



## SECTION 9 - CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Blight Study Area met the statutory requirements for establishing a Community Redevelopment Area primarily from building conditions, taxable values, and lot lay-outs dating back to early plats, transportation and crime issues. That study examined the blighted conditions evident in the proposed redevelopment area, and clearly established the need for adopting findings of necessity and creating this strategic plan to capture a vision, address opportunities for public and private reinvestment, redevelopment and overall revitalization.

Blighted areas in general:

- ♦ Impose a costly burden on local communities in terms of service requirements;
- ♦ Cause the loss of much needed tax revenues;
- ♦ Infringe on the general health, safety and welfare of the residents within the area of deterioration; and,
- ♦ Have the effect of impairing and arresting economic growth and vitality because few will invest or reinvest in the area.

A Community Redevelopment Plan provides opportunities for the community to design a new future for and create opportunities for public and private investment. A CRA can aid the market in finding and directing the right kinds of development, installing infrastructure, providing rehabilitation assistance to businesses and homes, preserving neighborhoods and quality residential areas, retaining and supporting existing businesses, and expanding new business opportunities through the new expanded area. By encouraging new public and private investment and other physical and social improvements, crime rates decrease, values increase, and a true sustainable community with a strong sense of place emerges.

### Consultant Recommendations

The Plan integrates ideas, strategies, and projects from the community, professionals, staff, Council, Boards, the consultant, and residents. However, the following represents the observations and recommendations for priority strategies, actions and projects from Lawandales Planning Affiliates (the consultant) based upon years of experience in the field:

1. Amend the land development codes and zoning map to promote mixed-use developments within the CRA.
2. Allow for expanded recreational, tourism, lodging, and special event opportunities.
3. Continue to focus/target efforts at creating a City Center, which is occurring with the conversion of the 'OLD SCHOOL" to a new City Hall/Boys and Girls Club, along with upgraded site features, public parking, drainage enhancements, decorative lighting, landscaping, and public art.
4. Create community policing programs, with sub-stations in satellite areas, officers on horseback, bicycles, "walking the beat", all paid for through tax increment financing.
5. Apply for additional grants, such as Brownfield's designation and obtain funding for site assemblage and redevelopment.



6. Identify and market incentives for development bonuses to capture market demands, eco-tourism opportunities, and aggregate parcels, particularly if eco-tourism, public access to the St. Sebastian preserve, equestrian features, historic preservation and natural landscapes are enhanced or included.
7. Amend the CR 512 Overlay district for clarity and consistent enforcement.
8. Apply architectural and site design guidelines through adoption of a Pattern Book, to promote a style or quality of new construction that would maintain the desired theme and scale of development in the City.
9. Create a system of strategic, planned improvements of publicly owned lands and right-of-ways to maximize their usefulness for the residents of the City and surrounding community, such as with trailheads, greenways, riding trails, special areas for hiking, cycling, horseback riding, and eco-tours; a pedestrian system for walking and bicycling to the City center and environs. These would be superb amenities and attractors to bring people to the area to support existing and new businesses. Using the lands that are off the tax rolls as “people generators” provides remuneration from the loss of tax revenue through sales taxes, fair-share contributions through leases, user fees, and/or rentals, such as canoe, kayaks, building leases, walking tours, historic tours, educational classes, etc.
10. Provide protections for historic structures and historic neighborhoods where there are opportunities for market forces to improve and upgrade existing structures or features.
11. Allow for smaller lots where neighborhoods can be preserved and rehabilitated.
12. Provide resources for residential, commercial and industrial façade and infrastructure grant to upgrade existing buildings, retain existing business, or aid in business location.
13. Amend the zoning maps to remove inconsistencies and conform to logical property boundaries and work with property owners to eliminate non-conforming uses.
14. Target and strengthen code enforcement efforts to handle initial “clean-up” of the areas.
15. Create a business development program to aid, expand or retain existing businesses and promote new business opportunities; consider a small business administration loan program to aid small business start-ups from the community; create incentives for business location and retention.
16. Implement plans to improve Broadway through infrastructure and beautification improvements, including water/wastewater, drainage, parking, traffic lights, sidewalks, landscaping, new signage, approve industrial and heavy commercial opportunities for lands CR 512, where compatible with nearby residential (phasing out incompatible uses).
17. Create a system of waivers for parking, setbacks, or other elements, where owners can do site and building improvements that can upgrade existing properties and retain business.



18. Promote private projects on development sites throughout the area: vacant lands; derelict properties; historic sites; and other by offering incentives for reducing impact fees, water/sewer connection charges, or other “buy-downs” using the TIF to supplement those costs.
19. Identify a phased streetscape program for each of the north-south streets; when paving and drainage project are being planned-include sidewalks, on-street parking, piping the ditches, lighting, and landscaping as feasible.
20. Continue plans to improve the gateways into the City to solidify and create Fellsmere’s image/theme as you enter the City.
21. Identify new parking areas, access management controls for existing locations, and other transportation solutions, including an alternative truck route along Myrtle Street to eliminate truck traffic through downtown.
22. Create a series of special events to complement the existing Frog Leg Festival and Fellsmere Days, such as closing Broadway for a Farmers Market once per month, Friday Fests, and other events as appropriate.

By adoption of the Plan, the Council and CRA integrate the overall goals, objectives, strategies, concepts, and recommendations into a composite successful receipt for redevelopment and economic development.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rochelle W. Lawandales". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rochelle W. Lawandales, AICP