



Legislation Text

File #: ID#20-8324, **Version:** 1

SUBJECT/RECOMMENDATION:

Find that certain areas of the North Greenwood study area are, together, a blighted area as defined in the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969 and that there is a need for a Community Redevelopment Agency to carry out community redevelopment and adopt Resolution 20-52.

SUMMARY:

Resolution 20-52 establishes the boundary areas for the North Greenwood Community Redevelopment Area, finds and declares the area as blighted as defined by F. S. Section 163.340(8) and that there is a need for a Community Redevelopment Agency to carry out community redevelopment.

The resolution also requests that Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) delegate to the City Council (Council) all authority and powers conferred upon the County through The Community Redevelopment Act of 1969 for the North Greenwood Community Redevelopment Area. Delegation of such authority by BCC will allow Council to then create a Community Redevelopment Agency. Additionally, the resolution requests that BCC establish a tax increment financing district and a redevelopment trust fund within the North Greenwood Community Redevelopment Area.

Finally, the resolution requests that the City's administration prepare a redevelopment plan for the North Greenwood Community Redevelopment Area.

Background

In December, 2019, members of the Clearwater Urban Leadership Coalition (CULC) and city staff came together to discuss the CULC's efforts and interest in establishing a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) in the northern portion of the city including the North Greenwood community and surrounding areas.

In February 2020, the City engaged Wade Trim, Inc. to conduct a Findings of Necessity Study in accordance with Florida Statutes Section 163.335 and 163.340.

In the following months through September 2020, CULC members engaged individuals, businesses, and community groups and leaders to inform and seek support for the establishment of a CRA.

North Greenwood Area Finding of Necessity Study

The North Greenwood Area Finding of Necessity Study (Study) area is comprised of six (6) subareas identified as 1) Downtown (limited to Old Bay Character District), 2) Non Low-Mod Area, 3) North Fort Harrison/Osceola, 4) North Greenwood Extension, 5) North Greenwood Core, and 6) North Osceola. The Study was conducted to identify and determine whether the necessary conditions (slum, blight, and/or a shortage of affordable housing) are present and meet the statutory requirements of establishing a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) in any 1 or more subareas.

The analysis of the 6 subareas focused on data that support the finding of slum or blighted conditions. The

following 10 statutorily-required topics of analysis for each subarea were compiled and analyzed:

1. Poverty
2. Household Income
3. Median Home Value
4. Housing Vacancy
5. Housing Affordability
6. Housing Condition
7. Housing Crowding
8. Crime and Fire/EMS Calls for Service
9. Code Enforcement Activity
10. Taxable Values

Per Florida Statute (Part III, Chapter 163), a study area must have a minimum of 2 of the 10 conditions present to be considered for inclusion in a CRA. The Study determined the necessary conditions are present in 5 of 6 subareas. The consultant initially recommended inclusion of 2 subareas (North Greenwood Core and North Fort Harrison/Osceola), noting that signs of distress and blight are becoming increasingly evident as other parts of the city prosper. Public intervention is needed in conjunction with private sector participation to treat the negative influences and foster a healthier social and economic environment.

In rank order, the subareas showed evidence of the number of conditions present:

1. North Greenwood Core (9)
2. North Fort Harrison/Osceola (8)
3. Downtown (Old Bay) (7)
4. Non Low-Mod Area (5)
5. North Greenwood Extension (4)
6. North Osceola (1)

In recognition of the Downtown (Old Bay) subarea as a largely commercial district, and therefore a unique opportunity for economic growth and stabilization, staff requested the consultant analyze the 3 subareas as a single, unified area. The Addendum provided in the North Greenwood Area Finding of Necessity Study identifies 3 specific major findings consistent with Section 163.340(8), Florida Statutes, for the unified study area:

1. The crime rate is disproportionately higher in the unified study area compared to the citywide crime rate.
2. The Fire/EMS call rate is disproportionately higher in the unified study area compared to the citywide Fire/EMS call rate.
3. The percentage of code violations within the unified study area is disproportionately greater than the relative size of the combined study area.

Additionally, the unified study area also exhibits a higher prevalence (compared to the city overall) of poverty, households spending 35% or more of household income on housing costs, housing with substandard conditions, and household income and median home values are significantly lower.

Staff Recommendation

Based upon the conclusions of the Study (and Addendum), and the public outreach and support provided by CULC, staff has determined that it is necessary, appropriate, proper and timely that a CRA is created in the North Greenwood Community as described in Resolution 20-52 and recommends adoption thereof.

Next Steps

Upon adoption, city staff will transmit the Resolution to Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners seeking authorization to create the North Greenwood Community Redevelopment Agency, and the creation of the North Greenwood Community Redevelopment Plan (Plan). Staff will return to Council with the Plan for approval and will then seek the same from BCC. Additionally, staff will seek approval to establish the Redevelopment Trust Fund and set the property tax base.

APPROPRIATION CODE AND AMOUNT:

N/A

USE OF RESERVE FUNDS:

N/A