

And it keeps getting better!

>Continued

and much more. In addition to these large scale projects, the CRA is also pursuing short term improvements that will be immediately visible. Such projects have already included roadway re-striping, and replacement of damaged traffic signs. In the future, facade work, building renovation, and streetscaping improvements may follow. Such work helps to signify the importance of the Porters within the Downtown community. CRA activities have already created a heightened sense of interest in the neighborhood as both Porters residents and the greater community are recognizing the value and potential of this key neighborhood.

Hampton Inn/Lot 9 Redevelopment

As downtown redevelopment has progressed, the City's urban center has received an influx of new residents, offices, shops, and restaurants. However, one important element has remained elusive. In 2007, the CRA issued final approvals on a project that will bring this much needed amenity to the downtown. Redevelopment of Lot 9, a surface parking lot formerly owned by the City, will result in downtown's first hotel and conference facility. The mixed-use development will offer approximately 124



hotel rooms, conference and meeting facilities, and ground floor retail space. The hotel, which will be constructed by early 2009, will feature a pedestrian-friendly design and will incorporate a mixture of contemporary and traditional architectural features, in order to blend with the existing downtown fabric.

Bethel Station

The Bethel Station is an historic building located in the center of downtown Gainesville, directly adjacent to the Downtown Plaza. Built



in the 1920s as a service station, the small building boasts a large canopied area and unique, elaborately detailed architecture. Most recently, the building functioned as a ticketing office for the City's transit system. However, these activities were moved to a new location in 2007, leaving the building vacant. Although Bethel Station enjoys a prime location (adjacent to the Plaza, shops, offices, and the new Hampton Inn), at only 400 square feet of interior space, the building's extremely small size presents significant redevelopment challenges. For these reasons, the CRA is leading redevelopment activities at Bethel. Moving forward, the CRA will work to stabilize and preserve the historic Bethel structure and to install a small café and associated outdoor seating areas at this important site.

Depot Park

Located just south of Downtown's central business district, Depot Park is envisioned as a contemporary public greenspace that will serve as Gainesville's "Central Park". As the

signature urban park, it will be the gateway to central Gainesville and will offer opportunities to experi-



ence a renovated historic train depot, enjoy a system of walking paths, and participate in family activities at several children's areas (including, the proposed Cade Museum). The park, which encompasses a multi-million dollar cleanup of contaminated soils, also includes a series of stormwater ponds, an important feature that will enable cost-effective and environmentally sound stormwater management that will support the ongoing reinvestment and redevelopment in the Downtown area.

The Palms and Jefferson on 2nd Avenue

Two exciting residential projects receiving support through CRA incentive programs are currently under construction in the Downtown Redevelopment Area. Scheduled for completion in 2008, The Palms will provide 48 new residential condos to the Downtown market. Also nearing completion is Jefferson on 2nd Avenue, a large-scale development that will incorporate a five story building and almost 300 student apartments. Jefferson on 2nd Avenue is designed to compliment and enhance the urban fabric, and includes pedestrian-friendly elements such as articulated



facade massing, ground level retail, and a "hidden" parking structure located within the interior of the development. Both developments are highly anticipated for the influx of new pedestrian and residential activity the will contribute along important Downtown corridors.

SE 7th Street Lighting

Just a few blocks from the center of Downtown, SE 7th Street is charming, tree-lined corridor known for its Bed & Breakfast district, and eye-catching historic architecture. To encourage walkability and to better link the residences and Bed & Breakfasts of the Southeast Historic District to Downtown's center, the CRA installed decorative pedestrian lighting along the SE 7th Street corridor. The historically sensitive design of the lights is complimentary to the architecture along SE 7th Street, and it also provides a sense of continuity



between Downtown's business and residential sectors.

College Park/University Heights Redevelopment Area

SW 2nd Avenue

Anchored by Downtown on the east and the University of Florida on the west, the SW 2nd Avenue corridor is an ideal location for redevelopment activities. Unfortunately, the reality of the corridor has lagged behind its potential. A surprisingly wide roadway and vast expanse of pavement resulted in a visually barren corridor that was unremarkable to automobile traffic and uninviting to pedestrians. In order to address these issues and to make the corridor more attractive to private reinvestment, the CRA partnered with the City of Gainesville to create a new experience along SW 2nd Avenue. The result is a lush, inviting streetscape that is completely



unrecognizable from its former incarnation. Second Avenue has been completely redesigned and is now a person-scaled environment complete with decorative lighting, planted medians, roundabouts, and sidewalks. Compatible with automobile, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit modes of travel, SW 2nd Avenue now truly conveys the area's redevelopment potential, and will likely encourage private reinvestment in adjacent properties.

SW 5th Avenue Triangle Park

The CRA has converted a small triangular median located at the intersection of SW 13th Street and SW 5th Avenue into an urban pocket park. The park now features landscaping, hard-scaping, benches, and lighting, and in the future will also include a public art installation. Construction of the triangle park creates a valuable public space and landmark that enhances the distinct character and identity of the surrounding neighborhood.



Stormwater Study

One impediment to dense urban redevelopment revolves around the issue of stormwater management. In large greenfield or suburban development patterns, onsite stormwater management can be easily achieved. However in urban areas such as College Park/University Heights, developers are obliged to fund costly underground systems in order to work within the confines of dense urban infill. Recognizing this problem, the CRA recently completed a comprehensive study and planning guide for stormwater issues in the CPUH

Redevelopment Area. The results of this study will provide a higher level of understanding and guidance in addressing an important infrastructure issue, and will further advance redevelopment opportunities in the Area.

NW 14th Street Lighting

Due in part to its proximity to the University, the CPUH Redevelopment Area has traditionally developed as a very walkable, pedestrian-friendly community. Through projects such as the installation of attractive new lighting along NW 14th Street, the CRA supports and encourages this type of activity. By funding streetscape elements that are both functional and beautiful, the CRA continuously works to provide safe, inviting, and attractive environment that will promote a lively, walkable atmosphere.

Rail Trail Design Guidelines

One of Gainesville's most unique features is the extensive system of converted rails-to-trails bicycle and exercise paths that serve as excellent amenities for both transportation and recreation purposes. In order to make the most of these special features, the CRA commissioned a system of design standards and materials which will embrace legacy of the historic rail corridors while also conveying the creativity and energy of the modern community. Currently planned for implementation within the CPUH Redevelopment Area, the CRA envisions that in the future, these innovative design features will



enhance and unify the rail trail system throughout the entire City.

Camden Court

Construction has been completed on Camden Court, a unique infill development located in the University Heights historic district. Through the CPUH Redevelopment Incentive Program, the CRA was able to guide the project in a manner that will truly benefit the Redevelopment Area. The completed project is oriented to address the street and is contextually sensitive to its historic surroundings. Upgraded facade materials include historic elements and colors, and the development's numerous awnings, windows and shade porches blend well with the architecture of the surrounding neighborhood. By holding redevelopment to such high stan-



dards, the CRA is able to encourage reinvestment in the core neighborhoods in a manner which uplifts and fortifies the charm and character of these special places.

The CRA's dedication to and investment in Gainesville's urban core has generated both local and widespread recognition!



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Look for our new website in 2008!
www.GainesvilleCRA.com

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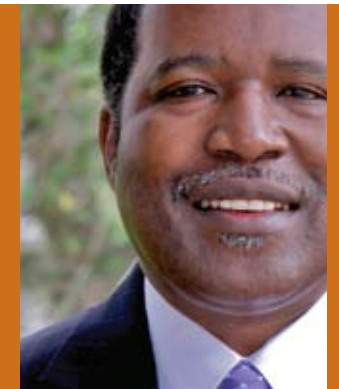
Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency Annual Report



Chairman's Message

A Vibrant Future Forward

Commissioner **Scherwin Henry**
Chair, Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency



It has been an honor to serve as Chair of the Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency. I look forward to continuing to work with the dedicated members of our volunteer Advisory Boards, citizens, and staff as we continue to invest in Gainesville's present and future.

Redevelopment in a CRA district is an investment in a vibrant future for Gainesville's urban core. It is a coordinated effort to enhance our community's assets while constantly improving the cityscape. This year has brought significant reinvestment and continued progress in our four Community Redevelopment Areas: Eastside, Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street, Downtown, and College Park/University Heights. The CRA has moved forward with a variety of projects; some of which (such as historic rehabilitations, streetscape improvements, and facade enhancements) enrich existing elements within a redevelopment area. Other projects will provide exciting new features such as gateway features, and public art, and high density residential, mixed use, and commercial developments. The following pages contain information and updates highlighting a year filled with exciting progress in each of our redevelopment areas and in the CRA as a whole. Our dedication to and investment in Gainesville's urban core has generated both local and widespread recognition. It has been an honor to serve as Chair of the Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency. I look forward to continuing to work with the dedicated members of our volunteer Advisory Boards, citizens, and staff as we continue to invest in Gainesville's present and future.



The Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency Fiscal Year 2007 Annual Report covers activities from October 1, 2006 to September 30, 2007. As required by Florida Statute 163.356(c), the report includes a complete financial statement of the CRA's assets, liabilities, income and operating expenses, amount of tax increment funds collected, and a record of CRA activities for the fiscal year. All financial statements were audited by the City of Gainesville.



Board info:

CRA board

Meets 3rd Monday of the month at 3pm at City Hall, 200 E University Ave

Commissioner **Ed Braddy**
 Commissioner **Craig Lowe**
 Commissioner **Rick Bryant**
 Commissioner **Jeanna Mastrodicasa**
 Commissioner **Scherwin Henry**
 Mayor **Pegeen Hanrahan**
 Commissioner **Jack Donovan**

Eastside

Meets 3rd Thursday every other month at 4pm at Gainesville Technology Enterprise Center, board room, 2153 Hawthorne Road

Cindy Campbell
Juanita Miles Hamilton
Vivian Filer
Kay Mahaffey
Dave Mays
Mary Rhodes
Brad Pollitt
Tom Rider
Eric Wild

Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street

Meets 4th Tuesday every other month at 6:15pm at SFCC Downtown, Blount Center Boardroom, 401 NW 6th St

Dotty Faibisy
Thomas Hawkins
Russ Ingram
Eleanor Laughlin
Matthew Norton
Robert Pearce

About the CRA

The City of Gainesville DRA, later replaced by the Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), was established in 1981. The original purpose of the CRA was to create a redevelopment framework in which the Central City District would evolve into a more dynamic office, service, financial, entertainment, residential, and governmental area. By 2001, the CRA was operating in four Community Redevelopment Areas: Eastside, Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street, Downtown, and College Park/University Heights. Redevelopment projects in these areas all share a central purpose: to alleviate urban blight in the Community Redevelopment Areas. Each redevelopment area is guided in part by a citizen advisory board. The CRA Board, which is made up of members of the City Commission, reviews recommendations of the citizen advisory boards, adopts redevelopment plans and budgets, and provides direction to staff. The CRA Executive Director is Russ Blackburn and assistant city manager Fred Murry provides day to day assistance for CRA. The CRA has a staff of seven, plus interns, managed by Anthony Lyons. Gainesville's Community Redevelopment Areas comprise 4.3 square miles, or approximately 6% of the total area of the City. The CRA is the official redevelopment body for the City of Gainesville, as described in Chapter 163 of the Florida Statutes. Funds for CRA projects are drawn from tax increment funds, which are collected from the four redevelopment areas. When a redevelopment area is established, the current assessed values of the property within the project area are designated as the base year value. Tax increment comes from the increased assessed value of property, not from an increase in tax rates. Any increases in property values, as assessed because of change in ownership or new construction, will increase tax revenue generated by the property. This increase in tax revenue is the tax increment that goes to the CRA.

College Park/University Heights

Meets 1st Wednesday every month at 5pm at the Wadsworth boardroom, UF Foundation 2012 W University Ave

Ricardo Cavallino
John Fleming
Anne Haisley
James Harnesberger
Philip Heflin
Diane Hurtak
Brad Pollitt
Tom Rider
Eric Wild

Downtown

Meets 4th Wednesday every other month at 8am At the Florida Community Design Center, 300 E University Ave, suite 101

Jim Beeler
David Castine
Michael Giddings
Linda McGurn
Jay Reeves
Kinnon Thomas
Janie Williams

Get Involved!

WE ALWAYS WELCOME PARTICIPATION AND INPUT FROM CITIZENS AND PROFESSIONALS. GIVE US A CALL OR ATTEND A MEETING!

Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency
 (352) 334-2205 www.GainesvilleCRA.com

HIGHLIGHTS

Eastside

Established in 2001 and significantly expanded in 2006. Eastside is Gainesville's newest and largest redevelopment area. With established tree-canopied neighborhoods, proximity to downtown, minimal traffic congestion, and varying land options for housing and retail, East Gainesville offers significant opportunity for reinvestment. This area is experiencing exciting new opportunities, such as homebuyer investment in the Duval neighborhood, City acquisition of the former Kennedy Homes site, a new Wal-Mart super center located off Waldo Road, a planned gateway located on the former Tackle Box site, and coordinated redevelopment planning under the Southeast Gainesville Renaissance Initiative. Simultaneously, East Gainesville's past is also being preserved. The CRA and dedicated volunteers are working towards restoration of the historic Cotton Club. With so much opportunity and potential, the Eastside will continue to become a place in which to reinvest and to call home.

Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street

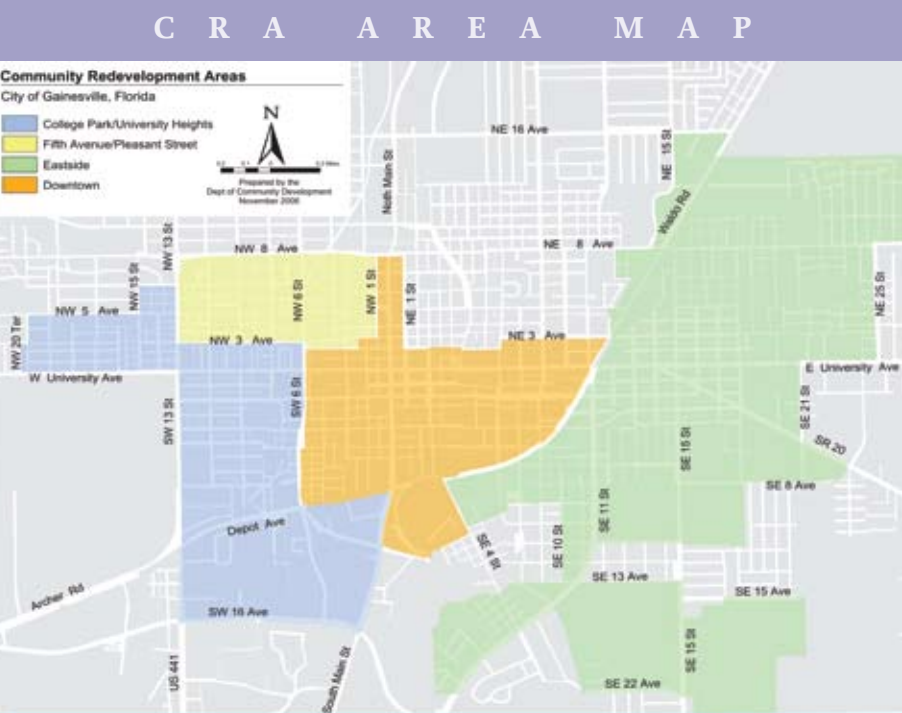
Located north of University Avenue, between the University of Florida and Downtown, the Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street redevelopment area is home to some of the finest historical examples of residential, religious, and educational buildings in Gainesville. These neighborhoods, rooted in a vibrant and colorful past, promise opportunity where a mix of uses can occur in a single corridor, in a manner sensitive to residential occupancy and scale so that residential and commercial uses can exist and thrive together. Additionally, Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street contains an invaluable inventory of some of the most striking styles of vernacular Gainesville architecture found in the city. Pleasant Street in particular boasts such fine collection of historic structures that it has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. These neighborhoods contribute enormously to Gainesville's arts and culture with their annual activities and festivals, location within the City, and rich local history.

Downtown

Downtown Gainesville combines the best of the city's southern charm and modern sophistication. The area offers abundant traditional downtown features such as historic architecture, cobblestone streets, public plazas, old-fashioned storefronts, and a pedestrian-friendly street grid. However it also provides an eclectic array of cafes, restaurants, art and theater venues, clothing stores, cycling shops, salons, and exciting nightlife destinations. Conveniently located in town neighborhoods, such as the Porters community, provide an important residential base for the redevelopment area. Additionally, large-scale redevelopment opportunities at the soon-to-be-vacated 16 acre GRU operations site and Depot Park promise to enhance downtown and further establish its status as a local and regional destination center through residential development, business attraction, and retention.

College Park/University Heights

The identity and future of the College Park/University Heights Community Redevelopment Area is intertwined with the University of Florida. As more students opt to walk and cycle to class, living close to campus becomes increasingly appealing. The diverse residential base and proximity to a center of higher education infuse an aura of freshness and activity in this district. Luxury row houses, apartments, and condominiums with attention to design are being constructed alongside established historic residences in these conveniently located neighborhoods. Perhaps the most exciting opportunity for College Park/University Heights is the redevelopment of under-utilized commercial and industrial districts, and the potential infusion of technology and medical-related spin-offs from the University. A mix of technology research and enterprise is planned for areas south and east of campus, providing jobs and support for additional mixed-use development. This would also encourage new and unique housing options for professionals and entrepreneurs who want to live, work, and play in College Park/University Heights.



What's going on where.

A mix of vision, creativity & hard work.

The CRA combines the talents and energy of community leaders, best of class professional resources and hardworking citizens to realize a *new urban renaissance*.

Eastside

Cotton Club/Perryman's Grocery Revitalization

The CRA continues to assist with the restoration of the historic Cotton Club, an **extraordinary historic and cultural resource** to the North Central Florida region. In its prime, the Cotton Club hosted jazz legends such as BB King, Brook Benton, and James Brown, though over the years the property fell into disrepair. The revitalized site **will honor this history**, will serve as a venue for special events, and will function as a center for recreational, educational, cultural, and social opportunities. In addition to the Cotton Club structure itself, the site as a whole will also receive redevelopment attention



and will host further community resources. With help from the CRA, the historic Perryman's Grocery will also undergo renovation, including the installation of a commercial kitchen. This amenity will **provide resources** for local entrepreneurs to prepare food for sale in the Perryman's shop, or at the on-site cultural Farmer's Market which will be established as part of the overall Cotton Club revitalization. The Cotton Club represents an important part of Gainesville's cultural heritage, and soon it will again serve as a **unique and special attraction** that will showcase East Gainesville to the entire community.

Southeast Gainesville Renaissance Initiative (SEGRI)

East Gainesville is poised for redevelopment and new investment opportunities. In order to ensure that the community's **coming "renaissance"** results in well-designed, high quality development that compliments and benefits the existing community, the CRA helped coordinate a **wide-ranging planning initiative** for southeast Gainesville. This initiative, commonly known as SEGRI, received support from the City, CRA, planning consultants, and from a dedicated group of proactive neighborhood residents. Together, these stakeholders identified **key amenities** that are currently underrepresented in the area, such as medical facilities, offices, local servicing retail, banks, and restaurants. With the help of CRA staff and the consultant team, residents were able to identify potential locations (termed "Focus Sites") throughout southeast Gainesville that could potentially host the previously identified redevelopment needs. Special consideration was given to the visibility of each Focus Site, and its potential to spur additional redevelopment and reinvestment through the study area. Additionally, much **emphasis was placed on the quality** of the built environment, its relation to the human scale, and the high level of urban design that residents will demand of new development. Moving forward, the CRA is working closely with residents and City leaders in order to establish formal tools that will implement the SEGRI vision. In the very near future, the community will be able to enjoy quality redevelopment thanks to the **hard work and input of the dedicated citizens** involved with SEGRI.

Kennedy Homes

One very important redevelopment project linked to SEGRI is the redevelopment of the former Kennedy Homes property. **A longtime fixture in southeast** Gainesville, Kennedy Homes was a federally subsidized housing development that unfortunately came to embody many negative stereotypes associated with low-income housing. Challenged by poor maintenance, drug, and crime issues, problems at Kennedy Homes also contributed to negative impacts within the surrounding community. In 2007, the City purchased and cleared the property, and through the SEGRI program the CRA has formulated plans to redevelop the site into a mixed-income community **characterized by high quality housing** stock and top level urban design. Moving forward, the CRA will implement redevelopment at the site, creating a **safe, attractive, high quality community** that will showcase the potential of East Gainesville.

Eastside Roadway Medians

Median and streetscape upgrades are an **important component** of redevelopment, and comparisons between the "before" and "after" views can result in **stunning visual impacts** that, in turn, spur private investment within the surrounding area. Aiming to achieve this effect along critical Eastside corridors, the CRA has finalized design plans for the **overhaul** of three medians near the intersection of E. University Avenue and SE Hawthorne Road. The project will install low maintenance, **Florida-native plantings** in the medians and will greatly approve the aesthetic of the surrounding area. Additionally, through the use of a **unified material palette**, the redesigned medians will serve to visually link East Gainesville to other areas in and around the City's urban center.

Eastside Gateway

Situated on a wedge-shaped parcel at the intersection of Hawthorne Road and University Avenue, the former Tackle Box property is a highly visible site with the potential to serve as a **prominent neighborhood feature**. However, redevelopment opportunities for the site are severely limited due to serious accessibility obstacles and environmental contamination issues. Working within these constraints, the CRA is pursuing a **thoughtful, context-sensitive** strategy for the site, and will transform the vacant property into an attractive landscaped median that will function



as a gateway feature to East Gainesville. The CRA's design will provide an eye-catching, **high quality fixture** that will lend prominence to the Eastside and be indicative of exciting reinvestment opportunities to come in this area.

Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street Redevelopment Area

NW 5th Avenue Tot Lot

With help from the City's Parks Department, the CRA **has successfully revitalized** a long-neglected tot lot located in the heart of the 5th Avenue neighborhood. Adjacent to both

residences and neighborhood commercial structures, the 5th Avenue tot lot possessed unrealized potential to function as a **lively and dynamic public space**. In order to combat years of disrepair and disinvestment, the CRA completely redesigned the tot lot, provided an aesthetic facilit,



and installed **new state-of-the-art** playground equipment built to green building standards. The result is a colorful and inviting play space that attracts visitors from the local neighborhood as well as those throughout the City.

Model Block

Building on the continuing momentum of **this successful project**, in 2007 the CRA sold the second refurbished house, and also went on to complete construction on the third Model Block home. Through a funding partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the CRA is able to renovate and restore a cluster of dilapidated, unlivable structures, in the process transforming a once-derelict city block into a **lively, vibrant neighborhood center**. Each rehabilitated



structure is subsequently sold for homeownership, and the impact of the program is extraordinary: the historic **legacy of the neighborhood is celebrated**, residents' pride in the community is strengthened, and private investment in surrounding properties is increased.

University House

In 2007, the Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street Redevelopment Area received **its first transformational project** application. Currently under construction, University House will consist of roughly 185 high-end student apartments. The project's design will be **pedestrian friendly and sensitive to its location** in a central urban neighborhood; structured parking is hidden at the rear of the development, onsite wetlands areas will be preserved, and developer is working to fund neighborhood improvements at the nearby A. Quinn Jones School. The project is **an exciting opportunity** for the Fifth Avenue neighborhood, as it brings new investment to the community, while remaining sensitive to local issues.



NW 5th Avenue Streetscape

NW 5th Avenue is a mixed-use corridor lined with residences and neighborhood businesses which has traditionally functioned as **epicenter**

of activity for the Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street communities. The CRA



is committed to strengthening and affirming the significance of this important street through on-going redevelopment initiatives in both the private and public realms. As part of this effort, the CRA has systematically pursued phased utility undergrounding along the corridor. Additionally, streetscape plans have also been finalized, and construction will soon commence on the first phase of this project. **The revitalized streetscape** will include wider sidewalks, new crosswalks, brick hardscaping, and decorative pedestrian lighting. Such **current and future improvements** will help transform NW 5th Avenue into a showcase for the district, and for the City as a whole.

A. Quinn Jones House

The Fifth Avenue neighborhood has historically been home to many prominent African American leaders within the Gainesville community. One such resident is A. Quinn Jones, a respected educator and civic leader. Mr. Jones' former residence is now owned by the City, and the CRA is working to **stabilize and restore** this historic structure, which may be a



candidate for recognition on the National Register of Historic Places. The restored home will likely function as a **valuable civic amenity**, and will bring new activity to the area by embracing the neighborhood's unique cultural resources.

Downtown Redevelopment Area

Porters

Located in the heart of Downtown, the Porters community is one of the City's oldest neighborhoods. In 2007, the CRA began a series of initiatives in the neighborhood in an effort to reverse the effects of years of disinvestment within the Porters community. The CRA is approaching Porters **improvements through a multifaceted strategy**, focusing on both large-scale, long term projects and on smaller projects that may be implemented more readily. In 2007, the CRA partnered with the City to compile detailed surveys of the major corridors running through the Porters neighborhood. These surveys will function as the basis for engineering work and large scale infrastructure improvements in the neighborhood. Through this effort, **the neighborhood will gain** reconstructed streets, sidewalks, utilities improvements, utilities undergrounding, lighting,

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