

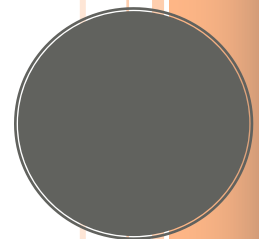
# WEST 192 ECONOMIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## *Final Report*

This report has been compiled by the West 192 Economic Advisory Committee for presentation to the Osceola County Board of County Commissioners.

West 192 Economic Advisory Committee

01/23/2012



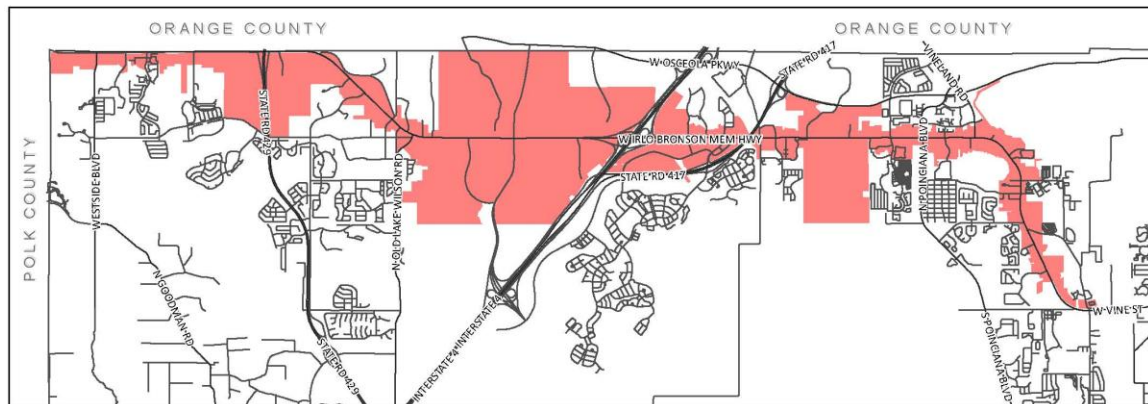
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In response to the recognized economic stress existing along and near the West 192 corridor, the Osceola County Board of County Commissioners established the West 192 Economic Advisory Committee in order to identify redevelopment opportunities and strategies. These opportunities and strategies will effectively reduce or eliminate blight, improve the tax base, and encourage and facilitate public and private investments within the corridor. The West 192 corridor is defined as U.S. 192 from the County line on the west to the Kissimmee city limits on the east, as shown in Map 1 below.

Map 1. West 192 Study Area



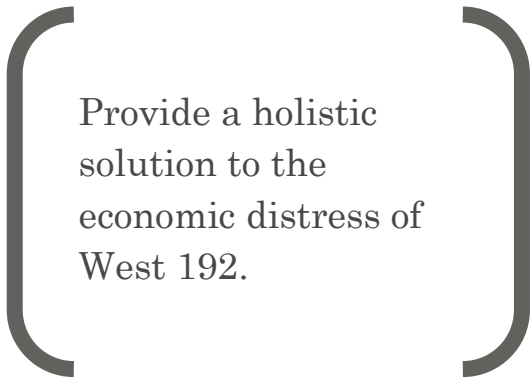
West 192 is Osceola County's primary platform for economic growth, job creation, and tax generation. One-third of all jobs are located along the corridor, a quarter of the County's commercial property tax is generated through its land uses, and almost half of the County's sales tax is collected by its businesses. This area is also the face of tourism for Osceola County. The value of this area needs to be sustained for the viability of the County. Future development and redevelopment decisions affecting the corridor should support and further efforts to make the corridor economically competitive.

The West 192 corridor has historically been positioned as a budget alternative to Orange County. The lack of hotel supply with significant meeting space is a contributing factor to the relatively poor hotel performance in Osceola County. The situation observed has probably been exacerbated with the recession as all properties in the region have priced themselves to gain market share. In order to reverse this trend significant development and redevelopment must occur.

The West 192 Economic Advisory Committee completed a visioning exercise in order to visualize what U.S. 192 should look like in the future. The Committee discussed topics such as transportation improvements, affordable housing, a diversity of uses, passive attraction and events.

The Committee has drafted strategies and action steps in order to provide a holistic solution to the economic distress of West 192. The strategies are divided into near-term, intermediate, and long-term strategies. Near-term is defined as a project which can be completed within one to two years. Intermediate is defined as a project which can be completed within five to seven years. Long-term is defined as a project with a completion time in excess of seven years, although progress towards its completion resulting in substantial results can occur earlier.

The long-term strategies are those transformational solutions which will alter West 192. The near-term and intermediate solutions are other supporting actions, but completed without the long-term strategies will not change the face of West 192. An aggressive approach is needed to create this transformation. These strategies, listed below, are not prioritized in terms of their importance.



Provide a holistic solution to the economic distress of West 192.

Table 1. Proposed Strategies

<i><b>Time Frame</b></i>	<i><b>Strategy</b></i>
<i>Near-Term</i>	<i>Development Authority Marketing Community Redevelopment Agency Signage Minimum Maintenance Standards Cohousing Pilot Program Site Improvement Grants Mixed Use Designation</i>
<i>Intermediate</i>	<i>New Land Development Code Consolidation of Property Cohousing Program Community Land Trust</i>
<i>Long-Term</i>	<i>Transportation Linear Park</i>

The recommendation to the Osceola County Board of County Commissioners is to accept the strategies as presented in this report. It is recommended that the West 192 Economic Advisory Committee members be reappointed to this Committee for an additional six months and be directed to work on the strategies and action steps.

The West 192 Economic Advisory Committee will report back to the Osceola County Board of County Commissioners to present their Work Program for the Sept 2012 – Sept 2013. The Work Program will include the budget, staffing needs, and funding requirements. The Work Program will be taken over by the Development Authority once it has been established.

## OSCEOLA COUNTY AND TOURISM

Tourism, the travel for recreational, leisure or business purposes, is vital to the overall health of Osceola County. Osceola County is adjacent to Orange County which is home to Walt Disney World, Universal, and Sea World. Osceola County supports these theme parks with vacation rentals and hotel/motel accommodations as well as other attractions and things for tourists to do while visiting Central Florida. Osceola County is an integral part of the Tourism Cluster, as display in Chart 1 below.



Osceola County is a family-orientated destination known for its themed dinner theaters, swamp tours and outdoor activities. Osceola County offers such activities as theme parks, fishing, golfing, entertainment and swimming. The City of Kissimmee has a historic downtown which offers shops and dining options. Osceola County is also working to promote eco-tourism which includes such activities as airboat rides, fishing and canoeing/kayaking.

Chart 1. Tourism Cluster



Throughout this study of West 192, the status and health of tourism as it relates to this study area was greatly analyzed. The three sections of the study area were assessed as to their existing and future role in tourism. It was found that Section 1 and Section 2, as described on Map 2: West 192 Section, page 7, are still viable in the tourism market. Future development within Section 3 should be non-tourist related development as Section 3's role in the tourism market has diminished. These findings are discussed further in the Data & Analysis section, beginning on page 8.



## THE WEST 192 ECONOMIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The West 192 Economic Advisory Committee was established by the Osceola County Board of County Commissioners by Resolution 10-153R on December 6, 2010. The Commissioners recognized the economic distress existing along and near the West 192 corridor. The West 192 corridor is defined as U.S. 192 from the County line on the west to the Kissimmee city limits on the east.

Committee membership was structured around stakeholder organizations to provide an efficient and productive means for ensuring meaningful participation from the corridor's business and property owners. Members were asked to regularly brief their respective organizations and provide feedback to the Advisory Committee. Eight organizations comprised the Committee; U.S. 192 Redevelopment Advisory Committee, Gateway Advisory Committee, Osceola Resort Area Council, Four Corners Area Council, City of Kissimmee, Tourist Development Council, 192 Business Alliance, and the Gateway Finance Committee. The Committee met eleven times during an eight month period.

The Committee was tasked with identifying redevelopment opportunities and strategies that could to effectively reduce or eliminate blight, improve the tax base, and encourage and facilitate public and private investments within the corridor. The Resolution highlighted these items for consideration by the Committee; these items were discussed in the committee meetings.

Provide meaningful participation from the corridor's business and property owners in the West 192 corridor.

The Committee discussed the historic patterns of the corridor, the health and viability of similar tourist corridors, visioning for the future, and establishing strategies for the future. This Committee is invested in the health and viability of this corridor and believes the proposed recommendations will assist in reviving West 192.



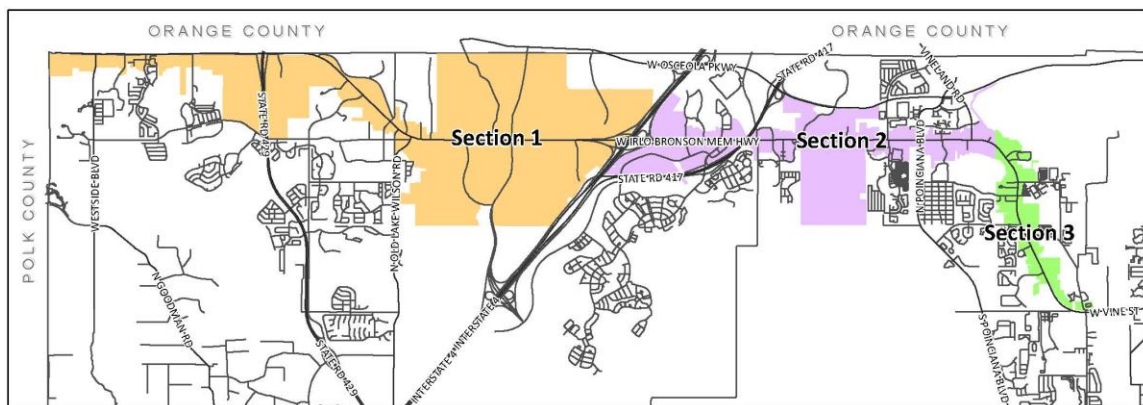
## DATA AND ANALYSIS

West 192 is Osceola County's primary platform for economic growth, job creation, and tax generation. One-third of all jobs are located along the corridor, a quarter of the County's commercial property tax is generated through its land uses, and almost half of the County's sales tax is collected by its businesses. As such, West 192 plays a similar role to that of historic downtowns when they functioned as communities' commercial centers.

West 192's value to the County needs to be sustained. Future development and redevelopment decisions affecting the corridor should support and further efforts to make the corridor economically competitive.

The study area was broken up into three different sections for evaluation purposes. Section 1 is from I-4 west to the Lake County line, Section 2 is from I-4 east to SR 535 and Section 3 is from SR 535 east to the city of Kissimmee border, as shown on Map 2 below. The properties researched were the parcels adjacent to U.S. 192 or have direct access to U.S. 192.

Map 2. West 192 Sections



Case studies were used to assess West 192 competitiveness in the metro Orlando area. The locations analyzed were I-Drive North, I-Drive South, Lake Buena Vista, and Walt Disney World Area. The comparisons between the areas were focused on retail trends, concentrations of activities and land use, age of structures, number of hotel rooms, taxable values, crime and employment.

The West 192 corridor has historically been positioned as a budget alternative to Orange County. This corridor has not aged well as compared with other regions, the most telling indicator is that occupancies have generally fallen even as the area’s overall attendance counts at the region’s major attractions has grown, as displayed on Chart 2 below.

Chart 2. Orange County and Osceola County Hotel Rooms, combined with Disney, Universal, and Sea World Attendance, 1972-2010

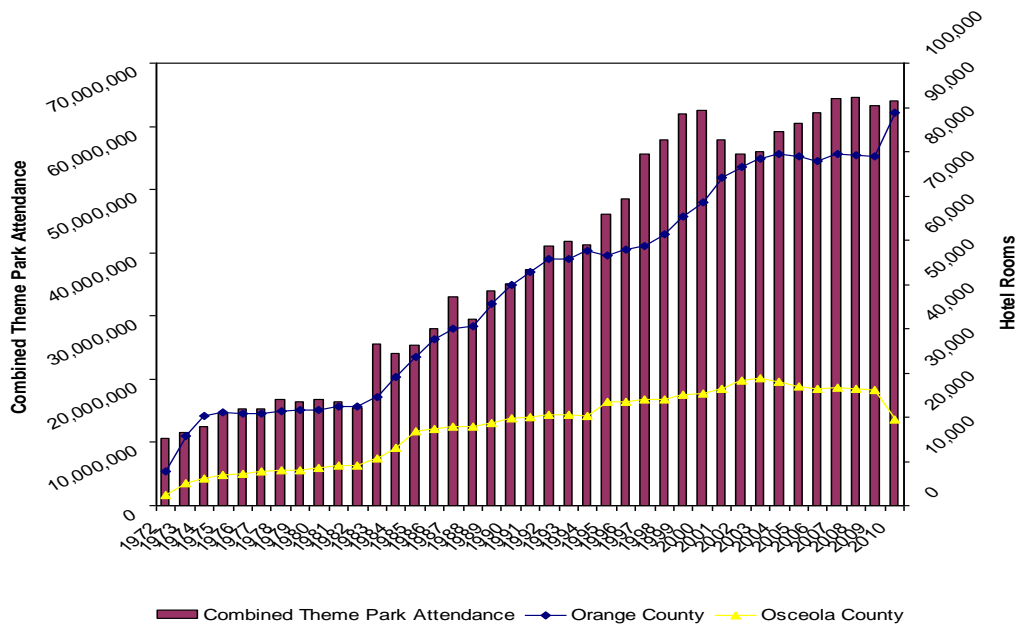


Chart by Real Estate Research Consultants, Inc.

There are many explanations for the eroding position of the corridor although the main explanation is the emergence of better lodging areas and Disney’s efforts to grow its own inventory of available moderate and value priced rooms, as can be seen in Chart 3 below. The lack of hotel supply with significant meeting space is a contributing factor to the relative poor hotel performance in Osceola County. The situation observed has probably been exacerbated with the recession as all properties in the region have priced themselves to gain market share. In most cases, this loss of competitiveness has resulted in reduced occupancies, tourist tax collections and lost ad valorem revenues.

Chart 3. Osceola County and Walt Disney World as a percent of Orlando Metro Area Hotel Units, 1971-2010

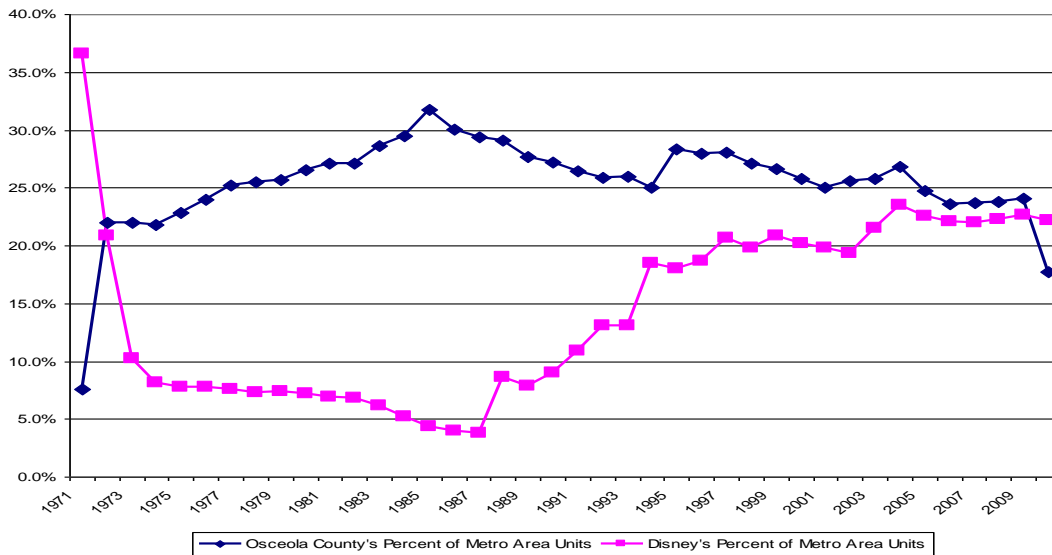


Chart by Real Estate Research Consultants, Inc.

Investment and reinvestment is strongly encouraged. Investment might occur on new or consolidated properties or repositioning of existing properties. For the most part, the specific role played by West 192 will need to be evaluated. In all likelihood, this will mean certain areas retain their basic orientation to defined segments of a tourism or visitation industry while others are reprogrammed or deployed for other uses, including non-tourist uses.

These conditions and situations point to a need to explore a more comprehensive (re)development strategy in selected areas of the corridor, identify market segments that might respond to some facilities among the available lodging and retail inventory, and guide public investments into areas or properties that seem the most likely to sustain themselves based on location or other yet undefined attributes.

A recommended strategy is to encourage investment and reinvestment.

## VISIONING EXERCISE

The West 192 Economic Advisory Committee was challenged to vision what they would like the West 192 corridor to look like in the future. The Committee came up with similar ideas for the future covering such topics as transportation, affordable housing, diversity of uses, passive attraction and events.

Sampling of the vision statements discussed by the Committee;

- Redevelop the West 192 corridor in a manner that maximized diversity of uses; that maximizes economic diversity; and that incorporates mixed use development strategies that promote dynamic economic health and a positive image with an inviting identity.

- Different areas connected by one boulevard, with median landscaped with trees and interesting lighting effect.



- Create transportation hubs that could be centered around themes or attractions such as entertainment. These hubs could be incentivized in order to attract those types of companies to invest in that area.
- Create an Apple Directional Enterprise Zone. Where there is an Apple application that can be downloaded to cellphones, iPads and laptops that promotes business on West 192.

- Provide unique entertainment, lodging, dining, sporting, and shopping experiences as the western gateway to Walt Disney World in a high-density, walkable and visually appealing corridor.



- Create a neighborhood identity; incorporate a beginning and ending archway to designate that neighborhood. Provide transportation within the area to promote businesses. Create a passive free attraction to attract visitors to the area. Clean up properties that are in disarray, making a better visual presentation with curb appeal.
- West 192 is an economically healthy environment capable of achieving and maintaining:



A certain % annual growth rate in earnings (e.g., visitor spending)

A certain % annual growth rate in employment

A certain % annual growth rate in tax revenues (i.e., property tax and sales tax)

Transportation was a common theme among the visioning submissions. It is a way to provide connectivity and continuity throughout the West 192 area. It can also provide an interesting and fun means of travel for visitors and residents. Alternate means of transportation can be provided in the form of technology such as; bus rapid transit (BRT), street car or shuttles.



The idea of creating hubs or nodes of activities stemmed from these discussions. Each node would have a different theme; such as entertainment, shopping, or dining. Once the themes are established, incentives could be offered to businesses who wanted to open in the node and maintain the theme.

Create one cohesive neighborhood

The Committee also believes that creating one cohesive neighborhood is very important. That can be done by establishing transportation links, neighborhood branding and naming, or providing events in the area which all the businesses participate in.

## STRATEGIES AND FUNDING STEPS

The proposed strategies stem mainly from the visioning exercise that the West 192 Economic Advisory Committee completed, as well as follow up discussions. Discussions regarding potential issues or implementation delays occurred within the committee meetings.

The strategies are divided into near-term, intermediate, and long-term strategies. Near-term is defined as a project which can be completed within one to two years. Intermediate is defined as a project which can be completed within five to seven years. Long-term is defined as a project with a completion times in excess of seven years, although progress towards its completion resulting in substantial results can occur earlier. The long-term strategies are those transformational solutions which will alter the character of the West 192 corridor. The near-term and intermediate solutions are other supporting actions, but completed without the long term strategies will not change the face of West 192. An aggressive approach is needed to create this transformation.

Together these fourteen (14) strategies work to provide a coordinated approach for reversing the corridor's economic decline, as well as creating a platform for sustainable economic growth. Actions steps and timelines are provided with each strategy in order to ensure successful implementation. These strategies are not prioritized in terms of their importance.

Table 2. Proposed Strategies

<i><b>Time Frame</b></i>	<i><b>Strategy</b></i>
<i>Near-Term</i>	<i>Development Authority</i>
	<i>Marketing</i>
	<i>Community Redevelopment Agency</i>
	<i>Signage</i>
	<i>Minimum Maintenance Standards</i>
	<i>Cohousing Pilot Program</i>
	<i>Site Improvement Grants</i>
	<i>Mixed Use Designation</i>
<i>Intermediate</i>	<i>New Land Development Code</i>
	<i>Consolidation of Property</i>
	<i>Cohousing Program</i>
	<i>Community Land Trust</i>

*Long-Term                  Transportation*  
*Linear Park*

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The overall funding for all of the strategies should be explored as a next step in the process. There are a number of potential funding mechanisms for the various strategies. These can include but are not limited to: brownfield incentives, Local Government Distressed Area Matching Grant program (LDMG), utilizing an enterprise zone, amending the US 192 Municipal Service Benefit Unit (MSBU), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), as well as tax increment financing (TIF). These potential funding mechanisms should be tasked to the Gateway Finance Committee.

## Near Term – Strategy #1

### **Development Authority**

This recommendations report lists fourteen (14) strategies and numerous action steps for implementation of these strategies. A single management agency must be created in order to oversee all of the programs to ensure consistency between the strategies and that the implementation occurs. The Development Authority would be the single management agency for the West 192 study area.

The Development Authority Board would be appointed by the Osceola County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). The Board will consist of property and business owners within the West 192 study area. The authority will function as an umbrella organization for coordinating all other agencies and programs along the corridor such as the Community Redevelopment Agencies, the U.S. 192 BeautiVacation Program and the Community Land Trust. This agency would be responsible for implementing and enforcing all of the programs put into place.

A report will be presented to the BOCC that will entail the full duties and board structure of the Development Authority. Once the BOCC accepts the report and establishes the agency, the Commissioners will appoint the Board members for this agency. The Development Authority will be a public private partnership.

### **Action Steps**

- Compile a report about the duties and board structure of the Development Authority
- Bring to the BOCC for adoption by resolution
- Assist the agency in becoming independent

### **Timeline**

- 6 months – Present report to BOCC for adoption
- 1 year – Establish the Development Authority
- 18 months – Programs are implemented

( Single Management Agency )



## Near Term – Strategy #2

### Marketing Plan

The West 192 study area lacks a cohesive community character. The study area over 15 miles in length and the street name changes a number of times for the entire length of the roadway. As the face of tourism, and in order to fully grasp the new neighborhood concept, a marketing plan should be completed for the West 192 study area. The marketing plan for the West 192 study area will identify the key market segments and market position, improving the image and developing a brand for the area, and implementing marketing programs.

The development of the marketing plan should involve Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB). The West 192 study area could be made up of more than one market segment. Understanding all of the segments will assist in knowing the customer better and being able to deliver what they want. Using the analysis will provide an understanding of the competition and how West 192 can gain competitive advantage. Once the background information has been collected, a market position statement can be created.

Creating a sense  
of community

The image of West 192 needs to be improved and a brand should be developed. The image should be updated in order to communicate the new vision for the area. Branding creates a positive image of the area; it will assist in creating a sense of community. The marketing programs can include such items as: marketing goals, communication plan, advertising and promotion, public relations and/or special events.

### Action Steps

- Complete the market segment and competition analysis
- Draft a market position statement
- Development of an image and branding
- Develop marketing programs

## Timeline

- 9 months – Complete the market segment and competition analysis
- 1 year – Draft a market position statement
- 1 year – Development of an image and branding
- 18 months – Develop marketing programs

## Near Term – Strategy #3

### **Community Redevelopment Agency or Agencies**

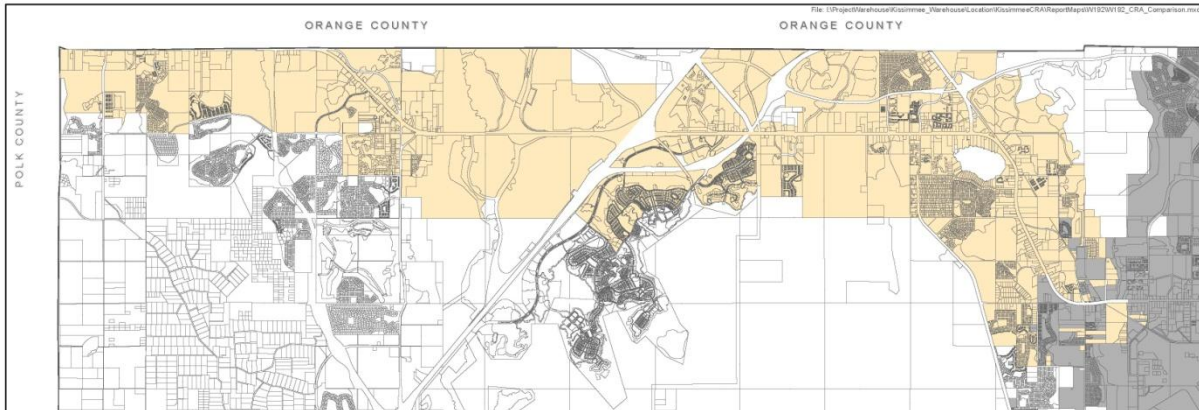
The West 192 study area is in need of a dedicated and flexible funding source. This funding will be used to finance a developed Work Plan, which would work to revitalize the area.

The West 192 study area should establish a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) or Agencies (CRAs) in order to provide a long-term funding source for the area. A CRA enables a local government, through Tax Increment Financing (TIF), to leverage public funds to promote redevelopment activities in the targeted redevelopment area. A TIF captures the future tax benefits of real estate improvements in the CRA area to pay the current cost of making those improvements as part of the redevelopment plan. A CRA Trust Fund is established for the tax increments and dedicated to redevelopment.

In order to establish a CRA, a local government must make an area assessment and generate a “finding of necessity”, based on data and analysis, in order to make a determination that “slum” or “blight” exists within the study area, in accordance with the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969 (“Act”), Chapter 163 Part III, Florida Statutes. The Act sets forth the legal process by which local governments may establish community redevelopment agencies and provide financing and regulatory processes to undertake the complex task of overcoming the conditions that contribute to the causes of slum and blight in declining areas in the County.

The geographic area being utilized to conduct the data and analysis for the finding of necessity report is shown below on Map 4. Once the analysis is complete, a recommendation can be made for the exact parameters of the proposed CRA as well as if it should be one or multiple independent CRAs. Once the finding of necessity is adopted by resolution an agency to facilitate the redevelopment can be created, the Work Plan commences, and the baseline year for the CRA/CRAs is established. This date is important as it should be at the bottom of the market. Once established, any increase in value would go to the TIF for the CRA’s use.

### Map 3. Data & Analysis Study Area



The funds accrued in the TIF must be used within the CRA designated area. A Work Program could be formulated “...for utilizing appropriate private and public resources to eliminate and prevent the development or spread of slums and urban blight, to encourage needed community rehabilitation, to provide for the redevelopment of slum and blighted areas, to provide housing affordable to residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly, or to undertake such of the aforesaid activities or other feasible county or municipal activities as may be suitably employed to achieve the objectives of such workable program”(163.350 FL. Statutes). The Work Program will list the tasks and activities in a priority list for the utilization of funds.

#### Action Steps

- Complete the site assessments and documentation
- Complete the finding of necessity based on Chapter 163 Part III, Florida Statutes
- Adopt finding of necessity via resolution
- Create a CRA/CRAs
- Establish a Work Program

## Timeline

- 6 months – Complete the site assessments and documentation
- 9 months – Complete the finding of necessity based on Chapter 163 Part III, Florida Statutes
- 1 year – Adopt finding of necessity via resolution
- 1 year – Create the CRA/CRAs
- 18 months – Establish a Work Program
- 18 months – Set up organizational structure to manage the CRA/CRAs

## Near Term – Strategy #4

### Signage

Currently the signage in the West 192 study area is not cohesive in nature and there is limited enforcement of the current signage standards. This results in a cluttered and confusing display of signage along the corridor. In order to provide an updated and competitive environment for West 192, the sign ordinance must be amended and enforced.

The intent of this strategy is to promote signs that are architecturally integrated with both the buildings and the environment. There are existing signs displayed in the corridor that should not be allowed in the future, and immediate notification/adoption will prevent property owners from installing not compliant signage in the near future.

The amendment of the signage ordinance will be done in preparation of Strategy #9, the Land Development Code, which is a more comprehensive amendment affecting many different sections of the code. Also, in conjunction with Strategy #5, Minimum Maintenance Standards, enforcement of current signage standards would occur. This proposed signage ordinance will work to further de-clutter the corridor.

### Action Steps

- Draft a sign ordinance
- Public hearing for adoption

Provide an updated  
and competitive  
environment

### Timeline

- 6 months – Draft a sign ordinance
- 1 year – Public hearing for adoption

## Near Term – Strategy #5

### **Minimum Maintenance Standards**

Properties within the West 192 area have not been receiving enforcement attention of existing codes and standards. This problem is unfortunately due to having a smaller code enforcement staff than Osceola County is used to. The staff only has time to respond to complaints, and do not inspect all properties for potential violations. The West 192 area would benefit from having a dedicated code enforcement officer as well as stricter standards for properties to follow.

The establishment of minimum property and building maintenance standards provide for the abatement of the nuisances affecting the surrounding properties and the general public. The minimum maintenance standards will apply to all properties located within a designated Development Authority area. The standards will address items such as: premises, structures, equipment and facilities for light, ventilation, signage, safe and sanitary maintenance, and require compliance within a specific time period. For clarity of purpose and consistent application, the standards will be comparable with the standards that the City of Kissimmee adopted on August 17, 2010.

The minimum maintenance standards will be drafted and presented to the Osceola County Board of County Commissioner for adoption by resolution. Once these are adopted, compliance from properties will be pursued. Using the information developed through the finding of necessity, the County’s resources will be prioritized. A dedicated code enforcement officer will be hired to implement these minimum maintenance standards in the West 192 area. The funds for the code enforcement officer are coming from the existing BeautiVacation funds.

Provide for the abatement of nuisances

### **Action Steps**

- Draft minimum maintenance standards
- Public hearings for adoption
- Select locations for immediate compliance
- Hiring code enforcement officer to be dedicated to the West 192 area
- Enforce standards and follow new procedures for fines/hearings/etc.

### **Timeline**

- 3 months – Draft minimum maintenance standards
- 6 months – Public hearing for adoption
- 6 months – Hire code enforcement officer and begin enforcing the new standards



## Near Term – Strategy #6

### Cohousing Pilot Program

There are numerous families and individuals living in the West 192 area in non-permitted extended stay facilities. These facilities are not equipped for long-term residents; they lack kitchens, recreation areas, and other types of common areas. While various agencies are working to relocate families to appropriate housing such as apartments, the need for housing is not dwindling. The Cohousing Pilot Program is an effort to provide another option to these residents.

The Cohousing Pilot Program will work to address the non-permitted extended stay facilities along West 192. A permitted extended stay facility allows a person to rent a room for up to 30 days. A non-permitted extended stay allows a person to reside in the facility for over 30 days. Based on information provided by the Osceola County Fire Department (gathered September 2011) of the 59 hotel/motel facilities in the study area, 16 of those are functioning as non-permitted extended stays.

Table 3. West 192: Hotel/Motel

	<b>Number of Hotel/Motel</b>	<b>Number of Non-Permitted Extended Stay</b>
<b>Section 1</b>	12	1
<b>Section 2</b>	19	3
<b>Section 3</b>	28	12

There is a scarcity of quality, safe housing in the West 192 study area. The housing that is created must be affordable as most people living in the non-permitted extending stays are doing so as their last resort. This program would work to create safe and affordable housing for existing residents of the area currently living in the non-permitted extended stays.

The Cohousing Pilot Program would identify a single test facility. Financial incentives would be identified in order to retrofit the existing motel as a non-permanent housing facility. The design would take aspects from other products; permitted extended stays, boarding houses, hostels, and apartment hotels. Ideally there would be a private room(s) with

common facilities such as; kitchen, dining area, laundry room, and recreation areas.

Identify a single test facility

The target location of this program is east of SR 535 to the Kissimmee city limits, in Section 3. This area is the most economically depressed on the study area and a future dependent on the tourist industry is not likely. This program will assist the people currently living in the non-permitted extended stays to find more permanent, safe, and appropriate housing.

### Action Steps

- Of the facilities identified in Section 3, chose one for the test site
  - Contact owners to see who is interested in the program
  - Establish criteria in order to choose a site if more than one are interested
- Research and acquire funding
- Assist owner in the implementation/redevelopment
- Document the entire process, generate a report
- Fast track the permits

### Timeline

- 6 months – Establish criteria to choose a site
- 9 months – Research and acquire funding
- 1 year – Contact owners of all the non-permitted extended stay hotels to see if they are interested in the program
- 18 months – Assist owner in the implementation/redevelopment

## Near Term – Strategy #7

### Site Improvement Grants

There are properties within the study area that would be greatly improved by using a small amount of funding for certain aesthetic projects. These areas can be identified and targeted for immediate improvements.



Site Improvement Grants is a strategy to target specific redevelopment sites. Osceola County would provide a dollar for dollar match grant for eligible façade and landscape improvements. The grants could cover such items as; painting, building or property signage, landscaping exterior lighting and exterior wall repairs.



Other potential financial incentives that could be utilized in the short term include but are not limited to; brownfield incentives, Local Government Distressed Area Matching Grant program (LDMG), utilizing an enterprise zone, or amending the current Municipal Service Benefit Unit (MSBU) to include this as an option.



Brownfield incentives are for underutilized industrial or commercial sites due to actual or perceived environmental contamination. The LDMG is awarded by the State of Florida to equal \$50,000 or 50% of the local government's qualified business assistance amount (not derived from the State of Federal funds), whichever is less, and be provided following the commitment and payment of that assistance. An enterprise zone is a specific geographic area which is targeted for economic revitalization; incentives could include a sales and use tax credit, tax refund for business machinery and equipment, sales tax refund for building materials and a sales tax exemption for electrical energy, all of which must be utilized in the enterprise zone. The MSBU funds currently cover maintenance and the bond repayment. The resolution could be amended to include site improvement grants or other types of incentives.

### **Action Steps**

- Identifying eligible improvement items
- Acquiring a funding mechanism
- Create an application for fund requests which will identify the eligibility requirements to receive the grants
- Monitoring each approved program to ensure completion

### **Timeline**

- 6 months – Identify the eligible improvement items
- 6 months – Create an application for fund requests
- 9 months – Identify funds for match
- 1 year – Open grant application

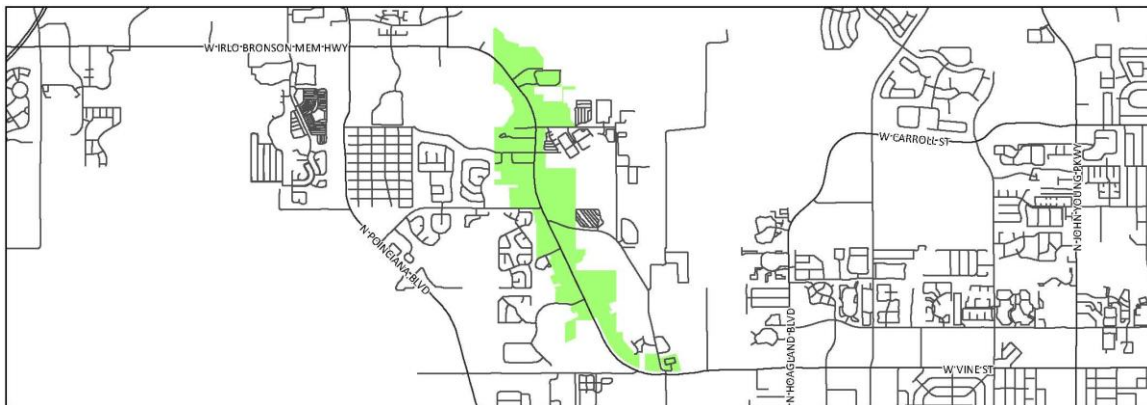
## Near Term – Strategy #8

### Mixed Use Designation

That segment of the corridor between S.R. 535 and the Kissimmee city limits (identified as Section 3, in the Data & Analysis) is an area whose future is unlikely to be associated with the tourism industry. The lodging inventory has deteriorated to the point that is no longer competitive. The key to this sections' revitalization is to add other potentially more viable land uses, most particularly residential. This will provide a fuller spectrum of uses and help spark redevelopment efforts. Also, there are residents already living in the area, as identified in the Cohousing Program section. Despite the relocation efforts, people want to live on this corridor, most likely for the close location to employment and transit options. The application of the Mixed Use designation will provide the opportunity for better living facilities to be built in the area.

The Mixed Use designation is a proposed Future Land Use Amendment for Section 3. While this designation does not exclude tourist related uses, it provides for a diversity of uses within this section. Along with this effort, the designation for Section 1 and 2 will be evaluated to ensure it provides consistency with the tourism industry.

Map 4. West 192, Section 3



This Mixed Use designation supports and furthers Kissimmee's Vine Street redevelopment efforts and provides the density/intensity need to support transit. This designation also supports the Cohousing Pilot Program. Due to current future land use and zoning designations, uses are very limited in this area. With the Mixed Use designation, more

options for different types of uses will be available to support the redevelopment of the area.

### **Action Steps**

- Propose the Future Land Use Amendments for the properties within Section 3.
- Contact all property owners, notification
- Public Hearing for adoption

### **Timeline**

- 6 months – Submit Large-Scale Future Land Use Amendment application
- 9 months – Public Hearing for adoption
- 1 year – Approval from the State, Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO)

## Intermediate – Strategy #9

### **New Land Development Code**

In order to implement the cohesive center plan as discussed in other strategies, an overall land development code should be created for this area. This will provide direction and consistency for future development. The new land development code will solidify the theme for the centers.

The new land development code will pertain to the entire West 192 study area. This code would create a series of centers and development nodes, as displayed on Map 7 below, along the corridor and establish development standards for future construction activities. Map 7 also highlights the three sections of West 192. There are a total of five centers and twenty development nodes identified

These centers would be walkable and urban in terms of scale and form. The nodes would function as transit stops and stations. There will be a variety of uses that are mutually supportive. Each center will have a unique theme developed in order to attract certain businesses to the area. Each center will also provide public transportation options for residents and visitors to the area, these options are further discussed in Strategy #13, Transportation.

### **Action Steps**

- Draft the new land development code
- Work with property owners within the identified development nodes.
- Public hearings for adoption

Create a series  
of centers and  
development  
nodes

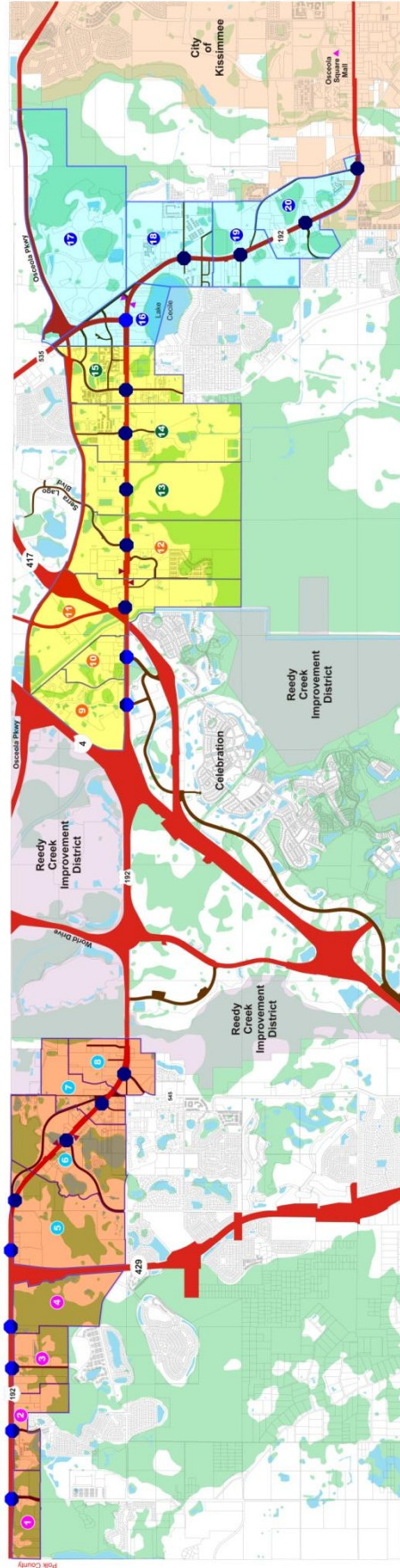
### **Timeline**

- 1 year – Work with property owners within the identified development nodes.
- 2 years – Draft the new land development code
- 3 years – Public hearings for adoption

Map 5. Strategy Plan

# West US Hwy 192 Strategy Plan

Date Prepared: 17 January 2012



### LENGED

- 1- 20 Indicates Proposed Center Boundary
- Identifies Proposed Center Number
- Identifies Existing Lynx Shelter / Stop
- Identifies Proposed Multi-Modal Transit Stop
- Indicates US 192 and Existing Supporting Highways
- Indicates Existing Collector Roads
- Identifies Centers 1 thru 4 Served by the West Section 1 Inter-Center Trolley
- Identifies Centers 5 thru 8 Served by the East Section 1 Inter-Center Trolley
- Identifies Centers 9 and 10 Served by the West Section 2 Inter-Center Trolley
- Identifies Centers 11 thru 15 Served by the East Section 2 Inter-Center Trolley
- Identifies Centers 16 thru 20 Served by the Section 3 Inter-Center Trolley

### MM TRANSIT SUMMARY

US 192 FRONTAGE	SECTION 1 (West County Line to RCD)	SECTION 2 (4 to West Lake Cicale)	SECTION 3 (West Lake Cicale to Kissimmee)	TOTALS
CENTERS	4, 8 miles 1-8	4.0 miles 9-15	2.4 miles 16-20	13.7 miles (includes 2.5 mi. RCD Gap)
MM TRANSIT STOPS	2	7	5	20
INTER-CENTER TRANSPORTATION	2 V1-V4 (2.4 miles Polk County to 429) V5-V8 (2.4 mi. between 429 & RCD)	2 V9-V11 (2.4 mi. between 417 & West Lake Cicale) V12-V15 (2.4 mi. between West Lake Cicale & Kissimmee)	1 V16-V20 (2.4 mi. between West L. Cicale & Kissimmee)	5

### MOBILITY CONCEPT

- (in addition to the MM Transit Stops)
- 1) Reedy Creek Improvement District, Celebration and Disney Properties are not included in this planning exercise
  - 2) The W 192 corridor is proposed as 3 Sections, each including 5-7 Centers, each employing a MM Transit Stop at the heart of its Activity Center
  - 3) In order to minimize upfront capital, maximize flexibility and affordability, the mobility concept would allow phasing in logical increments, each consisting of 3-5 Centers served by its own Inter-Center Transportation
  - 4) The mobility concept consists of the following:
    - a. A walkable zone is proposed around each MM Transit Stop
    - b. The proposed bus and the walkable zone have the options of biking or taking a shuttle to the Center Stop
    - c. Those intending to visit the shops and services within adjoining Centers may utilize the Inter-Center Transportation System
    - d. Those needing to travel to other longer distance destinations, such as theme parks, airport, etc. may use the regional transportation system





## Intermediate – Strategy #10

### **Consolidation of Property**

The consolidation of property can be used as an incentive for developers to build in particular areas. Acquiring enough land in order to redevelop a site has the potential to be a time consuming and costly process. If the consolidation step has already occurred prior to the developer purchasing the property, this shortens the speed to the market time for developers and businesses. One of the functions of the Development Authority will be to acquire, consolidate, and sell parcels.

The West 192 study area has a number of properties that would benefit from redevelopment. While these properties have frontage on West 192, they may not be the ideal size and/or configuration for redevelopment, such as flag lots. Flag lots have a small amount of road frontage and the majority of the property is set off the frontage. In order to attract development/redevelopment companies, these properties will be identified for potential consolidation. The consolidation recommendations would be for properties that are contiguous and are either vacant or distressed. Identifying these potential locations will assist companies in making the choice in invest in West 192.

Once this list has been constructed, the property owners must be contacted in order to identify their future interests in the property. With this information the final list of properties can be created and marketed to development companies.

### **Action Steps**

- Identify parcels which would qualify for consolidation, this will be completed during the CRA/CRA's Work Program process
- Identify an incentive plan and types of businesses to be targeted
- Contact property owners
- Create a comprehensive list to market to development companies

## **Timeline**

- Completed through the CRA/CRAAs – Identify parcels which would qualify for consolidation
- Ongoing – Create a comprehensive property list to market to development companies

## Intermediate – Strategy #11

### **Cohousing Program**

As discussed in Strategy #6, the Cohousing Pilot Program, a solution is needed for the residents who are currently residing in non-permitted extended stays along West 192. These residents are living in facilities that are not designed for long-term residents and while relocation efforts are helping with this problem, it is not a long term solution. Strategy #6, the Cohousing Pilot Program is a recommended solution for that issue. This strategy, the Cohousing Program is the expansion of the Cohousing Pilot Program.

Throughout the pilot program site implementation, the process will be documented to assist the expansion of the program. The program will still be confined to Section 3. Confining the program to Section 3 will assist the other two sections in maintaining their tourism character while providing much needed housing to residents. This program can begin immediately following the success of the Pilot Program.

### **Action Steps**

- Create a procedures manual from the Cohousing Pilot Program
- Identify the new sites and work with the owners on the conversion.
- Identify potential partners (public/private).

### **Timeline**

- 2 years – Create a procedures manual from the Cohousing Pilot Program
- 3 years – Identify new sites and work with the owners on the conversion

Providing much  
needed housing  
for residents

## Intermediate – Strategy #12

### Community Land Trust

Affordable housing is a problem within the West 192 study area. Residents are resorting to living in motels because appropriate housing is beyond their financial means. One strategy for creating affordable housing along and adjacent to the corridor is through a Community Land Trust.

The Community Land Trust (CLT) is a community-based nonprofit organization that is designed to acquire and hold land for affordable housing. This works to narrow the gap between the cost of housing and the ability of residents to pay for housing by holding ownership of the land in perpetuity, removing the land cost from the price of the residence. The housing remains affordable for current residents as well as for future residents. This housing can be in attached or detached styles. The CLT will be confined to Section 3 of the West 192 study area, since this section will be designated as mixed use.



The CLT is an independent, not-for-profit organization, which acquires parcels within a targeted area with the intent of retaining ownership forever. The property can be purchased by the CLT or donated to the CLT. The parcels are then leased using long-term ground leases, the leasee builds the structures. By design and by intent, the CLT is committed to preserving the affordability of housing (and other structures) – one owner after another, one generation after another, in perpetuity. The ground lease requires owner-occupancy and responsible use of the premises. Should buildings become a hazard, the ground lease gives the CLT the right to step in and force repairs. Should property owners default on their mortgages, the ground lease gives the CLT the right to step in and cure the default, forestalling foreclosure. The CLT remains a party to the deal,



safeguarding the structural integrity of the buildings and the residential security of the occupants.

The organizers of a CLT must build a base of community support, drawing into the membership and founding board a broad range of stakeholders, including political leaders, community activists, philanthropic institutions and residents of the community to be served by the CLT. The key start-up issues in creating a CLT include: defining the organization's service area, deciding what roles the CLT will play and what types of projects the CLT will pursue, and educating the community about this approach to the ownership of land and housing.

The basic steps to establishing a nonprofit organization such as the Community Land Trust are;

1. Reserve a name with the state of Florida
2. Select individuals to serve on the board of the tax-exempt non-profit. The minimum required is three board members.
3. Elect the officers
4. Organize a nonprofit operating plan, which includes a description of the organization's location, staffing, activities, funding, fund raising plan and budget
5. Create the bylaws
6. Incorporate or Trust the non-profit, to be done through the state of Florida website
7. Apply to the IRS for an Employee Identification Number
8. Fill out form 1023 on the irs.gov website

### **Action Steps**

- Write a report about the duties and structure of the Community Land Trust
- Bring to the BOCC for adoption by resolution
- Assist the agency in becoming independent, following the steps listed above

### **Timeline**

- 1 year – Present report to BOCC for adoption
- 2 years – Community Land Trust is established
- 3 years – Programs are implemented

## Long-Term – Strategy #13

### Transportation

West 192 is the face of tourism for Osceola County; we need to create an environment that encourages residents and visitors to stay in the area. The transportation system for West 192 must be retrofitted to incorporate transit options and well as make the environment more pedestrian friendly. West 192 must be able to carry more people while not expanding to eight lanes, that expansion will create a more harsh un-pedestrian friendly experience than already exists.

The transportation system should be a multi-faceted transit system designed to move visitors and residents along the corridor. This system may include; street cars, bus rapid transit (BRT), shuttles and other technologies as may be appropriate and feasible. This system will be coordinated with the City of Kissimmee's transportation and BRT efforts on Vine Street. This area is currently defined as a highway; that image needs to be changed.



There should be two main types of transit framework; one fast link covering the entire area that moves people through the area quickly, and another that links the walkable centers with one another. As a starting point, a shuttle system could be implemented in the short term to provide visitors with a convenient alternative to using their cars. The system could use multiple shuttles to provide acceptable headways through the area. It could be expanded to meet growing demand with other technologies added, such as streetcars, as the system matures.



The Fast Link offers the opportunity to move people from one major center to another quickly. As with the shuttle system, technologies could change overtime, progressing from bus to BRT to light or commuter rail. All



transit systems could interface at an intermodal center on West 192 that could also allow the opportunity for transit connections to other centers of the region. Specifically, the Fast Link could connect with future SunRail lines providing direct rail connection to Orlando International Airport (OIA).

Redevelopment activities will help support the centers concepts. Once the development takes a more pedestrian friendly form, people will begin walking to the center links and taking transit to move between the centers.

Transportation is linked with many of the strategies on this list. Coordination needs to occur so the possibilities for the transportation are limited by other actions.

### **Action Steps**

- The Transportation Element Update & Funding findings
- The Lynx U.S. 192 Alternatives Analysis study for transit on West 192
- Implement a Fast Link covering the whole study area
- Define the centers shuttle service
- Find funding and time the development
- Establish a shuttle service

### **Timeline**

- Phase 1: Implement a Fast Link to cover the entire study area
- Phase 2: Create two separate shuttle links in the study area. Two separate shuttle links, one on either side of I-4 to move visitors and residents between the businesses on West 192.
- Phase 3: Dedicated transit to run throughout the study area

## Long-Term – Strategy #14

### Linear Park

The West 192 corridor lacks an attractor for pedestrians. The built environment is catering to the automobile, making it difficult and unattractive for people, visitors and residents alike, to navigate as pedestrians. In order to make this area more inviting a linear park should be established. The park begins to establish a sense of place.

Creating a linear park throughout the length of the West 192 corridor will assist in reviving the area. It will provide connection between the sections, creating a cohesive neighborhood feel throughout the fifteen mile long corridor. The linear park will support the development nodes, creating public recreation space that the development can build off of.



The linear park could be enhanced over time by connecting it to other trails in the area and by creating additional park areas that are adjacent to it. These additional parks could take many different forms; small pocket parks, plazas, or a large scale “central park” used for staging events and providing a “center” to the corridor.



### Action Steps

- Identify the alignment of the linear park.
- Must acquire the right of way (ROW)
- Design the linear park
- Acquire funding to build the park
- Assign the maintenance to the Development Authority

### Timeline



- 1 year – Identify the alignment of the linear park.
- 1 year – Assign the maintenance and responsibility to the Development Authority
- 2 years – Design the linear park
- 3 years – Acquire the ROW

## SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendation to the Osceola County Board of County Commissioners is to accept the strategies as presented in this report. We request that the West 192 Economic Advisory Committee members be reappointed to this Committee for an additional six months and be directed to work on the strategies and action steps.

The West 192 Economic Advisory Committee will report back to the Osceola County Board of County Commissioners to present the work program for the Sept 2012 – Sept 2013. The work program will include the budget, staffing needs, and funding requirements. The work program will be taken over by the Development Authority once it is established.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### **West 192 Economic Advisory Committee**

Jeste Pottinga, U.S. Redevelopment Advisory Board

Mary Ellen Kerber, Four Corners Council

Belinda Ortiz Kirkegard, City of Kissimmee

Randy Dillard, Osceola Resort Area Council

Bob Whidden, Gateway Advisory Committee

George Chen, Tourist Development Council

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