To: County Beachside Redevelopment Committee Members
From: Sandy Murphy, C4RD Secretary/Treasurer

Re: FL Redevelopment Association Conference held in Daytona Beach

I had the opportunity to attend this recent conference, which showcased successful and inventive redevelopment across the state; a lot of the information was relevant to the questions you are debating about beachside development. I’m sharing my notes on the presentations with you in the hopes that it will spark some ideas for consideration by the group.

There are a few general points that I took away from the conference that I’d like to share also:

**Sometimes people need help to see the potential.** The Lakeland CRA prepared renderings and video of what could be developed in a huge warehouse that was a hoarder’s heaven when they acquired it. They gave people a vision of an art gallery, commercial kitchen and event space that have since come to life, operated by private businesses.

**Aesthetics matter a lot, and are worth spending money on.** Whether it’s a logo that ties together every city-related event, department and location, street lights that provide safety *and* add to the visual appeal of a street, creating a space where people naturally want to gather, or just providing an obvious place for people to take a selfie that is hash-tagged with their location, it all needs to tie together to be most effective.

**There are CRAs where a lack of resources has been inventively replaced by grants, rents and general fund dollars.** We shouldn’t look at the Daytona Beach Main St. CRA and say, well, the money is mainly going to debt service, what can we do? Other resources exist and should be pursued.

**We don’t have to invent solutions ourselves.** There are people all over Florida and beyond who specialize in aspects of redevelopment, who don’t also have to wrestle with the day-to-day administration and events and meetings that pull attention away from areas we think of as our priorities. Just like most home bakers would still hire a professional to make their wedding cake, our redevelopment department should consider specialized contracts with proven entities to undertake very focused redevelopment efforts.

**We need to remember that the planning we are doing isn’t for us,** it’s for the next generation. We need to find ways to bring young people into the process, through internships, liaisons with youth organizations, or just actively soliciting youth opinions.
#MassMarketLKLD, An Example of Adaptive Re-use
Nicole Travis, CRA Director, Lakeland, FL

The CRA in Lakeland took a large, blighted warehouse space and the adjacent transitional shelter for women and transformed them to create an attractive block.

Before the project began, this area of town struggled with a concentration of social services. City officials negotiated with providers to consolidate congregate feeding sites at one location near the edge of town and provided financial support for the move. The CRA decided to tackle the renovation project themselves when their RFP to developers across the state brought no response. The warehouse was formerly a hoarder’s haven that also included leased space for the Salvation Army’s feeding program.

Once the interior space was cleared, the CRA invested in renderings and a video to create and sell the vision of a community space. They recruited tenants who were permitted to sublease or share space and did bare-bones renovation to keep the industrial vibe. The space had included a commercial kitchen, though all that was left was an industrial-sized vent hood. The CRA recruited Your Pro Kitchen, a for-profit, shared commercial kitchen operator to take over the space and customize it to meet their needs. They recruited a young artist to operate an art gallery and manage the leasing of art studios to other artists. They created a very large, minimalist but chic, event space for rental to the public. The women’s shelter was renovated on the exterior and on the interior to include a meeting space and a sales area on the first floor where the women can participate in art classes and sell their arts and crafts. Land alongside the warehouse is now being prepared for an urban farm. A brightly colored striped wall along the parking area provides an intentional backdrop for photo shoots and plaques. The hashtag #MassMarketLKLD on the wall reminds people to post about the location. Social media has been used extensively to “spread the word” about the project.

The project cost $3.5 million in acquisition fees and another $3.2 million in rehab, all self-funded thanks to a CRA that previously had accumulated funds without taking on any activity.

Creating a Brand for Maitland FL (and Palatka)
Charles Rudd, CRA Manager

The Palatka CRA used consulting firm Arnett-Muldrow to create a basic branding platform for Palatka in three days. Their format is for city staff to tightly schedule meetings with key individuals for two days; on the third day they present their recommendation. For this basic level of branding, Arnett-Muldrow charged about $8,000.

The Maitland CRA also used Arnett-Muldrow but had them do a complete branding system build-out, including logos for various city departments and events, street signage, newsletter website templates, event posters, information cards. They worked with local businesses to post their attractive event calendar, including using waiting rooms in medical offices and car dealerships.

There was the same three day initial effort and about three weeks to prepare all the brand extension materials. Total cost of $25-30K.
Linking People to Place
Sharon McCormick, Marketing and Business Attraction Specialist at RMA
Suggested reading:
- *Arts and Economic Prosperity* by Americans for the Arts
- *Guidelines to Help Cities Design Public Spaces that Better Attract People* by the Knight Foundation

In the study by the Knight Foundation, three keys were identified to making a public space that becomes a gathering place: Aesthetics, Social Opportunities and Visual Openness.

Sharon McCormick of RMA recommends starting a brand from the existing businesses – use their authenticity as a draw. In Oakland Park FL, they used an analysis of business licenses to determine what sectors appeared frequently, then they used that information to designate a “Culinary Arts District” that included anything remotely related to this topic. By labeling and promoting, they attracted the attention of Fat Buddha Brewery and secured their flagship location, which then became a centerpiece of further development.

She showed many examples of how cities creatively used public space to support businesses or to create the aesthetics to jump-start momentum. An example of the former is the *Summer in Paradise* (SIP) marketing that was a joint effort of the CRA, businesses and the city of West Palm Beach department of Parks and Recreation. An example of the latter is the *Fire Fountain Plaza* in Pompano Beach.

She also introduced the concept of the “honeybee” path – you have to create a series of ‘landing areas’ to draw the public along a street or through a public space.

Creating Sociable Spaces
Marjorie Ferrer, Responsible Hospitality Institute

Ms. Ferrer talked about how to make spaces safe for night-time use. Start by collecting data on who is making the decisions about the space – everything from waste haulers to city inspectors, because what they do during the day affects how well the nighttime space works – and bring all of them together to understand how their decisions ‘make’ the space. She pointed out that it is generally the police who are out at night and have a personal experience of how the space works. She suggested a “Night Walk” from midnight to closing time should be mandatory for anyone making decisions about the space. That allows you to plan for the way people are actually using the area. She gave an example of how, in one area like our Seabreeze Ave., women came out of the clubs carrying their shoes at 2 a.m. and then had to walk a block or more to get to a safe Uber or taxi pickup spot; recognizing this led the city to alter their traffic flow.

She also stressed that planning for adequate lighting is crucial for safety and for the perception of safety. She urged redevelopment directors to consider lights as both a safety improvement and as public art, so that their presence during the daylight was also a visual enhancement.
CRA Master Planning

Taryn Sabia, Center for Community Design and Research, University of Southern FL

She discussed methods for developing a plan that the community will get behind. She creates consensus by “working from the macro down to the micro” and by asking people to evaluate not only projects, but the features within the projects. This keeps the good parts from getting lost inside a bad project. They start with the rule “Talk with your pen, not with your mouth”. That keeps the group from getting distracted with disagreements and focused on areas of consensus.

She had the audience engage in a demonstration exercise about community identity. First, she posed, “What do you think of when you think Daytona Beach?” Everyone was given Post-its and a Sharpie to write down three things. Looking at the answers, the consensus was “the beach”. The next question was, “What three things do you think of when you think of “the beach in Daytona?” and everyone wrote those down, with a wide array of answers: family fun, driving, spring break, Main St. Then everyone was asked to identify five “challenges” related to “the beach” and say how they would address each one, in less than a sentence. This is where the exercise stopped, but in a community session, the large group would then be broken into small groups to reach a consensus on three identity things and five challenges/solutions. The small group results would be presented to the whole group. With full group input, the small groups would discuss again until the full group came to a consensus.

It felt like a good system for avoiding complaint sessions – no issues could be raised without an accompanying solution.

The Food Industry and Community Development

RMA, for Oakland Park and Pompano Beach
Southeast Overtown/Park West CRA, Miami

Oakland Park (see Connecting People to Places, above) is a CRA without the authority to capture a tax increment, so they offer no TIF funding; they are supported by grants, rents and general fund dollars. They are working with RMA, which was instrumental in the planning and obtaining funding for their entire effort. It's a good illustration that the will to move forward may be more important than the money in the CRA fund.

The CRA provided land to the Urban Farming Institute, which brought in a community garden, and will add an apiary and aquaponic garden shortly.

Their Music on Main event features music and food trucks. They emphasized that special events like this are a HUGE component in economic development.

They were able to attract a Lucky's Market (“Organic for the 99%”), again based on the Culinary Arts District identity.

Like ours, their CRA Board is their City Commission.

In Pompano Beach, RMA is doing work in two CRAs; this in the initial stages. Ms. McCormick advocated, “Stress the human capital in your community, support existing small businesses and create an
entrepreneurial environment.” You will have achieved that when the businessperson’s answer to “why here?” is “because it’s so easy”. She advised that you have to begin with the streetscape and with luring restaurants, because when you have done that, the retail will come. This is the community where they invested a lot of money in the Flame Fountain, to create a centerpiece to the streetscape. They also started a “Green Market” farmer’s market which will pay people to be allowed to “farm” their yards by giving them a share of the profits from any produce grown there. She emphasized “growing the culinary scene” as central to any economic development plan.

In Miami, the Southeast Overtown/West Park CRA has substantial resources – a director and multiple staff, including a staff attorney who is available to assist business owners in the legal aspects of opening a business in the city and an in-house architect to help design improved facilities. They provide grants for build-outs, but the grantees are required to participate in their business training program. They have focused on identifying existing entrepreneurs and “taking them to the next level”. One way they do this is by featuring certain businesses in a pop-up space they operate. The pop-ups are so popular that online pre-registration frequently sells out. They brought a Top Value supermarket to this food desert, and negotiated a cooked food section that features foods from one of the businesses they’ve helped to expand.

**Engaging Universities – Community Partners for Workable Visionary Projects**

*Dr. Martha Kohen, Center for Hydro-Generated Urbanism, University of Florida*

This group specializes in envisioning creative ways to use waterfront spaces. They work with University of Southern Florida to pull together student teams who will analyze all aspects of a town - physically and socially - and propose visionary projects to improve the community. A full-scale project might include up to 200 graduate students and requires a considerable commitment from the town staff. There is a charge to cover expenses; FDEO Planning Grants of up to $40,000 can offset the cost.

**Keynote Speech**

*Lenora Billings-Harris, Ubuntu Global*


She started with a quote from Michael Kimmel, “Privilege is invisible to those who have it.”

Ms. Billings-Harris gave many good examples and demonstrations to show how our unconscious bias can affect our decision-making. A few of these include:

- **Size bias** - people over six feet tall make more money, have a large percentage of high-prestige jobs, get called on more often in class, all because our “caveman brain” relates height to the advantage conferred by being able to see further.
- **Name bias** - names not common in the dominant culture are 55% less likely to be pulled from a group of resumes for interviews.
- **Visual bias** - we rely on sight more than hearing, so a person with an unassuming appearance is less likely to be heard in a group.
Hyperlinks expanded for hard copies:

Your Pro Kitchen:  [https://www.yourprokitchen.com/](https://www.yourprokitchen.com/)

Arts and Economic Prosperity:

Guidelines to Help Cities Design Public Spaces that Better Attract People:


Fire Fountain Plaza:

Oakland Park Special Events:  [http://oaklandparkfl.gov/221/Special-Events](http://oaklandparkfl.gov/221/Special-Events)