



MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM V.E.

DATE: JANUARY 5, 2014

TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: STAFF

SUBJECT: 79th STREET CORRIDOR PARTNERS IN PROGRESS INITIATIVE AND COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

Council staff continues to support and participate in activities that assist the region's leaders, stakeholders, and residents in the development and implementation of creative strategies that result in more prosperous and equitable communities, a healthier and cleaner environment, and a more vibrant economy.

Background

In November 2013, Neighborhood Housing Services of South Florida (NHSSF) was one of thirteen grantees selected nationwide by Citi Foundation, Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, and the Low Income Investment Fund to participate in the Partners in Progress (PIP) Initiative. This initiative is aimed at transforming community development and the lives of people across the country.

The PIP funding received by NHSSF has supported the formation of the 79th Street Corridor Steering Committee, research, and the development of a comprehensive Market Study and Community Action Plan. This effort represents a renewed commitment to working through collaborative partnerships and an integrative approach to community and economic development in the 79th Street Corridor.

A hallmark of the PIP approach is NHSSF's leadership as the community "Quarterback" who organizes and leads a team of multi-disciplinary players who work together across silos to integrate people- and place-based strategies that will result in healthy communities. Something more than shared, coordinated action, the team's mindset is to function as one unit focused on doing whatever it takes to transform the community into "a vibrant, safe, and economically sustainable community with rising incomes and property values that is attractive to families of mixed incomes, businesses, and entrepreneurs. They are working to create a "community of choice" and opportunities where people will choose to live, work, learn, and visit.

Community Action Plan

In late summer 2014, Council staff was asked to assist NHSSF, its partners, and community residents with the development of a Community Action Plan. This Action Plan was completed in December 2014.

The Action Plan is intended to build upon the many assets which can be found in the community, including community residents and leaders, businesses, housing, and transportation infrastructure. It can be used to guide community enhancement and strategic investment opportunities to advance the economic, environmental and social well-being of the community.

The 79th Street Corridor and surrounding community have been the focus of extensive study, planning, and policy initiatives and programs over many years. Excellent work has been accomplished and progress made. This progress has been made with the support of many partners including area residents; the area's federal, state, and locally elected officials, County Commission Chair Monestime and County Commissioner Edmonson, the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners and Mayor; county staff; and committed public, private, non-profit, and philanthropic partners. Review of the work that has been accomplished and evidence of growing public and private investment in the 79th Street Corridor reveals that much of the research, planning and policy framework needed to support transformational change of the area has been put in place.

This Community Action Plan provides an initial framework around six action items with steps, measures, and desired outcomes. As times goes by it will be revised and updated to reflect accomplishments, tasks to be completed, new partners, and new community and economic development priorities.

The priority Action Items are:

- Create a Range of Housing Options
- Improve the Appearance and Vitality of the Built Environment
- Foster Economic Development and Create Diverse Employment Opportunities
- Create an Environment that Supports Healthy Behaviors
- Create Ladders of Opportunity through Lifelong Learning
- Build and Maintain Community and Steering Committee Capacity and Engagement

It should be noted that the Action Items are a point of beginning, not ending, and that they should be continuously updated to reflect new information, opportunities, and community priorities. The absence of a particular Action Item or Action Step does not mean that it is not important or should not be addressed as part of a comprehensive community and economic revitalization strategy.

The challenge that remains is how to bridge the gap between research and planning to investment and implementation. How does one develop the broad-based political will and unwavering commitment necessary from diverse partners for the investment of professional and financial resources of a sufficient magnitude and change the conversation from one of assisting a community of need to one of realizing the potential of a community of untapped opportunity?

The establishment of the 79th Street Corridor Steering Committee is the important difference between this and past efforts. This committed, multi-disciplinary team of public, private, non-profit, and philanthropic organizations and champions, led by Neighborhood Housing Services of South Florida, has the power to act and speak with one voice, and use their talent, knowledge, and influence to support, attract, and direct needed investment to the community.

Recommendation

Information only.