

DOWNTOWN ORLANDO MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION

Improvement Strategy For The West Colonial Drive Corridor



This report was prepared by the Downtown Orlando Merchants Association with assistance from the City of Orlando Planning & Development Department.

IDENTIFYING ISSUES

The 25 workshop participants divided into four groups and recorded their ideas for maintaining and improving their business district. Once the issues were identified, the participants were asked to select and prioritize the issues which were most important to the business district as a whole. The D.O.M.A. Appearance Review Committee also included additional priorities for the business district. The top priorities identified by the participants and the D.O.M.A Appearance Review Committee are as follows:



- Encourage removal of pay telephones.
- Construct bump-outs for planting additional street trees.
- Install decorative streetlights and trash receptacles.
- Develop design standards for fences and walls.
- Construct a police sub-station at 7-11 or alternative site.
- Create a D.O.M.A. Development Review Board for input of design and planning issues in the area.
- Consolidate public directory signs.
- Install decorative trash receptacles.
- Enhance existing landscaping to current code.
- Install pedestrian lights and trash receptacles around Lake Dot.
- Restrict fast food restaurants.
- Encourage land uses such as boutique shops, outdoor cafés, etc.

POTENTIAL ACTIONS

The consensus achieved through this workshop process and the recommendations from the D.O.M.A. Appearance Review Committee will help the business district association to focus its efforts on actions that will make the most difference. The potential actions for the top priorities identified above are as follows:

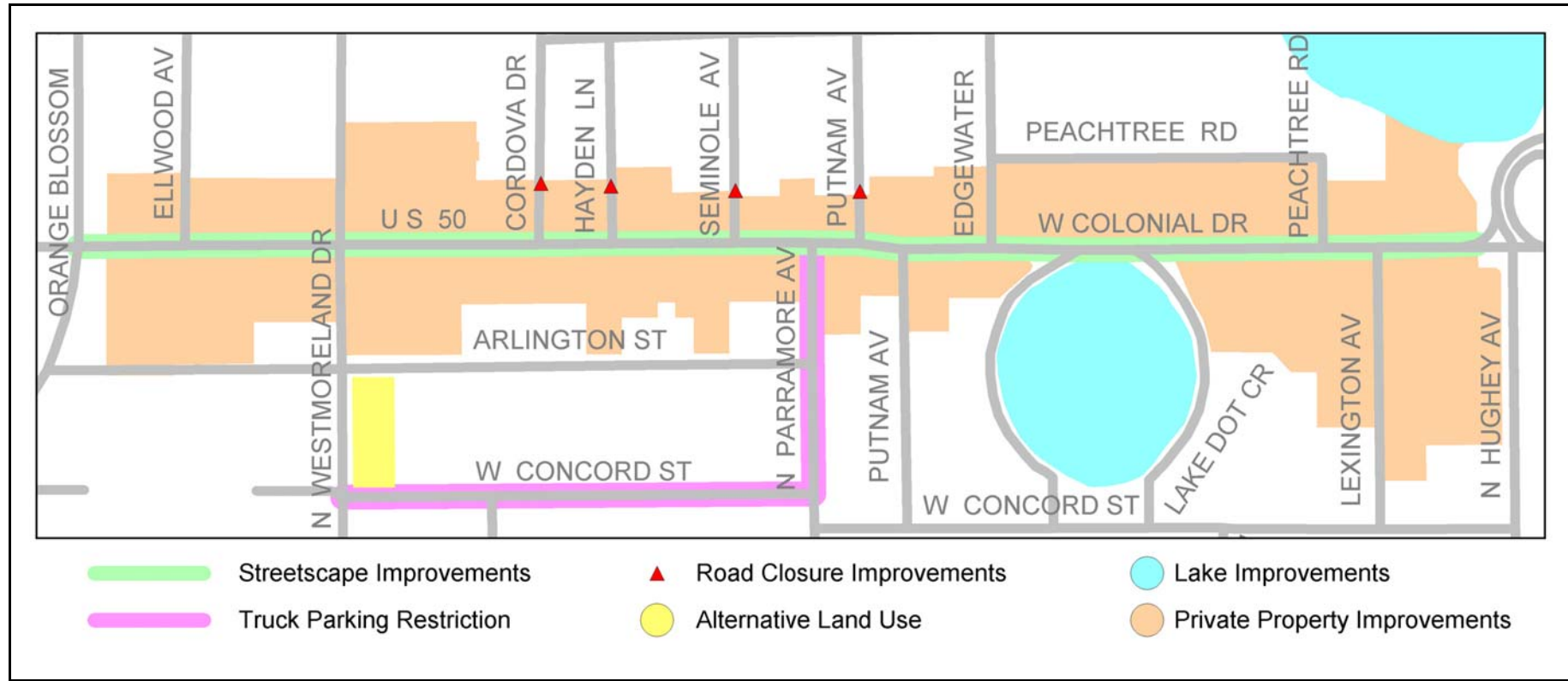
- Contact the public carrier (i.e., Bell South) as well as property owners who lease space to other pay telephone providers to encourage telephones to be removed from the business district.
- Work with the Transportation Planning and Transportation Engineering Bureaus and the Florida Department of Transportation for streetscape improvements (i.e., bump outs for street trees and decorative street lighting), consolidation of directory signs and potential beautification grants.
- Work with the Planning Bureau's Urban Design staff to develop standards for fences and walls that meet Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design standards and to create an Appearance Review and/or Special Plan Overlay District.
- Contact the Orlando Police Department to determine the feasibility for a sub-station along West Colonial Drive and provide some potential sites.
- Create a D.O.M.A. Development Review Committee for input on planning and design issues in the area.
- Develop a private funding pool for landscape improvements and maintenance of private properties.
- Work with the Public Works Department to improve the lighting and maintenance of Lake Dot.
- Work with the Mayor's Business Assistance Team to encourage new businesses through the Economic Incentive Programs.

The map below illustrates the issues and ideas identified by the business and property owners, merchants and local residents at the D.O.M.A. Improvement Strategy Workshop held on November 14, 2000. The issues presented on the sides of the map summarize the overall concerns of the business district stakeholders.

PUBLIC SAFETY Reducing potential criminal activity and the loitering of vagrants are major concerns. Removing pay telephones, installing more lights and replacing opaque walls with open decorative fences and having a police sub-station are community suggestions to improve public safety. Another recommendation was to restrict truck parking along Parramore Avenue and Concord Street to improve vehicular safety.

STREETSCAPING A common streetscape theme is needed to unify the business district. This could be accomplished by installing decorative site furnishings, planting additional street trees, reducing visual clutter and improving maintenance. A themed design approach similar to Park Avenue in Winter Park, is desired.

PROPERTY IMPROVEMENTS More code enforcement attention is needed to improve property conditions in the business district and to help promote pride of place. Code enforcement efforts should target illegal signs, building exteriors, garbage and overgrown/unkept properties. Design guidelines for building and landscaping could unify the overall appearance of the business district.



LAKE IMPROVEMENTS Lake Dot could be an amenity by creating a gathering place on the lake (i.e., playground). Pedestrian lights, trash receptacles and more trees could enhance the lake and increase public use. Regular clean-up is needed.

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY More wholesome family style businesses (i.e., boutique shops, outdoor cafés, etc.) similar to College Park are needed to increase pedestrian activity. Prohibiting fast food restaurants, tattoo parlors, pawn shops, fortune tellers and rental furniture stores could improve the image of the business district. Rezoning the properties along Westmoreland Drive between Concord Street and Arlington Street to commercial was suggested.

PLANNING PROCESS Create a D.O.M.A. Development Review Committee for input of planning and design issues in the area.

NOTE: The City of Orlando's Neighborhood Resource Guide is available to assist property owners and merchants in identifying City programs and resources that may be helpful in addressing the issues and strategies outlined above.



**Summary of Issues/Actions Identified
by Individuals and Groups at the November 14, 2000
D.O.M.A Improvement Strategy Workshop and by the D.O.M.A.
Appearance Review Committee**

PUBLIC SAFETY	GROUP			
	1	2	3	4
1. Encourage removal of pay telephones to prevent gathering of drug dealers and prostitutes.			✓	✓
2. Construct a police sub-station to deter prostitution, drug dealing and transients along West Colonial Drive and around the neighborhood.	✓	✓		✓
3. Develop design standards for fences and walls.	✓	✓		
4. Encourage on-premise lighting improvements for additional security.	✓	✓		
5. Provide more street lights along Westmoreland Drive.		✓		
6. Prohibit truck parking along Parramore Avenue and Concord Street.			✓	
STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS				
1. Install decorative streetlights to unify business district.	✓	✓	✓	
2. Construct bump-outs for additional street trees to unify business district.	✓	✓		
3. Allow flags on light poles to identify the business district and promote special events.		✓		
4. Remove/relocate/consolidate newspaper dispensers.		✓		✓
5. Reduce the number of bus stops.			✓	✓
6. Remove and prohibit billboards.	✓		✓	
7. Consolidate public directional signs.		✓		
8. Place overhead utilities underground.	✓	✓		
9. Improve sidewalk maintenance.			✓	
10. Install decorative trash receptacles.		✓		
11. Provide regular litter clean-up days.	✓			
12. Replace temporary road barricades with permanent closure structures.			✓	
13. Develop a consistent streetscape theme for the business district (i.e., Park Avenue in Winter Park).	✓			
14. Widen West Colonial Drive, brick the street and install landscape medians.	✓			



PRIVATE PROPERTY IMPROVEMENTS	GROUP			
	1	2	3	4
1. Increase code enforcement to improve building and landscape maintenance.	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Enhance landscaping to current code.	✓		✓	
3. Provide uniformity for on-premise signs.			✓	✓
4. Develop building appearance standards (i.e., façade treatment, awnings/canopies, etc.)	✓	✓	✓	✓
5. Provide grants for private property improvements.				✓
6. Provide more entrance screening of the Salvation Army.				✓
7. Screen commercial uses from residential neighborhoods.		✓		
LAKE DOT IMPROVEMENTS				
1. Create a gathering place (i.e., playground).		✓	✓	
2. Clean up trash within and around the lake.			✓	✓
3. Plant more trees.		✓		
4. Install pedestrian lights and trash receptacles around the lake.		✓	✓	
LAND USE COMPATIBILITY				
1. Rezone properties to commercial along Westmoreland Dr. between Concord St. and Arlington St.		✓		
2. Restrict fast food restaurants.			✓	
3. Prohibit land uses such as tattoo parlors, pawn shops, fortune tellers and rental furniture stores.		✓		
4. Encourage land uses such as boutique shops, outdoor café, etc. (i.e., College Park type businesses).		✓		✓
PLANNING PROCESS				
1. Create a D.O.M.A. Development Review Board for input of design and planning issues in the area.			✓	✓
2. Develop a review process to allow input from the business owners and residents.			✓	✓

NOTE: Issues identified in **bold** have been identified as the top priorities from the workshop and by the D.O.M.A. Appearance Review Committee

The D.O.M.A. Appearance Review Committee, business and property owners, merchants and local residents for their active participation.

O’Boys Bar-B-Q and Garden Café for providing dinner at the workshop.

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PARTICIPANTS

The following participants representing business and property owners, merchants, residents and city staff participated in the D.O.M.A. Improvement Strategy Workshop held on November 14, 2000, at City Hall, 400 South Orange Avenue.

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Disclaimer

The issues identified in this document reflect the consensus position of the business and property owners, merchants and local residents and do not necessarily reflect those of the City. Appropriate partnerships between D.O.M.A. and City departments to effectuate projects are subject to available funding, staffing and scheduling priorities.