

city of vero beach | vision team | gould evans

vero beach vision plan

Vero Beach Vision Plan

City of Vero Beach, Florida

Prepared in cooperation with:

The Vero Beach Vision Team and The Citizens of Vero Beach

Prepared by:

Gould Evans Associates

4041 Mill Street

Kansas City, Missouri 64111

Adopted by the Vero Beach, Florida City Council

February 24, 2005

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface/Executive Summary.....	iii
Chapter One: Introduction.....	1-1
1.1 Regional Context	1-2
1.2 Local History	1-3
1.3 Physical Characteristics	1-3
1.4 Demographics	1-4
1.5 Economics	1-7
1.6 Considerations for the Future	1-10
Chapter Two: Visioning Process.....	2-1
2.1 City Council Mandate	2-2
2.2 Vision Team	2-2
2.3 Public Meetings	2-3
2.4 Community Survey	2-4
2.5 Key Person Interviews / Individual Meetings	2-5
2.6 Vision / Physical Framework Alternatives	2-6
Chapter Three: Vero Beach Vision.....	3-1
3.1 Vision Statement	3-2
3.2 Vero Beach Concept Plan	3-3
3.3 Commercial Districts	3-4
3.4 Neighborhoods	3-15
3.5 Industry and Employment	3-18
3.6 Roadways, Infrastructure, and Wayfinding	3-19
3.7 Planning and Development Regulations	3-22
Chapter Four: Implementation.....	4-1
4.1 Implementation Matrix	4-2

p r e f a c e

In 2003, with the City of Vero Beach addressing significant issues regarding growth, development, and overall city character, the City Council decided to pursue a "visioning process." Different from a comprehensive plan, which is mandated by State statute and has substantial technical requirements, a "vision plan" broadly engages the public and seeks a community consensus for the future direction of the City. From the visioning effort, future comprehensive plan amendments, ordinance changes, and administrative adjustments may be pursued.

e x e c u t i v e s u m m a r y

During the visioning process, which began in early 2004, a significant number of Vero Beach citizens and "stakeholders" engaged in community town hall meetings, interviews, focus groups, and a community-wide survey that elicited opinions regarding key problems, issues, opportunities, goals, priorities, and visions for the community. The City Council appointed a diverse fifteen member "Vision Team" to work with the staff and consultants to develop a cohesive vision statement and report that was consistent with public input.

Priorities that emerged included preservation of the community's character, the maintenance of vibrant commercial centers, architectural and site design considerations, community and economic development issues, and implementation strategies.

ALTERNATIVE FUTURES AND VISION

Based on the community's input and an understanding of the demographic trends for Vero Beach, a series of diverse alternatives were formulated. They were developed to encourage a community debate concerning the future city "patterns." One alternative represented a "status quo" or "stay the course" attitude. A second alternative sought to enhance the unique character of specific city districts. Finally, a third alternative attempted to direct market and development influences.

From the discussion that followed in both a community-wide open house and Vision Team meetings, a vision and concept plan emerged. The vision statement:

"Vero Beach...the crown jewel of the Treasure Coast."

Inherent in this statement is the desire of Vero Beach citizens to continue to be one of central Florida's premier places to live. Along with inevitable change, Vero Beach must be proactive in maintaining its unique character and attributes.

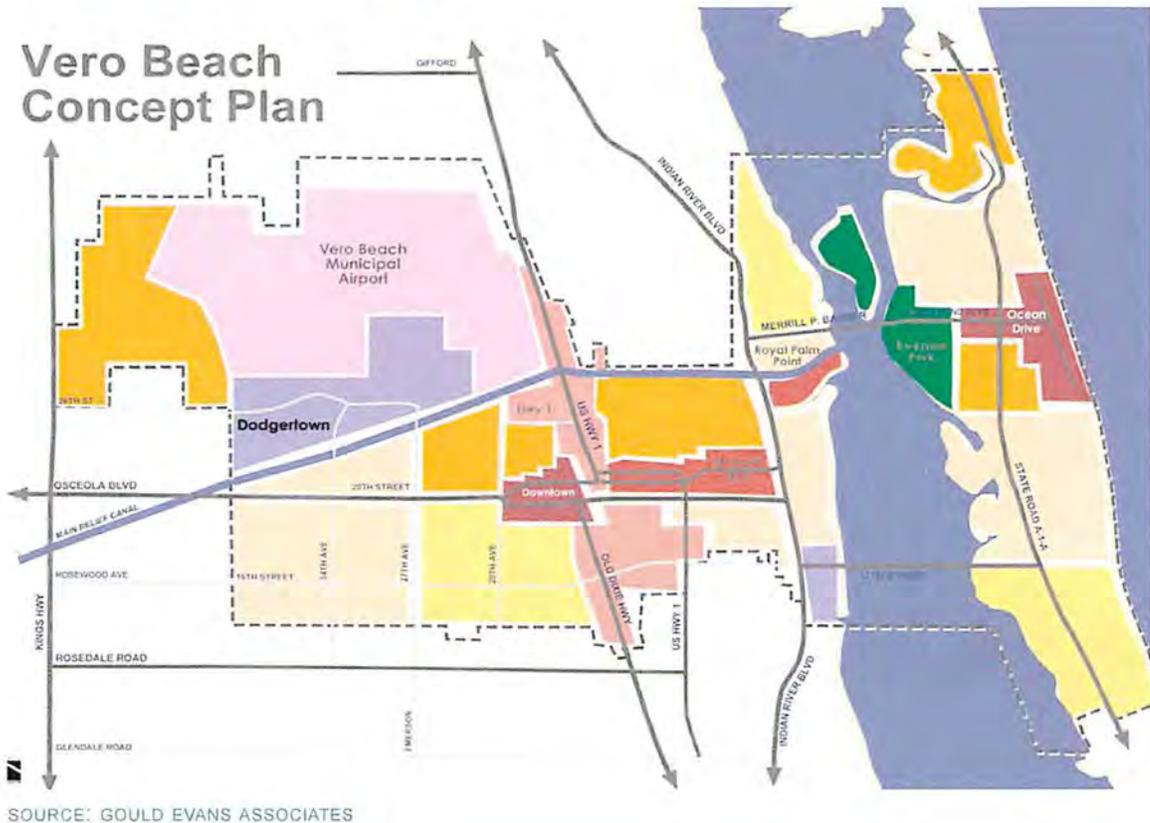
CONCEPT PLAN

Working with the Vision Team, a concept plan was developed that sought to maintain the City's key positive attributes and physical elements. For each, a series of strategies were formed.

Commercial Districts

The key commercial districts of Vero Beach include its historic downtown, Royal Palm Pointe, Miracle Mile/US 1, Ocean Drive/Cardinal Drive, and Beachland Boulevard. For each district, strategies include the enhancement of its unique characteristics, as well as addressing key threats to its future success. In some cases, it is recommended that a district wide, participatory, comprehensive master plan be developed.

VERO BEACH CONCEPT PLAN



Downtown Vero Beach

Downtown should be reinforced as a mixed-use office and governmental center, as well as a unique cultural, arts, entertainment, and residential enclave, with shopping and dining opportunities that support the district and its surrounding neighborhoods. Addressing the "twin pair" arterials that bisect downtown is a key strategy to enhance the pedestrian nature of the district.

Royal Palm Pointe

Royal Palm Pointe should continue its transformation as a regional mixed-use residential, commercial, and entertainment district; focusing on restaurants, recreation, and boutique retail venues. It is also desirable that a stronger connection be made to the Indian River Lagoon.

Miracle Mile/US 1

The existing character, marketability, and long-term sustainability of the Miracle Mile and US 1 commercial corridors should be enhanced, while allowing for their future evolution in accordance with changing commercial development trends. Innovative parking requirements and concepts should be pursued that will encourage a more diverse future land use pattern.

Ocean Drive/Cardinal Drive

The Ocean Drive/Cardinal Drive district should be maintained as a destination and quality-oriented boutique retail center for both residents and visitors, while accommodating a demand for office development and the desire for a quality residential environment. Like several commercial areas in Vero Beach, a district parking solution is a key to accomplishing the dual objectives of accommodating new development and maintaining the district's character.

Beachland Boulevard

Beachland Boulevard, from Mockingbird Drive to Ocean Drive, should be reinforced as a premier office corridor, particularly for professional services and banking and financial activities. Maintaining the corridor's "green spine" setback and protecting the vitality of adjacent neighborhoods are keys to successful development along Beachland Boulevard.

Neighborhoods

The Vision Team decided that, while neighborhoods in Vero Beach are distinctive, policies regarding their future development or redevelopment strategies should spring from neighborhoods at a "grass roots" level.

The goal is to reinforce Vero Beach as a "community of neighborhoods" by developing strategies for both neighborhood preservation and conservation, as well as neighborhood revitalization and stabilization. There are, however, overriding strategies that should be applied to all neighborhoods:

- Preserving the native tree canopy on both the Barrier Island and the Mainland
- Developing design standards, zoning modifications, and review procedures that protect the character and integrity of neighborhoods
- Limiting all housing construction to a height of 35 feet as measured from the natural grade to the top of the roof
- Requiring site plan review for all single-family development
- Integrating neighborhood development with the existing and "resilient" network of arterial roadways
- Creating ordinances that more easily allow for mixed-use residential development in appropriate commercial districts
- Instituting aggressive code and public safety enforcement in stabilization neighborhoods
- Using landscape treatment to buffer existing neighborhoods from industry or busy highways
- Creating a series of neighborhood gateway features where appropriate and practical
- Preparing plans and considering incentives for redevelopment and renovation of stabilization and revitalization neighborhoods
- Allowing for individual neighborhoods to request additional regulations on a "supermajority" basis

Industry and Employment

Most cities seek economic diversity in order to better assure long-term stability. It is recognized that Vero Beach is a desirable community for retirees and "snow birds." This creates a strong demand for seasonal workers in the service economy.

The goal, however, is to create a diversity of good employment opportunities in Vero Beach for the benefit of workers, to support younger residents in their desire to remain in Vero Beach, and to create a more stable and sustainable tax base.

The strategies to accomplish this goal involve the pursuit of the three primary activities of job creation: new job attraction; existing job retention and growth; and entrepreneurship. Also, new and infill development of businesses should be pursued in appropriate districts and corridors, as well as at the Vero Beach Municipal Airport.



VERO BEACH MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

Roadways and Wayfinding

The goal of the City's transportation network is to create a roadway and supplemental transportation network that enhances the image of Vero Beach, while providing a framework for a multi-modal transportation system.

The vision plan seeks an interconnected arterial network that serves all of the city's districts. It also seeks to develop a series of entrance gateway markers that will enhance the sense of arrival in Vero Beach. The identification of storm routes, as well as enhancing the potential for bicycles, pedestrian trails, and public transit are also important.



WAYFINDING IN DOWNTOWN

Planning and Development Regulations

Many of the directions and changes suggested in the Vision Plan will require alterations to the City's planning or regulatory structure. Therefore, the City's plans and regulations should be aligned to support the Vision Plan and followed through with appropriate training and public information programs.

Strategies for addressing this include updates to the City's Comprehensive Plan and zoning ordinance, including the potential creation of zoning "overlay" districts when requested by specific communities. The creation of a historic preservation enabling ordinance will allow for neighborhoods, districts, or owners of qualifying individual buildings to seek protection and, potentially, the financial benefits allowed by the federal tax code. Finally, future training of elected and appointed officials, as well as public educational efforts and input, should be undertaken to better understand the long-range planning and development implications of the Vision Plan.



Implementation Strategies

An implementation matrix has been prepared that lists all key strategies in the plan, along with their time frames. It should be used by the City Council, appointed boards and commissions, the City staff and the public-at-large as a guide or "check list" to track implementation success.

The Future of Vero Beach

The *Vero Beach Vision Plan* sets forth a future direction for Vero Beach. This future direction, or vision, was developed with public involvement and adopted by the City Council, giving the community ownership of the Vision Plan.

Success of this endeavor will be accomplished through the proper implementation of the Vision Plan's strategies and key concepts. Perseverance and the recognition that implementation is not the culmination of the planning process, but rather another step in the process is crucial to the Plan's success. Likewise, a partnership involving city officials, citizens, public entities, and the private sector is paramount to Vero Beach's future. In unison, Vero Beach now moves forward, soon to discover its crown jewel.

i n t r o d u c t i o n

This chapter of the Vision Plan summarizes facts and trends that influence Vero Beach. Both past and current conditions are provided in order to understand the foundation for addressing the future. The following topics are presented in this chapter: regional context, local history, physical characteristics, demographics, economic statistics, and considerations for the future.

c h a p t e r o n e

1.1 REGIONAL CONTEXT

Vero Beach is located on the Atlantic coast of Florida, approximately 100 miles southeast of Orlando. Interstate 95, the major north / south transportation artery on the eastern seaboard, runs just west of Vero Beach. I-95 connects Vero Beach to several large metropolitan areas in relative close proximity, including Miami and Jacksonville; and to distant metropolitan areas like Washington D.C., New York, NY, and Boston, MA.

The following lists the driving distance between Vero Beach and select metropolitan areas in Florida and elsewhere:

Miami	148 miles
Tampa	140 miles
Jacksonville	212 miles
Fort Myers	147 miles
Tallahassee	378 miles
Atlanta, GA	557 miles
Mobile, AL	615 miles
Washington D.C.	923 miles
New York, NY	1,157 miles
Boston, MA	1,372 miles



REGIONAL CONTEXT MAP

SOURCE: GOULD EVANS ASSOCIATES

Vero Beach is one of five municipalities, as well as the county seat of Indian River County. The other four municipalities are Sebastian, Indian River Shores, Fellsmere, and Orchid. In addition, the U.S. Census Bureau recognizes nine other unincorporated Indian River County communities, classifying them as "designated places". These eleven designated places are Gifford, Wabasso, Roseland, Vero Beach South, Florida Ridge, South Beach, North Beach, Winter Beach, West Beach, West Vero, and Wabasso Beach.



VERO BEACH AND VICINITY

SOURCE: GOULD EVANS ASSOCIATES

Four other counties border Indian River County. These neighboring counties are Brevard County to the north, Osceola County to the west, Okeechobee County to the southwest, and St. Lucie County to the south.

1.2 LOCAL HISTORY

Native Americans were the first known inhabitants in and around the Vero Beach area. The first Western European inhabitants to Vero Beach and the Indian River area were the English and Spanish over three hundred years ago. Settlement patterns of these individuals generally followed a north to south movement along eastern Florida. Initially, settlers in the area planted large acreages of sugarcane and pineapples. By the early 20th Century, however, grapefruit and oranges were the crops of choice, flourishing in Florida's sun. The Indian River area became known for its citrus crop. In part to meet the demands of agricultural industry, the area's first railway opened in 1903. The train station was built in a settlement called Vero. Sixteen years later, in 1919, Vero was incorporated. On June 1, 1925, the city was renamed Vero Beach.

By the 1930's, Indian River County had grown to a population of roughly 7,000 residents, and a growing population of seasonal residents from northern states impacted the growth and development of the area. The Riomar Country Club, a well-renowned winter resort of that day, was started by a group of seasonal residents from Ohio during this time.

Vero Beach and Indian River County continued to grow. By the late 1940's, Indian River County had a population of over 11,000 residents. In 1948, local businessman Bud Holman persuaded the then Brooklyn Dodgers to use a Naval air station, abandoned since the end of World War II, for spring training. Known as Dodgertown, the Los Angeles Dodgers have called Vero Beach home for spring training ever since. In 1953, the current ballpark was constructed in Vero Beach and named after Bud Holman.

By the 1970's, the population of Indian River County was nearing 40,000 residents. Similar to other Indian River County communities, Vero Beach was facing building and development pressures that influenced the community's existing scale and design. To combat these pressures, Vero Beach adopted a series of ordinances that addressed both height and density issues.

**Sources used for the history summary include City of Vero Beach website (<http://vero-beach.fl.us/info/history.html>) and <http://vero-beach.fl.us/playing/sports/dodgers.html>.*

1.3 PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Indian River County is on the Atlantic coast between Melbourne-Titusville and Ft. Pierce. It is approximately 549 square miles in area. Roughly 13 of the 549 square miles are within the city limits of Vero Beach. The county includes 43 square miles of water and 23 miles of Atlantic Ocean beaches. The average January temperature is 63.4 degrees F, and the average August temperature is 81.3 degrees F. May through October is considered the rainy season. The average annual rainfall is between 50-55 inches.

Numerous water bodies are located in and around Vero Beach. Besides the Atlantic Ocean, they include the Indian River, surface canals, and the headwaters of the St. Johns River. These waterways

provide for commercial and recreational opportunities, as well as habitats for wildlife. Various birds, fish, reptiles, and mammals make up the local wildlife, including dolphins, manatee, whales, turtles, storks, eagles, pelicans, and alligators.

Vero Beach is located in a transition zone between temperate and tropical climates. The result is a mix of vegetation common to both climates that can survive and flourish in the area. The presence of the significant tree canopy in Vero Beach is partially attributable to this mild climate. The topographic features in Vero Beach consist of a coastal ridge and sandy flat lands with area elevations starting at sea level that rise to 30 feet above sea level. From the sand ridge that defines the edge of these geologic features, development has moved east and west, typically within 5 to 10 miles of the ocean. The remaining undeveloped portions of the county are predominately grove, hardwoods and marshlands with nearly half of the land in the county being in public ownership.

**Excerpts from the 1992 Vero Beach Comprehensive Plan were used to complete this section.*

1.4 DEMOGRAPHICS

Since 1980, the population of Vero Beach has remained relatively constant. In 1980, the city's population was 16,179 residents; and in 2000, the population was 17,705 people. In the same 20-year period, however, Vero Beach's population as a percentage of Indian River County's population has decreased. The following projections were taken from the Indian County Community Development Report, January 2004.



AERIAL OF VERO BEACH AND CITY LIMITS

SOURCE: GOULD EVANS ASSOCIATES



TREE CANOPY

	U.S. CENSUS			PROJECTIONS		
	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030
Vero Beach	16,176	17,350	17,705	18,239	18,422	18,792
Other Municipalities	5,265	14,715	23,582	33,355	44,752	50,145
Places	33,031	49,897	59,306	69,959	77,647	88,549
Unallocated	5,242	8,246	12,354	14,247	16,679	20,014
Indian River County	59,896	90,208	112,947	135,800	157,500	177,500

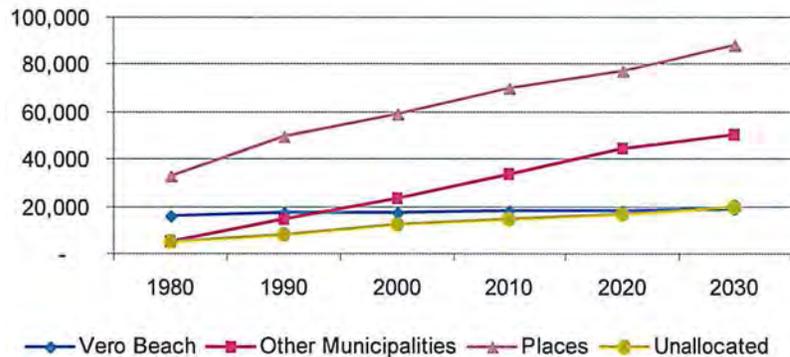
POPULATION TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

SOURCE: INDIAN COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT, JANUARY 2004

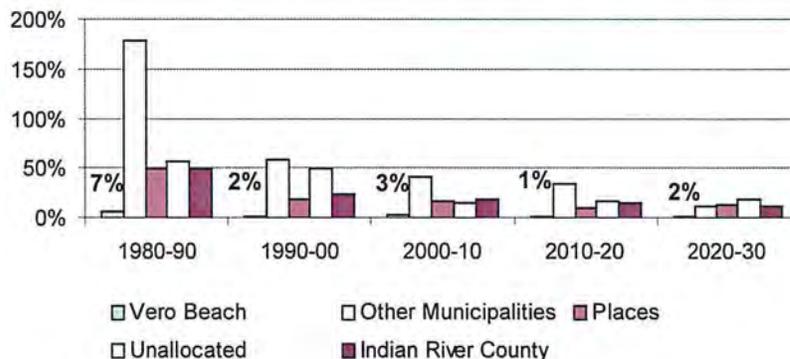
In 1980, Vero Beach's 16,179 residents represented 27% of the County's total population. Twenty years later, Vero Beach's population of 17,705 comprised 16% of the County's total population. By the year 2030, it is projected that approximately 10.6 % of the residents in Indian River County will reside in Vero Beach. The following table and charts compare population growth rates and projections between 1980 and 2030.

The sustained population growth in Indian River County can be partially accounted for by the net migration of people from northern states and people moving out of southern Florida. Although population will continue to increase, it is anticipated that the rate of growth in the area will decline between now and 2030. Incoming residents are typically White, over 54 years of age, with a middle to upper class household income. This in-migration has and may continue to influence the aging of Vero Beach and Indian River County.

POPULATION TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS
SOURCE: INDIAN COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT



PERCENT POPULATION GROWTH AND FORECAST
SOURCE: INDIAN COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT



In 2000, over 40% of Indian River County's population and 41% of Vero Beach's population was over the age of 54. Both percentages are much greater than the 2000 national average of 21%. The 2000 median ages of Indian River County and Vero Beach were 47.0 and 47.7 years respectively. Both are greater than the 2000 national median age of 35.3.

Vero Beach and Indian River County have average household sizes less than the national average. The lower household size and the high median age indicate that many residents are past the "family raising" life-stage. Since 1990, age cohorts of 44 years of age or less represent a decreasing portion of the overall population in Indian River County.

	% Over 54	% Under 20	Median Age	Ave HH Size
Vero Beach	41%	18%	47.7	2.02
Indian River County	40%	21%	47.0	2.25
United States	21%	29%	35.3	2.59

AGE AND HOUSEHOLD AVERAGES

SOURCE: 2000 U.S. CENSUS

Over 87% of Indian River County's and 93% of Vero Beach's population is classified as White. Though the area has become more diverse over the past 50 years, both Vero Beach and Indian River County have higher White populations, by percentage, than the national average (75%). In contrast, the Black and Hispanic percent population in both Vero Beach and Indian River County are below the 2000 national averages of 12% (Black) and 13% (Hispanic). The following table lists the racial and ethnic breakdown for Vero Beach, Indian River County, and the United States in 2000.

	Vero Beach	Indian River County	United States
White	93%	87%	75%
Black	3%	8%	12%
American Indian	0%	0%	1%
Asian	1%	1%	4%
Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%
Other Race	2%	3%	8%
Hispanic*	6%	7%	13%

*Ethnicity

RACE AND ETHNICITY

SOURCE: 2000 U.S. CENSUS

The 2000 nation-wide household income average of \$41,994 is higher than both the average household income of Indian River County (\$39,635) and Vero Beach (\$38,427). Using this statistic, however, in an attempt to compare general socioeconomic conditions of the overall community is skewed due to the high number of retired Vero Beach and Indian River County residents not earning a daily wage as defined by the census. Those who earn a daily wage in Vero Beach tend to earn slightly less than

the national average. In fact, 47% of Indian River County residents and 42% of Vero Beach residents received Federal Social Security benefits in 2000. In contrast, less than 26% of the total U.S. population received benefits in 2000. In addition, only 6% of both Indian River County and Vero Beach residents were considered as living in poverty. This is lower than the national average of over 9% in 2000. The following table compares 2000 Census income data.

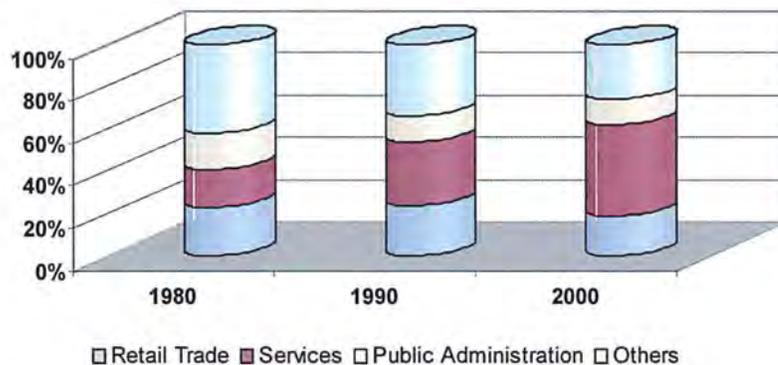
	HH Income	Income > \$75K	Social Sec	Poverty
Vero Beach	\$ 38,427	23%	42%	6%
Indian River County	\$ 39,635	20%	47%	6%
United States	\$ 41,994	23%	26%	9%

EXISTING SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

SOURCE: 2000 U.S. CENSUS

1.5 ECONOMICS

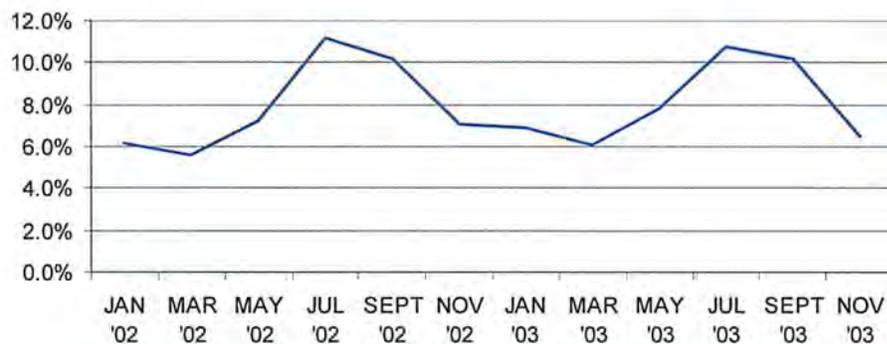
According to the Indian River County Community Development Report, January 2004, since 1980, Indian River County has become increasingly more dependent on the Service Industry. Since 1980, the three largest employment sectors in Indian River County have been Retail Trade, Services, and Public Administration. In 1980, these three industries comprised 58% of the county's employment; Retail Trade 23%, Services 18%, and Public Administration 17%. By 2000, the three industries made up over 76% of the entire county's employment. Both Retail Trade and Public Administration decreased to 19% and 12% respectively. This means that in 2000, the Services industry made up 43% of the county's total employment. In 2000, Vero Beach's Service industry was even higher at 50% of total employment. The following chart illustrates employment by industry trend in Indian River County.



INDIAN RIVER COUNTY EMPLOYMENT TREND

SOURCE: INDIAN COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT

The growing service sector has been a nation-wide trend for over 20 years. In 2000, 42% of the nation's workforce was employed in the service industry. The higher service industry employment in Indian River County and Vero Beach can be explained by supply and demand. Retirees and seasonal residents have brought a relatively high disposable income to the area. A significant portion of this income is spent on health care, retail goods, food, entertainment, and recreational activities. This demand for services and the population that this service-oriented labor force supplies is a primary driver of the economy in Vero Beach. As population growth has occurred unemployment levels have remained slightly higher than national levels. The following chart illustrates the seasonal fluctuation in the County's unemployment rate.



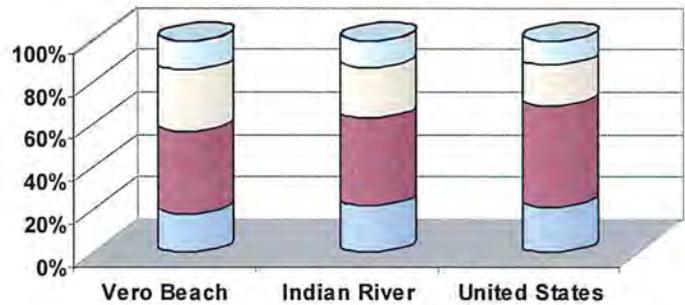
INDIAN RIVER COUNTY SEASONAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FLUCTUATIONS 2002-2003

SOURCE: INDIAN COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Despite fluctuating annual rates, historic trends show that unemployment typically increases during the summer time. This is related to the lower demand for services due to the summer absence of seasonal residents and the seasonal nature of the citrus industry. The United States Census Bureau divides service jobs into four basic categories. These categories are:

- Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services (1)
- Educational, health and social services (2)
- Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services (3)
- Other services (4)

Vero Beach and Indian River County deviate less than 10% from the Service industry's national average. The breakdown of service jobs into the four basic categories differs significantly, however, when comparing Vero Beach and national averages. In 2000, Vero Beach's highest employment percentage was in the third service category (Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services). It was higher than Indian River County's percentage and almost twice the national percentage. This portion of the service industry creates jobs that typically pay lower wages. The Service Industry Breakdown chart on page 1-9 illustrates the difference in the breakdown of service categories for Vero Beach, Indian River County, and the United States, for 2000.



□ 1 (Professional...) □ 2 (Health...) □ 3 (Arts...) □ 4 (Other services...)

SERVICE INDUSTRY BREAKDOWN

SOURCE: INDIAN COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT

The largest employer in the county is the Indian River County School District with almost 2000 employees in 2004. The following is a list of the five largest employers in Indian River County and the number of people employed.

1. School District of Indian River County.....1,945
2. Indian River County Government.....1,333
3. Indian River Memorial Hospital.....1,100
4. Publix Supermarkets.....801
5. New Piper Aircraft.....752

A number of City decisions have resulted in minimal population growth over the last 25 plus years for Vero Beach. Restrictions on height, density, and the decision to limit annexation have all attributed to a relatively slow rate of growth. A community experiencing minimal population growth over a sustained period of time, while neighboring communities are increasing by double-digit percentages, tends to be labeled as a community in decline. However, this is not the case for Vero Beach. Instead, the low growth rate is largely a result of small household size and the decreasing availability of developable land.

In essence, Vero Beach is "built-out," and the reinvestment and redevelopment market will impact the shape of the city in the future. This trend will continue to influence real estate values, as well as the type of development that will occur in the future. Since 1980, Vero Beach's residential real estate has appreciated at a faster rate than the national average. By 2000, the median value of a single-family home was \$144,800. This value was both higher than Indian River County (\$104,000) and the national average (\$119,600). In addition, over 22% of Vero Beach's single-family units were above \$300,000. This is significantly higher than Indian River County (12%) and the national average (9%). The following table compares the 2000 Census housing value statistics.

	Median Value SF Household	Value Above \$300K	Mortgage < 15% of HH Income	Median Rent
Vero Beach	\$ 144,800	22.3%	42.5%	\$ 598
Indian River County	\$ 104,000	12.5%	40.8%	\$ 615
United States	\$ 119,600	9.5%	36.5%	\$ 602

SOURCE: 2000 U.S. CENSUS

1.6 CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

This information geographic and demographic information leads to the identification of key facts and trends worthy of consideration when developing the vision for the Vero Beach.

- Indian River County, including the City of Vero Beach, is an environmentally diverse location in the transition zone between temperate and tropical climates.
- The City of Vero Beach is a decreasingly smaller percentage of the Indian River County population - 27% in 1980, 16% in 2000 and projected to be 10.6% in 2030.
- The median age of Vero Beach is significantly older than the nation's population (47.7 to 35.3 respectfully). Additionally, 41% of Vero Beach's population is over 54 years of age, compared to 21% nationally.
- The Indian River unemployment rate fluctuates dramatically during the year (due to seasonal influences). It has generally shown a historic trend of being slightly higher than the national unemployment rate.
- In 2000, approximately 50% of the employment in Vero Beach was occurring in the Services sector of the economy. This reflects a greater economic dependence on the economic sector with little to no employment growth in other sectors.
- Roughly 14% of the employment in Vero Beach represents jobs in arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services. That is a significantly larger percentage than the national employment average in the same job categories.
- The County's top three largest employers are public or institutional employers (i.e. the county school district, the county, and the hospital).
- The combination of an aging Vero Beach population, restrictions on height and density, lack of large tracts of developable land, and the decision to limit annexation contribute to a relatively slow population growth rate in the City. Simultaneously, these factors are influencing an increase in the median value of housing in Vero Beach.

v i s i o n i n g p r o c e s s

The visioning process, culminating in the adoption of this Vision Plan, represents a commitment to pursue a common community vision through the implementation of specific actions and strategies. This commitment has been built through the momentum gained in the visioning process itself. Citizen involvement has provided a solid base for understanding desires for the future ensuring that the values and priorities identified by citizens are the foundation for the vision plan.

c h a p t e r t w o

Indian River County is engaged in a similar visioning process associated with its long-range transportation plan update. There is a significant debate that is taking place in the County with regard to the nature, disposition, and impacts of growth. It parallels many of the issues and concerns that emerged during the Vero Beach visioning process. It is important to coordinate the visioning, planning, and policy ramifications of these two plans.

2.1 CITY COUNCIL MANDATE

The vision process began in 2003 with the City Council's decision to pursue a visioning process and plan that would be open to the public and set the tone for future development in Vero Beach. The emphasis of the process and the plan, in accordance with the City Council's direction, was to incorporate and consider:

- Broad citizen participation
- Consensus building
- Community and architectural character
- Appropriate development regulations and design guidelines
- Key environmental resources
- Aesthetics of the community
- Integration of economic strategies

2.2 THE VISION TEAM

In January 2004, a "Vision Team" was established by the City Council to work with the city staff, consultants and citizens to accomplish project tasks associated with the development of the visioning process and plan. Fifteen people were selected from 85 applications to serve on the Vision Team. These fifteen people served diligently throughout the visioning process.

The Vision Team was an integral part of the visioning process by participating in public events, completing work tasks necessary for understanding Vero Beach, advising the City staff and the consultant team through the visioning process, assessing concepts and alternatives and, most importantly, through candid and detailed discussions representing a variety of viewpoints. The key to the success of the Vision Team in this project was the ability to work together, while sometimes representing opposing viewpoints with both passion and conviction.

This team of people found common ground on many points because they all recognized one common goal -- the preservation of the things that make Vero Beach a unique place to live.

2.3 PUBLIC MEETINGS

The public participation process began during the week of February 9th, 2004. During that week, six public meetings were conducted across the City. Additionally, a community survey was distributed, the Vero Beach Vision Team held its first meeting, approximately 30 individual interviews were conducted, and comments were heard from the Vero Beach Planning Board. Over 500 people were involved in the week's events.

The public meetings all followed a similar format. Key questions were asked in facilitated "brainstorming" sessions. Then participants were asked to prioritize the entire group's responses. A discussion was then moderated around the key priorities in each meeting.

The key questions asked were in the following categories:

- **Issues:** What are some of the issues, concerns, problems or items that need to be addressed in Vero Beach?
- **Descriptive Terms:** How do you describe Vero Beach to other people?
- **Strengths:** What are the current strengths or assets of Vero Beach?
- **Vision:** What does your vision of Vero Beach include? Describe what you see in your vision of the future.

2.3.1 Priorities

Each public meeting led to a long list of issues, terms, strengths and visions. Recognizing that the vision plan must be strategic and realistic, a prioritization exercise was conducted in each meeting. Each of the participants were asked to identify their top three priorities needing to be addressed or incorporated in a future vision plan.

It is important to note that the public generated the issues below. They do not represent the opinions of the planning consultant or staff. Important issues, such as tourism, education, or employment did not emerge as significant in this phase of the public process. Ultimately, however, they were addressed in the development of the Vision Plan.



PUBLIC MEETING



PRIORITIZING

Generally, there appears to be much agreement regarding the top priorities for Vero Beach. Looking at the results of all six public meetings, priorities are grouped in several thematic areas:

- **Community Character:** The appearance and definition of the City of Vero Beach within the context of Indian River County. Natural character, public spaces, gateways, history / heritage and neighborhoods.
- **Downtown/Commercial Destinations:** A vibrant downtown along with other commercial destinations that attract people and sustain community viability. Movement of people (auto, pedestrian, bicycle), street life, aesthetics, and diversity of experience.
- **Architectural/Site Design:** Creating and maintaining buildings and properties that reflect the desired community character. Heights, setbacks, densities, architectural elements, and landscape features.
- **Community Development:** Remaining a sustainable community through physical improvements and inherent community qualities or values. Family-friendly, the character of "old Florida", small town, and infrastructure investment.
- **Economic Development:** Recognizing and building upon the economic base of the citrus industry and other strong marketplace components. Technology, job creation and retention, research, and partnerships.
- **Implementation:** The ability of the community to follow through and achieve the desired vision that is determined. Government cooperation, financial and regulatory policy and processes, public participation, and capital improvements / supporting infrastructure.

2.4 COMMUNITY SURVEY

During the months of February and March, a community survey was distributed to attendees at the public meetings, through the project web site, and through newspaper circulation. Almost 1600 responses were submitted to the City of Vero Beach Planning Department. It is important to note that this was not a scientific survey. It did, however, provide the community with another opportunity to give input early in the visioning process.

2.4.1 General Findings

The survey asked a number of general questions to elicit a sense of how respondents viewed Vero Beach and what they valued about the community. The majority of the respondents were age 40 and above and lived in Vero Beach or Indian River County.

When asked to agree or disagree with several statements, a large majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the following:

- Vero Beach is a great place to raise a family
- There are a variety of cultural and social opportunities in Vero Beach

- There are sufficient entertainment opportunities in and/or convenient to Vero Beach
- I enjoy a high quality of life in Vero Beach
- Vero Beach is unique compared to other Florida coastal communities
- It is important to preserve and enhance the existing character of Vero Beach in the future

Additionally, the results of the survey pointed to two key contributors to the quality of life in Vero Beach - small town character and the natural environment. Other important contributors included outdoor and cultural activities. Vital physical characteristics to preserving the character of the community were identified as the tree canopy, the low density/low rise building scale and massing, public access to the waterfront, public open space and historic preservation.

Finally, respondents were asked what their vision of Vero Beach was for the future. This was an open-ended questionnaire, and the specific responses were all different.* A number of commonalities or themes, however, arose around the concept of remaining a unique and distinctive place along Florida's "Treasure Coast." There was a strong desire to retain and incorporate the existing qualities of Vero Beach that have attracted people here for many years. It was also recognized that growth in the area would continue to occur, but that growth must meet the standards that the community desires.

**A summary report of the survey results tabulated to date and the individual comments made is available from the City Planning Department.*

2.5 KEY PERSON INTERVIEWS/INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS

A series of personal interviews and meetings with individuals and groups in Vero Beach supplemented the broader community participation process. Approximately 75 people were interviewed. Many had applied to be members of the Vision Team, but they were not selected to serve in that role. Others were identified by the City Staff, the City Council, and the Vision Team or through citizen input during the process. Still others were interviewed through casual contact and conversation "on the street" by the consultants. These interviews frequently focused on the same issues that were identified in the public meetings -- issues, goals, priorities, and vision for the future.

A number of Vero Beach groups also asked that the consultants informally meet with them during the visioning process. They included high school students, as well as business and community groups. The findings from these interviews and meetings typically affirmed the findings from other participation activities.

2.6 VISION/PHYSICAL FRAMEWORK ALTERNATIVES

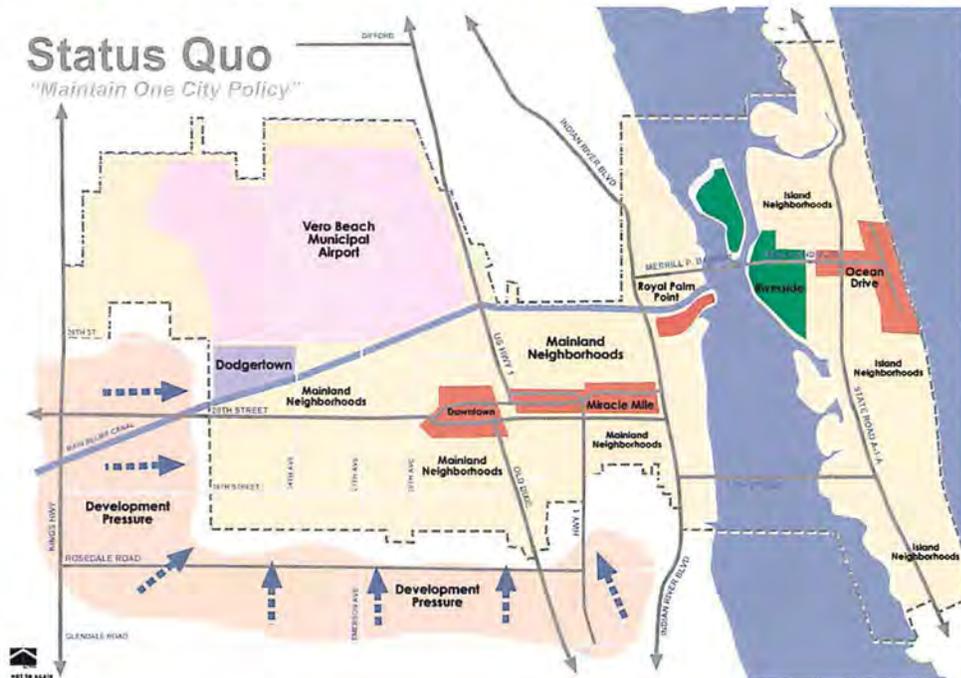
The public activities and Vision Team exercises during the first phase of the visioning process provided a sense of community values and priorities for the future. This general findings described above, along with an understanding of the current conditions and trends identified in Section 1.0, provided the context that lead to the development of three potential alternatives for the future of Vero Beach.

Alternatives are a way that a community can "visualize" its potential future. They are developed to elicit an open dialog about the assets and liabilities inherent in each alternative. A single alternative is not to be selected in its entirety.

The specifics of each of these alternatives were based upon perceptual mapping and visual preference information gathered from the Vision Team that identified key pathways, landmarks, districts and nodes, as well as desirable development traits.

During a public open house in May 2004, participants were provided information about the status of the project and findings to date. Additionally, they were asked to take part in a brief visual preference exercise, provide suggestions on a potential vision statement and goals for Vero Beach, and assess the three physical framework alternatives. These alternatives are summarized below.

2.6.1 STATUS QUO ALTERNATIVE - MAINTAIN A "ONE CITY" POLICY



SOURCE: GOULD EVANS ASSOCIATES

Represents a "stay the course" attitude regarding citywide development policies. This alternative would not regulate land development on a district-by-district basis, rather regulations would be enforced on a citywide, one policy fits all basis.

Key Features

- Extends current trends and policies
- More reactive in nature
- Easy implementation/few changes/incremental
- Can be contentious and prone to disagreements
- Edge development pressure for larger scale / out of "Vero Beach character" development in Indian River County

Neighborhoods

- Continued private reinvestment in unique neighborhoods (such as McAnsh Park, Country Club, and RioMar) on a site by site basis
- Little stimulus for redevelopment or reinvestment in deteriorating neighborhoods
- Pressure for tear downs / large "out of character" houses

Municipal Airport / Dodgertown

- Greater demand as a general aviation airport
- Underutilized potential for employment activity

Ocean Drive / Beachland Commercial

- Maintain building scale and stock
- Office use becomes more dominant
- Hotel / restaurant pressure increases
- Some national commercial chains appear
- Beachland Boulevard experiences loss of setbacks
- Persistent parking issues

Open Space

- Continued preservation of green space (i.e. islands, sensitive lands) as a public investment
- Continued investment in public functions and park qualities
- Preservation of the tree canopy

Downtown

- Downtown is a traffic "throughway"
- Difficulty in achieving pedestrian-oriented retail center
- Individual entrepreneurial and government investments
- Main Street efforts continue

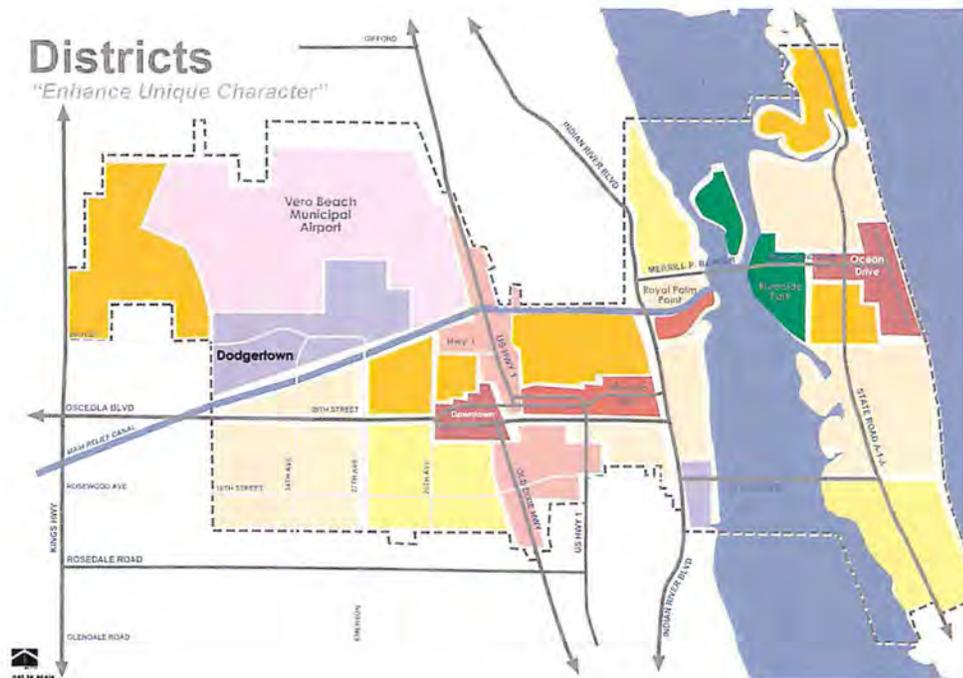
Miracle Mile

- Growth pressures for more national chains and "larger box" buildings
- Public efforts to maintain streetscape improvements
- Increased competition from commercial development in Indian River County

Royal Palm Pointe

- Persistent parking issues
- Loss of ground floor commercial to other office / residential uses

2.6.2 DISTRICTS ALTERNATIVE - ENHANCE UNIQUE CHARACTER



SOURCE: GOULD EVANS ASSOCIATES

Vero Beach is a "tapestry" of districts, each having a unique character, rather than imposing a single development and regulatory policy on the city as a whole.

Key Features

- Unique districts each have distinct characteristics, plans, and guidelines
- District characteristics are based on community self-assessments
- Planning and community participation is intensive
- More cumbersome planning with more definitive implementation

Neighborhoods

- Policy and development decisions based on self-assessment as preservation/conservation/stabilization/rehabilitation classifications
- Neighborhood districts are regarded as equal to commercial districts in emphasis

Municipal Airport/Dodgertown

- Develop a regional business park and recreational complex

Ocean Drive Commercial

- Maintain ground floor retail
- Employ a historic preservation strategy to maintain "contributing" building stock
- Encourage "walkability" through enhanced pedestrian features.
- Maintain existing "building bulk" and setbacks through architectural guidelines
- Emphasize on-street parking and surface parking behind buildings, as well as a district approach to parking

Beachland Boulevard

- Reinforce consistent "green" setback with landscaped parking allowed
- Utilize architectural guidelines to regulate building mass
- Enhance "gateway" character
- Develop as a premier, low-rise office development corridor with some residual retail uses

Downtown

- Reinforce "walkability" of downtown district through streetscape improvements and "traffic calming"
- Maintain key buildings through a historic district strategy as appropriate
- Allow flexibility in uses, while reinforcing a retail/service commercial ground floor
- Utilize a district parking strategy
- Build on downtown's function as a government, employment and entertainment destination

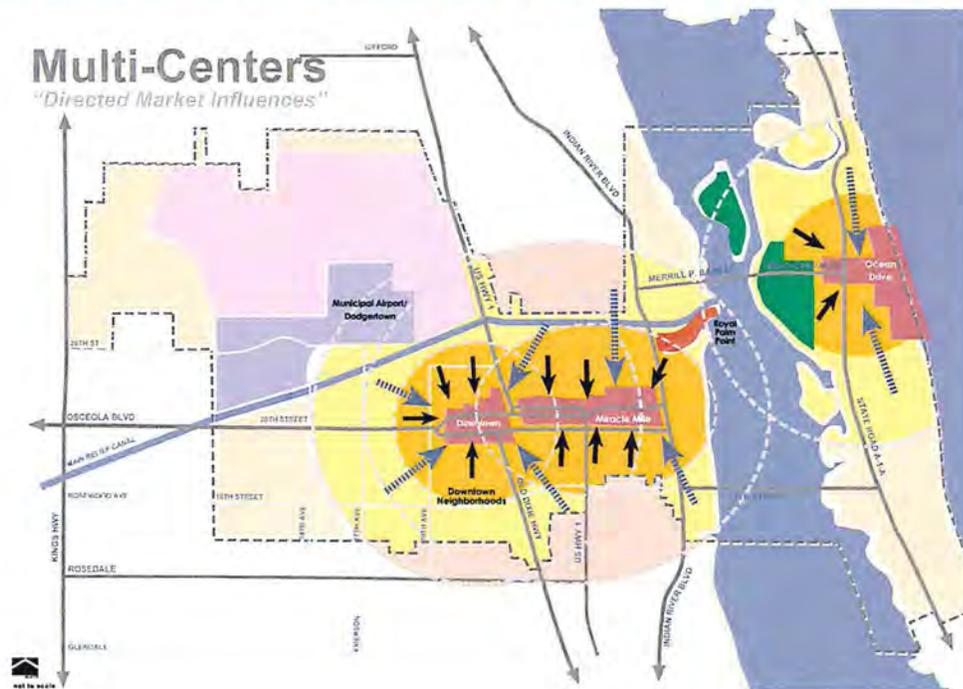
Miracle Mile

- Visually unify all property through architectural and site development guidelines
- Provide a district landscape and streetscape standard
- "Buffer district from adjacent neighborhoods through landscape and/or architectural features
- Maintain Miracle Mile as Vero Beach's only "big box" retail district

Royal Palm Pointe

- Emphasize restaurants, entertainment and boutique retail
- Enhance entrance gateway and function from Indian River Boulevard
- Provide a district shared parking solution including parking in the landscaped median

2.6.3 MULTI-CENTERS ALTERNATIVE - DIRECTED MARKET INFLUENCES



SOURCE: GOULD EVANS ASSOCIATES

Market influences are recognized, enhanced, and directed to create a series of mixed-use centers, each with a unique character.

Key Features

- Builds on existing commercial district districts
- Protects neighborhoods through zoning policies and design guidelines
- Provides services through market catchment areas
- Requires a more proactive development approach
- Coordinate with Indian River County on commercial development decisions to keep strong "market catchment" areas

Neighborhoods

- Protection of neighborhoods through guidelines that prevent the intrusion of commercial development
- Neighborhood development is market driven - optional guidelines for neighborhood character and scale

Municipal Airport / Dodgertown

- Requires an active and targeted job attraction program
- Protection of Vero Beach character through additional zoning and design guidelines for industrial uses

Ocean Drive Commercial

- Promotes boutique retail and office/residential mixed-use environment
- Preserves retail ground floor by allowing mixed-use development on upper floor(s)
- Requires a district parking approach

Beachland Boulevard

- Enhances the boulevard street qualities of setback with a green spine
- Reinforces corridor as a premier office area
- Address parking and setback issues through consistent site design application

Downtown

- Creates a full service, multi-level, mixed-use district
- Emphasis on a "walkable" center
- Relieves pressure on island commercial and retail
- Requires "twin pairs" traffic management solution
- Requires a district parking approach

Miracle Mile

- Maintain and enhance as Vero Beach's regional commercial district
- Requires the development of design guidelines to maintain district character
- Continued enhancement of streetscape and parking lot landscaping

Royal Palm Pointe

- Site-by-site redevelopment in an opportunistic manner - market driven manner - including residential, office, and commercial uses

v e r o b e a c h v i s i o n

To identify and achieve the vision for Vero Beach it is important to continuously ask and answer three questions:

Where are we today?

What do we want to become?

How do we get there?

c h a p t e r t h r e e

Sections 1 and 2 of the vision plan provide the foundation for answering these three questions. There are many different paths a community can take to accomplish its vision. The purpose of examining the alternatives in Section 2 was to further understand the potential direction that Vero Beach wants to take to address the issues and priorities described in Section 1.

In Vero Beach, the vision for the community has been framed in debates related to density and growth. By conducting a number of exercises and facilitating discussion through the visioning process, however, members of the community began to discover that there is much more to Vero Beach than these two issues. The vision for the future must be more encompassing.

3.1 VISION STATEMENT

To what does Vero Beach aspire in the future? In many ways the community desires to be what it always has been and remains today, but with all the advantages and conveniences of the future.

Envision a place where the best of "old Florida" is nurtured. A place that is filled with community pride, but not boastful or arrogant. That pride is reflected in well-kept private property and public land. That pride is embodied in the manner in which people treat one another and work together to address problems and issues. That pride embraces a respect for the natural environment and the unique history of the community.

Envision a place that is different from any other place in Florida. A place where spring training is a family event. A place that is made up of a variety of neighborhoods. A place that you can "fall in love" with on your first visit and, ultimately, make it your home. A place where the expectations and standards for quality and excellence are clearly stated in public policies, private actions, and community decisions.

Envision a community that values its location. A community where tree canopies are preserved and enhanced. A community that uses but does not exploit its natural beauty or geographic location. A community that both recreates in and respects sensitive environmental areas. A community that does not succumb to trends, but establishes its own image based on its vision for the future.

"Vero Beach... the crown jewel of the Treasure Coast."

This vision statement reflects the broad values and desires of the community to be the best place to live along Florida's Treasure Coast. It recognizes that there are other jewels along the coast, but that Vero Beach does and should continue to stand out among those jewels by retaining and enhancing its unique qualities and values.

Vero Beach will still change with time. It will continue to mature as a community and be influenced by outside actions, thus bringing new challenges. But its inherent qualities and values will continue to be prominent as long as citizens work diligently in a proactive manner. Vero Beach needs to be cared for like a precious jewel. Its brilliance will stand out not because of boastful pride, but because of diligent care, respect, and responsible action.

Vero Beach will, most likely, continue to remain the center of government and culture for Indian River County, as well as an important commercial and residential center. But central Florida is engaged in an era of profound change. Growth and demographic shifts are continually presenting opportunities and problems associated with that change. This vision plan seeks to determine both the cooperative and competitive position of the City within its larger context.

3.2 VERO BEACH CONCEPT PLAN

In pursuit of the Vero Beach vision, an important part of the vision plan is the formation of a concept for the future of the City. It is a necessary requirement to understand the relationships among the diverse elements of the community's commercial, residential, industrial, and recreational resources. It also facilitates a better understanding of the relationship between the natural and built environment.

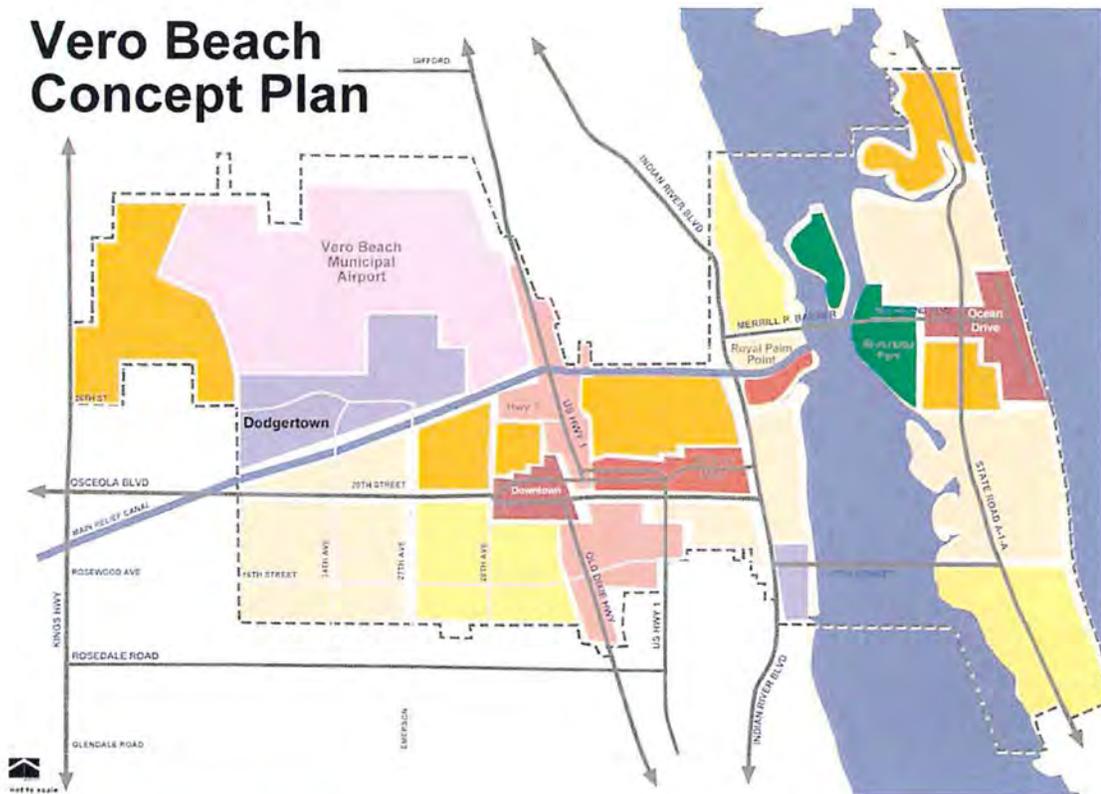
The Vision Team reviewed the alternative strategies for the future development, as described in the previous section. These alternatives explored a range of options for addressing the City's basic physical structure. The Vero Beach Concept Plan illustrates a composite of the best or preferred elements from all of the explored options.

The concept plan recognizes that much of Vero Beach is built-out; with new, raw land development opportunities existing primarily in the northwest quadrant of the City, near the airport and Dodgertown. It also recognizes the strengths of existing assets, such as the Atlantic Ocean and the Indian River Lagoon, as well as parks, recreational, environmental, and cultural amenities. Important commercial corridors and districts like Ocean Drive, Beachland Boulevard, Royal Palm Pointe, Downtown Vero Beach, and the Miracle Mile are recognized for their ability for clustering community shopping and employment activities and enhancing the overall image and identity of Vero Beach. Finally, neighborhoods are recognized for the range and forms of lifestyle they represent and the market forces they create for retail and services in the community. The approach of the City and the citizens of Vero Beach to each of these areas is fundamental to implementing the visioning process.

The transportation network provides the framework upon which the city's physical form is based. A series of arterial roads form a web that links neighborhoods, commercial uses, services, jobs, and recreational and scenic opportunities. It also connects Vero Beach with its neighbors. Roadways each have their functional and design character that makes them unique. The vision process also makes recommendations regarding maintaining the intrinsic character of prime roadways and the districts they serve.

CONCEPT PLAN

Vero Beach Concept Plan



SOURCE: GOULD EVANS ASSOCIATES

3.3 COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

3.3.1 Downtown

Like many cities in the United States, Vero Beach has the legacy of a historic downtown core. For most cities, downtown was the center for retail commerce, government, and entertainment and culture. The passage of time, the economics of geography, and changes in living and shopping patterns have taken their toll on many historic downtowns. Downtown Vero Beach is no exception. Today, downtown Vero Beach must assume a new and complementary role with the City's other commercial centers. To accomplish this, downtown must be positioned as a destination, must recognize its history, must build on its role as a center of government, and must find creative uses that rebuild the attraction of downtown.

Goal

Reinforce downtown as a mixed-use office, employment, and governmental center, as well as a unique cultural, arts, entertainment, and residential enclave, with shopping and dining opportunities that support the district and its surrounding neighborhoods.

Key Issues and Recommendations

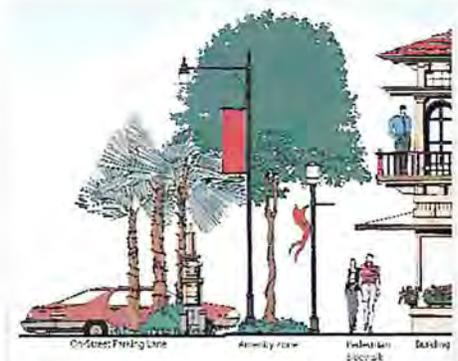
Downtown Vero Beach, generally located between 19th Street and 23rd Street and 17th Avenue and the Florida East Coast Railway tracks, is bisected by two major east west, one-way arterials, 20th Place and 19th Place. They are known in the community as the "twin pairs." These two streets allow traffic to efficiently pass through the downtown core, but also make stopping, parking, and pedestrian connections more difficult. Any rehabilitation of downtown as a viable center of activity must address the "traffic calming" of the "twin pairs."

In addition to traffic concerns, parking, pedestrian circulation and amenities, aesthetics, and the types of uses in downtown are important factors for future consideration. If downtown is to emerge as a more competitive and economically viable commercial district in Vero Beach, all of these issues must be addressed in a comprehensive and synergistic manner.

The strategies below support the creation of a unified, compact, more dense, and competitive downtown in Vero Beach -- one that builds on and supports its historic pedestrian scale. To accomplish this, a proactive approach of planning, development attraction, and organization is proposed.

Strategies

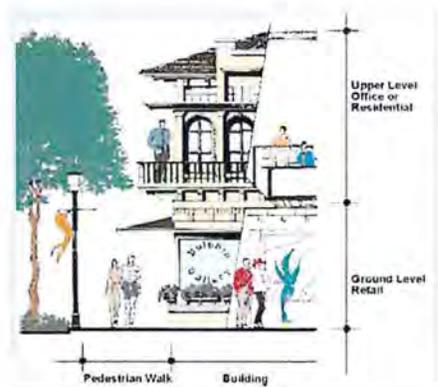
- a. Prepare a comprehensive master plan for downtown to address issues of urban design, land use, circulation and parking, parks and open space, public improvements and pedestrian streetscape, signage, building design characteristics, historic preservation, and development incentives. This process should actively involve business owners, institutions and government, property owners, surrounding neighborhoods, and the general citizenry as participants.
- b. Undertake a traffic engineering analysis of the "twin pairs" that bisect downtown, either as a precursor to the downtown urban design study or concurrent with it. The goal of this study would be to ascertain methods for making downtown a destination instead of a place to "pass through." Traffic calming measures, pedestrian friendliness, and parking, as well as the ramifications of two-way versus one-way traffic on the "pairs," must be investigated to assure downtown's future vitality. Work with the Florida Department of Transportation with regard to the configuration and other actions to be taken with regard to the "twin pairs."
- c. Maintain the street grid network in and around downtown Vero Beach. It is important to sustain a resilient street network, assuring both pedestrian-friendliness and vehicular access, respecting the historical transportation network, and providing stronger connections to surrounding neighborhoods.
- d. Maintain and enhance on-street parking in downtown Vero Beach. A competitive and pedestrian-oriented retail environment requires an active on-street parking concept.
- e. Prepare and implement a comprehensive landscape, streetscape, signage, and open space plan for downtown Vero Beach. This plan should address aesthetic issues, as well as functional and durability issues.



DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE

SOURCE: GOULD EVANS ASSOCIATES

- f. Promote retail businesses, restaurants, arts or cultural activities, or other pedestrian-related uses on the ground floor of all downtown buildings. Consider an array of incentives to entice appropriate ground floor development in downtown, particularly arts and cultural uses. Other cities in the United States have utilized incentives, such as tax abatement, zoning bonuses, and other financial and policy incentives to promote desirable development. Promote future governmental buildings in downtown.



MIXED-USES

SOURCE: GOULD EVANS ASSOCIATES

- g. Promote office and residential uses on upper floors of downtown. These uses support both daytime and nighttime retail and entertainment activities in the area, as well as support a greater "critical mass" of development in the downtown core. Downtown residential activities, including multifamily housing and townhouses, will help create a new and more vital urban neighborhood for Vero Beach and support amenities that enhance the attractiveness of existing neighborhoods that surround downtown.
- h. Establish a district-parking concept for downtown Vero Beach, rather than parking on a site-by-site basis. This will help create a more compact and pedestrian-friendly development. District parking may involve surface and/or structured parking solutions. If structured parking is proposed, it must be in the form of "mixed-use" garages that have a retail or similar pedestrian-oriented ground floor use.
- i. Increase downtown density to establish a viable and competitive mixed-use center. Current downtown buildings are generally below the capacity allowed by City ordinance. By allowing greater density, a more viable center may be created. If successful, a more competitive center can help relieve some of the developmental pressures that exist on the Barrier Island. Currently the height limit in downtown Vero Beach is 50 feet, but care must be taken to avoid the creation of "canyon streets." Consider density bonus incentives for development that conforms to downtown urban design and use recommendations.
- j. Support and engage an effective downtown advocacy organization. This organization should act as a "stakeholder" during the proposed urban design planning process, act to promote and attract appropriate uses in downtown, promote the preservation of historically significant structures, and coordinate the collective marketing and promotion of downtown activities and events.

MIXED-USE
PARKING CONCEPT

SOURCE: GOULD EVANS ASSOCIATES



3.3.2 Royal Palm Pointe

Royal Palm Pointe, as it is known today, was created when the Merrill Barber Bridge was constructed in 1995. At one time, Royal Palm Pointe was the roadway and bridge corridor connecting the Mainland with the Barrier Island. It was historically lined with automobile-oriented commercial activities. When the new bridge was opened, the old bridge was demolished and State Route 60 was rerouted, leaving a commercial corridor that had no through vehicular access.



ROYAL PALM POINTE

This created an opportunity for a new and unique commercial center for Vero Beach. As the northernmost of the finger peninsulas, Royal Palm Pointe has been transformed. This is due in part to public investments in common parking within an extensive landscaped median and the development of a terminus park along the Indian River Lagoon.

This transformation, however, is not yet complete. This district has the potential to become one of Vero Beach's and Florida's most innovative mixed-use districts. Accommodating parking and creating the appropriate regulatory environment for new development forms still loom as significant challenges.

Goal

Complete the transformation of Royal Palm Pointe as a regional mixed-use residential, commercial, and entertainment district; focusing on restaurants, recreation, and boutique retail venues.

Key Issues and Recommendations

Royal Palm Pointe is now well established in the minds of both visitors and residents, but the full potential of the district has not yet been realized. Although bordered by water on three sides, public access along the length of Royal Palm Pointe's waterfront is not common. Also, parking on this peninsula, with its limited available land, remains a significant obstacle to achieving true mixed-use development.

Strategies for the future development of Royal Palm Pointe involve solving the issues of parking adequacy and waterfront access to create a more innovative and integrated mix of land uses. Public improvements should also be integrated into the vision for Royal Palm Pointe in order to reinforce its unique character, public spaces, and recreational opportunities.

Strategies

- a. Prepare a comprehensive master plan for private property on Royal Palm Pointe that will guide property owners, as they redevelop or improve their properties, and assure consistency with improvements the City has made in the right-of-way. The plan should address issues of urban design, building design, façade, signage, landscaping, parking, pedestrian access, and access to the waterfront. The plan should also address the issue of mixed-use development. This process should actively involve merchants, business owners, property owners, and the general citizenry as participants.

- b. Create a single zoning district to replace the three existing zoning districts. The new zoning district should assure the creation of an active mixed-use area by requiring ground floor retail, commercial, restaurants (indoor and outdoor dining), recreational, and entertainment uses in all new buildings on Royal Palm Pointe. Residential uses are encouraged in upper floors of buildings. Assure that all new buildings address their orientation to the waterfront, as well as to the street.

- c. Reinforce the pedestrian nature of Royal Palm Pointe through the continued enhancement of the unifying streetscape and landscape concept. Future improvements should address pedestrian walkways, landscape, streetscape and median treatments, decorative lighting, and signage. As a part of this streetscape plan, public views to the Lagoon and waterfront access through a "boardwalk" along the entire shoreline of Royal Palm Pointe should be considered, along with its accompanying noise impact. Beautification of the entrance into Royal Palm Pointe must also be addressed through streetscape and landscape design.



PUBLIC ACCESS ALONG WATERFRONT AND STREET
SOURCE: GOULD EVANS ASSOCIATES

- d. Prepare and implement a comprehensive landscape, streetscape, signage, and open space plan for Royal Palm Pointe. This plan should address aesthetic issues, as well as functional and durability issues.
- e. Establish a district-parking concept for Royal Palm Pointe, rather than parking on a site-by-site basis, which will better facilitate the creation of a mixed-use district. Coordinate the district parking concept with the Royal Palm Pointe Master Plan. District parking may involve surface and/or structured parking solutions, as well as solutions involving an enhancement of the current median parking concept. If structured parking is proposed, it must be in the form of "mixed-use" structures that have retail, entertainment, or similar pedestrian-oriented ground floor uses.
- f. Enhance water-borne access to Royal Palm Pointe through the creation of additional boat docks and, potentially, marina facilities. Utilize Royal Palm Pointe as a "gateway to the islands" through private boating and the incorporation of excursion boat facilities. Investigate the potential for enhancing navigation through dredging in cooperation with the Florida Inland Navigation District. Cooperate with other regulatory agencies for the protection of manatees and other wildlife.

3.3.3 Miracle Mile/US 1 Commercial Districts

Miracle Mile and US 1 both developed as automobile-oriented commercial centers in the latter half of the 20th Century. This development pattern was consistent with the national trends in lifestyle, shopping, and transportation that occurred after the Second World War. The changes in shopping patterns also profoundly influenced the viability of downtowns in America as well.

Both corridors reflect the shift from pedestrian-oriented commerce to an auto-dominated strategy. The emphasis moved from people walking along sidewalks to automobiles moving at much higher speeds along roadway corridors. Buildings and signage became larger and parking lots, not storefront windows, became the point of entry into the retail environment.



MIRACLE MILE

Many cities across the United States are attempting to deal with the next generation of auto-oriented shopping. As communities grow, the next ring of commercial corridors is typically developed in outlying locations. These new centers frequently draw economic vitality away from the earlier centers. Thus, communities are faced with creating strategies to stem deterioration and decline. Strategies have ranged from simple streetscape improvements to the introduction of new land use mixes, innovative regulation techniques, and different marketing approaches.

Goal

Enhance the existing character, marketability, and long-term sustainability of the Miracle Mile and US 1 commercial corridors, while allowing for their future evolution in accordance with changing commercial development trends.

Key Issues and Recommendations

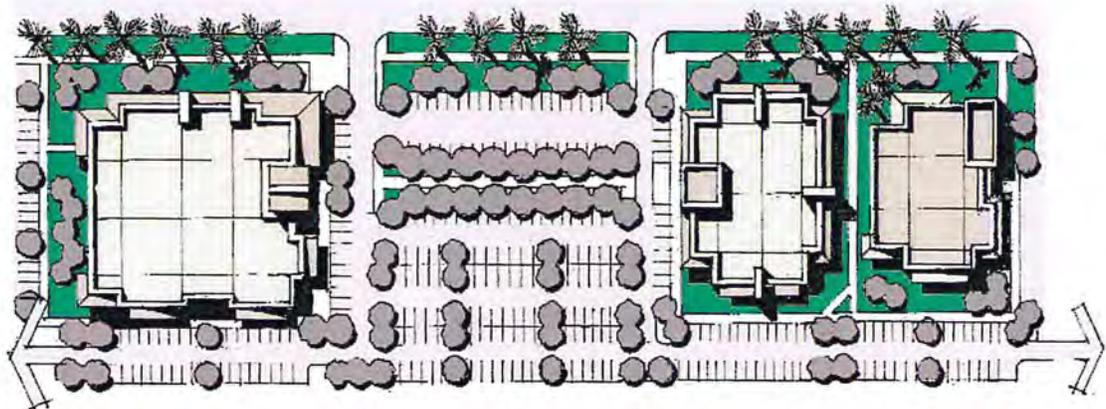
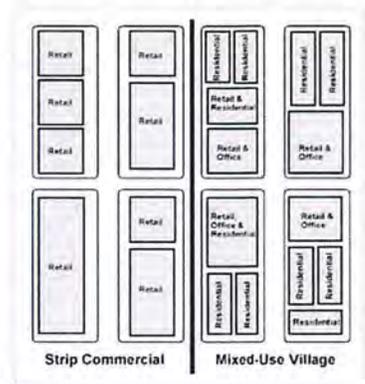
The recommendations for these commercial corridors seek to continue and expand the significant progress made in the landscape beautification of the Miracle Mile. It is clear, for the foreseeable future, that all US cities will have significant automobile-oriented commercial and shopping districts. In Vero Beach, strategies are oriented toward making their environment more pleasant and intimately scaled. Strategies include public actions, as well as anticipated private development initiatives.

In the future, it is also important to position both corridors to accommodate the next generation of development evolution.

Strategies

- a. Continue public streetscape improvements along the Miracle Mile, and extend an enhanced streetscape concept along the US 1 corridor. Provide landscaping to both enhance the corridors and buffer residential from commercial areas. Consider bonuses or incentives for enhanced landscape treatment.

- b. Along the Miracle Mile, limit the maximum size of any new, individual building occupant to 40,000 square feet, with larger occupancies allowed on US 1. Create design standards for new buildings and building renovations, along both corridors, that enhance the orientation of buildings toward the street, the relationship of parking to buildings, parking lot landscaping, better pedestrian connections between buildings and adjacent sites, building and site signage concepts, the articulation or scale break-down of larger buildings, and the relationship between commercial buildings and surrounding neighborhoods. Consider bonuses or incentives for "outstanding" design.
- c. Develop more innovative parking requirements that allow for parking reductions for mixed-use development in accordance with Urban Land Institute's parking formulas. Consider lowering the overall parking requirements to lessen the visual impact of surface parking lots. Require interconnectivity between adjacent parking areas, and consolidate required landscape treatments into larger, more contiguous planting areas that have greater visual impact
- d. Modify zoning ordinances to allow the creation of mixed-use and "village" character development in strip commercial corridors, including incorporating residential and other non-retail uses.



INNOVATIVE PARKING REQUIREMENTS - LANDSCAPING, INTERCONNECTIVITY, SHARED PARKING
SOURCE: GOULD EVANS ASSOCIATES

3.3.4 Ocean Drive/Cardinal Drive Commercial District

The Ocean Drive/Cardinal Drive commercial district represents a "symbolic heart" to many citizens of and visitors to Vero Beach. Its quaint shops, hotels, and restaurants provide a pedestrian-oriented district that creates a quality image and pleasant activity center for the Barrier Island.

Cities change over time, and office development pressures in this district are beginning to alter its scale and land use character. Many long-term retail establishments are now threatened by the higher rents

that follow to these development pressures. Parking requirements to serve new development and the perception or reality of a lack of parking, particularly during the winter "high season," are issues that are paramount in the minds of business owners and customers in the area.

Goal

Maintain the Ocean Drive/Cardinal Drive Commercial District as a destination and quality-oriented boutique retail center for both residents and visitors, while accommodating a demand for office development and the desire for a quality residential environment.



OCEAN DRIVE

Key Issues and Recommendations

On the Vero Beach's Barrier Island, the primary retail and commercial core is located along Ocean Drive and Cardinal Drive, between approximately Cypress Road and Flamevine Lane. It is a pleasant mix of shops, offices, restaurants, and services linked by a strong and well-landscaped pedestrian environment. Framed by the Atlantic Ocean to the east and a series of strong neighborhoods, this district has established itself as one of Florida's premier boutique commercial destinations.

Development pressures, however, are presenting a challenge to the continuation and success of retail in this district. Many banking and financial service establishments view Ocean and Cardinal Drives, as well as the adjoining Beachland Boulevard Corridor, as an ideal location to serve their customers in the region. This development has typically taken the form of relatively larger structures that many residents feel are out of character and out of scale with the district's historic scale and uses. Particularly, locally owned shops that have formed the unique character of Ocean Drive are under pressure to be displaced. The larger scale of these buildings has also placed parking demands on each development site that further contributes to larger scale solutions.

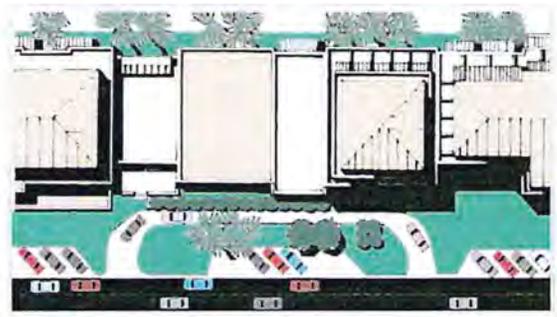
The strategies for the Ocean Drive/Cardinal Drive Commercial District deal directly with the desire to maintain the retail nature of this important district, while maintaining the area's intrinsic scale and character. It is essential that Ocean Drive maintain its retail character, while it is desirable, but not essential for Cardinal. A cornerstone of the emerging concept is to solve traffic circulation, parking, and neighborhood interface issues on a district-wide basis.

Strategies

- a. Prepare a comprehensive master plan for the Ocean Drive/Cardinal Drive Commercial District to address issues of urban design, land use, traffic and parking, Ocean access, open space, public improvements, a unifying pedestrian-friendly streetscape program, signage, and building design characteristics. This process should actively involve merchants, business owners, property owners, surrounding neighborhoods, and the general citizenry as participants.
- b. In association with the comprehensive urban design plan for the district, prepare architectural standards, along with creating a mechanism to review and enforce those standards. The emphasis of standards should not be the creation of a uniform architectural style or theme, but rather the creation of guidelines that better assure scale and form continuity.

- c. Ocean Drive must remain a mixed-use district. To support this objective, all buildings fronting on Ocean Drive must have a retail or restaurant dominated ground floor use. Office or residential uses are encouraged on upper floors. Furthermore, retail frontages must have a majority of transparent glass or "storefront windows" along the Ocean Drive façade. There must also be a direct relationship between the pedestrian sidewalk and the storefront entrance that is not separated by a significant change in elevation.

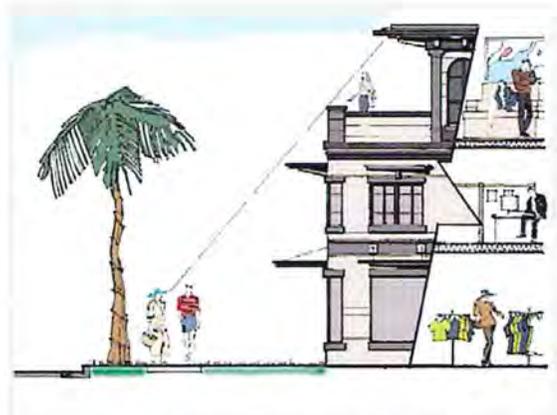
- d. There must be a consistent building setback established for each street in the Ocean Drive/Cardinal Drive Commercial District. This setback should accommodate the pedestrian sidewalk, as well as a green median or planting area. Deviations from this setback may be allowed for uses such as outdoor cafes, but the setback line must be referenced by architectural or landscape elements. These elements may include a courtyard wall, a decorative fence, and/or a landscape feature.



ON-STREET PARKING AND BUILDING SETBACK CONCEPT
SOURCE: GOULD EVANS ASSOCIATES

- e. There shall be no setback or side yards along Ocean Drive between buildings located on the same block. Building facades in the district should appear as a series of smaller scale structures. A single building that occupies an entire city block should have the appearance of a series of adjoining buildings.

- f. For new buildings or additions to existing buildings, heights shall be limited to two stories---a retail ground floor and an office or residential upper floor. A third residential floor may be allowed along the eastern Cardinal Drive frontage if it is set back from the main body of the façade, so as not to contribute to the perception of a "street wall" or be readily visible by a pedestrian from the adjacent sidewalk. No structure can exceed a thirty-five foot height limit as measured from the existing front façade sidewalk.



MIXED-USE BUILDING
SOURCE: GOULD EVANS ASSOCIATES

- g. Encourage appropriate hotel redevelopment along Ocean Drive. If redevelopment occurs, the building configuration may change, but the density or intensity of the hotel development may not be increased. Hotels do not need to have a retail storefront, but their ground floor lobbies should be visible from the street, and facades should consist of a high percentage of transparent glass. Strong pedestrian connections should exist between hotels and Ocean Drive's sidewalk system. Hotels must accommodate all of their required parking on-site, and parking areas should be extensively landscaped. Hotels seawalls should be "softened" with appropriate or indigenous landscape treatment.
- h. Establish a district-parking concept for the Ocean Drive/Cardinal Drive Commercial District. District parking, rather than parking on a site-by-site basis, will help create more compact and pedestrian-friendly development. District parking may involve surface and/or structured parking solutions. If structured parking is proposed, it must be in the form of "mixed-use" structures that have a retail or restaurant ground floor use. All hotels in the district must accommodate their own parking on site.
- i. Revise the Vero Beach zoning ordinance to allow density trade-offs for the use of district parking and compliance with the massing, design, and retail use standards.
- j. Prior to the preparation of a comprehensive urban design plan for the district, undertake quick action, interim measures to increase parking in the district, as well as address basic traffic and parking conflicts or problems. A parking strategy should recognize and distinguish between the different requirements and controls for winter and summer.

3.3.5 Beachland Boulevard

Beachland Boulevard, for most visitors to and many citizens of Vero Beach, represents the primary entrance corridor to the Barrier Island. From Mockingbird Drive to the Sexton Plaza terminus at the Atlantic Ocean, Beachland Boulevard is a commercial corridor that forms a significant "gateway" to the Ocean Drive/Cardinal Drive Commercial District, the Atlantic Ocean beach, adjacent neighborhoods, and park, recreational and cultural amenities.

Like Ocean and Cardinal Drives, development pressures are changing the scale, intensity, and character of new buildings along Beachland Boulevard. Newer buildings with relatively smaller setbacks and smaller planting areas are sometimes replacing the characteristic "green spine," established by historic building setbacks and lush plantings. Over time, retail uses are also disappearing in favor of more office uses.

Beachland Boulevard, however, represents an area with some capacity for absorbing additional office demand, particularly from banking and financial institutions. And unlike the Ocean Drive/Cardinal Drive Commercial District, Beachland Boulevard is more automobile-oriented than pedestrian-oriented. A retail ground floor use, therefore, is not essential to the future success of Beachland Boulevard.

Goal

Reinforce Beachland Boulevard, from Mockingbird Drive to Ocean Drive, as a premier office corridor, particularly for professional services and banking and financial activities.

Key Issues and Recommendations

In considering its future development and physical form, Beachland Boulevard must respond to multiple forces. First, it must remain as a primary entrance corridor and gateway to the Barrier Island. Second, it must respond to the market demand for additional "Class A" office space in Vero Beach. In accomplishing that, it can help relieve some of the developmental pressures along nearby Ocean Drive. Third, it must serve as an "entry portal" to neighborhoods and recreational opportunities that adjoin the boulevard.

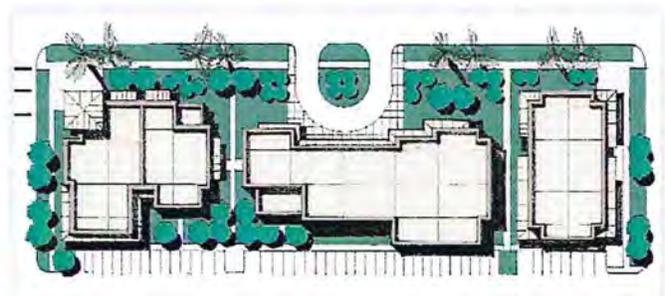


BEACHLAND BOULEVARD

Of particular importance is maintaining the "green spine" that has historically defined Beachland Boulevard's character. Appropriate building setbacks and massing, as well as a unifying landscape design concept, can enhance the spine. It is also important to consider the context and physical relationship between any new development located along Beachland Boulevard and adjacent neighborhoods.

Strategies

- a. Establish the Beachland Boulevard Corridor as a prime office location in Vero Beach for professional services and financial and banking activities.
- b. Maintain and reinforce a common landscaped setback along Beachland Boulevard. Establish both a minimum and maximum building setback line, so that a relatively uniform front yard can be established along the length of the corridor.
- c. Prepare a corridor landscape plan for Beachland Boulevard and 17th Street in order to create a unifying landscape concept that includes elements such as vegetation, signage, public lighting, and street furniture.
- d. Maintain all significant native canopy trees. A limited number of trees may be relocated on site, in conformance with City ordinances, to accommodate new building development.
- e. Locate major parking areas behind buildings along Beachland Boulevard. Cross-connect all rear parking areas to allow for north-south access and egress, as well as for shared parking opportunities. Meet all parking requirements for new development on-site. Minimize curb cuts



SETBACKS, LANDSCAPE, AND PARKING CONCEPT

SOURCE: GOULD EVANS ASSOCIATES

to parking areas along neighborhood streets. Front yards may contain minor vehicular drop-offs and/or minor, short term parking areas.

- f. In many cases, commercial development already extends for the full block depth between Beachland Boulevard and Azalea Lane in order to accommodate on-site parking. The Vision Team recognized the validity of this concept, but it is a very sensitive issue with neighborhoods. Whenever the full block depth is used, significant landscape screening must be placed along the Azalea Lane edge of the site in order to shield parking areas from the view of neighboring residential areas.
- g. All new buildings shall have a "front" building entrance facing Beachland Boulevard. A parking lot entrance may be located along the rear building façade.
- h. Protect adjacent neighborhoods from light infiltration by using "baffled" or "cut-off" lighting fixtures for all rear yard site and parking lot lighting.
- i. Establish Sexton Plaza as an appropriate terminus for Beachland Boulevard at Ocean Drive. Plan and implement design, landscape and site amenities that heighten the sense of arrival and create a landmark for motorists and pedestrians.

3.4 NEIGHBORHOODS

Vero Beach is a community of neighborhoods - neighborhoods of all shapes, sizes, characters, and styles. From the Riomar neighborhood on the Barrier Island to the McAnsch Park neighborhood on the Mainland, neighborhoods represent more than mere places to live. They also tell us something about who we are - as individuals and communities.



VARIOUS NEIGHBORHOODS

Like most cities in the United States, Vero Beach has neighborhoods that fall generally within a range from those that require conservation or preservation to those that require revitalization or stabilization. Strong neighborhoods are located both on the Barrier Island and the Mainland. Neighborhoods that require revitalization or stabilization are located primarily on the Mainland.

Goal

Reinforce Vero Beach as a "community of neighborhoods" by developing strategies for both neighborhood preservation/conservation and neighborhood revitalization/stabilization.

Key Issues and Recommendations

Strategies for Vero Beach's neighborhoods consider a wide range of approaches. They generally fall into three categories. First, there are strategies that should be applied universally throughout the City, such as preservation of the native tree canopy, modifying requirements of all residential zoning districts, or requiring site plan review for all residential approvals. Second, there are optional strategies that are subject to request by an individual neighborhood, such as consideration of a zoning overlay or historic preservation district. Third, there are City planning and development issues regarding neighborhoods, such as strategies that deal with neighborhood markers or strategies that address revitalization of neighborhoods in decline.

Strategies

- a. Preserve the native tree canopy on the Barrier Island and Mainland. Institute a citywide program of tree planting to reinforce the City's tree canopy in all locations. Revise the existing tree protection ordinance to change the focus to preservation and/or relocation of the existing tree canopy, rather than removal and strengthen penalties for violations. A revised tree preservation ordinance should define the nature of "specimen trees," establish an administrative review process, specify a mitigation process for unavoidable losses or violations, address the issue of preserving the existing grade around specimen trees, and consider the implications regarding septic fields and tree impacts, where appropriate.
- b. Develop design standards, zoning modifications, and review procedures for housing construction in Vero Beach that preserves the integrity and character of neighborhoods. Standards and regulations should address size, bulk, massing, density, rooflines, site planning, landscaping, and lot replating for all residential zoning classifications.
- c. Limit all housing in residential zones to two occupied stories, not to exceed 35 feet in height, measured from the natural site grade to the top of the roof. Consider issues in the development of this limitation, such as ornamental roof top features like dormers or widow's walks.

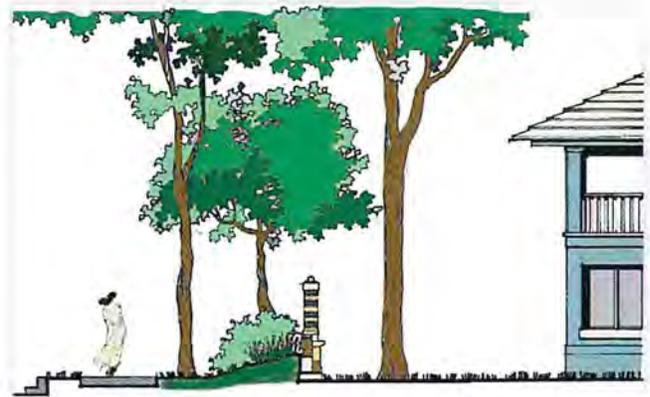


TWO OCCUPIED RESIDENTIAL STORIES

SOURCE: GOULD EVANS ASSOCIATES

- d. Additional residential regulations/overlay districts (with stricter zoning standards or the regulation of architectural design issues) or local historic preservation designation may be considered on an individual neighborhood basis. Development of these regulations or designation should be considered only by a neighborhood request or petition representing a "super majority" of property owners. Issues that may be considered for additional regulations may include roof pitch, roof ornamental areas or decorative structures, façade articulation, and other design-oriented features.
- e. Require site plan review for all single-family residential development. Currently, if appropriate zoning is in place, residential development may take place without any planning, neighborhood, or policy review. By requiring the submission of a site plan, the preservation of specimen trees and the overall massing of structures on a site may be more easily examined.

- f. New subdivisions should, to the greatest extent possible, integrate with the existing roadway framework and adjacent residential development. Gated or walled communities are discouraged in Vero Beach. If gated or walled communities are proposed, a landscape and circulation plan must be submitted for site plan review that mitigates the visual impact of the wall to the broader community and allows vehicular and pedestrian connections to adjacent residential development.



BUFFERING A GATED/WALLED COMMUNITY
SOURCE: GOULD EVANS ASSOCIATES

- g. Create zoning ordinances and review procedures that allow and encourage mixed-use development, including residential uses, in appropriate commercial areas of Vero Beach. Issues that must be addressed are residential open space requirements that would be too onerous for mixed-use development that includes residential, building setbacks, and shared parking strategies.
- h. Institute aggressive code and public safety enforcement in the stabilization/revitalization neighborhoods of Vero Beach. This strategy may have personnel and budget implications for the City's code enforcement staff.

- i. Landscape treatment, walls, berms, or other solutions, from non-compatible uses, such as industry or busy highways, should buffer neighborhoods. The preferred method for buffering is a combination of landscaping and berms. Only in limited circumstances should walls be permitted. These requirements should be enforced through site plan review. Neighborhoods should not be "buffered" from each other, as they are not incompatible uses.

BUFFERING BETWEEN RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL USES

SOURCE: GOULD EVANS ASSOCIATES



- j. Identify neighborhoods with gateways and entrance features wherever appropriate and practical. Neighborhood gateways should represent the "character" of their individual neighborhood. They should not be a generic design that can be replicated throughout the City.
- k. Prepare plans for stabilization/revitalization neighborhoods that encourage renovation of existing structures, as well as infill development and redevelopment as appropriate. Improve public parks and other capital investments, and eliminate open drainage ditches. Consider incentives for appropriate development and redevelopment in these neighborhoods.

3.5 INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT

Although Vero Beach is relatively affluent and has a high number of retired citizens, it is subject to the same economic forces of any US city. Cities across the United States have recognized that a sustainable municipal economy is a diverse economy. It is widely recognized in most cities that residential property is a net consumer of resources, such as public services and infrastructure. This is typically balanced by a diverse array of uses that overcome this deficit by generating non-residential tax revenues.

Retail and employment centers are typically positive tax-generating uses. Employment opportunities are also factors in retaining young people in the community. This was a significant issue in community visioning discussions.

Goal

Create a diversity of good employment opportunities in Vero Beach for the benefit of workers, to support younger residents in their desire to remain in Vero Beach, and to create a more stable and sustainable tax base.

Key Issues and Recommendations

Strategies for industrial and employment development primarily address actions in the industrial economy. The service economy is perceived as strong in Vero Beach, illustrating of a wide range of employment opportunities from financial services to food services. Districts and corridors in the City already exist to address these employment demands.

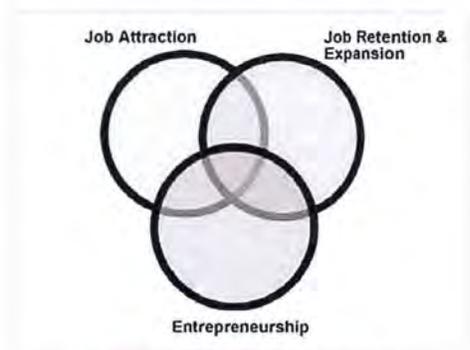
The industrial economy, however, is the subject of several recommendations. They range from the attraction and location of business opportunities to physical improvements for industrial districts.

Strategies

- a. Pursue the three primary activities of employment creation: new job attraction; existing job retention and expansion; and entrepreneurship. Build the local employment base on the community's intrinsic economic strengths, such as the existence of the general aviation airport and the health care industry.
- b. Support the development of a full-service business and light industrial park at the Vero Beach Municipal Airport. Reconsider the disposition of revenue streams from airport site private development that currently must be allocated to the airport.
- c. Promote new and infill industrial and business development along existing industrial corridors. Prepare landscape and parking plans to improve the quality and aesthetic appeal of existing industrial corridors.



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
SOURCE: GOULD EVANS ASSOCIATES

3.6 ROADWAYS AND WAYFINDING

Vero Beach's roadways provide a hierarchical framework for movement into and around the City. Major highways and arterials, collector streets, and local neighborhood streets, each with its own character, help establish this integral network. The network is supplemented and made legible by signage and perceptual cues that orient travelers.

Goal

Create a roadway and supplemental transportation network that enhances the image of Vero Beach, while providing a framework for a multi-modal transportation system. Create an infrastructure network that serves the people of Vero Beach and presents a positive image.

Key Issues and Recommendations

A transportation network of a city is continuously developed throughout the entire history of that city. It evolves with technological change, changes in engineering design standards, and changes in the public's transportation preferences. As a case in point, the nation's Interstate Highway system, which has profoundly impacted the growth patterns of urban America, did not even exist until the latter half of the 20th Century.



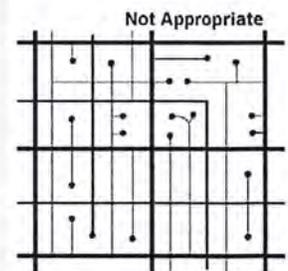
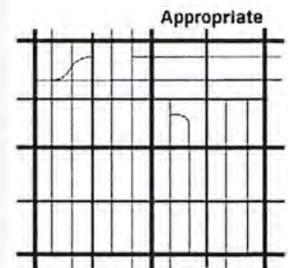
TYPICAL ARTERIAL

Although located several miles from the Interstate 95, the urban form of Vero Beach has been greatly influenced by that national network. What was once a federal and state highway system that served the heart of Vero Beach from a north or south direction, now delivers external travelers from the west, via the Interstate Highway system. The changes in this system, along with altitudinal changes in living and shopping patterns both inside and outside of Vero Beach, have profoundly changed the City's form. Highway-oriented commercial corridors have replaced the once thriving downtown shopping district of Vero Beach. Downtown's traffic pattern is now more "pass through" than destination-oriented.

The vision strategies for Vero Beach's roadway and transportation network directly address the need to capitalize on the unique nature of the City's roadway corridors, including the districts and neighborhoods that they serve. The strategies also recognize the need to develop alternative forms of circulation for the enjoyment of Vero Beach's residents and visitors, as well as to position the City appropriately for emerging patterns of development. The City's infrastructure network has served Vero Beach well. As future improvements are made, however, the network should be upgraded to meet contemporary service and aesthetic standards.

Strategies

- a. Maintain a system of roadways in Vero Beach that is interconnected at all levels, from arterials to local neighborhood streets. This creates a more resilient transportation system that can help alleviate traffic congestion on arterial or collector streets - and helps minimize the need to add capacity to arterials and collector streets through additional traffic lanes. The form of development adjacent to major roadways is a primary determinant of roadway interconnectivity. Walled or gated communities, cul-de-sac street neighborhoods, and commercial "superblocks" are the antithesis of a well-connected transportation system.



ROAD HIERARCHY
SOURCE: GOULD EVANS

- b. Prepare a master plan for the entire arterial network of Vero Beach. This plan should consider not only roadway capacity, but it should also address the intrinsic design character of each street. Elements such as landscape and streetscape treatment in the public right-of-way, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, lighting, directional signage, public art, and entrance and gateway monuments should all be addressed. Some of these streets have been addressed in the vision strategies for various districts.
- c. Initiate a gateways plan for Vero Beach. The gateways map to the right indicates entrance points into Vero Beach, as well as suggests entrances to key districts within the City. These symbolic gateways, along with an appropriate signage system, form a framework to assist in "wayfinding." They enhance the image and identity of the City. The design theme of new gateway or wayfinding signage should be compatible with the existing Downtown Vero Beach and Royal Palm Pointe entrance signs. The Vision Plan also calls for the development of a series of markers that identify key neighborhood entrances (not show on this map).
- d. Maintain and appropriately identify all storm evacuation routes in the City. This is particularly important, for example, if changes in the capacity or directional flow results from an enhanced arterial urban design plan. Potential changes to the "twin pairs" through downtown is a prime example of the need for this strategy.
- e. Enhance the bike and pedestrian trail systems throughout Vero Beach, so that they become a true alternative mode of transportation. Trails should link all major commercial districts with parks, entertainment venues, and neighborhoods. The system should also contain amenities and street furniture that is supportive of this mode of transportation. Work with the MPO bicycle committee to coordinate regional and local bicycle networks
- f. Support mass transit as an alternative form of transportation. Public transit should be designed to link major residential districts with employment centers and shopping and entertainment venues. The provision of specialized district-oriented transit should be considered in more intensive, pedestrian-oriented environments. The Ocean Drive shopping district, and its potential linkages to district and employee parking, is an example of a location where this solution may be appropriate.
- g. Investigate the feasibility of placing utility services below ground, particularly electric power lines in commercial areas.
- h. Support the completion of the sewage plant relocation study. If the decision is made to relocate the facility, undertake a land use analysis for the site.
- i. Anticipate and plan for the impacts on community facilities that are influenced by the area's



growth. The impact of growth of beaches and beach parking, museums, and cultural venues should be continually monitored. Consider the future economic viability and capacity of these venues, as well as methods for securing their future viability.

- j. Study the impact of the City's marina on the local economy. Consider the viability of marina expansion, as well as transit and pathway linkages between the marina and significant Vero Beach attractions.
- k. Continue to work with the Indian River Community College as a center for employment skills training, as well as a nucleus for county-wide entrepreneurial skills training.

3.7 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

The Vision Plan suggests a number of physical changes that will require alterations to the City's planning and regulatory structure. Some of the strategies are not in conformance with previously prepared Vero Beach plans and ordinances. Other strategies represent new ideas that have not yet been anticipated.

Goal

Align the City's plans and regulations to support the Vision Plan and follow through with appropriate training and public information programs.

Key Issues and Recommendations

Although the Vision Plan suggests many physical and policy changes in Vero Beach, these changes are not necessarily reflected in the City's policy and regulatory process. Florida State statutes require, for example, that zoning decisions conform to comprehensive plan recommendations. Other suggestions, such as allowing the designation of historic preservation districts, are not covered in any existing Vero Beach ordinances. Additionally, mechanisms should be created to educate decision makers on these changes, as well as to provide for a continuing community planning dialog regarding Vero Beach's future vision.

Strategies

- a. Review, amend or update the City's comprehensive plan to align it with the adopted recommendations of the Vision Plan regarding land use, transportation, public policies, and other key factors.
- b. Revise the City's zoning, development, and signage ordinances to implement the recommendations of the Vision Plan concerning building massing and location, including recommendations that require more innovative "form based" zoning approaches, as well as signage regulations and standards for both the public and private sectors. Adopt an interim development code (IDC) to regulate the character and form of development in conformance with the Vision Plan, while the comprehensive zoning modifications are being prepared. Eliminate conditional uses in neighborhoods that undermine neighborhood stability.

- c. Create zoning "overlay" districts, when requested by affected communities, to regulate special design features that are unique to an area or enforce requirements that are more rigorous than those included in the underlying zoning regulations.
- d. Create a local historic preservation-enabling ordinance for the City of Vero Beach that allows neighborhoods, areas, or individual buildings and sites to request designation as a historic district. This will facilitate the preservation of significant historic buildings and districts.
- e. Create a training program for City officials -- elected officials, appointed commissioners, and staff members-- to inform them regarding the policy and enforcement ramifications of the Vision Plan and accompanying public policy changes.
- f. Conduct a public workshop or workshops on an annual basis to gain input regarding vision planning issues and implementation in Vero Beach. This public input may be used to amend or update the strategies on a regular basis.
- g. Coordinate with Indian River County with regard to vision planning and subsequent zoning or regulatory modifications.

i m p l e m e n t a t i o n s t r a t e g i e s

Success is truly dependent upon the entire community accepting responsibility, taking action, and strategically working together for positive change and desirable outcomes.

c h a p t e r f o u r

Implementation strategies identify the means to accomplish the Vero Beach Vision Plan. Implementation is not the culmination of the visioning process; rather it is part of the continual cycle of public input, analysis, community development, implementation actions, evaluation and updating. Implementation is both incremental and cumulative, and success requires participation from both public and private entities. All segments of the community need to work together to protect the unique qualities and character of Vero Beach in a proactive manner to achieve the desired vision for the future.

4.1 IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Implementation of the Vero Beach Vision Plan is dependent upon the commitment of many individuals and organizations in Vero Beach. Implementing the strategies and actions of this plan will require long-term commitment and community "ownership" with a sense of priority. The implementation matrix is intended to guide the implementation of the many strategies and actions that are necessary to achieve the desired vision for Vero Beach.

This matrix will help to guide future actions so that priorities can be set, interim successes can be celebrated, and improvement can occur through the effective use of resources and time. The implementation matrix identifies the timeframe, for accomplishing each strategy in the Vero Beach Vision Plan. Many of the items listed in the matrix will require significant capital expenditures. In the vision plan process, it is not possible to estimate the extent of these costs. The vision plan calls for more detailed feasibility studies or master plans, such as the master plans for the key commercial districts. Through these future efforts, order of magnitude costs for infrastructure, public works, and development should be determined. The matrix should be used as a tool for the city council to debate and prioritize these expenditures within the framework of the overall capital improvements program.

STRATEGY 3.3 - COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

Strategy 3.3.1 - Downtown

#	STRATEGY	0-2 YRS	2-5 YRS	+5 YRS	NOTES
a.	Prepare downtown master plan	●			With stakeholder participation
b.	Conduct traffic engineering analysis of "twin pairs"	●			Coordinate with 3.3.1a
c.	Preserve street grid network	●	●	●	Ongoing policy
d.	Enhance on-street parking		●		
e.	Prepare and implement streetscape, signage, and open space plan	●			Ongoing implementation
f.	Promote pedestrian-related uses on the ground floor of buildings	●	●	●	Ongoing policy
g.	Promote office and residential uses on upper floors of buildings	●	●	●	Ongoing policy
h.	Seek to increase downtown density			●	
i.	Establish district-parking concept			●	
j.	Support and engage downtown advocacy organization			●	Engage in 3.3.1a

Strategy 3.3.2 - Royal Palm Pointe

#	STRATEGY	0-2 YRS	2-5 YRS	+5 YRS	NOTES
a.	Prepare comprehensive master plan for private property	●			With stakeholder participation
b.	Create a single zoning district	●			
c.	Reinforce pedestrian nature	●	●	●	Ongoing policy
d.	Prepare and implement streetscape, signage, and open space plan	●			Ongoing implementation
e.	Establish district-parking concept			●	
f.	Enhance water-borne access			●	

Strategy 3.3.3 - Miracle Mile/US 1 Commercial Districts

#	STRATEGY	0-2 YRS	2-5 YRS	+5 YRS	NOTES
a.	Continue streetscape improvements along Miracle Mile - enhance streetscape concept along US 1 corridor		●		With stakeholder participation
b.	Limit building size to 40,000 sq ft	●			
c.	Develop innovative parking requirements	●			
d.	Modify zoning ordinances to allow mixed-use development	●			

Strategy 3.3.4 - Ocean Drive/Cardinal Drive Commercial District

#	STRATEGY	0-2 YRS	2-5 YRS	+5 YRS	NOTES
a.	Prepare comprehensive master plan	●			With stakeholder participation
b.	Prepare architectural standards	●			
c.	Maintain Ocean Drive as retail district	●	●	●	Ongoing policy
d.	Consistent building setback established for each street	●	●	●	Ongoing policy
e.	Setbacks or side yards should not be permitted along Ocean Drive between buildings	●	●	●	Ongoing policy
f.	Height of new buildings should be limited to two stories		●	●	Ongoing policy
g.	Encourage appropriate hotel redevelopment along Ocean Drive	●			
h.	Establish district-parking concept			●	
i.	Revise the Vero Beach zoning ordinance to allow density trade-offs	●			
j.	Increase parking and address basic traffic and parking conflicts	●			

Strategy 3.3.5 - Beachland Boulevard

#	STRATEGY	0-2 YRS	2-5 YRS	+5 YRS	NOTES
a.	Establish the Beachland Boulevard Corridor as prime office location	•	•	•	Ongoing policy
b.	Maintain and reinforce a common landscaped setback	•			
c.	Prepare corridor landscape plan		•		
d.	Maintain all significant native canopy trees	•	•	•	Ongoing policy
e.	Locate major parking areas behind buildings	•	•	•	Ongoing policy
f.	Screen parking along Azalea Lane	•	•	•	Ongoing policy
g.	Require new buildings to have front entrances face Beachland	•	•	•	Ongoing policy
h.	Protect neighborhoods from light infiltration	•	•	•	Ongoing policy
i.	Establish Sexton Plaza as an appropriate terminus		•		

STRATEGY 3.4 - NEIGHBORHOODS

#	STRATEGY	0-2 YRS	2-5 YRS	+5 YRS	NOTES
a.	Preserve native tree canopy on the Barrier Island and Mainland	•	•	•	With stakeholder participation
b.	Develop design standards, zoning modifications, and review procedures for housing construction	•			
c.	Limit all housing in residential zones to two occupied stories	•	•	•	Ongoing policy
d.	Consider additional residential regulations or historic preservation designations on a neighborhood basis	•	•	•	Ongoing policy
e.	Require site plan review for all single-family residential development	•			Ongoing policy
f.	Integrate new subdivisions with the existing road framework and adjacent residential development	•	•	•	Ongoing policy
g.	Encourage mixed-use development through new zoning ordinances and review procedures	•			
h.	Institute rigorous code and public safety enforcement	•	•	•	Ongoing policy
i.	Buffer neighborhoods from non-compatible uses through landscaping and other aesthetically pleasing techniques	•	•	•	Ongoing policy
j.	Use neighborhood gateways and entrance features where appropriate			•	
k.	Prepare plans for stabilization/revitalization of neighborhoods	•	•	•	Ongoing policy

STRATEGY 3.5 - INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT

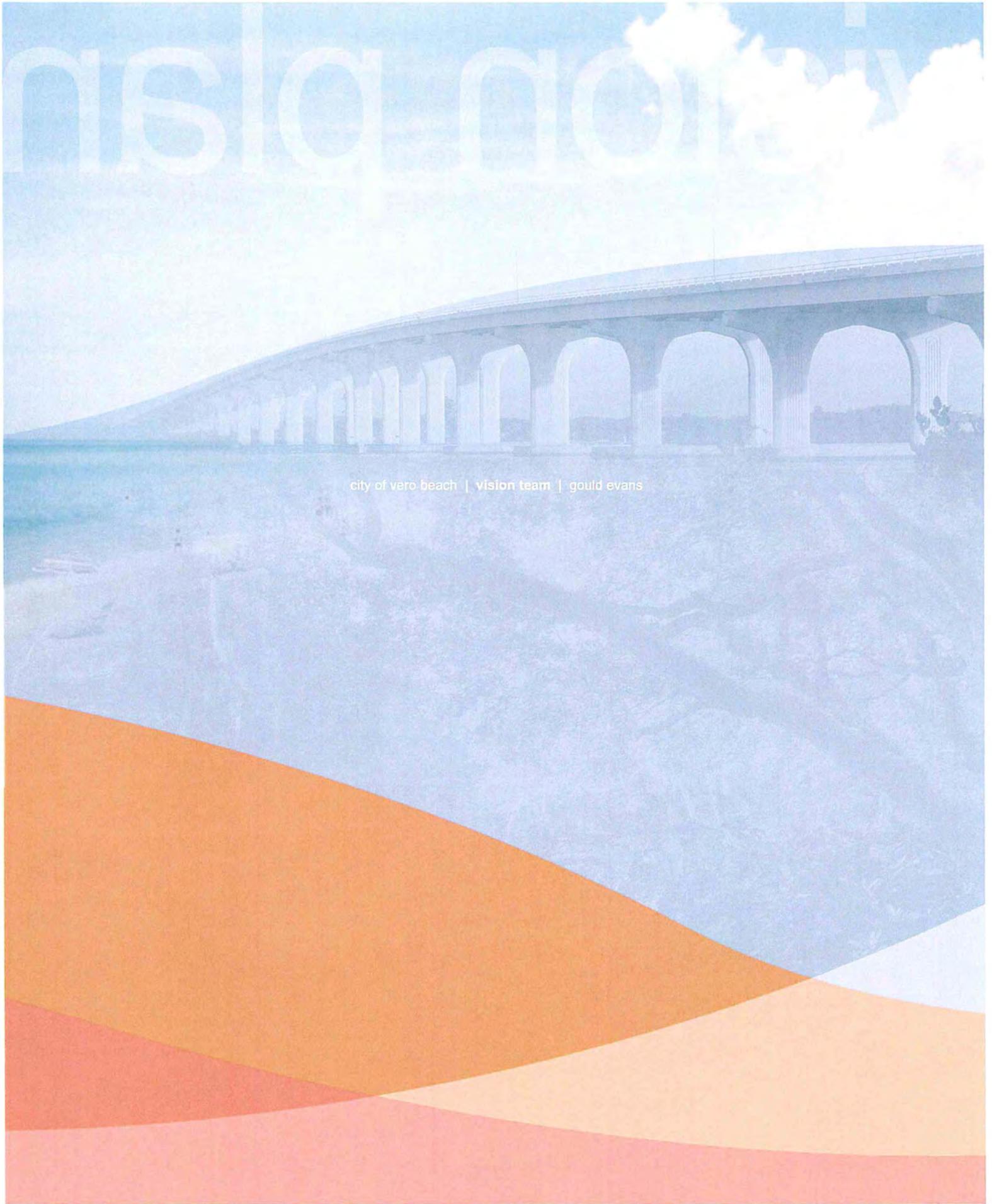
#	STRATEGY	0-2 YRS	2-5 YRS	+5 YRS	NOTES
a.	Pursue the three primary activities of employment creation	•	•	•	Ongoing policy
b.	Support development of business/light industrial park at municipal airport	•	•	•	Ongoing policy
c.	Promote new and infill industrial and business development along existing industrial corridors	•	•	•	Ongoing policy

STRATEGY 3.6 - ROADWAYS, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND WAYFINDING

#	STRATEGY	0-2 YRS	2-5 YRS	+5 YRS	NOTES
a.	Maintain interconnected roadway system at all levels	•	•	•	Ongoing policy
b.	Prepare master plan for entire arterial network of Vero Beach		•		
c.	Initiate city-wide gateway plan			•	
d.	Identify and maintain all storm evacuation routes in Vero Beach	•			
e.	Enhance community-wide bike and pedestrian trails system		•		
f.	Support mass transit as an alternative form of transportation	•	•	•	Ongoing policy
h.	Support the completion of the sewage plant relocation study	•			
i.	Anticipate and plan for growth impact on community facilities	•	•	•	Ongoing policy
j.	Study the impact of the marina on the local economy		•		
k.	Work with IRCC for employment and entrepreneurial skills training	•	•	•	Ongoing policy

STRATEGY 3.7 - PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

#	STRATEGY	0-2 YRS	2-5 YRS	+5 YRS	NOTES
a.	Review and update comprehensive plan to align it with visioning recommendations	●	●		Amend plan (0-2 yrs) new plan (2-5 yrs)
b.	Revise City's zoning ordinance	●			Immediate interim development ordinance
c.	Create zoning "overlay" districts	●	●	●	Ongoing policy
d.	Create historic preservation enabling ordinance for city	●			In conjunction with 3.7b
e.	Create training program for officials and staff	●			
f.	Conduct annual public workshop(s) to gain input	●	●	●	Annual activity
g.	Coordinate with Indian River County with regard to vision planning and policy changes	●	●	●	Ongoing policy



VERO BEACH

city of vero beach | vision team | gould evans