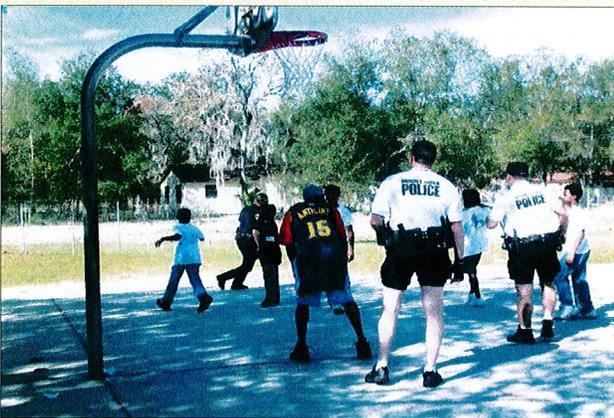


City of Mount Dora

DRAFT

Northeast Community Redevelopment Agency

2009 Master Plan Update



Northeast Community Redevelopment Agency Board

Chair: Melissa DeMarco

Vice Chair: James Homich

Members: Glenna Burch
Stewart Holley
Michael Tedder
Robert Thielhelm
James E. Yatsuk

City Manager: Michael Quinn
Tel: 352-735-7126 • E-mail: QuinnM@cityofmounddora.com

City Attorney: Clifford B. Shepard, Smith and Cassady, P.A.

Northeast Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee

Chair: Amy Bolt

Vice Chair: James T. Williams (J. T.)

Members: Robert Fitzgerald
Jane Brown
Phillip Martin
Nate Walker
James Argento

Community Redevelopment Agency Staff

NECRA Staff: Mark Reggentin, AICP, Planning and Development Director
Tel: 352-735-7112 • E-mail: ReggentinM@cityofmounddora.com

Gus Gianikas, AICP, Assistant Planning and Development Director
Tel: 352-735-7113 • E-mail: GianikasG@cityofmounddora.com

Cheri McKitrick, Administrative Supervisor
Tel: 352-735-7113 • E-mail: McKitrickC@cityofmounddora.com

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Map of the Mount Dora NECRA	7
NECRA Master Plan Vision Statement & Goal	8
Plan Elements and Objectives	8
• Housing	9
• Natural Built and Environment	10
• Public Safety	13
• Economic Development.....	14
• Citizen Involvement.....	16

List of Figures

Figure 1 - Map of the NECRA District	7
Figure 2 - Aerial View of Grandview.....	13

Introduction

What is a Community Redevelopment Agency (NECRA)?

In 1969, Florida enacted legislation that enabled local governments to create community redevelopment districts and community redevelopment agencies to work in those districts. Approximately 178 CRAs operate in Florida at this time. CRAs are charged with undertaking redevelopment functions in the specified community redevelopment district. In Mount Dora, the NECRA has fulfilled this function by making improvements to public grounds and infrastructure such as sidewalks, drainage, and parks. The NECRA has also created redevelopment programs to foster affordable housing and housing rehabilitation. These projects and programs are intended to encourage investment into private properties in the area including both residences and businesses.

History of the Mount Dora NECRA

In 1989, neighborhood leaders in northeast Mount Dora decided there was a need to improve conditions in the area. After exploring various alternatives, this group of citizens decided the creation of the Northeast Community Redevelopment Agency (NECRA) would provide the means to improve the designated area. They felt that through the NECRA, revenue would become available to make public improvements, and these public improvements would serve as a catalyst to encourage property and business owners to make improvements to their properties.

Organization of the Mount Dora NECRA

The NECRA is made up of a Board, an Advisory Committee and City staff. The staff of the Planning and Development Department works with the NECRA Board and Advisory Committee to carry out the Agency's responsibilities and activities. The Board, comprised of the seven members of City Council, is the decision making body. Their duties include approving the annual budget and awarding contracts for engineering services and construction projects. The Advisory Committee is a seven member volunteer committee comprised of City residents and business owners appointed by the City Council. The Advisory Committee works with the staff to make recommendations to the Board on projects and programs to be included in the annual work plan, budget and project design. The Advisory Committee and Board hold monthly meetings, and the public is encouraged to attend.

Like most CRAs, the Mount Dora NECRA is funded through Tax Increment Financing (TIF). Tax Increment funds are derived from ad valorem property taxes. The NECRA is not a taxing authority nor does it set millage rates or assess property. Tax increment funds come through existing taxing entities including the City of Mount Dora and Lake County but not including the school district or the water management district. The method of determining the amount of funding the NECRA receives each fiscal year (Oct. 1 – Sept. 30) is described in the section Funding the Mount Dora NECRA.

Funding the Mount Dora NECRA

When the NECRA was created in 1989, the assessed value of the area was set as the base year tax base. Thereafter, taxes from additional increases in property values are dedicated to the redevelopment agency. In each subsequent year, the Lake County Property Appraiser determines the assessed value of the area. The difference between the assessed value of the base year and the current year is calculated and referred to as the “increment.” The increment is multiplied by the millage rate of each contributing taxing entity. The taxing entity remits 95% of that amount of money to the NECRA Trust Fund.

NECRA Meetings

Regular meetings of the Advisory Committee are held quarterly. The second Tuesday of February, May, August and November beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the Martin Luther King Center located at 803 Florida Avenue. Special meetings are called as needed. The NECRA Board meets as needed, on evenings of City Council meetings. These meetings occur on first and third Tuesdays at 7 p.m. in the City Hall Board Room, located on the first floor of City Hall, 510 N. Baker Street.



Above: Martin Luther King Center - 803 Florida Avenue

Description of the Mount Dora NECRA District

The redevelopment district as delineated by the city contains approximately 469 acres. The area is bounded by Limit Avenue on the north and approaches Donnelly Street on the west, between Ninth and Tenth Avenues on the south and US 441 to the east. The specific delineation of the district is shown on the attached map.

Statistics:

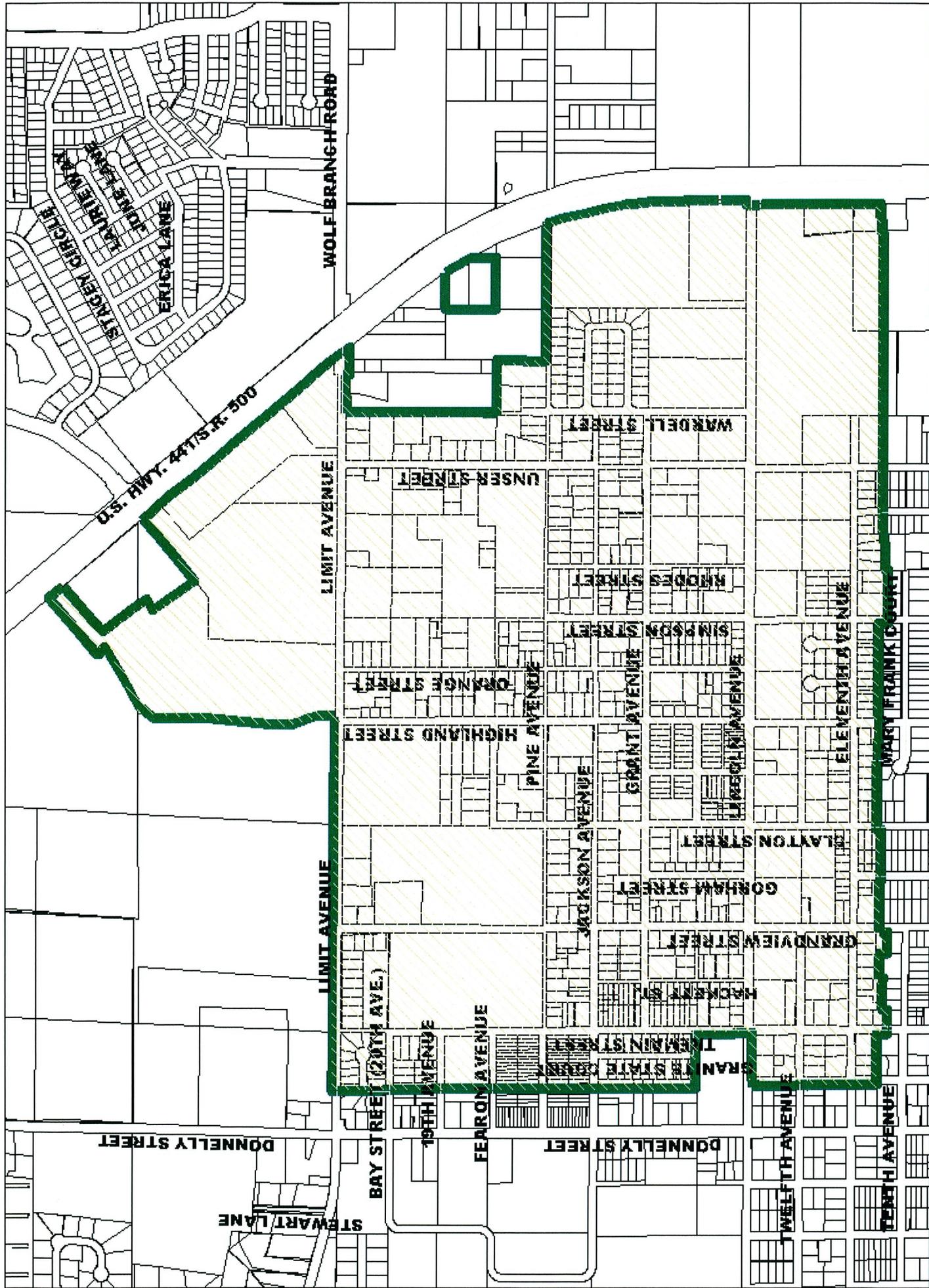
Land Area: 469 acres **Housing Units:** **Population:**

Parks: Frank Brown, Cauley Lot, Lillie Park, Lincoln Avenue, Dog Park

Historic Landmarks:

Witherspoon Lodge

Milner/Rosenwald Academy



Northeast Community Redevelopment Area

NECRA Master Plan Vision Statement & Goal

Mount Dora is a well-established community with citizens, neighborhoods and businesses sharing a sense of local identity and purpose. Mount Dora will maintain its unique sense of place and economic vitality while preserving its history, diversity, natural beauty, and “traditional historic small town” character. Redevelopment efforts will focus on encouraging private investment into properties, supporting a dynamic mixed use, walkable environment.

The goal of the Mount Dora Northeast Community Redevelopment Agency Master Plan is to create a framework for providing improvements to public areas and infrastructure that encourages private redevelopment activities and to facilitate investment into private property through programs in line with the vision.

Plan Elements and Objectives

Housing

- Objective: The NECRA will work with non-profit housing organizations to enhance and promote their housing programs. The NECRA does not intend to operate or administer their own program but to collaborate with other organization through their established programs, including providing grants and / or in-kind services.

Natural and Built Environment

- Objective: Promote pedestrian and bicycles access to parks, churches, schools, and commercial areas, and other community meeting places through provision of safe and convenient sidewalks, multi-use trails, crosswalks, and traffic calming designs.
- Objective: Work with property owners of designated historic properties to improve the structure and appearance of the property. This includes providing grants for the restoration of the property.

Public Safety

- Objective: The NECRA will provide funding to the Mount Dora Police Department to provide Community Policing initiatives as allowed by Florida Statute Chapter 163..

Economic Development

- Objective: Encourage and facilitate redevelopment of commercial property in Neighborhood Business District on Grandview Street between Lincoln and Grant Avenues.

Citizen Involvement

- Objective: Encourage and promote extensive citizen involvement. Keep continuously informed. Work with churches in implementing programs to reach objectives.

Housing

Goal: Provide a variety of housing options and work to improve existing housing stock.

Objective: The NECRA will work with non-profit housing organizations to enhance and promote their housing programs. The NECRA may also develop programs to assist property owners in constructing and improving housing.

The NECRA does not intend to operate or administer their own housing programs but instead to collaborate with other organizations through their established programs, including providing grants and / or in-kind services.

Implementation:

1. Continue Affordable Housing incentive Program with approved non-profit affordable housing providers. Assist providers in identifying potential sites for new home construction
2. Consider housing construction incentive programs for property owners.
3. Continue Weatherization Grant Program through Lake Community Action Agency Assist the Agency in promoting their program to homeowners.

The Mount Dora NECRA Board has approved funding to partner with the DOE/WAP program to provide in financing for projects located in the NECRA district. To ensure all necessary improvements can be funded, there may also be funding available for health and safety measures, which include electrical, plumbing, handicap ramps/rails, septic tanks, screen doors, window screens, termite inspection, termite tenting and other needs.

4. Work with approved non-profit housing organizations in their rehabilitation and home improvement programs. Assist providers in promoting the program and identifying potential homes.
5. The City will continue an aggressive Code Enforcement program.

Background:

As affordable housing is a priority of the NECRA, it is important to help reduce the cost of providing affordable housing. Affordable housing incentives help to improve the economic conditions of the communities where they are provided.

Housing

Three homes on Grant Avenue were constructed on land NECRA provided in 2005 by Homes in Partnership, Inc., another not-for-profit organization that works to provide affordable housing for low-income families.

In May 2008 a Habitat for Humanity building blitz began with a groundbreaking on side-by-side lots on Gorham Street. In two weeks two homes were completed. The project was made possible in part through a substantial land donation of two lots from the City, as well as offsetting building permit fees. The project brought residential development to lots on Gorham Street and affordable housing for two families in need.

This type of grant serves as an investment for the NECRA since the funds are typically returned through additional property tax increment revenues within five years' time.

Below: These three homes on Grant Ave., constructed by Homes in Partnership, a not for profit affordable housing provider were constructed on land provided by the NECRA



Above: Habitat - In May 2008 Habitat built two homes in 2 weeks on Gorham Street.

Natural and Built Environment

Goal: Ensure high quality in the natural and built environment.

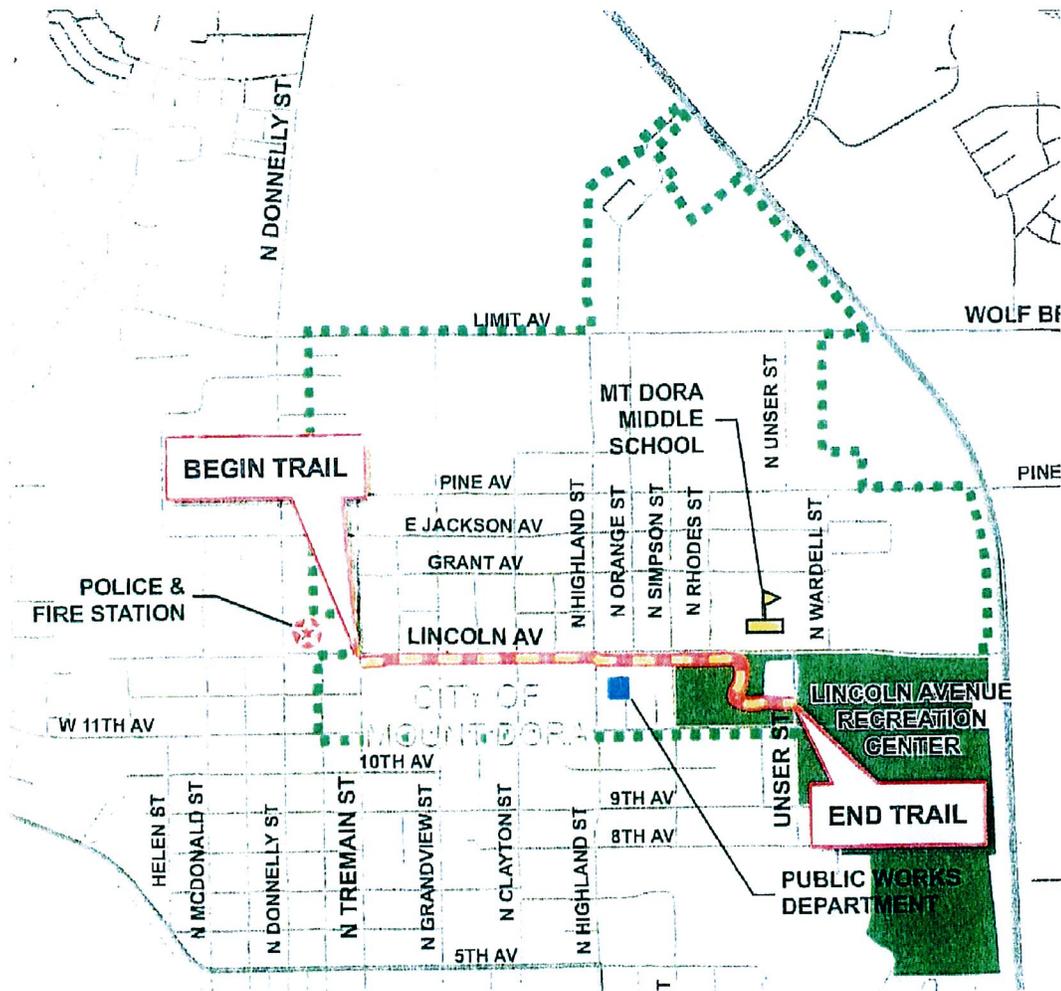
Objective: Promote pedestrian and bicycle access to parks, churches, schools, and commercial areas, and other community meeting places through provision of safe and convenient sidewalks, multi-use trails, crosswalks, and traffic calming designs.

Implementation:

1. Coordinate with the City in implementing of the Mount Dora Trails Master Plan. Lincoln Avenue shared-use trail and Tremain Street greenway and trail are the initial priorities.

The Lincoln Avenue Trail project extends from Tremain Street to the Lincoln Avenue Park Complex. In the proposed Mount Dora Trails Master Plan, this trail is classified as a shared-use trail as part of the City's vision to develop a comprehensive and interconnected trail network, the purpose of the trail project is to create a safe pedestrian and bike route to the middle school, Lincoln Avenue parks complex, Grandview Street commercial area, and other destinations near Lincoln Avenue. Eventually the trail will connect Donnelly Street to the proposed park entrance at the east end of Lincoln Avenue near US 441. The trail will be on the south side of Lincoln Avenue.

Right:
Lincoln
Avenue
Trail



Natural and Built Environment



Above: The area as it currently exists



Above: An example of what the improvements may look like

2. The City through the Public Works Department will continue to apply for CDBG, Safe Routes to Schools and other grant programs for sidewalk construction.

Objective: Historic Preservation - Work with property owners of designated historic properties to improve the structure and appearance of the property. This includes providing grants for the restoration of the property.

Background:

The NECRA has a grant program for properties designated as historic structures with the potential to serve as a tourism attraction.

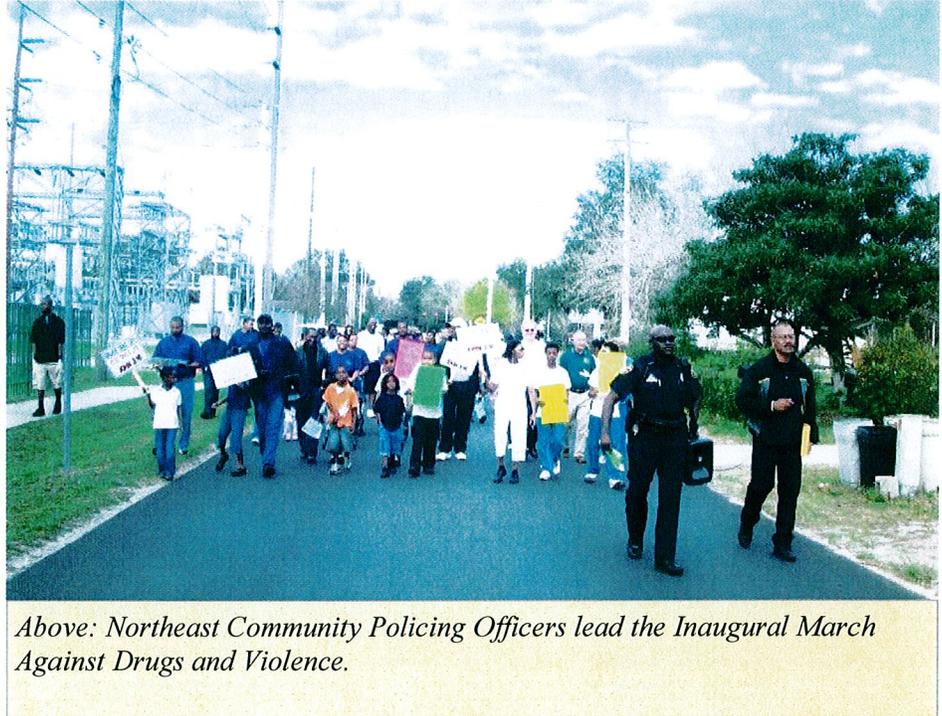
The NECRA provided \$8,000 in grants to the Witherspoon Lodge for renovation work. The building has both a Mount Dora and State of Florida Historic Site Marker. Application will be made in 2008 for a National Register Site.

Public Safety

Goal: Provide a safe environment for residents and businesses

Objective: The NECRA will provide funding to the Mount Dora Police Department to provide Community Policing initiatives as allowed by Florida Statutes Chapter 163.

Florida Statute allows for a community redevelopment plan to provide for the development and implementation of community policing innovations. Community policing innovation is a policing technique or strategy designed to reduce crime by reducing opportunities for, and



Above: Northeast Community Policing Officers lead the Inaugural March Against Drugs and Violence.

increasing the perceived risks of engaging in, criminal activity through visible presence of police in the community, including, but not limited to community mobilization, neighborhood block watch, citizen patrol, citizen contract patrol, foot patrol, neighborhood storefront police stations, field interrogation, or intensified motorized patrol.

In line with these guidelines, the Mount Dora Police Department will continue to develop a Community Policing Program that enhances the normal operating procedures in the NECRA area.

Implementation:

1. Youth Programs—The Community Policing program will work with community groups including Lake Community Action Agency and churches to determine the community policing initiatives that focus on and would benefit youth of the neighborhood.
2. Establish a Neighborhood Crime Watch program.
3. The NECRA will make recommendations to the City Police and Public Works Departments on crosswalks and traffic calming needs.

Economic Development

Goal: Promote and Support Economic Development

Objective: Encourage and facilitate redevelopment of commercial property in Neighborhood Business District on Grandview Street Between Lincoln and Grant Avenues.

Implementation:

1. Continue Development Incentive Program reimburses property owners for development and building fees and required infrastructure improvements in city right-of-ways.

Background:

Currently the Northeast Community Redevelopment Agency (NECRA) may reimburse applicants up to \$15,000 of their cost of development, building, and impact fee as well as required utility work in the public right-of-ways.

Eligible properties are those zoned C-1 with frontage on Grandview Street north of Lincoln Avenue and south of Grant Avenue.

Eligible construction includes new commercial buildings and additions to or remodeling of existing commercial buildings.

The use and development of the property must meet the land development code and zoning requirements and be compatible with and meet the needs of the neighborhood as determined by the NECRA.

The program is structured to be a performance-based reimbursement program. The applicant must complete the desired result, the construction and occupancy of a commercial building, before being awarded the grant.

The grant is an investment for the NECRA. The cost of the grant will be returned to the NECRA through additional property tax revenues within three to five years. After that time, the additional property tax is a net gain to the NECRA, which will invest the revenue in other projects.



Above: Signage guides business to the Grandview Street business area.



Above: A development incentive grant was provided to Ivory's restaurant, on Grandview Street.

Economic Development

2. Evaluate need for additional programs such as:

- Incentive for aggregating properties
- NECRA acquiring and permitting sites for redevelopment

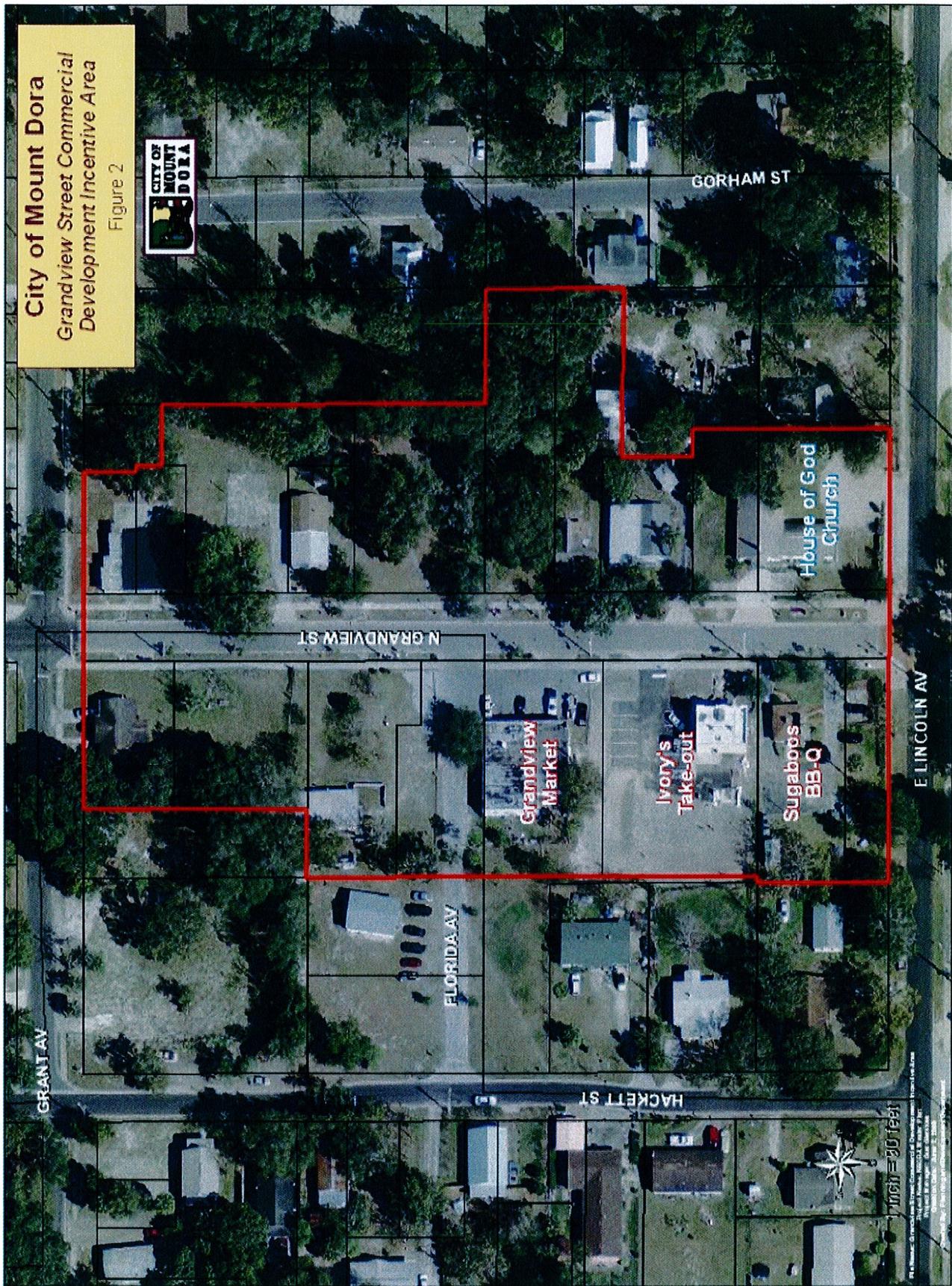
A logical site for redevelopment is shown below in Figure 3. The site would contain a 3,600 square foot building.



Above: An example of acquiring and permitting sites.

City of Mount Dora
Grandview Street Commercial
Development Incentive Area

Figure 2



North = 30 feet
 City of Mount Dora
 Planning Department
 2024

Citizen Involvement

Goal: Encourage and promote extensive citizen involvement in the northeast community.

Objective: Improve communication to keep citizens continuously informed.

Implementation: Work with churches in implementing programs to reach objectives.
Install kiosks in public location for use for community notices.