-street parking, the right-of-way along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way shall have a minimum 60 ft. distance from building face to building face. If current public right of way is not sufficient, explore a strategy to meet the aforementioned standards, such as right-of-way dedication outright or as an easement dedicated to the City to be able to meet the standard.

A right-of-way study could be conducted to determine portions of the corridor where dedications and/or easements are needed.



*Example of 4-story urban building development*

## SECTION 6.0 LAND USE & ZONING

---

### ► US 41 Zoning

The CRA could encourage the City to promote economic development on US 41, since it is a state road and carries high traffic volumes. This corridor is one of the most important regional north-south connectors to Sarasota and in particular the Newtown CRA, and the building form, density, height, setbacks, and other regulations must be an urban corridor and therefore more intense than MLK Way. The objective for the corridor is to create a “complete streets,” higher density, urban environment. This the corridor that would be a great example of a State-owned road where residents work, live, shop and take local transit for traveling to the airport and to downtown. The City and CRA should coordinate with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and align the US 41 vision for right-of-way improvements that are additional to FDOT’s current US 41 project (*see Section 2.4*). The following is a list of current regulatory conditions and recommendations for zoning overlay regulations for US 41.

### ► Current Conditions in Newtown (not in Newtown Overlay):

Zoning District: Mostly RMF-4, Residential Multi-Family-4, 18 units per acre for multi-family, generally up to 4-story buildings, North Trail, NT Zoning, 35 units per acre.

Zoning District: Mostly at Ringling College of Art + Design Campus, “ORD,” (office regional district), a medium intensity office zone.

### ► Recommendations:

Land Use: Change to “transit-oriented district”; zoning change to mixed-use overlay district that permits higher density, particularly a portion of the residential for micro units. The future land use designation will need to be redefined to include urban concepts of transit, pedestrian urban area.

A form-based code is imperative to adopt in the zoning code for US 41 in order to have greater control over form, mass, height, implementation of plazas, and parking (consider the feasibility of introducing on-street parking on US 41, which would require additional right of way).

Height & Density: If in the future there is community support, it is recommended to explore an increase in height and number of units per acre along US 41 based on economic development principles. Any changes will most likely require a Comprehensive Plan amendment, zoning text amendment, and rezoning. It is also suggested to evaluate microunits as 0.5 units per acre in density unit counts as a means to help address affordable housing.

Ground Floor Uses: Uses facing the corridor shall be retail, commercial, civic, supporting uses such as a gym, lobby, building services. Residential may face the corridor but only on floors above the ground floor.

Parking: On-street parking on US 41 and side streets may be built and receive credit for adding to the parking supply; one parking space per residential unit and two parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of retail. Parking may be either in a well landscaped surface parking lot in the rear of a structure or in a garage. If a garage is built, then a density bonus will provide for one additional floor and 15 additional units per acre. Such structure shall be properly buffered from the single-family area. No parking lot can face the main corridor of the district but must be hidden in the rear of buildings, not visible from the sidewalk.

Curb Cuts: Access to parking lots should be by side streets; however, a curb cut shall be allowed if none is available; one per project, unless prohibited by FDOT.



## SECTION 6.0 LAND USE & ZONING

---

Setbacks and Build-to Lines: In order to create a continuous corridor and “sense of place”, the CRA shall coordinate with FDOT on providing a minimum ten (10) ft. sidewalk with shade trees, bicycle lanes, and on-street parking. If current public right of way is not sufficient, explore a strategy to meet the aforementioned standards, such as right-of-way dedication outright or as an easement to the City to be able to meet the standard.

Boundaries of ORD zoning district, which includes the Ringling College of Art + Design, need to establish a new boundary of the zoning district within the next five years based upon a redevelopment study. The intent of this study will be to incentivize private investment and development of other complementary uses, particularly housing.



*Example of 5-story urban building*

## SECTION 6.0 LAND USE & ZONING

### ► US 301 Zoning

The CRA could encourage the City to promote economic development on US 301. This corridor is one of the most important regional north-south connectors for the City and County, as well as Newtown and the cities north of Sarasota, and the building form, density, height, setbacks, and other regulations must be more of an urban corridor and therefore more intense than Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and even US 41. Given the wideness and capacity of this road, the objective for the corridor is to create a transit friendly, “Grand Boulevard” urban environment. The City and CRA shall coordinate with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and align their respective visions for any right-of-way improvements. Sarasota County, which also shares sections of US 301 in other parts of the County with other cities, should likewise be part of the alignment of visions. The following is a list of current regulatory conditions and recommendations for zoning overlay regulations for US 301 (particular to the City areas).

#### ► Current Conditions:

Zoning District: CI – Commercial Intensive, G – Governmental, ILW – Industrial Light Warehousing, CGD – Commercial General District, ICD – Intensive Commercial District, IHD – Industrial Heavy District.

#### ► Recommendations:

Height & Density: If in the future there is community support, it is recommended to explore an increase in height and number of units per acre, as well as residential, along US 301 based on economic development principles. Any changes will most likely require a Comprehensive Plan amendment, zoning text amendment, and rezoning. It is also suggested to evaluate microunits as 0.5 units per acre in density unit counts as a means to help address affordable housing.

Ground Floor Uses: The uses facing the corridor shall be retail, commercial, civic, supporting uses such as a gym, lobby, building services. Uses not facing the corridor can be residential.

Parking: On-street parking may be built on side streets and on frontage or service roads (where applicable) and receive credit for adding to the parking supply; one parking space per unit. Parking may be either in a well landscaped surface parking lot or in a garage. If a garage is built, then a density bonus will provide for one additional floor and 10 additional units per acre. No parking lot can face the main corridor of the district but must be hidden in the rear of buildings, not visible from the sidewalk.

Curb Cuts: Access to parking lots should be by side streets; however, a curb cut shall be allowed if none is available; one per project, unless disallowed by FDOT.

Setbacks and Build-to Lines: In order to create a continuous corridor “sense of place”, CRA shall coordinate with FDOT on providing frontage or service roads with a minimum ten (10) ft. sidewalk with shade trees and on-street parking. If current public right of way is not sufficient, explore a strategy to meet the aforementioned standards, such as right-of-way dedication outright or as an easement to the City to be able to meet the standard.

The CRA could promote retrofitting the US 301 roadway with “Grand Boulevard” standards. CRA shall coordinate with FDOT and the City to align their vision for US 301. The recommended roadway may have the same six (6) lane road capacity but with a new frontage or service road (where applicable and practical), new centered median linear park, new protected bicycle paths, new on-street parking, wider sidewalks, shade trees, and landscaped dividers. A US 301 master plan is recommended to implemented by the next 20 years but would be preferred during the next ten years. One consideration, as well as others to be examined is the use of a long-term provision of building a service road parallel to US 301 for local traffic.



*Example of 6-story urban building, image credit: Arlington Magazine*

## SECTION 6.0 LAND USE & ZONING

---

### 6.3 Recommended New CRA Programs and Projects

It is recommended that additional programs be implemented so that redevelopment within the CRA is done so with good design principles.

#### ► **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way Master Plan and “Main Street” Character**

In order to control the development of the Main Street with one consistent set of standards (architectural and use), and to create a “complete streets” roadway, the CRA could update the 2006 master plan for the corridor within the next five years. An updated plan could be the blueprint for new development standards, which would be required in the zoning code. In general, the update would maintain on-street parking, streetlights, and wide sidewalks to accommodate outdoor activities, particularly dining. Occasionally additional right of way will need to be offered by anyone improving or developing on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way to widen the right of way to meet the cross-section standards of a 60 feet right of way.

- Redeveloping the Main Street according to an updated master plan would ensure quality development and good urban design practices. For example, a small set back may be required in the zoning code for creating a consistent sidewalk width, bike/auto sharing, on-street parking, and street beautification, which should include ample streetlights with identity banners, shade trees, and street furniture.
- An illustrated build-out scenario of the entire corridor would be helpful to communicate the concept to the public. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way should be considered the principal gateway into the community from US 41, US 301 and Orange Avenue, which all connect to the downtown area. An updated master plan is essential prior to developing new regulations, since the master plan is the framework of potential redevelopment and subsequently new and revised land development regulations. A detail of the “complete street” cross section of the roadway that is proposed is shown in this Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 in [Section 7](#), along with an additional discussion of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way improvements.

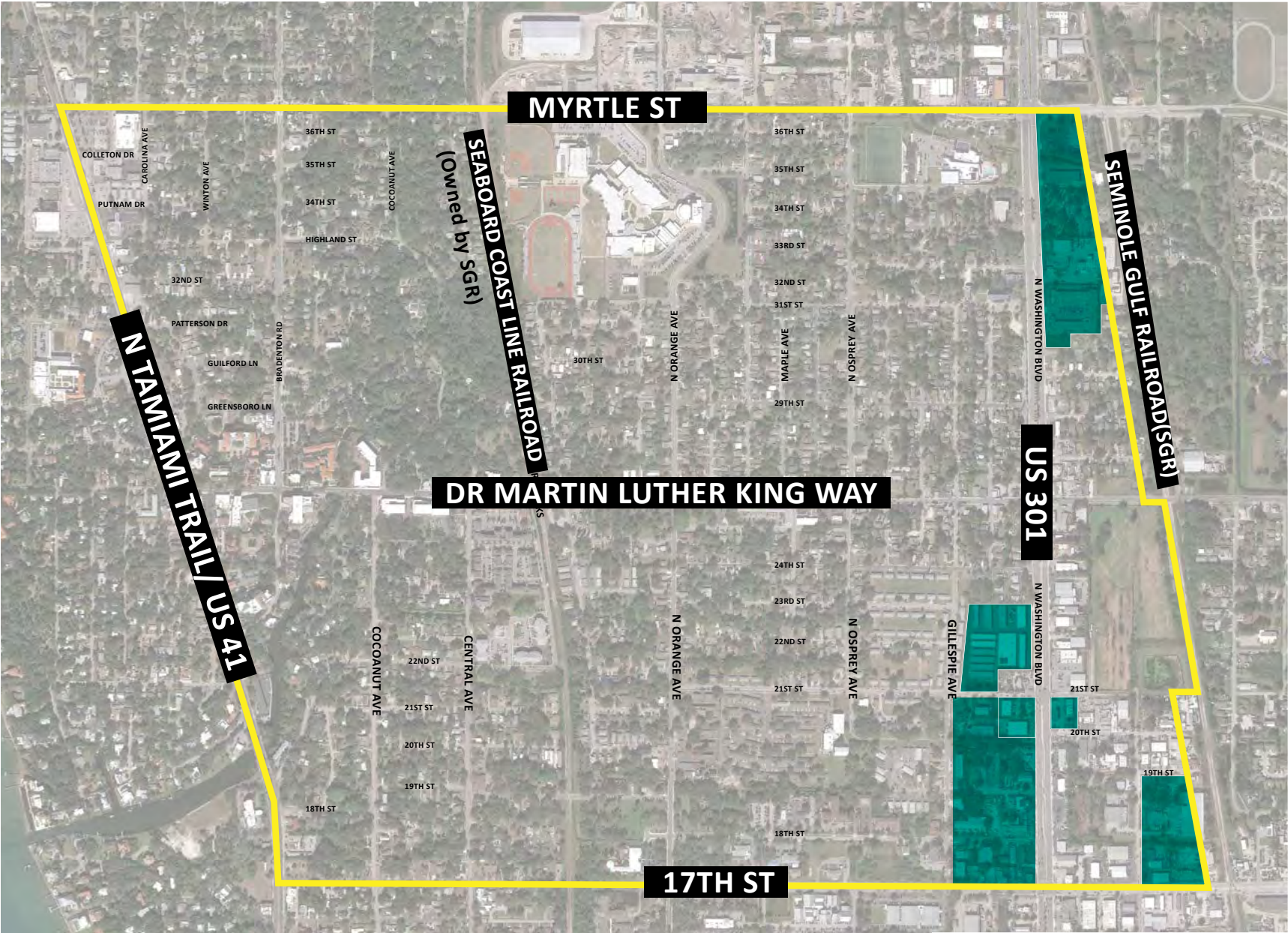
#### ► **Newtown Arts District Zoning**

Newtown Arts District is a suggested zoning brand name for the Newtown CRA area for it contains not only its proper name, “Newtown,” but also a quickly understandable additional name, “Arts,” followed by a creation of a particularly formal area called a “District;” hence, Newtown Arts District. The CRA should work with the Planning Department to combine the brand of Newtown with the zoning regulations. The brand could potentially also be the name of the set of land development regulations (Land Use, Zoning, and Design Guidelines), that guides new development in the district through its redevelopment phase over the next 10 to 20 years.

#### ► **Industrial Property Conversion to Mixed-Use Transit Oriented Development**

Evaluate the corridor to determine if the future land use map and zoning change can be approved to create a mixed use transit oriented corridor. The Newtown CRA contains approximately 70 acres of industrial-zoned property, generally located along US 301 between 17<sup>th</sup> Street (to the south) and Myrtle Street (to the north). The highest concentration of industrial land is located at the intersection of US 301 and 17<sup>th</sup> St and at the SE area near US 301 and Myrtle St. Most of the industrial land is underutilized due to the single zoning designation.





January 2020

NEWTOWN CRA INDUSTRIAL ZONED PROPERTIES MAP





## SECTION 6.0 LAND USE & ZONING

### ► Special Events Zoning

Every neighborhood and community desires to create events for their residents and hope to attract visitors from outside of their community to attend. The events serve as a social purpose as well as a way to earn funds to carry on local activities. The events' appeal can be affected by the City's zoning restriction of not allowing food trucks at events. Many cities (Pompano Beach and West Palm Beach to mention a few) with farmer's markets, green markets, and fresh markets allow food trucks because they can deliver better Health Department approved quality food to the public than a small vendor under a tent. Usually vendor food trucks specialize in one food type or another, such as tacos, hamburgers, Asian, soul-food, and many others. This Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 suggests that food trucks be allowed into events such as the Farmer's Market, or the proposed Art Walk, a proposed annual art fair, and even block parties in the neighborhoods or at the Robert Taylor Community Complex during an event. Food trucks are a business type and resembles in both form and function that of a retailer. Residents from Newtown could be attracted to operating a food truck; they create a new business. The most well-known collection of food trucks in the United States is found in Portland, Oregon, at the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Food Cart Pod. In fact, the park is now turned into a combination of food truck park and a downtown sitting, socializing, and event park.



*Food truck example, photo credit: The City Lane*



*Downtown Sarasota BBQ restaurant "Brick's Smoked Meats" that started as a vendor in the downtown Farmers Market.*

### ► Special Provisions for Right of Way Dedication to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, US 41, and US 301

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, US 41, and US 301 are considered the major activity corridors of Newtown and are viewed as important for not only automobiles but also for walkers and bicyclists. If these major corridors in the City are not converted to multimodal pathways, traffic will increase, and residents will demand a moratorium for building until such time that traffic can be directed elsewhere or roads can be built wider with additional lanes (which aides creating even more traffic). As described in the discussion above for each of the roadways the rights-of-way may need modifications to include wider sidewalks, include protected, two-way bike tracks, and automobiles and buses. More right of way may be needed, and it should come from private property. In addition, coordination with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to align the complete streets vision may be necessary to encourage a more pedestrian street.

## SECTION 6.0 LAND USE & ZONING

---

### ► **Urban Design Street Standards**

The street standards and zoning code are recommended to be compatible with one another in order to create a coordinated urban redevelopment environment. The following are suggested minimum standards in order to establish urban design street standards. The underlying principal of the standards is to create a “complete streets” standard and to categorize streets within the Newtown CRA as “A” streets (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way), “B” Streets (Orange Avenue) and “C” streets (single family neighborhood or local streets connecting to either “A” streets or “B” streets). It is recommended coordination with the Engineering and Design Criteria Manual effort should be pursued.

- Lane Widths: Maximum ten (10) feet if not used as a bus route; 10.5 feet if bus route needed.
- On-Street Parking: Eight (8) feet including the curb
- Curb Requirement: Curb-less urban street permitted by approval of the City Engineer
- Shade Trees: Live oak trees or similar with eight (8) feet by eight feet tree opening
- Sidewalks: Ten feet (10') preferred and twelve feet (12') most desirable particularly if sidewalk cafes are a desired use to serve the retail. Bonuses granted, such as parking, density, or height, to the owner of a mixed-use retail building for the wider sidewalk, determined by the Department Head
- Sidewalk Cafés: Permitted on public right-of-way for a reasonable fee already established. Café may extend into a private easement on private land in order to meet the sidewalk width standard and outdoor café standard.
- Streetlights: Pedestrian scaled, architecturally approved by the Department Head, installed with electrical outlets at the base and with banner arms at the top 1/3 of the pole. At prominent intersections, the street lighting fixtures are recommended to be double lanterns.
- Undergrounding Utilities: Provisions could be made to bury the overhead utilities such as electrical, telephone, cable and others in order to eliminate the urban blight of unsightly commercial grade lighting and poles and wires supplied by the electric company.

### ► **Incentives for Good Building Practices**

As part of the land development regulations, incentives to builders, developers and investors can be an effective tool to obtain positive changes to the Newtown CRA District. The CRA may analyze the cost and effectiveness of offering various incentive types (such as increased density, waiving certain fees, parking variations, etc.) for development that helps achieve CRA goals. Monetary incentives, if not cash grants, could entail the use of the Newtown TIF generated from a project being paid to the development for providing an outstanding mixed-use development and architecture or providing an urban plaza along a major roadway for the public to enjoy.



## SECTION 7.0 INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORTATION & CONNECTIVITY

---

### 7.1 General Overview

The subjects of infrastructure, transportation, and connectivity are important to the preservation and economic growth of the Newtown community since connecting to places of employment and places of education/training will enable residents to improve their lives and gain greater stability. Infrastructure, which is well-planned, beautified, and contains mass transit, enables not only the residents to connect to employment centers, such as the airport and downtown, but it also enables outside consumers wishing to entertain themselves at cultural events and enjoy the special retailing of the area to easily access Newtown and enjoy the trip as the connection is made. Recently new retail facilities have been built on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, but much of it remains vacant. It is important to provide easy access and attract consumers from not only inside the Newtown community, but also the larger metro area.

Other infrastructure improvements can make the connection more accessible between where residents live and where they wish to go to school or exercise, like at the Robert Taylor Community Complex, attend art exhibits, or take their family to one of the many of the local parks. Infrastructure must include a high degree of walkability on sidewalks and trails, and protected bike lanes for short distance accessibility. A community and its neighborhoods should be easily accessible by foot, bicycle, automobile, and other transportation methods. For all transportation projects, a review with the City's Transportation Plan should be cross-referenced.

### 7.2 Recommendations for Existing Projects in the CRA

There are many existing projects within the CRA that are working to provide improved streetscapes, connectivity, and transportation options. These programs should continue.

#### ► Pedestrian Lighting on Neighborhood Streets

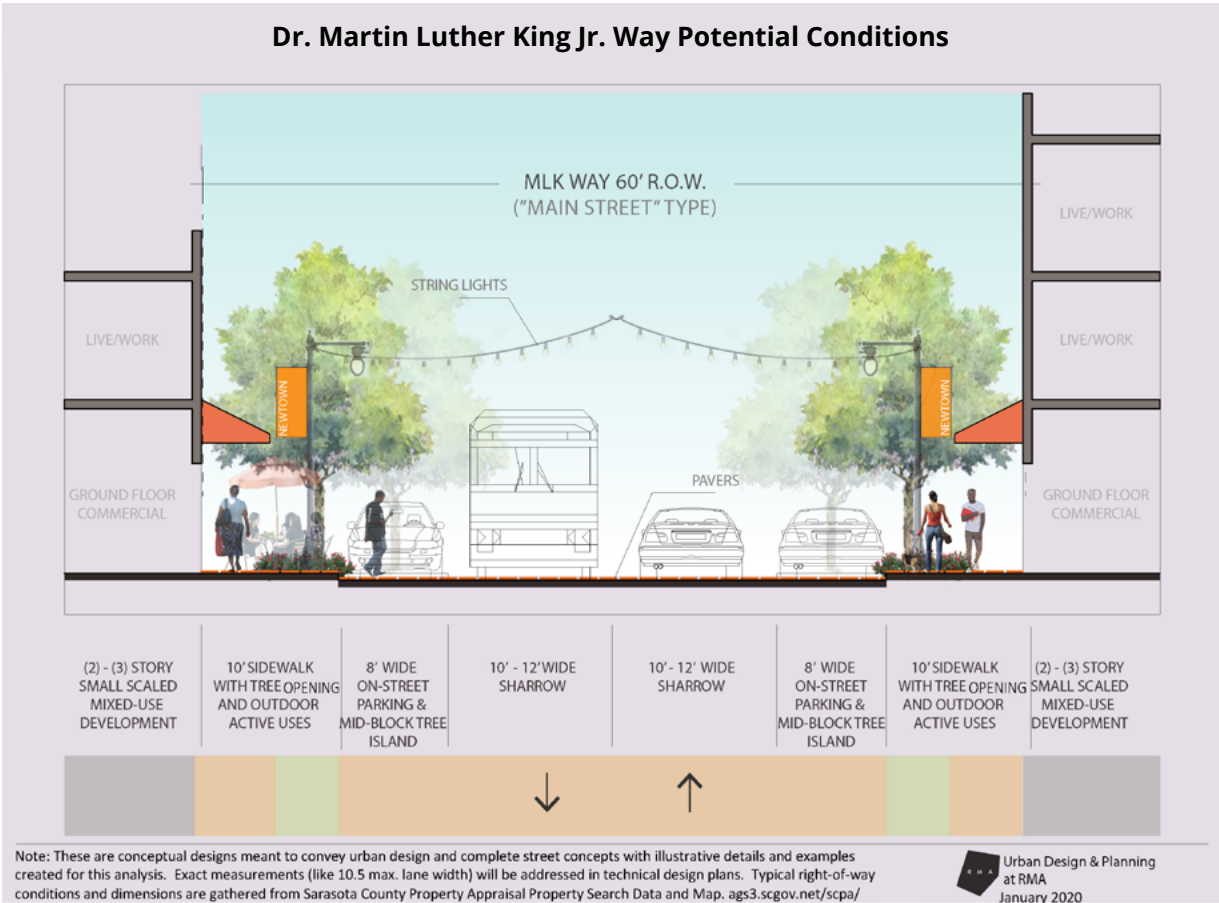
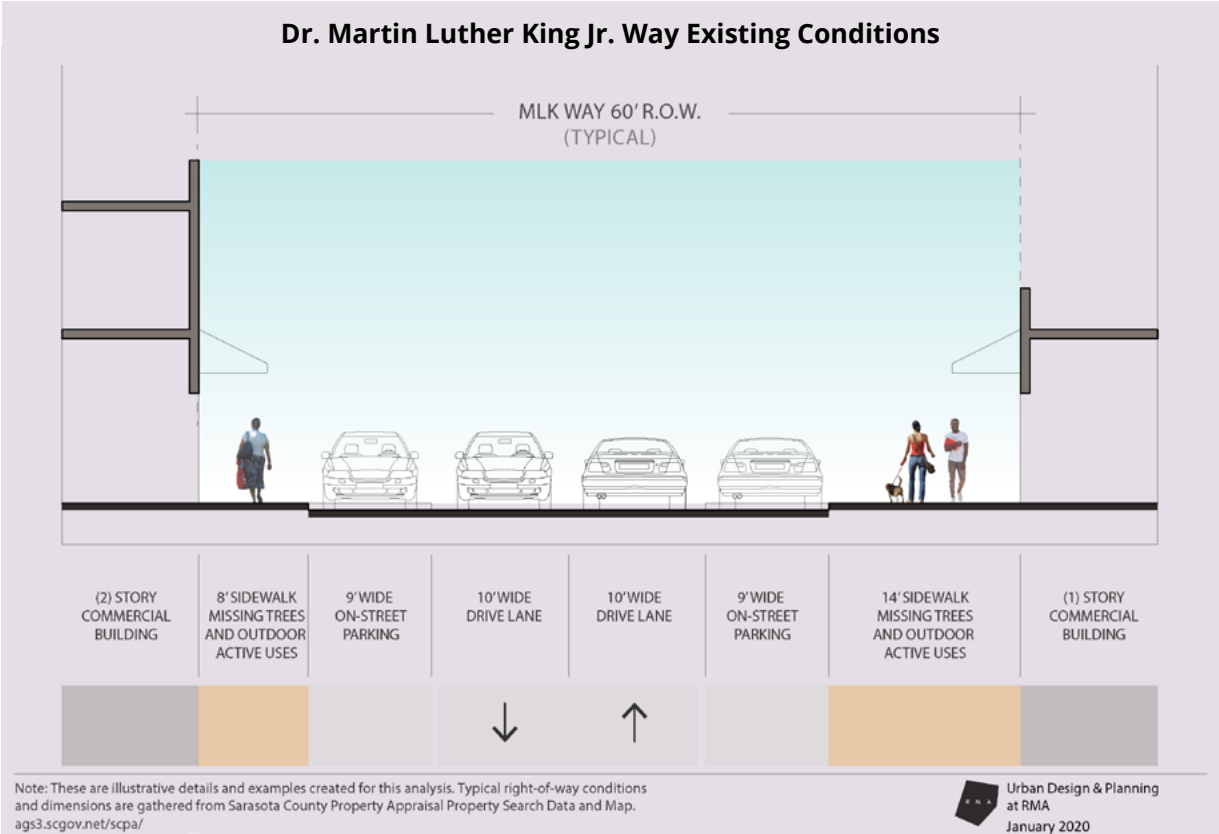
**Overview:** The City's Public Works Department is working to ensure lighting needs are met and upgrades occur consistently over time.

**Recommendation:** Having adequate lighting can help communities feel safer. It is recommended the CRA continue to collaborate with the City's Public Works Department to add pedestrian lighting on neighborhood streets throughout Newtown. FPL does have a program that provides lighting fixtures to existing electric poles, but usually these programs have maintenance costs that the residents of Newtown may not be able to bear. A photometric assessment of lighting in residential neighborhoods throughout the Newtown may be conducted and a master plan of the lights be designed, so then every year a section of the grid can be built.

#### ► Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way Improvements

**Overview:** The CRA completed a streetscape improvement project on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way in 2015, which included intersection improvements, new light fixtures, new sidewalks, and on-street parking. Although these improvements did beautify the "main street," there are additional streetscape improvements recommended to set the foundation for development of vacant parcels along the street.

**Recommendation:** This Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 recommends that the most important east-west corridor within the district, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, continues to be improved as suggested below since it is not only an important transportation corridor but also a critically important element of the revitalization of the Newtown CRA District; it is Newtown's "Main Street." It would serve as not only a transportation corridor being a pedestrian walkable and bikeable street, but also a cultural arts corridor that represents the brand of the Newtown CRA. The corridor is envisioned to be a successful main street with boutiques, unique retail, art galleries, and music venues. Other sections of the Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 have discussed strategies to improve Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way's brand, developments that could occur along the street, and recommended zoning changes.



## SECTION 7.0 INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORTATION & CONNECTIVITY

### ► Lighting

Although Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way does have pedestrian street lighting, it is recommended to ensure all lighting fixtures are LED. It is understood that the City and FPL are working on this already.

### ► Shade Trees

To create a walkable street, the walk must be shaded and buildings fronting the corridor must have awnings shading outdoor cafes and pedestrians. It is recommended shade trees be installed wherever possible given utility conflicts, be part of the brand of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, and contribute to the streetscape. Committing to shade trees may require widening pedestrian areas, or the usage of root containment devices.

### ► On-Street Parking

Another important element of a “complete street” is on-street parking. Parking on the street will be critical to the success of the retail, because the consumer will always look for a vacant parking space on the street where its destination is located, whether it be a shop or a café. Other parking over time will be required since parking demand will eventually be greater than the current supply. When that occurs, the City may need to study parking in both the Newtown CRA as well as on the North Trail. Although Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way currently has several on-street parking spaces, as demand increases and retailing improves on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, parking will become an issue to plan for in the coming years.

### ► Way Finding

Directional signage assisting motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians to their destination or as a suggestion to an additional destination, is very important to creating a welcoming environment of a walkable, bikeable, and drivable retail main street. The signage would include directions to many existing destinations such as Fredd “Glossie” Atkins Park, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park, Ringling College of Art + Design, and Robert Taylor Community Complex. Wayfinding for historical monuments is particularly important, or it could be directions to other parks both north and south of the corridor. Way Finding is part of branding a place or a neighborhood or a district. Newtown needs, as discussed in the Marketing [Section 4.0](#) of the Newtown CRA Plan of 2021, to be branded. And sub-brands must be included, such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way as a cultural art walk, which would be part of a cultural heritage tour.

### ► Parklets

Parklets could be constructed within on-street parking spaces temporarily to activate the street. The Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 is suggested that two parklets be constructed on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, one in front of the retail of Janie’s Garden and one on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way between Osprey Avenue and Links Avenue.



*Parklet example. Photo credit: A Guy on Clematis*



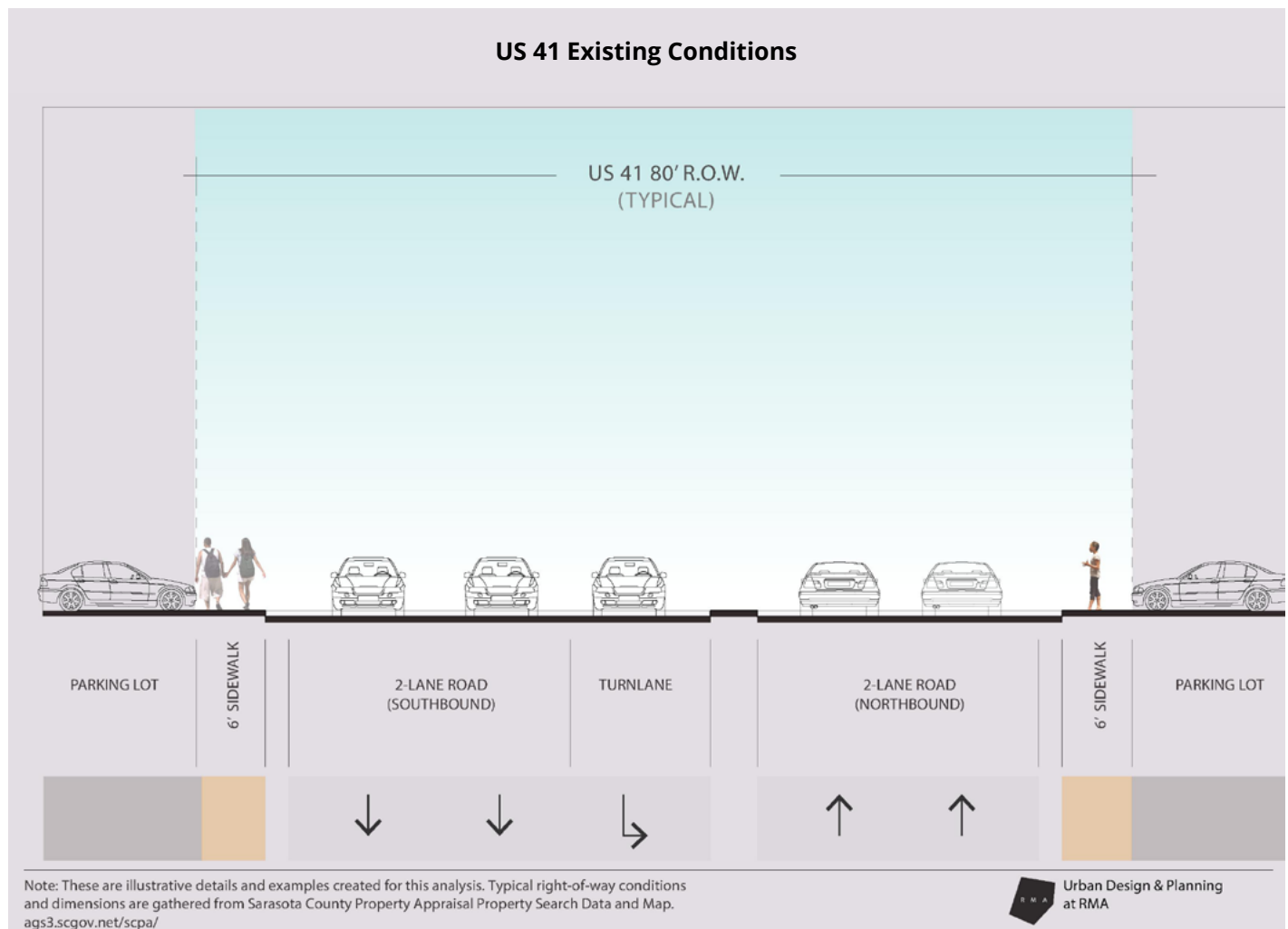
## SECTION 7.0 INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORTATION & CONNECTIVITY

### ► US 41 Master Plan

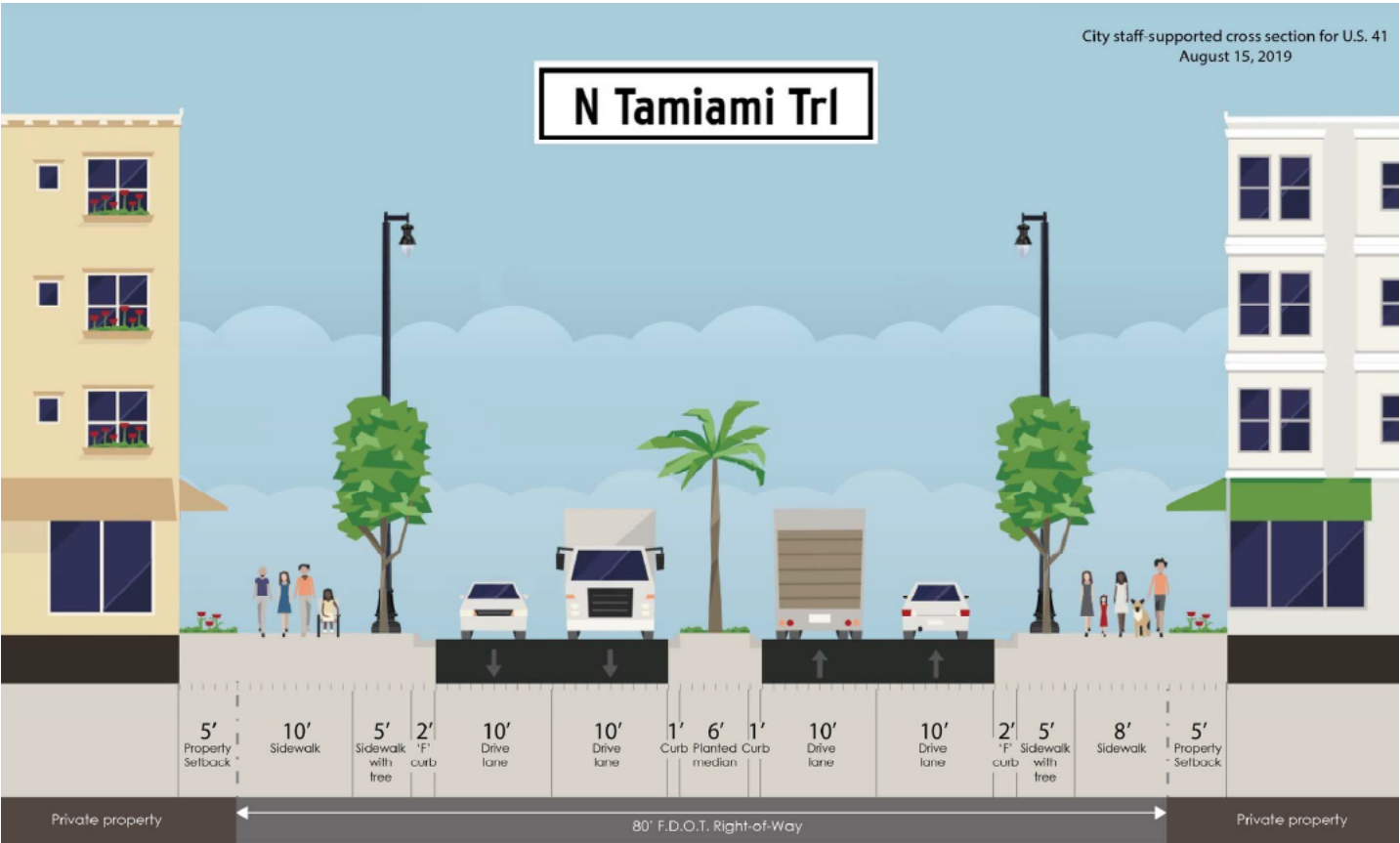
**Overview:** As discussed in [Section 2.4](#), FDOT has plans to improve US 41 including constructing roundabouts at the intersections of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and Myrtle Street.

**Recommendation:** US 41 corridor is a candidate for a technology or innovation corridor, whose office buildings would be filled with technology companies, small start-ups, and incubators, and its housing dotted along the corridor would contain housing quarters for tech workers who would rely on mass transit for transportation (bus), ride-share (Uber, Lyft), bicycling, walking, or other modes of transportation. A new long-term transportation facility could eventually be the jewel of the transportation network system: creating a local mass transit on or near the existing Seaboard Coast Railroad line just east of US 41, which could also serve as a walking and biking track. A 12' to 14' wide trail is being recommended as part of the future Legacy Trail extension. The connection between the airport and downtown could be the first phase of a much larger system of light rail.

However, the County has also studied Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), with a route along US 41. The idea for the technology innovation corridor is that people live, work, recreate, and socialize along US 41 and the light rail or BRT corridor. The concept of the innovation district would transform the character of not only US 41 but would have dramatic influence on the Newtown CRA, the Bay (cultural) TIF district, and on the neighborhoods to the west and east of US 41.



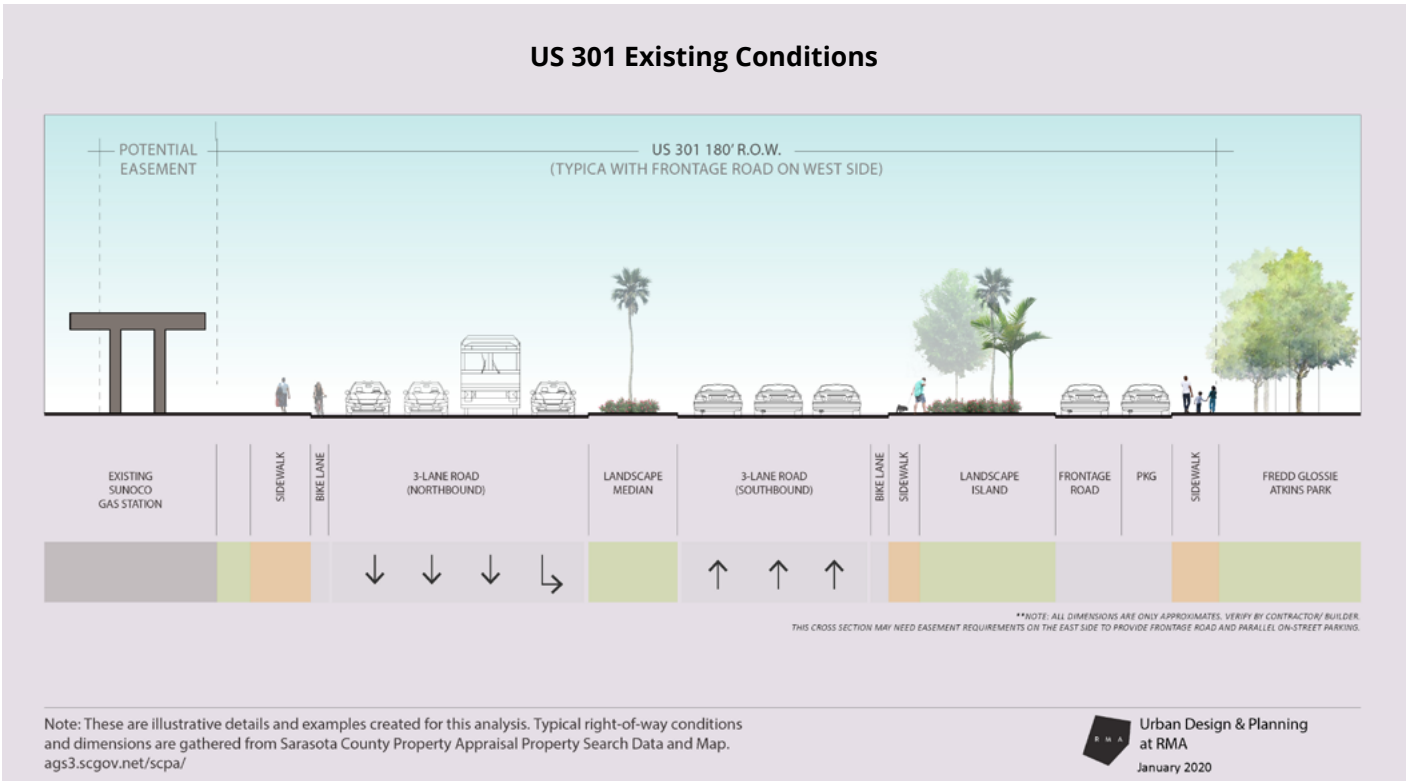
US 41 Staff-Supported Conditions



► US 301 Master Plan

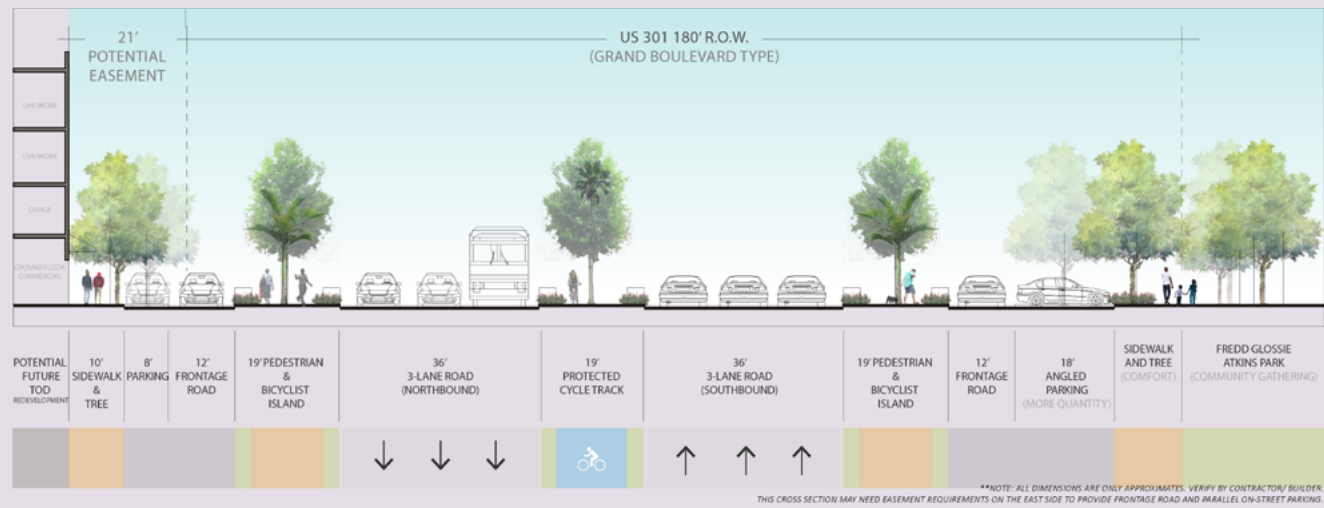
**Overview:** Although a street widening projects has been completed on US 301, it is recommended that additional streetscape improvements be constructed.

**Recommendation:** The US 301 is a corridor in need of a vision of what it wants to be. US 301 needs a vision, a plan, and an implementation team. It needs to be reorganized, and land parcels must be reassembled and redeveloped through larger projects including a mix of uses such as retail, office, housing, and urban industrial. Service roads such as the one in existence just south of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way next to Fredd Atkins Park is a good example. The service road takes higher speed, heavy State Road traffic and redirects it to a local parallel street, a more manageable road for providing housing and commercial. Close by US 301 is another unused asset, a rail line which in a much later phase could be a commuter line for passengers as well as for carrying freight to the urban areas of Sarasota and Sarasota County. Although a street widening projects has been completed, it is recommended that additional streetscape improvements be constructed. The roadway shall have the same six (6) lane capacity, with new frontage/ service road (where applicable), new centered median linear park, protected bicycle paths, new on-street parking, wider sidewalks, shade trees, landscaped dividers, in-pavement crosswalk lighting, and bus-stops with shade cover, seating, weather protection, and lighting.





US 301 “Grand Boulevard” Potential Conditions



Note: These are illustrative details and examples created for this analysis. Typical right-of-way conditions and dimensions are gathered from Sarasota County Property Appraisal Property Search Data and Map. [ags3.scgov.net/scpa/](https://ags3.scgov.net/scpa/). These are conceptual designs meant to convey urban design and complete street concepts and exact measurements (like 10.5 max. lane width of 10.5 ft.) will be addressed in technical design plans.

 Urban Design & Planning  
at RMA  
January 2020

## SECTION 7.0 INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORTATION & CONNECTIVITY

### ► Myrtle Street Plan

**Overview:** As mentioned in [Section 2.4](#), the County will be improving Myrtle Street, however, it will not include all complete street elements. Although Myrtle Street is not currently in the Newtown CRA, and only serves as the northern border of the CRA, it represents an important east-west corridor that will need to be improved to modern urban standards particularly to “complete streets.”

**Recommendation:** This is a project to put on the list of infrastructure projects to study for the County, particularly the section between Tuttle Avenue and US 41. The road is partially improved to modern standards near the intersections at US 41 and US 301 already. It could be a safer and better street for residents to traverse if the roadway improvements were continued to the east.

### ► Orange Avenue Improvements and Long-Term Master Plan

**Overview:** Just as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way is the most important local east-west corridor, Orange Avenue has an equally important role as the most important local north-south corridor in the CRA as it is the only north-south continuous street in the district. As discussed in [Section 2.7](#), the City also recently completed a water main replacement along Orange Avenue between Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and 19th Street. Special attention to the infrastructure of Orange Avenue must be taken in order to build what the status of this corridor represents.

**Recommendation:** Orange Avenue like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way is recommended to be a “complete street,” which translates into a roadway with wide sidewalks, streetlights, street furniture, shade trees, and way finding. On-street parking is preferable but this element of “complete streets” may require additional right of way. This Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 does recommend that a broad view be taken by the City about Orange Avenue, and a study of designing and building over the next twenty years a roadway that promotes walking, biking, parking, and connecting to the many amenities in the nearby community be conducted. A “complete street” design may require additional right of way from private property owners in order to obtain wider sidewalks, protected bicycle lanes, and on-street parking. On-street parking is included in the vision for Orange Avenue because the parking provides a buffer to the pedestrian, slows down travel speeds of automobiles, and provides parking on the street preventing the need to park on front lawns of single-family and multi-family buildings.

#### ► Infrastructure

Infrastructure includes a list of individual elements of streets including the roadway itself, on-street parking, water distribution system, sanitary sewer collection system, re-use water distribution, stormwater collection system, other storm water retention areas, sidewalks, bike pathways or shared paths, shade trees, undergrounding overhead utilities, street lighting, signage, street furniture, way finding signage, banners designating the brand of the area, announcements of an event and other modern electronic devices. This Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 discusses the design and construction of many of these elements of infrastructure on particular roadways.

#### ► Connecting the Downtown and to the Airport

Orange Avenue south of Newtown runs through the downtown and even south of Ringling Boulevard. However, north of downtown the roadway is interrupted by a dead end at Myrtle Street. This Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 suggests a study to test the feasibility of running the roadway north of the dead end and connecting to Desoto Road, in the first phase, followed by another phase that runs from Desoto Road to University Parkway. Connecting the downtown to the airport is an important objective since both areas are expanding dramatically. Also, potentially work with the County to explore feasibility of acquisition of 1600 Independence Blvd. and 3700 Orange Ave.

### ► City or Sarasota and Sarasota County Capital Improvement Programs

**Overview:** Plans for Capital Improvement Projects in the pipeline for the City and County are described in [Section 2.7](#).

**Recommendation:** CRA staff should keep communications with the City Public Works Department and County staff regarding any capital improvement projects near or bordering the CRA and advocate for improvements that are going to increase mobility options, infrastructure capacity, and revitalization in the CRA.

## SECTION 7.0 INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORTATION & CONNECTIVITY

### 7.3 Recommended New CRA Projects

There are additional programs and projects that the CRA could implement to provide improved streetscapes, connectivity, and transportation options.

#### ► Gateway to Newtown CRA from US 41 and US 301

The geographic position of two intersections with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, US 41, and US 301 are important gateways both to the Newtown community but also to connect with other parts of the City. The Gateways are prominent to Newtown and could be noted with two significant infrastructure improvements: roundabouts and gateway signage.

#### ► Gateway Roundabouts

Recently the FDOT designed a roundabout for the intersection of US 41 and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way. A graphic is depicted in [Section 2.4](#). The roundabout will slow traffic in all four directions and will eliminate the need for a traffic signal. Its effect will be to make the accessibility to Newtown and to the Ringling College of Art + Design. An additional request to the FDOT may be desired by the CRA to also design a rotary roundabout at the intersection of US 301 and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Although the US 301 roadway is a more complicated than US 41 and would require a larger area for the roundabout, the design would be more European in design by dealing with multiple lanes rotating around the circle.

#### ► Gateway Markers

Markers in the form of art works would be an appropriate addition to the gateways. Since the Ringling College of Art is the predominant institution on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and since the CRA is proposing an “Art Walk” along the corridor, it would be appropriate to install gateway markers that are art works. The College and the City will need to raise the funds to purchase or have art built for installation at the intersections. Art together with the roundabout would make the entrances to the CRA more welcoming.

#### ► Secondary Street Improvements

There are several secondary streets within the CRA that could be improved to create a “complete street.” Complete streets are streets designed and operated to enable safe use and support mobility for all users. A study of these secondary streets and a plan of improvements to them would be advantageous to develop. It is recommended that 18th Street (between Orange Avenue and US 301) and 21<sup>st</sup> Street (between Orange Avenue and US 301) be improved first. Phase II may include Osprey Avenue, Gillespie Avenue, and 31<sup>st</sup> Street between those two streets. Phase III is recommended to include Central Avenue and Cocoanut Avenue. Phase IV could include Lemon Avenue and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street (between Cocoanut Avenue and Lemon Avenue). Improvements to these roads should include widening sidewalks, crosswalks with in-pavement lighting, adding shade trees, bike lanes, on-street parking, and ensuring all bus-stops have seating, lighting, weather coverage, and shade. However, the process of transforming these aforementioned roadways into complete streets may be done in conjunction with the redevelopment of property bordering the streets. With a master plan that includes the cross sections of the streets, the City may want to consider asking a new development to adhere to the future development standards of the adopted vision.



## SECTION 7.0 INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORTATION & CONNECTIVITY

### ► Legacy Trail Expansion Phase III

The CRA should support the development of an urban trail for biking, skateboarding, walking, and other non-motorized modes of transportation along the railroad right-of-way in North Sarasota, a project referred to as the Legacy Trail North. Fences constructed along the trail within the CRA could serve as a canvas for public art and/or as a celebration of Newtown's history. The trail will provide connectivity for the Newtown community, as well as serving as a recreational asset.

### ► Long Term Study for Mass Transit

Mass transit will become more of an important piece of the City's growth in the future. The County has explored Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) along a few of the main corridors in Newtown including US 41, Old Bradenton Road, and the Seminole Gulf formally Seaboard Coast. Additionally, the two railroad lines, one in the CRA just east of Lemon Avenue (Seaboard Coast Railroad) and one east of US 301 (Seminole Gulf Railway), could have a role to play in the long-term growth of the City and County for passenger rail. The BRT or passenger rail could carry people to their destinations or at least within walking, biking or ride-share distances, along with providing opportunities for transit-oriented development. The CRA and City could initiate with the County a study of the future role of the mass transit, especially connection from Downtown to the Airport. As traffic increases and residents demand that government do something about the inconvenient and unpleasant experience of driving, a solution increasing mass transit options should be initiated. The CRA and City may also want to include mass transit in the development of the master transportation plan. The City is participating in SCAT's (Sarasota County Area Transit) transit system redesign now.

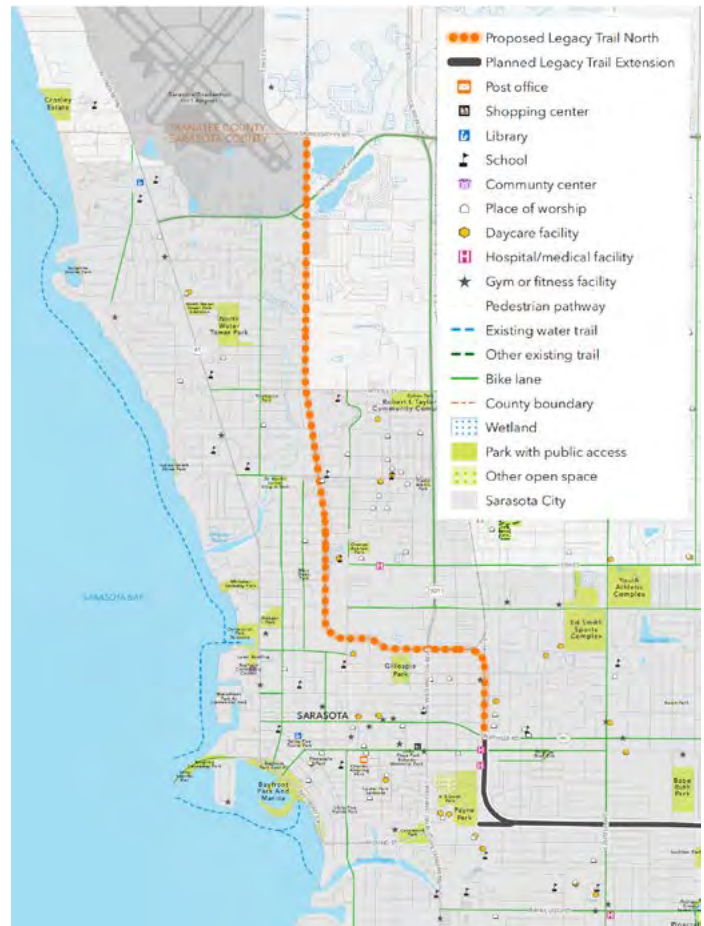
### ► Rideshare Accessibility and other Mobility Endeavors

It is recommended the CRA encourage the City to consider, as other cities its size have done, to contract with ride share and other mobility vendors to provide short distance rides from Newtown to places of employment, health care, entertainment, education, recreation, and other important destinations. In public meetings with Newtown residents, some of the Newtown residents do not have convenient access to transportation and need such in order to reach their destination such as a job interview or medical appointment. Coupons could be made available to residents of Newtown of very low income that cannot afford ride share or other mobility companies and these could be funded by a grant or by Medicare or Medicaid. Additionally, the CRA may also explore working with City and County to provide 6-passenger golf carts or other micro-transit option to transport Newtown residents to downtown and other major employment clusters in the City or County.

### ► Street Grid Connection

Many streets throughout Newtown dead-end at some point within the Newtown CRA District. If the opportunity becomes available and there is support, through-connection of streets (like Coconut Avenue and Central Avenue) could be first studied by the City in cooperation with the CRA staff, and then over time dead-ends could be connected in order to create more accessibility for residents and visitors. Dead-ends are not good for traffic management nor for low income neighborhoods.

Legacy Trail North (Expansion) Map  
from Sarasota in Motion 2020



## SECTION 8.0 QUALITY OF LIFE

---

### 8.1 General Overview

There are many factors that contribute to a resident's satisfaction with their communities. The Knight Foundation's 2020 Community Ties Report revealed that attachment to a place was deeper for people who spent more time in the main City, as well as those who reported choosing the City for "quality of life" reasons versus those there for family or jobs. In the same report, quality of life was defined in very general terms, with respondents saying that they just like the area, its vibrancy, its strong economy or its affordability. There are some areas that affect a resident's quality of life, that the CRA may not have domain over, but can influence to better the overall quality of life for residents. Improving the quality of life for Newtown residents will produce more satisfied citizens, so it is recommended the CRA work with partners in increasing educational achievement, encouraging healthier communities, addressing environmental sustainability, and implementing strategies to make the community feel safe.

### 8.2 Recommendations for Existing Projects in the CRA

There are many existing programs and projects within the CRA that are working to improve the quality of life for residents. The continuation of these programs and projects could help residents feel a more meaningful attachment to their community.

#### ► Fredd "Glossie" Atkins Park

**Overview:** The City has already undertaken many dramatic improvements to the Fredd "Glossie" Atkins Park based on the 2014 Urban Design Studio conceptual plan.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended to continue improvements to the park, including creating a plaza atmosphere, adding amenities and features for all ages, as well as additional streetscape improvements presented in the 2018 Parks + Recreation Master Plan, like space for food trucks, movable tables and chairs, and park-oriented mixed-use nearby. The CRA could also work with Town Hall building owner to open the building on to the park and include outdoor seating.

#### ► Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park

**Overview:** Improvements to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park have been implemented recently with the renovation of the restroom and kitchen.

**Recommendation:** Additional improvements to create a plaza atmosphere and gathering space for special events could be implemented as well, including adding amenities and features for all ages as suggested in the 2018 Parks + Recreation Master Plan like space for food trucks, moveable tables & chairs, multi-purpose lawn, and natural areas with environmental education exhibits. In addition, construction of a brick-and-mortar coffeeshop in the park is recommended.

#### ► Community Gardens

**Overview:** The CRA district already has two community gardens, Bayou Oaks Community Garden and Orange Blossom Community Garden.

**Recommendation:** The CRA may want to work with neighborhood associations, gardening organizations like Selby Gardens and the Sarasota Garden Club, to bring community gardens to all parks in Newtown. The community gardens could also serve as an educational experience with programming on healthy eating options, quick meals, and growing one's own food. If the community gardens are able to, they should sell produce or memberships to the community gardens at the Farmer's Market and become a weekly vendor.

## SECTION 8.0 QUALITY OF LIFE

---

### 8.3 Recommended New CRA Programs

There are additional programs and projects that the CRA could implement to improve the quality of life for residents.

#### ► Education

42.4% of Newtown residents achieve a high school diploma or GED/alternative credential as the highest level of educational attainment, while City-wide 26.5% reach the same achievement as the highest level of educational attainment with 43.5% of the City population achieving higher levels of education (associate, bachelor, or graduate degrees). Educational efforts should be driven by local education professionals including Sarasota County Schools, area colleges, CareerEdge and other technical training stakeholders with support from the CRA. The following strategies are recommended to advance educational outcomes for Newtown residents:

- Partner with area colleges to offer scholarships for Newtown residents. Since Ringling College of Art & Design is located in Newtown, it is suggested to start with that college.
- Work with area colleges to bring training programs to the community that offer skills in the targeted industries and other industries identified in [Section 3.3](#).
- Encourage area colleges to partner in the creation of a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) Incubator for kids at the Robert L. Taylor Community Center.
- Provide administrative support Back to School events in Newtown, especially one that residents can walk or bike to easily. The CRA should encourage community organizations like fraternities or church organizations to produce these events.

#### ► Community Health

The health of a community is integral to the quality of life. Residents should be able to live in a safe environment and have a plethora of options for living a healthy and active lifestyle. This is especially critical in Newtown where health disparities exist as evidenced by the Multicultural Health Institute's compilation figures for health information in North Sarasota, which found the following:

- 1 in 4 residents of Census Tract 3 (large portion of Newtown is located in this tract) did not have health insurance in 2016.
- More emergency room visits due to asthma come from ZIP code 34234 than any other ZIP code in Sarasota County; residents of ZIP 34234 account for 5.38% of the population of Sarasota County, but accounted for 15.65% of all County hospitalizations in 2016.
- The infant mortality rate for Black or African American residents of Sarasota County was over 3 times higher than that for white residents in 2017.
- In 2016, the Age-Adjusted Coronary Heart Disease Death Rate (per 100,000 population members) in Sarasota County was 155.2 for Black or African American residents and 110.8 for White residents.



## SECTION 8.0 QUALITY OF LIFE

---

### ► Air Quality

The CRA could work with Community Health Action Team (CHAT) to obtain testing and improvements the air quality especially around Booker High School. The redevelopment of the Myrtle Avenue industrial site across the street from Booker High School is recommended to be a high priority as part of the expansion of the CRA boundaries in order to not only build additional tax base but most importantly to eliminate the pollution the property emits and toxifies the Newtown CRA community.

### ► Healthcare

It would be beneficial for the CRA to work with the area healthcare providers, especially Sarasota Memorial Hospital and the Multicultural Health Institute, to try to entice Newtown residents to participate in annual checkups. This can be done during Health Fairs, but organizers could also promote area providers through social media.

### ► Parks

Public parks are important assets for cities. As described in [Section 2.5](#), there are several parks within the CRA. The 2018 City Parks + Recreation Master Plan did not recommend any new parks in Newtown, and does not consider Newtown an underserved area for parks and recreation because there are Local/ Neighborhood Parks within a 10-minute walk. For this reason, this Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 does not recommend any new City parks, but instead recommends improvements to existing parks in Newtown as well as encourages special use open spaces like locations for food trucks, additional community gardens, parklets, pocket parks, public plazas in new developments, and other small park space with special purposes, which can be done by the private or public sector, or a combination of both. For ways to improve and expand green spaces in the district, the following additional strategies are recommended:

- Develop parklets, plazas, alleyways, and pocket parks throughout the CRA district. The development of these smaller special use spaces should occur around the parks along the “main street” Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, including in the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park and Fredd “Glossie” Atkins Park, and along the US 41 and US 301 corridors. The CRA should encourage the City to allow pop-up uses like coffee vendors in these parks. Once this use proves viable, brick-and-mortar buildings for commercial uses around or in the parks should be pursued to create active uses in the parks throughout the day and evening. The CRA should also work with the Parks and Recreation Department to ensure there are amenity features for all ages as recommended in the 2018 City Parks + Recreation Master Plan.
- Encourage the Parks and Recreation Department to develop park programs that support healthy eating, gardening, and education about nutrition.
- Improve parks to allow for openness, community interaction, events and education in partnership with the Parks and Recreation Department like the inclusion of food trucks and movable tables and chairs.
- Partner with the Parks and Recreation Department to implement improvements as described in the 2018 Parks + Recreation Master Plan.
- Work with City Parks and Recreation Department to ensure fees for the Robert L. Taylor Community Complex are affordable for Newtown residents.

## SECTION 8.0 QUALITY OF LIFE

---

### ► Sustainability

The City of Sarasota has a long-standing commitment to environmental sustainability, as illustrated in June 2017 when the City Commission approved Resolution No. 17R-2648, which established a target for 100% renewable energy community-wide by 2045. City staff then led a year long public engagement process to identify strategies to reach this goal, which culminated in a Roadmap to 100 Report that was unanimously approved by City Commission in September 2018. Environmental sustainability is especially important in Newtown as environmental injustice, including the proliferation of climate change, has a disproportionate impact on minority communities in the United States and around the world. CRA Report 2, the Environmental Sustainability Plan, offers several recommendations to address sustainability in the community. Below are recommendations in that report: Develop parklets, plazas, alleyways, and pocket parks throughout the CRA district. The development of these smaller special use spaces should occur around the parks along the “main street” Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, including in the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park and Fredd “Glossie” Atkins Park, and along the US 41 and US 301 corridors. The CRA should encourage the City to allow pop-up uses like coffee vendors in these parks. Once this use proves viable, brick-and-mortar buildings for commercial uses around or in the parks should be pursued to create active uses in the parks throughout the day and evening. The CRA should also work with the Parks and Recreation Department to ensure there are amenity features for all ages as recommended in the 2018 City Parks + Recreation Master Plan.

### ► Lighting Fixtures in the Public Realm

The City and FPL are already in the process of implementing an LED replacement program. Below are additional recommendations for lighting in the public realm:

- LED fixtures should be utilized for any new lighting fixtures installed on:
  - Public rights-of-way
  - City or CRA owned buildings
  - Projects done in partnership with the City or CRA (including building improvement programs and development projects)
- Sarasota Housing Authority projects in Newtown may want to incorporate LED lighting fixtures for both exterior and interior lighting
- The CRA can partner with the City in its Green Building Program that will be looking at potential incentives for new developments that incorporate sustainable building practices

### ► Household Utilities

Households in the Newtown CRA spend an average of 12% of their annual income on energy compared to an average of 2% in households in Sarasota County and the State of Florida. According to the Department of Energy’s Low-Income Energy Affordability Data (LEAD) Tool, the Newtown area has a high percentage of energy burdened households. The following are recommendations to reduce the amount of resources Newtown residents spend on household utilities:

- Support the Sarasota County Energy Upgrade Program directly which offers energy assessments and the installation of low cost, high impact improvements throughout Newtown. Currently the program is offered in select Sarasota Housing Authority units, with plans to expand to other low-income properties in the future. The CRA should collaborate with this group and UF/IFAS Sustainability to conduct workshops and distribute materials to increase energy efficiency, which can provide significant monthly savings for renters and homeowners.
- Work with FPL to increase awareness on FPL’s free home energy surveys. Through this service FPL provides free energy audits to all its customers and each resident in the City of Sarasota can receive a free energy saving kit that includes items like LED light bulbs, caulk, etc.

## SECTION 8.0 QUALITY OF LIFE

- ▶ Partner with the City Sustainability Program and Utility Department to implement a Low-Flow Toilet Rebate Program for installation of 1.6 gallon low-flow toilets in Newtown. According to the Sarasota Climate Justice Coalition's report, toilet flushing accounts for 26% of indoor water use and offering rebates low-flow toilets could lower water bills by 13%. This program should run by the City and targeted to homeowners and property owners.
- ▶ Work with the City to subsidize rain barrels for Newtown residents through the Sarasota County rain barrel program. According to the Sarasota Climate Justice Coalition, outdoor watering uses 40% of summer water use. Conserving rainwater with rain barrels saves money and helps the environment by decreasing stormwater quantity.
- ▶ Encourage City departments to target Homeowners and Property Owners to implement the following:
  - ▶ Urge property owners and homeowners to reach out to the Utilities Department to install reuse system for irrigation. The City has water reuse lines running along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Old Bradenton Road, Central Avenue, John Rivers Street, and a portion of Osprey Avenue (see Exhibit B- Water Reuse Mains in Newtown CRA Map in Report 2). Many low-income families or their landlords will disconnect their yard irrigation, if connected to potable water system, because of the cost of water.
  - ▶ Work with the City to include information about FPL Energy Saving Programs & Rebates in regular utilities bills at least twice a year.
  - ▶ Encourage the City to conduct community outreach to provide residents with information about available programs - Weatherization Assistance Program, Home Energy Assistance Program, alternative utility programs – solar, cisterns, passive solar design, etc.
  - ▶ Recruit financial institutions to the Newtown CRA area to provide financing options for residential and commercial energy and water efficiency, renewable energy and water quality projects with applicants adhering to the financial institution's requirements. Financing products should be available for a wide variety of socio-economic levels and credit backgrounds. The CRA should work with Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD) and other partners to educate community members on the options available for grants and financing for home improvement projects.

### ▶ Solar Energy

There is an untapped opportunity to work with the Sarasota Housing Authority (SHA) to support solar panels on existing SHA sites. One suggestion is to have solar panels installed on the rooftops of the SHA's The Courts complex to create a "solar farm" (a large-scale photovoltaic system (PV system) designed to offset the electricity consumption for residents). The CRA could lead a partnership between the SHA, FPL, and the City to fund this endeavor. If this project were to be implemented, the cost burden of electricity would be lessened for residents. Energy efficiency upgrades would need to be prioritized first to ensure right sizing of the solar system. Additional solar incentives could be offered for Newtown CRA residents to help overcome the upfront financial capital needed for installations. A goal of powering 10% of Newtown households encouraged to be pursued.



*Proposed Solar Farm at The Courts*

### ► Sustainability Initiatives in Projects

The CRA may find it beneficial to include sustainable and energy efficient elements as part of renovation or new development projects in the district. It is recommended the CRA execute the following strategies to include sustainability initiatives in CRA projects:

- Consider having funding bonus (suggest 5-10% as enticement) for including certified green building design elements and initiatives in any CRA programs for renovation or public-private partnerships (P3) projects.
- Encourage “adaptive reuse” for existing buildings, which can attract new markets.
- Include requirements for certain green building design elements for any new CRA project. This could be integrated with the City of Sarasota’s upcoming Green Building Program development.
- Work with the Sarasota Housing Authority (SHA) to require energy saving measures in their projects. The SHA implements these elements, illustrating its applicability and potential for private development projects. This is especially important, as the SHA has constructed most of the new multi-family projects in Newtown, and a 2016 study through the NY Furman Center found that the low-income units had “statistically significant” higher EUI (energy use intensity, the amount of energy a household uses per square foot) levels than similar market-rate units.
- Construct drywell systems, rain gardens, and bioswales where appropriate. These stormwater capture and filtration systems divert water away from sewer and storm drains and back to the natural environment.
- Create green or park spaces for the community and residents, including parklets on urban streets that feature mixed-use development. Reference to the City of Sarasota’s Parks Master Plan should be made for priorities identified in the Newtown CRA.
- Establish goals for CRA projects to obtain LEED certification or Florida Green Building Coalition certification.

### ► Other Sustainability Initiatives

- The Ready for 100 report recommends creating a Newtown Energy Investment District (EID). EIDs are a concept developed by the Center for Social Inclusion as a policy solution that enable communities, particularly communities of color, to develop local renewable energy generation and energy efficiency programs that are accountable to the community and produce healthier neighborhoods, reduce energy costs, create good jobs, build the local economy, and combat climate change. The Sarasota Climate Justice Coalition recommended establishing an Energy Equity Fund to support this work and to develop targeted programs to increase energy performance in new and existing low- and moderate – income residential and multi-family buildings.
- The CRA could work with the City to expand residential and commercial composting programs to improve soil and water quality while creating local green jobs. The Sarasota Climate Justice Coalition points out that in cities which have implemented municipal composting, brownfields are often used as locations for the facilities, and it could be an opportunity for the Marian Anderson site. Although composting would be a great endeavor, previous public input on the desired uses of the Marian Anderson site illustrated a preference for an institutional and/or a mixed-use project. However, having green jobs training through a vocational use at the Marian Anderson site would be appropriate.
- The CRA may want to consider working with Sarasota County Schools to advocate installing air filters at Booker High School. A recent study has found that installing air filters in classrooms has surprisingly large educational benefits<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>7</sup><https://www.edworkingpapers.com/ai20-188>



## SECTION 8.0 QUALITY OF LIFE

---

### ► **Safety**

Although the crime rate in Newtown has decreased nearly 41% since 2006\*, there is still a perception that Newtown is unsafe. The CRA could implement these strategies to combat this view:

#### ► **CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design)**

The CRA may want to consider providing support for programs and activities that encourage safety through CPTED. The CRA could encourage City and CRA projects to adopt CPTED principles.

#### ► **Neighborhood Watch**

The CRA can establish or reignite a Neighborhood Watch program. A dedicated group of residents could be encouraged to walk through neighborhoods weekly. It has been voiced that the Wright-Bush house is a focal point of Newtown, so is suggested that location serve as the meeting point.

#### ► **Sarasota Police Department Community Service**

The CRA could work with the Sarasota Police Department (SPD) to encourage community engagement by having officers walk or bike, not drive during routine patrols in the district. The City, CRA, and SPD can create a community participation event where officers help the community. For example, officers could make minor improvements (cleaning, painting, landscape) to homes in Newtown; it would be good to start with Wright-Bush house or homes owned by the elderly.

*\*Sarasota Police Department Crime Statistics, Newtown, 2006-2018*

## SECTION 9.0 ADMINISTRATION & GOVERNANCE

---

### 9.1 General Overview

The administration of the CRA is critical in accomplishing the numerous programs and projects that are described in this Newtown CRA Plan of 2021. Any initiatives that enable the agency to effectively and efficiently to produce required documents and implement projects and programs should be pursued. The following sections describe administrative measures that are recommended to be pursued.

### 9.2 Recommendations for Existing CRA Programs

#### ► CRA Plan Updates, Annual Report, and Other Reporting Requirements

As a routine matter it is recommended the CRA update its CRA Redevelopment Plan every five to ten years, noting its accomplishments, confirming its priorities which may have not yet been completed, and adopting additional initiatives to be accomplished in one, five, and ten-year increments. This Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 is an update from the original CRA Plan adopted in 2008, a period of 12 years. Furthermore, the CRA on an annual basis will present to the public a progress report, describing its accomplishments for the year. The Annual Report presentation will also be an opportunity for the CRA to obtaining public input about not only the progress report but also about other suggested initiatives. The Annual Report shall be listed on the CRA Website per Florida Statute 163.371(2). The CRA shall also produce other reporting requirements per Florida Statute 163.371.

#### ► Communication Program for Public Outreach

It is recommended the CRA increase its communication with the public and with other departments of the City and County so that all parties are working for the same goal of improving the Newtown CRA. The CRA currently prepares a quarterly newsletter and will continue with this communication publication. However, as noted in some of the public input in 2019 with residents, the use of social media is an important tool to utilize in communications and promotion of public meetings within the Newtown CRA. The CRA is encouraged to improve its website per Florida Statute 189.069 and use social media for communication in addition to producing newsletters.

#### ► Grant Procurement

It is recommended the CRA coordinate with the City's grant writer to fund projects in need of capital for infrastructure. The CRA staff will provide each year prior to the beginning of a new year a list of capital that is needed to fund CRA initiatives and projects. Some of these projects may be infrastructure, others may be for cultural events, and other for capital building improvements.

9.3 Recommended New CRA Programs

► CRA Boundary

The Newtown Redevelopment Area was established per Resolution No. 06R-1901 on June 5, 2006. In that resolution, the City Commission found that one or more slum and blighted areas existed in the area depicted in an accompanying exhibit generally shown as the area bounded by North Tamiami Trail, Myrtle Street, the Railroad Right-of-Way east of US 301, and 17<sup>th</sup> Street. The 2006 Resolution is found in the Appendix of this Plan. See Technical Memo 2 for the legal description.

During the process of resurveying the CRA Boundary, it was discovered that some parcels along the eastern boundary being counted as part of the CRA by Sarasota County Property Appraiser records are only partially included in what was shown in the Resolution No. 06R-1901 exhibit. Parcels in the CRA Boundary are also in the City of Sarasota, however there are 7 parcels between the eastern CRA Boundary and the Seminole Gulf Railway that are in the City and not the CRA (Property IDs 0028120014, 0028120015, 0028120016, 0028120017, 0028120018, 0028120019, and 0028120020) and 18 parcels between the eastern CRA Boundary and Seminole Gulf Railway that are in the County but not in the City (listed below). It is recommended that an interlocal be crafted between the City and County reconciling the awkward condition. It is advised the City incorporate the 7 parcels listed above into the CRA Boundary and the County may agree to let the City annex the portion of property solely in the County and likewise agree to let the CRA adjust the boundary of the CRA to include the parcels west of the Seminole Gulf Railway. A City Resolution could add portions of property currently not in the City but later annexed to be included in the CRA.

**The following are Property IDs of County parcels between the eastern CRA Boundary and the Seminole Gulf Railway:**

- |              |              |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| ► 0028130069 | ► 0028130042 | ► 0028130014 | ► 0043120102 |
| ► 0028130068 | ► 0028130041 | ► 0028130013 | ► 0041050043 |
| ► 0028130067 | ► 0028130040 | ► 0043120051 | ► 0043130015 |
| ► 0028130066 | ► 0028130016 | ► 0043120064 |              |
| ► 0028130043 | ► 0028130015 | ► 0043120079 |              |

## SECTION 9.0 ADMINISTRATION & GOVERNANCE

---

### ► CRA Boundary Expansion

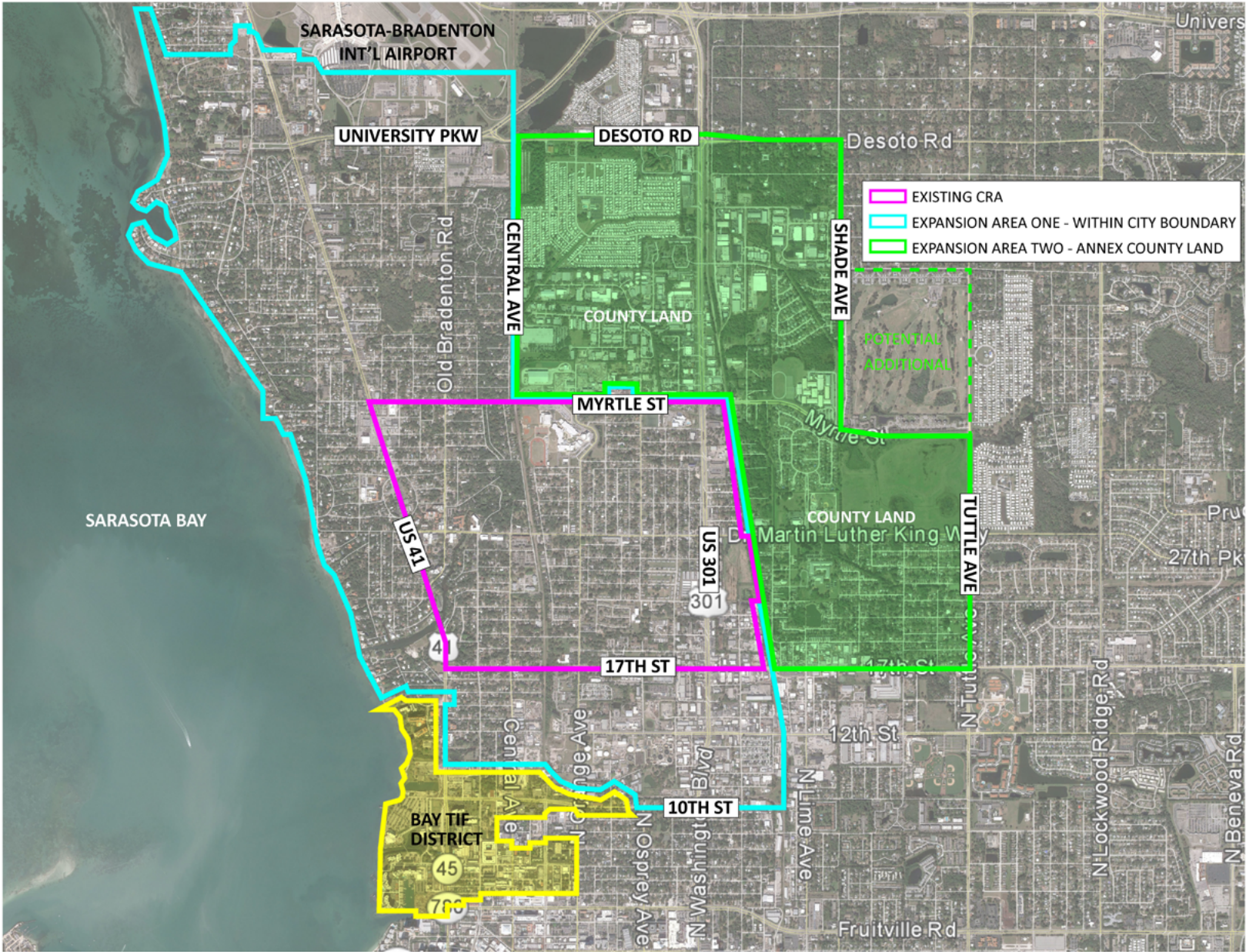
It is recommended that the current CRA boundary, containing approximately 838 acres, be expanded in two phases, the first of which can be implemented over a period of two to four years. The first phase for Expansion Area One would be to incorporate areas that lie within the City limits of Sarasota: south from 17th Street to the Bay TIF district/10th Street (including the entire right of way), north from Myrtle Street to northern City limits (including the entire right of way and parts of the airport where they are contemplating developing a mixed-use business park, and west from the center line of US 41 to Sarasota Bay, including both sides of US 41 and the subdivisions touching the Bay, such as Indian Beach and Sapphire Shores, as well as the Colleges, Ringling Museum and the commercial properties. The expansion would yield an additional 1,666 acres for the district.

Expansion Area One contains coastal resort and tourist areas which are deteriorating and economically distressed due to building density patterns, inadequate transportation and parking facilities, faulty lot layout, or inadequate street layout, and could be revitalized and redeveloped in a manner that will vastly improve the economic and social conditions of the community as identified in Florida Statute 163.335(4). Tourism is the top industry in Sarasota County, providing jobs and attracting households to choose the City as the place to live in and work in. This is one reason area leaders proposed the creation of a Bay TIF District to redevelop the 53-acre waterfront City-owned property into the cultural, arts and educational destination with public access to the bay. The cultural Bay TIF District is north of Sarasota's downtown and located on one of the most important north-south corridors in the community, US 41. Sarasota will now brand itself as the cultural capital of Florida. With the advent of the Bay TIF District, the role of the North Trail now changes; it no longer can remain as simply a thoroughfare to downtown, a particularly unattractive one at that. The Trail could be an important partner with the Bay TIF District in providing support services that will enhance the project and contribute to its success. Without a new and improved Trail, the cultural Bay TIF District will suffer. The Trail redevelopment suggested in Technical Memo 4 (see [Section 11](#)) is important to establish in order to ensure the success of the cultural Bay TIF District. Furthermore, the Trail itself contains several very important facilities making up the long list of Sarasota's cultural facilities, including the Ringling Museum, the Asolo Theatre, and the Ringling College of Art and Design, which contains its own cultural facilities of film and visual arts. These Trail facilities need to be linked to the cultural Bay TIF District.

A second expansion area (Expansion Area Two) of the Newtown CRA would require annexation of properties within Sarasota County, not currently within the City limits, yielding an additional 1,321 acres. The City included this expansion area in the CRA Plan to retain the opportunity to explore this option over time yet recognizes the associated logistical and political challenges and need to coordinate with Sarasota County. The Expansion Area Two would run north of the current CRA boundary to Desoto Road from Central Avenue and to Shade Avenue, then continuing south along Shade Avenue to Myrtle Street, east along Myrtle Street to North Tuttle Avenue, then south along Tuttle Avenue to 17th Street, and finally west along 17th Street to the current CRA boundary. The two phased expansions would result in a CRA, containing approximately 3,825 acres, that would incorporate additional commercial property on US 41, US 301, University Parkway, the airport and North Tuttle Avenue. Within those new areas are several large vacant parcels that, once developed, would contribute tax increment (TIF) income to the district and add additional consumers into the market. The CRA has projected in this Plan that the future tax increment income for the current Newtown CRA district is projected to be \$12,963,745 over the next 26 years, or an average of \$498,605 annually, an amount insufficient to carry out meaningful CRA redevelopment projects. Note that because of the small amount currently of tax increment income, the City provides additional funds to the District in order to operate and to carry out redevelopment, an example of which is the recent beautification and rebuilding of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way. The projected total TIF income over the next 26 years for the existing CRA district and the two expansion areas amounts to \$108,051,580 an amount likely to make a positive economic change in the expanded Newtown CRA. The new boundary of the CRA would geographically boarder part of its boundary with the proposed Bay TIF District. [Refer to Technical Memo 4, Boundary Expansion](#), for more details how the two expansion areas qualify for slum and blight according to the State Statute.



Potential CRA Expansion Areas Map  
April 2020



## SECTION 9.0 ADMINISTRATION & GOVERNANCE

---

### ► Positive Results from Boundary Expansion

- The current district of 838 acres is blighted and contains little developable property. The community is dominated by small lot single-family homes, many of which are in poor condition. Instead of acquiring houses and tearing them down to create a development site, a more sensitive approach would be to assist existing property owners to rehabilitate their homes, some of which are historic. Expansion areas described above would contribute an opportunity for redevelopment if added to the district and would result in more meaningful tax increment with which to assist both the Newtown Area as well as the new areas. The significant areas are listed below.
- US 41 Redevelopment of commercial property in the North Trail Corridor could contain mixed-use of housing, office, hotel, and retail fronting the corridor. The City is currently studying creating a program for revitalizing the corridor, called The North Trail. For the Trail to be revitalized and have its infrastructure improved, it is important to also have TIF funds for this area.
- University Parkway is likewise an important commercial corridor, and it already contains hotels that serve the tourism and business industries in Sarasota County. The likelihood of building more hotel facilities and area amenities such as restaurants is very high. The Sarasota Bradenton Airport is an important facility for tourism, redevelopment, and employment.
- US 301 will need many years of redevelopment and repurposing to turn the corridor into a more urban and livable environment.

## SECTION 10.0 CONCLUSION & IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY

---

The Newtown CRA has completed many projects and implemented several programs since its inception to revitalize the community. This Newtown CRA Plan of 2021 recommends additional projects and programs for the next phase of redevelopment in the district. The proposed schedule below provides a timeline for those recommended projects and programs to be implemented, however does not include programs that are currently ongoing and are recommended to continue in this Plan. The schedule of the projects is based on the community's input on priorities or the need to start projects for sequencing.

## SECTION 10.0 CONCLUSION & IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY

Newtown CRA Plan Schedule				Project Duration																									
Fiscal Years 2021-2046				Short-Term						Mid-Term												Long-Term							
	CIP No.	2020 CRA Plan Reference	Project Name	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031	FY 2032	FY 2033	FY 2034	FY 2035	FY 2036	FY 2037	FY 2038	FY 2039	FY 2040	FY 2041	FY 2042	FY 2043	FY 2044	FY 2045	FY 2046
Short-Term Projects	1	7.2	Newtown Pedestrian Lighting																										
	2	3.2	Miss Susie’s Kitchen																										
	3	4.2	Leonard Reid House Relocation & Renovation																										
	4	3.2	Acquisition																										
	5	5.2	Marion Anderson Site Development																										
		4.3	CRA Website Update, Social Media & Communications																										
		3.3	Business Attraction & Retention																										
		6.3	Special Event Zoning																										
	6	4.2	Newtown Cultural Arts & History Center																										
		4.2	Historic District Designation																										
		9.3	Boundary Expansion																										
		3.2	North Trail Economic Development Plan																										
		6.2	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way Master Plan																										
		4.3	Newtown Arts District Development																										
		3.3	Targeted Industry Job Training & Workforce Development																										
		7.2	US 41 Master Plan																										
		4.3	Brand Development & Marketing																										

Legend	
Planning	
Design	
Procurement & Permitting	
Construction/Implementation	



## SECTION 10.0 CONCLUSION & IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY

Newtown CRA Plan Schedule				Project Duration																									
Fiscal Years 2021-2046				Short-Term						Mid-Term										Long-Term									
	CIP No.	2020 CRA Plan Reference	Project Name	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031	FY 2032	FY 2033	FY 2034	FY 2035	FY 2036	FY 2037	FY 2038	FY 2039	FY 2040	FY 2041	FY 2042	FY 2043	FY 2044	FY 2045	FY 2046
Mid-Term Projects	7	5.3	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Mixed-Use Development Site																										
		4.3	Music & Art Events																										
	8	7.3	Gateway Markers and Art																										
	9	7.2	Orange Avenue Streetscape Plan																										
		4.3	Park Pop-Ups																										
	10	8.3	SHA Solar Panel Installation																										
		8.3	Sustainability Initiatives																										
	11	7.3	Legacy Trail Expansion Phase III																										
		7.3	Rideshare & Other Mobility Endeavors																										
	12	8.2	Fredd “Glossie” Atkins Park Improvements																										
	13	8.2	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park Improvements																										
	14	7.3	Secondary Streets Improvement Plan																										
Long-Term Projects	15	3.2	US 301 Acquisition Sites Development																										
	16	7.2	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way Streetscape Study & Implementation																										
	17	7.3	US 301 Streetscape & Corridor Master Plan																										
	18	5.2	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Infill Sites Development																										
	19	7.3	Mass Transit Study																										

Legend	
Planning	
Design	
Procurement & Permitting	
Construction/Implementation	

## SECTION 11.0 TECHNICAL MEMOS & REPORTS

---

### 11.1 Technical Memo 1

Gap Analysis between Concept Plan and Completed Project List and Map 1: Completed Projects to Date.  
[REFER TO SEPARATE TECHNICAL MEMO](#)

### 11.2 Technical Memo 2

Legal Description of the Newtown CRA Boundary  
[REFER TO SEPARATE TECHNICAL MEMO](#)

### 11.3 Technical Memo 3

Community Meeting Results Analysis and Public Survey Results Analysis  
[REFER TO SEPARATE TECHNICAL MEMO](#)

### 11.4 Technical Memo 4

Finding of Necessity Analysis for CRA Boundary Expansion  
[REFER TO SEPARATE TECHNICAL MEMO](#)

### 11.5 Technical Memo 5

Economic Sustainability Plan  
[REFER TO SEPARATE TECHNICAL MEMO](#)

### 11.6 Report 1

Land Use and Zoning Recommendations  
[REFER TO SEPARATE REPORT](#)

### 11.7 Report 2

Strategic Energy Saving Plan Recommendations  
[REFER TO SEPARATE REPORT](#)

### 11.8 Report 3

TIF Projections  
[REFER TO SEPARATE REPORT](#)

### 11.9 Report 4

Capital Improvement Projects Plan  
[REFER TO SEPARATE REPORT](#)

*REFER TO SEPARATE APPENDICES*

**12.1 Resolution No. 21R-2985, Approval by the City Commission of the CRA Redevelopment Plan of 2021.**

**12.2 Resolution No. 08R-2037 Approval by the City Commission of the CRA Redevelopment Plan of 2008. If any conflicts arise between the 2008 Newtown CRA Plan and the Newtown CRA Plan of 2021, then the latter will override the conflict.**

**12.3 Resolution No. 06R-1901 Approval by the City Commission of the Creation of the Newtown CRA**

**12.4 CRA Boundary Legal Description**

**Exhibit 1: Neighborhood Ambassador Program**

REFER TO SEPARATE EXHIBIT





The background of the entire image is a dark teal color with a white line-art pattern representing a city street grid. The grid is composed of various rectangular and polygonal shapes of different sizes, creating a complex, interconnected network. In the center of the image, there is a white, irregular pentagonal shape. Inside this shape, the letters 'R M A' are printed in a dark, sans-serif font, spaced out horizontally.

R M A

REINVENTING YOUR CITY