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Appendix – Planning Principles for Semoran Boulevard
The Semoran Boulevard corridor (SR 436 from Brosche Ave. to Grant St.) has experienced significant changes during the past decade. Neighborhoods surrounding this corridor have taken on an increasingly Hispanic or Latino character, while at the same time maintaining the strong values and home ownership that have always existed in this part of Orlando.

Changes to the businesses and properties within the commercial district have been both positive and negative. At the same time that some national chains have left the area (such as Pizza Hut, Arby’s, Winn-Dixie and Wendy’s), many of these same stores have become the new homes of vibrant local businesses (such as Oh! Que Bueno, Bravo! and Las Americas supermarkets, and La Tortilleria). Other national chains have remained and thrived (Perkins and Albersons) and some new national brands have arrived on the scene (Walgreens and Blue Water Car Wash).

The same can be said about the age and condition of individual buildings and properties in the commercial district. Some are new or recently remodeled. Others, while older, are well-maintained. But some of the properties within the corridor have fallen into disrepair, while others have become the home of businesses that detract from the character of the area. Crime has become a problem in some parts of the corridor.

The Semoran Boulevard corridor also includes several schools, churches and public spaces that serve as anchors and can become the framework for future redevelopment and improvement efforts. Schools include Azalea Park Elementary, Jackson Middle School and Keiser University, which has recently completed a major expansion. Churches include Orlando Baptist and Prince of Peace / Principe de Paz Lutheran. The La Costa Urban Wetland is one of Orlando’s true hidden jewels, and connects to a significant open space network bordering the east side of the Semoran Boulevard commercial district.
Urban Design and GMP / Zoning Considerations

Semoran Boulevard is a six lane arterial highway with a center median and narrow five foot wide sidewalks on either side. The study area is located outside of Orlando’s “Traditional City” and all of the existing development is typical of a low-scale, auto-oriented suburban commercial strip. Buildings are isolated and set back from the street with parking fields in front.

Despite these constraints, this part of Semoran Boulevard enjoys a higher degree of pedestrian activity than many other suburban commercial areas, including other stretches of Semoran Boulevard to the north and south of the study area. Also, from Curry Ford Road northward the Semoran right-of-way is narrower than elsewhere (“only” 100 feet wide) and therefore more conducive to a pedestrian-oriented future re-development pattern.

It is also important to note that the entire commercial corridor is vastly under-developed as compared to the intensity allowed by the current GMP future land use categories and zoning districts in this area. The GMP categories along the Semoran Blvd. corridor (north-to-south, see map) are:

- **Community Activity Center (CAC):** 0.7 FAR, 40 units per acre
- **Mixed Use Corridor (MUC):** 0.5 FAR, 30 units per acre
- **Urban Activity Center (UAC):** 1.0 FAR, 100 units per acre

In contrast, nearly all properties within this corridor are currently developed at a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.25 or less, with no residential component. Clearly, there are ample opportunities to create an improved urban environment through intensification and redevelopment.

Lastly, from Danube Way to Curry Ford Road nearly all of the retail commercial district is on the east side of Semoran Boulevard. The west side has some small office uses (mostly house conversions), and in one area a long fence that screens the backs of homes from the highway. Because of this, major urban design initiatives can focus on the east side—while not forgetting the needs of the west side.
Regional Context

Semoran Boulevard is strategically located on the east side of the Orlando metropolitan area. It is the primary route leading north from the Orlando International Airport and the primary route for auto traffic between the airport and such critical destinations as Downtown Orlando and the University of Central Florida.

As such, the Semoran Boulevard Business District is an important gateway into Orlando for our residents and for many visitors new to our region. It is the first commercial district these visitors see as they enter our city. For this reason, the improvement of Semoran Boulevard is important not just to the businesses and residents of the area, but to our region as a whole.

The first impression created by Semoran Boulevard is just as important as the impression created by Orlando’s theme parks and destinations like Downtown and UCF.
Regional Context

Taking a closer look, Semoran Boulevard can be divided into two major parts. From Orlando International Airport to just south of Curry Ford Road, it functions as a suburban highway with limited driveway access. The right-of-way is very wide, and traffic travels a higher speeds. Restaurants and inwardly-oriented shopping centers are clustered at major intersections such as Pershing Ave., Hoffner Ave., and Lee Vista Boulevard. Some of these businesses focus more on airport travelers as their main customer base, rather than the surrounding community.

Beginning just south of Curry Ford Road, the character of Semoran Boulevard changes dramatically and becomes a more community-oriented commercial business district. The right-of-way becomes a narrower 100 feet wide, and traffic slows. A continuous strip of businesses face the road, each with their own driveway access. This is the Semoran Boulevard Business District, and the subject of this Vision Plan.
How can Orlando’s Zoning Ordinance help implement the Vision Plan for Semoran Boulevard?

The City’s Zoning Ordinance (also called the Land Development Code or LDC) will be one of the main tools used to implement the Vision Plan. The LDC includes standards for design features such as:

• Signs – Size & types of signs, number of signs allowed; location on the property
• Landscaping – Types of plants and trees; location on the property.

• Parking Lot Landscaping – One way to create wider sidewalks will be to change the LDC to require “hardscape” and knee walls in place of parking lot landscaping.
• Building Location – Place buildings closer to the street, with parking at the side or rear.
• Permitted Uses – Encouraging mixed use redevelopment, changing the type of uses that are allowed in certain districts.
Here are some things about zoning that you may not have thought about before.

**What is the Purpose of Zoning?** – Many people do not like the restrictions zoning places on the use of their own property, but still worry about what might happen on other properties in their neighborhood. Think of the Zoning Ordinance as a compromise between you and your neighbors, and between you and the larger community. You are restricted, but so are your neighbors. Everyone knows what the rules are.

**Successful Zoning Regulations** are based on proper enforcement of the agreed-upon standards. Once you and your neighbors decide what rules will apply to everyone, the City itself takes responsibility to enforce those rules, using its “police powers.”

**Zoning Regulations Can Be Phased In Over Time** to make it easier for property owners to comply with a new requirement.
1. Semoran Boulevard – Unifying Themes

What unifying design themes will guide the Vision Plan for Semoran Boulevard?

The Semoran Boulevard Business District is more than just the sum of its parts. Although we will look at Semoran Boulevard “Piece By Piece” to evaluate its challenges and opportunities, the unifying themes that stand out are guided by the planning principles of the Vision Plan.

The planning principles that guide the Vision Plan are:

• Welcoming and guiding customers to the goods and services they need.
• Promoting a walkable, main street-style development pattern
• Visually de-emphasizing the automobile
• Promoting a mixture of uses
Welcoming and Guiding Customers to the Goods and Services They Need

The interchange reconstruction project completed in 2009 offers a great new opportunity to make the Business District entries at Lake Underhill Road and Yew Drive even more welcoming and attractive to potential customers.

Turn this landmark into a great new entry to the business district – Street trees, landscaped pedestrian areas and textured crosswalks at the Yew Drive intersection will truly catch the eye.

Directional signage for customers entering from the SR 408 ramp (left) are part of the vision, but not visible in this view.

Turn an attractive bridge into a true landmark – Building from the great foundation offered by the newly reconstructed bridge, this Vision Plan proposes to add flags to the tops of its four pillars, then create an iconic landmark sign across the bridge span.

Please note that City resources are currently unavailable to fund the improvements shown in this vision.
Welcoming and Guiding Customers to the Goods and Services They Need

**Attractive Intersection** – Overhead wires are replaced by mast-arms holding the traffic signals.

**Crosswalk Enhancements** – Another way to give the La Costa Drive intersection a “sense of place” will be to add simple enhancements like colored or stamped concrete crosswalks, special signs and/or banners.

Please note that City resources are currently unavailable to fund the improvements shown in this vision.
Why is the Sidewalk Important to Your Business?

Many business owners say, “Why should I care about the sidewalk when almost all of my customers come by car?” This is a good question that deserves a good answer.

Yes, most potential new customers are drivers, yet the sidewalks and public spaces are the areas that they see first as they pass through the business district. Will this first impression make them want to stop at your business?

So you might say that the main audience for attractive sidewalks and public spaces isn’t just the pedestrians, it’s also the thousands of drivers that pass by every day.
Promoting a Walkable Business District – Retail Districts

Sidewalks – Widen the public space by adding a “hardscape” behind the sidewalk. This hardscape includes brick pavement and a low “knee wall” to separate pedestrians from parking. This Vision Plan proposes this design for the public environment on the east side of Semoran Boulevard from Lake Underhill Road to Curry Ford Road. On the west side, this design is proposed from Kalmia Drive to Andora Street.

Street furniture and street trees put the finishing touches on the public environment.

Landscaping can make outdoor areas more attractive without blocking the customer’s view of businesses.

Chapter ___ of this Vision Plan sets proposed guidelines for design and location of landscaping on business properties, as well as the types of plant material to be used.
Promoting a Walkable Business District – Office Districts

Sidewalks – One way that the needs of Office Districts are different than those of Retail Districts is that a wider “public environment” is not needed here. Unlike Retail Districts, Orlando’s Office District regulations require that both buildings and parking lots be set back from the public sidewalk.

Street Trees – This Vision Plan proposes a consistent canopy of street trees in both the Retail and Office Districts from Brosche Road (the Orlando city limits) south to Curry Ford Road.

Landscaping can make outdoor areas more attractive without blocking the customer’s view of businesses.

Chapter 6 of this Vision Plan sets proposed guidelines for design and location of landscaping on both office and retail properties, as well as the types of plant material to be used.
Visually De-emphasizing the Automobile

The preferred location for parking lots should be behind the businesses instead of in front. There should be enough parking to serve customers but not more than is needed. Outdoor areas should be attractive and inviting to customers arriving by car, by public transit or by foot.

Chapter 6 of this Vision Plan sets proposed site design standards for new development, redevelopment and building renovations that will encourage better parking design.
Promoting a Mixture of Uses

Semoran Boulevard already provides a wide range of goods and services. By promoting greater intensity and a mixture of uses as properties redevelop, the Vision Plan will encourage an even more vibrant and exciting business district.

Imagine the wide range of uses that will take shape in the 2000-foot walk from Lake Underhill Road to the International House of Pancakes restaurant – the blue-roofed building in the far background of this photo.
Because Semoran Boulevard is a large business district, it is important to look closer and see how it can be improved piece by piece. This map shows the different locations within the business district that are given particular attention in the following chapters of this Vision Plan.
Welcoming and Guiding Customers

The SR 408 interchange reconstruction project completed in 2009 offers a great new opportunity to make the Business District entries at Lake Underhill Road and Yew Drive even more welcoming and attractive to potential customers and those passing through.

**SR 408 Bridge as it looks today** – This is the view from the north, as seen from the intersection of Semoran Boulevard and Yew Drive.

The new bridge is a great improvement over the old overpass. New architectural features include decorative pillars on both sides of the bridge span, attractive retaining walls, new lighting and underground utilities.
Turn an attractive bridge into a true landmark

Building from the great foundation offered by the newly reconstructed bridge, the Vision Plan proposes to add flags to the tops of its four pillars, then create an iconic landmark sign across the bridge span.

Street trees, landscaped pedestrian areas and textured crosswalks at street intersections could truly be eye-catching.

Directional signs for customers entering from SR 408 ramps (left in each photo) are included, but not visible in these views. (Please note that City resources are currently unavailable to fund the improvements shown in this vision.)
Welcoming and Guiding Customers

Lake Underhill Road – The SR 408 reconstruction project completed in 2009 offers a different set of challenges and opportunities for customers entering the business district from the west.

The new SR 408 exit ramp puts these customers on Lake Underhill Road near Andes Ave., over one-half mile west of Semoran Boulevard. Even though the reconstruction project has greatly improved the appearance of this area, this business district entry can be made even more welcoming and attractive to potential customers by adding street trees and directional signs.

(Please note: City resources are currently unavailable to fund the improvements shown in this vision.)
Welcoming and Guiding Customers

Curry Ford Road Gateway – For customers traveling north on Semoran Boulevard, the highway narrows markedly as one approaches the business district at Curry Ford Road.

These photos show how a relatively simple gateway feature at this intersection (such as gateway columns, as depicted) could let visitors and customers know they are entering a new and unique community.

(Please note: City resources are currently unavailable to fund the improvements shown in this vision.)
There are many eating places in the Semoran Boulevard Business District, but one of the greatest concentrations of restaurants is between La Costa Drive and Costa Del Sol Street. Here you will find Perkins, La Caridad, Baskin Robbins, Oh! Que Bueno! and the former Sonny’s (now closed).

This concentration makes it a good place to demonstrate the design principles that can apply to restaurants – and other retail businesses – anywhere on Semoran Boulevard.
Restaurant District –
Design Issues

Public Areas: Sidewalks and Streets –
These are the areas that customers see first as they pass through the restaurant district. And as they say, you don’t get a second chance to make a first impression.

Access – Since the Florida Dept. of Transportation installed medians on Semoran Boulevard in 2008, southbound customers can’t turn left into restaurants’ driveways. This makes access via La Costa Drive and Costa Del Sol Street more important than ever.

The Alley – Behind these businesses is an alley that is now unfinished and unsightly, but could become one of the Restaurant District’s great assets.

Utility Corridor – This Vision Plan proposes possible new uses for this corridor, which is just behind the Restaurant District.
Restaurant District – The View From The Sidewalk

As can be seen here, Semoran Boulevard’s streets, sidewalks and public spaces need improvement. There are a lot of drivers in this photo, and they are all potential customers. This is what they see today as they slow down to pass through the Semoran Boulevard Business District. The following pages look at the Restaurant District’s public environment in more detail, and show recommended improvements to this public environment.
Restaurant District – Challenges

This is the view of the Restaurant District as seen from the point of view of potential customers driving northbound on Semoran Boulevard. What challenges and opportunities stand out here?

**Sidewalk** - The narrow sidewalk gives the area a cramped, uncomfortable feeling.

**Landscaping** - The hurricane-damaged tree gives this area a run-down appearance. Even though most of the landscaping is well-maintained, it is not well-placed. In some places this landscaping blocks customers’ view of the businesses.

**Uninviting Outdoor Areas** – Large, hot, unmarked paved areas do little to welcome potential customers.
Restaurant District – Vision

Sidewalk – In this view, the public space is widened by adding a “hardscape” behind the existing sidewalk. This hardscape includes brick pavement and a low “knee wall” to separate pedestrians from parking.

Landscaping can make outdoor areas more attractive without blocking the customer’s view of businesses. The trick is better placement of plantings, and having the right type plant material in the right location.

Attractive Outdoor Areas – In this view, hot, unmarked paved areas are replaced by well-marked, attractively landscaped parking that uses low-maintenance plant material. An outdoor seating area is added in front of the restaurant.

Banners – Working together, a Semoran Boulevard business organization can design and place banners to help attract and direct customers to the products and services they need.

Street furniture puts the finishing touch on the public environment.
Restaurant District
La Costa Drive Entry - Challenges

Sidewalk - The narrow sidewalk gives the area a cramped, uncomfortable feeling.

No Directional Signs – Since the Florida Dept. of Transportation installed medians on Semoran Blvd. in 2008, southbound customers can’t turn left into restaurants’ driveways. This makes access via La Costa Drive more important than ever. Yet the existing intersection is confusing and provides no directional help for customers.

Uninviting Street Intersection – In addition to having no directional signs, the intersection itself is just plain ugly and offers no “sense of place.”
Restaurant District
La Costa Drive Entry - Vision

Sidewalk – In this view, the public space is widened by adding a “hardscape” behind the sidewalk. This hardscape includes brick pavement and a low “knee wall” to separate pedestrians from parking.

Directional Signs – There are two potential locations for directional signs: First, within the intersection, overhead signs can direct customers to turn left onto La Costa Drive. Just as important, the existing neighborhood monument sign in the La Costa Drive median can be transformed into a welcoming entry sign for the Restaurant District.

Attractive Intersection – Overhead wires are replaced by mast-arms holding the traffic signals.

Crosswalk Enhancements – Another way to give the La Costa Drive intersection a “sense of place” will be to add simple enhancements like colored or stamped concrete crosswalks, special signs and/or banners.

Street furniture puts the finishing touch on the public environment.

Please note that City resources are currently unavailable to fund the improvements shown in this vision.
Restaurant District – Rear Access Street

Here is what the Restaurant District’s rear access street looks like today. There is no directional sign at the entrance to this street, and no directional signs to the individual restaurants. The street is poorly maintained and uninviting.

However, this rear access street has great potential to serve the needs of the Restaurant District. Proposals for the improvement of this rear access street include:

• Add directional signage, both at the entrance to the street and at the driveway entrances to each restaurant
• Require that the access street be extended north to Costa Del Sol Street as a condition of any future redevelopment of the former Sonny’s Restaurant property.
• Each of the restaurants having frontage on the access street should become responsible for its own proportionate share of maintenance cost (currently all these costs are born by a single restaurant owner).
East Side Utility Corridor: What is it? Where is it?

The East Side Utility Corridor is a 100 foot wide open space corridor located east of and parallel to Semoran Boulevard. It extends from La Costa Urban Wetlands Park northward to the northwest corner of the Villas of Costa Del Sol neighborhood. From there, a narrower corridor runs eastward to join Stonewall Jackson Road just west of the Stonewall Jackson Middle School.
East Side Utility Corridor: Existing Conditions

These photos show the utility corridor looking north from La Costa Drive. La Costa Villas condominiums are at left, and the Villas of Costa Del Sol is at right.

Originally, this utility corridor contained a very large drainage canal that had become unsightly and poorly maintained. In the early 2000’s the City enclosed the drainage canal in an under-ground pipe, and directed this storm water to La Costa Urban Wetlands for storage and treatment. Today, the corridor is an under-utilized green corridor.

East Side Utility Corridor: With pedestrian & bicycle improvements

The existing utility corridor could become a community amenity connecting residential neighborhoods to an improved and active La Costa Urban Wetlands Park.

(Please note: City resources are currently unavailable to fund the improvements shown in this vision.)
Part of a larger Engelwood pedestrian & bike path system?

This map shows how the East Side Utility Corridor could become part of a pedestrian and bicycle path system linking together all of the major parks and open spaces in the Engelwood area.

Orlando’s adopted bike path plan proposes a bike path just east of the Engelwood neighborhood (shown in orange), running north-south and connecting to a regional pedestrian and bike path system.

An Engelwood bike path could split from the regional bike path at the intersection of Oxalis Drive and Lake Underhill Road, then run south through Engelwood Park to Stonewall Jackson Middle School, then west along Stonewall Jackson Road to the East Side Utility Corridor and south to La Costa Urban Wetlands Park.

From La Costa Urban Wetlands, a similar 100-foot wide utility corridor runs east to Leroy Hoequist Park. Just east of that is Chickasaw Elementary School, where the Engelwood bike path could rejoin the regional pathway system.
The State Road 408 Bridge is one of the most important landmarks on Semoran Boulevard, and the reconstruction project completed in 2009 has made it a much more attractive landmark indeed. The SR 408 interchange is also a major entrance for customers arriving in the Semoran Boulevard Business District.

The area around the SR 408 Bridge includes the widest variety of businesses and institutions to be found anywhere on Semoran Boulevard – goods and services, restaurants, shopping centers, Keiser University, Orlando Baptist Church, and even residential apartment buildings.

This concentration makes it a good place to demonstrate the design principles that can apply to commercial districts anywhere on Semoran Boulevard.
Semoran Bridge District – Design Issues

SR 408 Interchange Business District Entries – The interchange reconstruction project completed in 2009 offers a great new opportunity to make the Business District entries at Lake Underhill Road and Yew Drive even more welcoming and attractive to potential customers. See Chapter 3, “Entries & Gateways” on pages 16-18.

Public Areas: Sidewalks and Streets – These are the areas that customers see first as they pass through the restaurant district. And as they say, you don’t get a second chance to make a first impression.

Public Areas: Landscaping, Screening and Fencing – These design elements can make outdoor areas more attractive without blocking the customer’s view of businesses.
Semoran Bridge District – The View From the Street

What Is Wrong With These Pictures?

It should be noted that this series of photos is not intended to be critical of any individual business or property owner.

Instead, it is intended to show how, even when a business or owner “follows all the rules” to the letter, the results can still be unattractive because the rules now established in the City’s zoning ordinance do not take into account the specific needs of the Semoran Boulevard Business district.

In October 2009 (top photo), the businesses are well-maintained and freshly painted, and the landscaping is trimmed and conforms to City codes, but it still appears disorganized and blocks the customer’s view of the businesses.

In January 2010 (middle photos), the property owners removed the palm cluster blocking the view of the shopping center. They also severely topped off and trimmed back the trees in front of the shopping center, temporarily improving the visibility of businesses and signs at the shopping center. The trees could not be removed because they are currently required by the landscaping regulations in the City’s zoning ordinance.

As shown in the bottom photo, by June 2010 the trees have grown back and become very shaggy, rendering the trimming largely ineffective.
Now Transfer The Design Concepts Previously Presented For The Restaurant District To The Semoran Bridge District

It should be noted that these photos are not intended to be critical of any individual business or property owner.

Instead, you should apply the same concepts about improvements to the public environment from the previous images to the Semoran Bridge District and see how the view from the street can be improved.

- Widen the sidewalk with “hardscape” and knee wall.
- Landscaping should beautify without blocking the view of businesses.
- Create inviting outdoor areas.
- Add banners and street furniture to make the public area more attractive.
- Add street trees to give all of Semoran Boulevard a pleasing uniform appearance.
4. Semoran Boulevard’s Retail Areas:  
(C) Redevelopment of Aging Shopping Centers

Sun Center and Popeye’s – Existing Condition

This photo shows the Sun Shopping Center (left) and Popeye’s Restaurant (right foreground) at the intersection of Semoran Blvd. and Lake Underhill Road.

These properties occupy a very visible location near one of the principal entries to the business district, at the recently reconstructed SR 408 Bridge.

Even with these advantages, the aging Sun Shopping Center presents a drab appearance. The stores are difficult to see from the street, and the center has struggled with vacancies.
Sun Center and Popeye’s – Vision

This photo envisions how the Sun Shopping Center and Popeye’s Restaurant could undergo Main Street style redevelopment, increasing the visibility of these sites and drawing new customers.

The elements of this Main Street style redevelopment vision are those presented in other chapters of this Vision Plan:

- Widen the sidewalk with “hardscape”.
- Landscaping should beautify without blocking the view of businesses.
- Create inviting outdoor areas.
- Take advantage of SR 408 bridge features such as directional signs and textured crosswalks.
- Add street trees to give the entire business district a pleasing uniform appearance.
K-Mart Plaza – Existing Condition and Vision

The preferred location for parking lots should be behind the businesses instead of in front. There should be enough parking to serve customers but not more than is needed. Outdoor areas should be attractive and inviting to customers arriving by car, by public transit or by foot.

Chapter ___ of this Vision Plan sets proposed site design standards for new development, redevelopment and building renovations that will encourage better parking design.
K-Mart Plaza

Now
K-Mart Plaza

Main Street style redevelopment
K-Mart Plaza

Main Street style redevelopment
What lessons can we learn from the recent redevelopment and remodeling project at Danube Plaza?

The recent redevelopment and remodeling project at Danube Plaza is the result of an agreement between the property owner and the City to settle a series of code enforcement actions at this property.

As part of this agreement, the property owner agreed to remodel the façade of the main shopping center building (at far right in this photo), and to construct a new 7000 sq. ft. building along the north property line (center background of this photo).

This photo shows how Danube Plaza looked before the project started.

September 2007
**Improvements:**

- The new façade gives an updated appearance with improved architecture.
- Plaza space on the street side of the new building provides an outdoor seating opportunity.

**Challenges:**

- Enclosed archways & recesses in the new façade have created places for people to hide and pose potential crime issues.

This photo shows how Danube Plaza looks as of June 2010.

- The north-facing rear face of the new building presents an unattractive blank wall to customers (see photo above).
- Landscaping has been replaced but not enhanced.
- No changes have been made to the main parking lot or to the large sign (below – right of center).
What lessons can we learn from the recent redevelopment and remodeling project at Danube Plaza?

The Danube Plaza redevelopment and remodeling project offered an opportunity to make significant improvements to the Danube Plaza bus stop.

This photo shows how the bus stop looked before the project started. An old wood & concrete bench was at least located in a shady spot, but did not provide enough seating for this busy bus stop. Additional seating was often provided by overturned shopping carts.
What lessons can we learn from the recent redevelopment and remodeling project at Danube Plaza?

This photo shows how the same area looks as of June 2010. At present, there is no bus stop in this location because it has been “temporarily moved” during the construction project.

However, when the stop is moved back to its original location it will be at the spot marked in this photo. Furthermore, the City has obtained an agreement to provide the easement necessary for a new bus shelter to be placed here, at the edge of the new “plaza” at Danube Plaza.
Danube Plaza and the West Side Fence

Existing Conditions - Here is a view of Semoran Boulevard looking south from the Danube Plaza bus stop. Many who travel through this area frequently have become so used to it that we don’t see just how unattractive this area looks. But this is what potential customers do see as they are deciding whether to stop here to shop or eat.

The most obvious unattractive feature is the old poorly-maintained fence on the west side of Semoran Boulevard. But on the east (left) side of the road, the narrow sidewalk at Danube Plaza gives the area a cramped, uncomfortable feeling. The hurricane-damaged tree and other poorly-maintained landscaping also gives this area a run-down appearance. The Danube Plaza redevelopment project so far has not changed this.
Danube Plaza and the West Side Fence

**Proposed Improvements** – On the west side, construction of a uniform masonry wall to replace the old fence will greatly enhance the appearance of the business district. For the residents of Solandra Drive, the wall will reduce the traffic noise and provide better security.

On the east side, a wider sidewalk and improved low-maintenance landscaping gives the commercial district a cleaner, more comfortable feeling – not just for pedestrians, but for the many drivers who are also potential new customers.

The City has obtained an agreement to provide the easement necessary for the construction of this wider sidewalk, but currently lacks the enforcement authority to require the property owner to make the improvement.
4. Semoran Boulevard’s Retail Areas:
(D) Park-front Redevelopment at La Costa Urban Wetlands

What Semoran Boulevard properties will benefit from park-front redevelopment at La Costa Urban Wetlands Park?

The area of potential park-front redevelopment extends from La Costa Drive to Curry Ford Road on the east side of Semoran Boulevard. Most of the business properties here are owned by corporations – McDonald’s, AT&T, Baldwin-Fairchild Funeral Home, Blue Water Express, Jiffy-lube, Walgreens and AMF Bowling.

To the east, behind these properties, is the 21-acre La Costa Urban Wetlands, a City park.
Proposal for Park-front Redevelopment at La Costa Urban Wetlands Park

This aerial photo shows that the rear halves of most of the Semoran Boulevard properties consist of under-used land, with the businesses themselves being located toward the front of the properties along the highway.

La Costa Urban Wetlands Park is one of the area’s hidden jewels. Most people do not know about this park because it is not visible from any of the major streets around it.

La Costa Urban Wetlands Park has the potential to become a great attraction for visitors and residents alike – a place for events and family activities. This can happen if the park becomes a more visible and active space.
Proposal for Park-front Redevelopment at La Costa Urban Wetlands Park

This photo shows how the rear halves of the Semoran Boulevard properties could be redeveloped with buildings facing La Costa Wetlands Park. This vision includes a new north-south road extending from La Costa Drive to Curry Vista Plaza, along the western boundary of the park.

This proposal will give the property owners more usable land, and also make La Costa Wetlands Park a more visible and active people-place.

Please note that City resources are currently unavailable to fund the improvements shown in this vision.
Here is another option for park-front redevelopment.

One thing that is very important to understand about the park-front redevelopment proposal is that it will occur completely at the option of the property owners themselves. Some owners may decide to redevelop only a portion of their property – or none at all.

Others may decide to redevelop their entire property. This image includes redevelopment of Curry Vista Plaza shopping center and a possible extension of the north-south road to Curry Ford Road.

Also, the vision for park-front redevelopment is very flexible as to the type of uses that might be included – including residential, office, research, education, retail or a mixture of all these uses.
Issue #1 – Where will the storm water go?

Whenever construction occurs, the developer must include storm water retention ponds to prevent flooding and to clean the storm water runoff from the site. If park-front redevelopment takes place, an off-site location will have to be found for this storm water.

In this photo, the original 1992 site plan for the La Costa Urban Wetlands is added at the bottom of the slide. This original plan included three wetlands. However, only two of the wetlands were actually built.

As part of the redevelopment, private developers could pay for the construction of Wetland #3. This could provide part of the storm water retention needed for the project.
Issue #1 – Where will the storm water go?

In addition to the capacity available at La Costa Urban Wetlands, the City of Orlando owns drainage easements on about 4.5 acres just south of the park. Because the City can only exercise its easement rights for a public purpose, this area can not be used for storm water retention for the private property owners.

However, the construction of a new public street from La Costa Drive to Curry Ford Road will be a public purpose, and storm water retention ponds will also be required for the runoff from this road. The City’s drainage easements can be used for this purpose.
Issue #1 – Where will the storm water go?

It is also important to note that there are new emerging green technologies that can supplement the off-site storm water capacity that may be available for either private or public development.

The State of Florida is currently making revisions to its storm water regulations that will allow some of these emerging green technologies, including (clockwise from lower left): porous pavement, “green roofs” (example shown is Orlando Fire Station #1), and porous grass pavers for parking lots.
Issue #2 – What Parts of the Semoran Boulevard properties are suitable for development?

The map at right shows the 100-year flood plain as estimated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

One thing that stands out in this map is that the western boundary of the flood plain follows a nearly straight line along the La Costa Wetlands Park property boundary. Since this is not something one would expect to see in nature, it is reasonable to assume that the rear portions of some of the Semoran Boulevard properties have been filled.

In addition, a narrow corridor along the northwest park boundary was filled in the 1990’s as part of the Urban Wetlands project. Since this fill project was well-documented and controlled, it is reasonable to assume that the land in this corridor is at least suitable for road construction.
Issue #2 – What Parts of the Semoran Boulevard properties are suitable for development?

This is a 1954 aerial photo is overlaid with more recent property lines and street rights-of-way. It is easy to see that today’s La Costa Wetlands are the remains of an ancient sink hole that was nearly circular.

However, a closer look at this photo shows that the western edge of the sink hole is a little more uneven than the rest. Perhaps this sink hole did not collapse as completely on the west side – only further engineering tests can confirm or refute this assumption.

It seems clear from this photo that on at least two of the Semoran Boulevard properties (McDonalds & AT&T) the original sink hole extended well over 100 feet onto the rear portions of the property. Further tests will be needed to determine the extent and quality of the fill material in this area. One hopeful sign is that the AT&T parking lot has existed here for over 30 years and appears to be stable.
Issue #2 – What Parts of the Semoran Boulevard properties are suitable for development?

From looking at the 1954 aerial photo, it is reasonable to assume that portions of some of the Semoran Boulevard properties were filled as part of older development and are probably not suitable for buildings. However, other properties may have different soil conditions – only further engineering tests will confirm what those conditions are.

For example, the photo shows that areas north and south of the McDonalds and AT&T properties do not seem to have wetland vegetation. Does this mean that these areas were not part of the sink hole, or that the vegetation was cleared even before 1954? Further engineering tests will be needed.
Issue #3 – Where can the street be built?

Using the information shown in the 1954 aerial photo, it is possible to make an initial estimate of the best location for the proposed new north-south street.

Starting from La Costa Drive, the street can be located on the western edge of the City’s property until it reaches the end of the corridor that was filled in the 1990’s as part of the Urban Wetlands Project.

South of that point, the City’s land is unsuitable for street construction, so the street will shift west to be located on the previously-filled portions of the Semoran Boulevard properties.
Issue #3 – Where can the street be built?

The proposed street can be built in two phases.

Phase 1 extends from La Costa Drive southward to the southwest corner of La Costa Wetlands Park. At that point the street will tie in to the northern entrance to the Curry Vista shopping center.

Phase 2 continues to the southeast, passing east of the shopping center, along the edge of the City-owned drainage easement to intersect with Curry Ford Road just west of the Circle K store.

Construction of Phase 2 can wait until affected property owners in this area are ready to undertake their own development or expansion.

Please note that City resources are currently unavailable to fund the improvements shown in this vision.
Park-front Redevelopment at La Costa Urban Wetlands
La Costa Urban Wetlands

Now

Park-front redevelopment
5. Semoran Boulevard’s Office Districts:

(A) Office District – South

Semoran Boulevard’s Office District - South

Semoran Boulevard has two Office Districts. The southern Office District is located on the west side, between La Costa Drive and Curry Ford Road. This office district consists of 15 former homes that have been converted to office use.

Issues for the Office District – South

- Signs
- Fences and screening
- Driveways and cross-access easements
- Parking – high parking ratio uses
- Landscaping and hedges
What do your potential customers – or potential tenants – see as they drive by?

**Disorganized signs** – Every sign is a different size, style and location on the lot. Many are of poor quality, and some are falling down.

**Fences** – Many of the fences still remain from the time when these buildings were residential homes, and some are bent or falling down.

**Landscaping** – Much of the landscaping is disorganized, poorly maintained and blocks the customers’ view of your business (or your neighbor’s business).

**Driveways** – are difficult to find and use.
Offices have different landscaping needs than houses!

Many of the fences, trees and hedges in the Office District still remain from the time when these buildings were residential homes.

Landscaping for homes is intended for the benefit of the home owner, and to enhance the residents’ desire for privacy.

This same landscaping, when placed in an office district, makes businesses difficult to identify and blocks your potential customers’ view.

The City’s current landscaping regulations do not distinguish between the very different needs of offices versus the needs of houses.
Your Neighbors – The Office Complex Next Door

What do their potential customers – or potential tenants – see as they drive by?

Unified sign package – Every business has identifying signs that are easily seen, but are all of a similar design (actually, this sign package would be too restrictive for the Semoran Office District).

Landscaping – This office complex is in fact very well landscaped, but nothing blocks the customer’s view of the businesses. The tree is trimmed up so that the business signs can be seen.

Driveway - Easy to see and navigate.

Their parking lots are filled with customers and employees every weekday.
What can be done to improve the Semoran Office District – South?

Unified Sign Package – Each property is clearly identified by a monument sign and a building-mounted sign. Banners mounted on the street light poles can also include identification signs for the adjacent business. All signs within the Office District should be of uniform design.

Landscaping – The Office District should be well landscaped, in a way that does not block the customer’s view of the businesses. Unsightly fences should be removed.

Driveways - Easier to see and navigate.
What can be done to improve the Semoran Office District – South?

Joint Driveways and Cross-Access Easements – Over the years, the City of Orlando has used its permitting authority to encourage adjacent property owners to establish joint driveways with cross-access.

The current approach has had only limited success – if your customer becomes confused and misses your driveway, he or she must drive around the block and try again (and how many know how to do this?).

A far better approach would be to have cross-access among all properties in the office district, allowing customers to enter any driveway and still be able to easily find your business.

**Top:**
Now – Only partial cross-access and a few joint driveways

**Bottom:**
Vision – Complete cross-access
La Costa Dr. to Sanibel St.
Semoran Boulevard has two Office Districts. The northern Office District is located on the west side, between Brosche Road and Kalmia Drive. This office district consists of 16 former homes, most of which have been converted to office use.

Issues for the Office District – North

- Signs
- Fences and screening
- Driveways and cross-access easements
- Semoran Blvd. frontage road
- Landscaping and hedges
What do your potential customers – or potential tenants – see as they drive by?

**Disorganized signs** – Every sign is a different size, style and location on the lot. Many are of poor quality, and some are falling down.

**Fences** – Many of the fences still remain from the time when these buildings were residential homes, and some are bent or falling down.

**Landscaping** – Much of the landscaping is disorganized, poorly maintained and blocks the customers’ view of your business (or your neighbor’s business).

**Driveways** - are difficult to find and use. The frontage road is narrow, difficult to use and poorly maintained.
The Northern Office District faces especially difficult challenges:

- **The office properties** face all of the issues described in the previous slides.
- **The public right-of-way** is not designed to support office use. The frontage road and sidewalk are both narrow, difficult to use and poorly maintained. Furthermore, there is no city or state funding available to address these problems in any significant way.

The Northern Office District can only thrive when both sets of issues are fully addressed.
In this image, the private property issues are addressed but the right-of-way and frontage road are unchanged.

Positive results:

• **Unified Sign Package** – Each property is clearly identified by a monument sign and a building-mounted sign. Banners are also mounted on the street light poles. All signs within the Office District should be of uniform design.

• **Landscaping** – The Office District is well landscaped, in a way that does not block the customer’s view of the businesses. Unsightly fences are removed.

However, these improvements are visually overpowered by the unsafe, unattractive frontage road & sidewalk. Access is still awkward for customers.
In this image, the right-of-way and frontage road issues are addressed but the private properties are unchanged.

Positive results:
A safer & more attractive right-of-way
- Each office property has direct access to Semoran Boulevard.
- Customers have easier access to businesses.
- The sidewalk and bus stop are safer.

However, despite the improvements shown in this image, all of the private property issues remain. The right-of-way improvements fail to achieve the previously-described objectives for the office district. Also, there is no funding available to address these right-of-way issues.
In this image, the right-of-way, frontage road and private property issues are all addressed. Is there any way to reach this vision?

Two significant obstacles stand in the way of this vision:

- The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), which controls driveway access to Semoran Blvd., requires a minimum of 150 ft. spacing between each driveway. Until the private property owners work together to consolidate driveways through joint access and circulation, FDOT will not allow any changes to the frontage road.

- No funding is available to address the right-of-way and frontage road issues in any significant way. And the right-of-way vision shown in this image would likely be very costly.
What is “joint access and circulation”? What would be the minimum FDOT requirement to allow changes to the frontage road?

“Joint Access” means that two or three adjacent office properties agree to share one common driveway. “Joint Access & Circulation” means that the parking lots of all of the properties in the Office District are linked together and agree to share a small number of driveways, spaced to meet the minimum 150 ft. FDOT requirement.

Over the years, the City of Orlando has used its permitting authority to encourage adjacent property owners to establish joint driveways with cross-access. The current approach has had only limited success.

Now:
Only partial cross-access and a few joint driveways
What is “joint access and circulation”? What would be the minimum FDOT requirement to allow changes to the frontage road?

This image shows a concept plan to create joint access and circulation among 13 of the 15 properties between Kalmia Drive and Brosche Road. In this concept, the 13 office properties would share five common driveways that meet the 150 ft. FDOT minimum spacing requirement. Once implemented, FDOT could approve removal of the frontage road, giving all five of the shared common driveways in the Office District direct access to Semoran Boulevard.

The two corner properties (at Kalmia Dr. & Brosche Rd.) would not need to be included because those properties already take their driveway access from the side streets.

Vision:
Complete cross-access Kalmia Dr. to Brosche Rd.
This image shows a potential interim vision:

• The private property issues are addressed
• The right-of-way and frontage road remain in place, but with low-cost interim improvements.

Positive results:

Private property issues such as signage, fencing and landscaping are addressed as described in previous images.

Frontage road & sidewalk areas are shown with low-cost interim improvements that include:

• street resurfacing using colored asphalt to give the area a unique new look.
• use part of the frontage road as a pedestrian zone that could also be used for business identification.
• convert the frontage road to one-way traffic (to make room for the other improvements).
Another version of the same interim vision:

- The private property issues are addressed
- The right-of-way and frontage road remain in place, but with low-cost interim improvements.

Please note that City resources are currently unavailable to fund the improvements shown in this vision.
5. Semoran Boulevard’s Office Districts:
(C) Proposed New Office Districts

Proposed New Office Districts

* West side of Semoran Blvd., north and south of Lido St. and Pecos St.
* North side of Curry Ford Road, from west of Bahia Ave. to east of Terre Cia Ave.

Issues for Proposed New Office Districts

- Signs
- Fences and screening
- Driveways and cross-access easements
- Parking – high parking ratio uses
- Landscaping and hedges
**Location 1**
West side of Semoran Blvd., north and south of Lido St. & Pecos St.

The subject properties are currently developed and used as single family homes.

On the east side of Semoran Boulevard across from these homes, the existing uses are commercial, including restaurants and personal storage facilities. North and south on the west side of Semoran Boulevard, the existing uses are low intensity offices. To the west on Lido Street and Pecos Street is an established neighborhood of single family homes.
Location 2
North side of Curry Ford Rd., from west of Bahia Ave. to east of Terre Cia Ave.

The subject properties are currently developed and used as single family homes.

On the south side of Curry Ford Rd. across from these homes, the existing uses are apartments and offices. East of the subject properties on both sides of Curry Ford Rd. are retail commercial uses, including a Discount Auto Parts store and a shopping center anchored by a Sedona’s supermarket.

North of the subject properties on Sanibel Street the Future Land Use designation is Residential—Low Intensity and the existing land use is an established neighborhood of single family homes.
Land Use Compatibility: Issues Related to Homes Abutting Major Highways

Because of the proximity to commercial uses directly across a heavy-traveled four lane state highway, it has been difficult for the owners of these homes to shield them from the impacts of traffic, noise, and the glare of commercial lighting. Each property owner has attempted to address these impacts in a different way, with varying degrees of success.

The results of these efforts range from overgrown landscaping to different kinds and qualities of fencing. Some of the homes are themselves poorly maintained, and as a result they create a poor transition between the commercial business district along Curry Ford Road and the residential neighborhood to the north.
Proposed Office Districts: Design Guidelines

The proposed Future Land Use Designation for the properties is Office—Low Intensity. This land use will be more compatible with the surrounding impacts of traffic, noise, and the glare of commercial lighting.

However, the proposed Zoning will be O-1/SP (Special Plan Overlay). The proposed Special Plan Overlay for this and other office districts on Semoran Boulevard will include unified site design, landscaping design and signage to achieve the appearance of an “office park” rather than a disorganized row of house-conversions.

These proposed design guidelines are the same as those proposed for the existing Office Districts – North & South. The guidelines are described in more detail in Chapter _____ of this Vision Plan.
Examples of proposed joint access & circulation

The SP Overlay will include requirements for cross-access among all properties in the office district, allowing customers to enter any driveway and still be able to easily find the business.
The Lynx Transit Development Plan

The following five pages are taken from Chapter 4 of the Lynx Transit Development Plan (TPD), adopted by the Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority in 2008. These pages focus on specific proposals in the TPD that affect Semoran Boulevard.

Proposals made in this Semoran Boulevard Vision Plan need to coordinate closely with the Lynx TPD.
Chapter 4 – Future System

This chapter summarizes the LYNX system structure and service plan for the tri-county region for FY 2010 through 2019 along with a long-range (10 – 15 years) vision. It provides an overview of the transit network envisioned for the LYNX system along with a needs-based service plan and describes the concepts, criteria, and issues considered in the development of a well organized and efficient transit system as well as the service monitoring, evaluation and review, and implementation techniques used by the LYNX Planning Department. The future transit system described includes fixed route bus, flex routes, ridesharing programs, (Commuter Services), ADA paratransit (ACCESS LYNX), and commuter rail transit (CRT).
Transit Facilities

Implementation of the new LYNX transit system requires an extensive network of transit centers and park and ride lots to support the proposed transit network. Transit Centers are location in which transit links converge for the following purposes:

- To facilitate safe passenger transfers between connecting Links
- To accommodate transit coach layover/dwell times
- Ensure a high level of on-time performance

Primary Transit Centers:

- LYNX Central Station – LCS (existing downtown transit center facility)
- Fern Park (to be located near the existing transfer facility)
- West Oaks Mall (to be located near the existing ring road location)
- Seminole Towne Center (proposed new facility near the mall)
- University of Central Florida (existing off street facility)
- Waterford Lakes (proposed new facility near the Shopping Center)
- Rosemont (new facility near existing facility on Rosewood Way)
- Washington Shores (existing off street facility)
- Universal Studios Parking Garage (existing facility with expanded capacity)
- Florida Mall (proposed new facility near the mall)
- Canadian Court (proposed new regional intermodal facility)
- Disney (site to be determined in conjunction with Disney)
- Kissimmee Railroad Depot (proposed new regional intermodal facility)
- State Rd. 436/Hoffner Ave. (proposed off street facility near intersection)
- State Rd. 436/State Rd. 50 (proposed off street facility near intersection)
- Orlando International Airport (existing location)*
High Capacity Transit – Transit Emphasis Corridor Links

As previously noted, the Transit Emphasis Corridor links are the backbone of the proposed Long Range Vision Transit Network. These links have been defined on major arterial roadways that have proven to be effective transit markets. The defined links have minimal deviations from the major arterials to ensure quick transit travel times. These links serve many of the transit centers identified above, providing transfer connections to the Long Range Vision’s regional and local routes. Frequent service levels are proposed on the Transit Emphasis Corridor links to ensure minimum passenger wait times at transit stops. The maximum proposed peak or midday period service frequency proposed for a Transit Emphasis Corridor route is 15 minutes. Passenger amenity improvements are also envisioned as a critical element for the Transit Emphasis Corridor links, with features such as:

- Sidewalks leading to/from bus stops
- Lighted passenger shelters at high volume stop locations
- Pull out lanes at select stops
- Real time passenger information at select stops and at transit centers (e.g. “next bus arrives in XX minutes).

Highway improvement measures are also proposed along these links as a means to improve bus travel times and on time performance. Such measures could include signal prioritization and bus queue bypass lanes at select intersections. Ridership is anticipated to build along these Transit Emphasis Corridors as service frequencies are improved, passenger amenities are added and travel time improvement measures are implemented. It is envisioned that service on some of these corridors could evolve into higher capacity transit modes, such as bus rapid transit or streetcar. Transit Emphasis Corridor routes have been numbered beginning with Link #100 and detailed descriptions of each of the proposed services follow Figure 4-3.
Figure 4-3
Long-Range Vision Transit Emphasis Corridor Routes

- T = Transit Transfer Center
- P = Park & Ride Lot
- 39 = Transit Route
- CR = Commuter Rail Station
- = Commuter Rail
Link 100 – South State Rd. 436
This link would operate from the Orlando International Airport (OIA) to the Fern Park transit center at State Road 436 and U.S. Highway 17-92. In addition to serving the Fern Park and OIA transit centers, this route would stop at proposed transit centers at Hoffner Road and at Colonial Drive. This Transit Emphasis Corridor route mimics a portion of the existing Link 41. This route is one of LYNX’ stronger performing links. About 2/3 of the existing Link 41 ridership occurs between OIA and the Fern Park transit center. Proposed service frequencies are as follows:

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<th>Saturday</th>
<th>Sunday</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Late Evening</td>
<td>30-minutes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Proposed locations for bus shelters –
Semoran Boulevard Business District

NORTHBOUND
1501 S. Semoran - first stop north of Curry Ford Rd., important transfer point.
1111 S. Semoran - corner of Costa Del Sol St. (former Sonny's restaurant).
675 S. Semoran - Danube Plaza – The City has an easement for this location.
401 S. Semoran - aka 5700 Lk. Underhill - corner of Lake Underhill Rd. - Popeye's restaurant

SOUTHBOUND
106 S. Semoran - Royal Oak Plaza - Although it doesn't look like it, the public right-of-way extends 20 feet behind the sidewalk, so there is sufficient room for a bus shelter.
400 S. Semoran - corner of Lake Underhill Rd.
803 S. Solandra Dr. - This residential property backs up to Semoran Boulevard. The City has an easement for this location.
5675 La Costa Dr. (corner of Semoran Blvd.) - The bus stop is at the back corner of this property on Semoran Boulevard.

CURRY FORD RD. WESTBOUND
5657 Curry Ford - This is the first bus stop west of Semoran Blvd., it is an important transfer point.
7. Semoran Boulevard – Recommendations:
(A) Objectives

Objectives For Semoran Boulevard’s Commercial Districts
• Create a welcoming and attractive public environment for your customers
• Make your landscaping and outdoor areas work for you - not against you
• Make your businesses more visible and accessible to your customers
• Let you be more competitive

Objectives For Semoran Boulevard’s Office Districts
• Make each row of small office buildings look more like a unified office district
• Make your businesses more visible and accessible to your customers
• Maximize the potential use of each office district
• Let you be more competitive
How can Orlando’s Zoning Ordinance help implement the Vision Plan for Semoran Boulevard?

The City’s Zoning Ordinance (also called the Land Development Code or LDC) will be one of the main tools used to implement the Vision Plan. The LDC includes standards for design features such as:

- **Signs** – Size & types of signs, number of signs allowed, location on the property
- **Landscaping** – Types of plants and trees, location on the property
- **Parking Lot Landscaping** – One way to create wider sidewalks will be to change the LDC to require “hardscape” and knee walls in place of parking lot landscaping.
- **Building Location** – Place buildings closer to the street, with parking at the side or rear.
- **Permitted Uses** – Encouraging mixed use redevelopment, changing the type of uses that are allowed in certain districts.
Is it time to reconsider landscaping & site design requirements for Semoran Blvd.?

- Landscaping and site design requirements are part of the City’s Zoning Ordinance
- Current landscaping & design requirements are general - don’t consider the specific needs of Semoran Boulevard.
- Some requirements need to be tighter, but other requirements could be more flexible

Is it time to reconsider zoning regulations for Semoran Boulevard’s office districts?

- The current O-1 regulations work better on a city street – not so well on a busy highway
- Some requirements should be tighter – to make each row of small office buildings look more like a unified office district
- Other requirements could be more flexible – to maximize the potential use of each office district
Recommended changes to landscaping & design regulations:

- Parking lot landscaping requirements at street-front – Replace current requirements with new requirements for hardscape, knee walls, street furniture.
  ➢ Illustrated on Pages 18 & 32. Diagram on Page 104.

- Other Landscaping – Hedges and shrubs should be located closer to buildings, not along the public sidewalk, and should not block the customer’s view. Types of plants and trees used should be similar for all properties in the business district, using the trees, plants, and groundcovers described in this Vision Plan.

- Street Trees – Replace some current landscaping requirements with new requirement for street trees described in this Vision Plan – fewer, but larger trees, uniformly placed throughout the business district, to make a unified and great “first impression.”

- Fencing and screening – Screening from adjacent residential properties (to the rear) should be strong, but fencing and hedges along side property lines (between business properties) or along front property lines should be eliminated.
Other recommended changes to commercial district regulations:

- Establish a “build-to line” for new development and redevelopment within Semoran Boulevard commercial districts, in order to encourage Main Street-style redevelopment. The recommended “build-to line” is a 15-foot setback from the street right-of-way line.

- Amend City Code to allow banners on street light poles.
  - Illustrated on Pages 24, 26.

- In the Restaurant District, require that the rear access street be extended north to Costa Del Sol Street as a condition of any future redevelopment of the former Sonny’s Restaurant property.
Recommended changes intended to turn each row of small office buildings into a unified office district:

- Signs – Some parts of the sign regulations should be tighter – e.g. location & design. Each office district should specify a single design for monument signs to be applied to all properties within the district (see Section 6.D of this Vision Plan). The monument signs should, to the extent possible, be in the same setback location on each office property.
  - Illustrated on Pages 63, 68, 70,73-74. Example monument signs shown on Page 95.
  - Other parts of the sign regulations could be more flexible (see next page).

- Fencing and screening – Screening from adjacent residential properties (to the rear) should be strong, but fencing and hedges along side property lines (between office properties) or front property lines should be eliminated.
  - Illustrated on Pages 63, 68, 70, 73-74.

- Landscaping – Hedges and shrubs should be located closer to buildings, not along the public sidewalk, and should not block the customer’s view. Types of plants and trees used should be similar for all properties in the office district, using the trees, plants, and groundcovers described in Section 6.E of this Vision Plan.

- Joint driveways and cross-access easements should be required for all properties in each office district, using the concept plans described in Chapter 4 of this Vision Plan as guides.
  - Illustrated on Pages 64, 71-72.
Recommended changes to allow more flexibility – to maximize the potential use of each office district:

• Signs – Some parts of the sign regulations should be more flexible (e.g. allowing somewhat larger monument signs, allowing both monument signs and building signs). Amend City Code to allow banners on street light poles.
  ➢ Illustrated on Pages 63, 68, 70, 73-74. Example monument signs shown on Page 95.

• Allowable Uses – Re-examine the uses allowed in the this office district, adding new uses, but taking into account the limited available parking.

• Allowable Uses – Allow more uses for properties that implement joint driveways and cross-access easements. Allow one parking space in front yard.

• Building Setbacks – Reduce front and side building setbacks for properties that implement joint driveways and cross-access easements. This will allow larger buildings to be built on each site. Recommended setbacks are:
  ➢ Front & street-side yard – 17.5 feet
  ➢ Side yard – 5 feet (applies only to a side yard not subject to a joint driveway).

• Increase allowable Impervious Surface Ratio (ISR) to allow properties to be more intensively developed.
Monument sign recommendations to create a unified office district:

- Each office district should specify a single design for monument signs to be applied to all properties within the district.
- The monument signs should be the same size and should to the extent possible be in the same location on each property within the district, to give the entire district a unified appearance.
7. Semoran Boulevard – Recommendations:  
(E) Landscaping

Landscaping guidelines to create a unified business district

The goal of these landscape guidelines is to give the Semoran Boulevard corridor a unified, consistent look so that it has the feel of a recognizable district, while improving visibility of businesses. For sites that are not being completely redeveloped, options are limited by planting space, parkway strips, and overhead electric lines.

• **Street Trees:** A limited palette of trees is recommended so that a unified look can be had while conforming to site limitations.
  ➢ The “Street Tree Line” will be 15’ from the right-of-way line and should be consistent and simple for the length of the corridor (see diagram on next page).
  ➢ The primary street tree should be canopy trees. Palms or understory trees should only be used when matching existing trees and when site-specific conditions preclude the use of canopy trees.
  ➢ Street trees should be straight-trunked and single-trunked (i.e., a single dominant trunk). All trees should have at least 6’ of clear trunk at time of installation. Clear trunks should be maintained at 8’ or higher.
  ➢ Street trees should be planted in lines or groups of not less than 3 of the same species (preferably 7 or more when planted in a line), irrespective of lot lines. Palms should be planted in odd-numbered groups.
  ➢ To the extent practical, trees should match size and species of those directly across the street.
Trees between the Street Tree Line and the 10' building front landscape zone shall conform to the 6' minimum clear-trunk requirement at installation and 8' clear-trunk maintenance height.

10' Landscape Zone along the building front. Within this zone, landscaping is unrestricted because it is unlikely to block motorists' views of neighboring businesses.
• The “Public Zone”: The “Public Zone” is the area between the public right-of-way and the principle building (see diagram on previous page).
  ➢ Other trees (aside from street trees) within the “Public Zone” should conform to the clear trunk installation and maintenance requirements for street trees, but do not need to conform to the species or grouping requirements.
  ➢ Other landscaping (shrubs and ground covers) within the “Public Zone” should be generally long masses of dwarf shrubs and groundcovers, continuing the grouping irrespective of lot lines and matching beds across the street to the extent practical.
  ➢ There should be a color sequence throughout the year.
  ➢ On redevelopment sites, overhead electric lines should be placed underground, where cost-feasible.

• The “Unrestricted Zone”: Within the 10’ “Unrestricted Zone” surrounding existing buildings (see diagram on previous page), the landscaping restrictions of the “Public Zone” and the “Street Tree Line” do not apply; however all other applicable requirements of the LDC do apply.
Street Trees:

Canopy Trees:

Shumard Oak (*Quercus shumardii*)

Size at planting: 14'-16' height, 4” caliper, 6’ clear-trunk height

Characteristics:

- Straight trunk, 60' – 80' ht., 40'–50' spread at maturity.
- Deciduous; red fall color.
- High Drought-tolerance.
- Moderate wind-resistance.
- Minimum planting area: 8’ in width if in parkway strip...10’ in width in parking lot islands. Roots not overly aggressive...good street tree.
- As trees mature, maintain clear trunk to 8’.
- Planting distance from overhead electric lines: 15’ min.

‘High-Rise’ Live Oak (*Quercus virginiana*)

Size at planting: 14'-16' height, 4” caliper, 6’ clear-trunk height.

Characteristics:

- New cultivar of traditional live oak developed for narrower canopy.
- High drought-tolerance.
- High wind-resistance.
- Semi-deciduous.
- Planting distance from overhead electric lines: 15’ min.
Canopy Trees (cont.)

Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*)

Size at planting: 14’-16’ height, 4” caliper, 6’ clear-trunk height.

Characteristics:

- 50’-80’ height.
- High drought-tolerance.
- Deciduous.
- Bright orange to red foliage in fall. Bright red seed pods in spring.
- Planting distance from overhead electric lines: 15’ min.
**Palms:**

**Cabbage Palm (Sabal palmetto)**

Size at planting: 16’ clear-trunk height min.

Characteristics:

- High drought-tolerance.
- High wind-resistance.
- Can be planted in constricted spaces with high rate of success. Minimum planting area = 4’ in width. Will not lift or buckle sidewalks, curbs, pavement, or utilities. Can be planted in large sizes inexpensively.
- Cannot be planted underneath overhead electric lines. Minimum planting distance from overhead electric lines: 8’.

**Ribbon Fan Palm (Livistona decipiens)**

Characteristics:

- Broader canopy, glossier leaves than cabbage palm.
- Not as readily available as cabbage palm.
- Slender, straight trunk.
- Cannot be planted underneath overhead electric lines. Minimum planting distance from overhead electric lines: 8’.
Palms (cont.)

Chinese Fan Palm (*Livistona chinensis*)

Characteristics:

- Smaller than cabbage palm.
- Glossier leaves than cabbage palm.
- Not readily available in larger sizes.
- Cannot be planted underneath overhead electric lines. Minimum planting distance from overhead electric lines: 8’.

Date Palms (*Phoenix sylvestris, Phoenix dactylifera, Phoenix canariensis*)

Characteristics:

- Broad canopy to 25’ spread.
- Straight trunks.
- Can be readily transplanted in large sizes.
- Cannot be planted underneath overhead electric lines. Minimum planting distance from overhead electric lines: 12’.
Landscaping for the “Public Zone”:

**Understory Trees:**

*Crepe myrtle (Lagerstroemia indica)*

Size at planting: 14’-16’ Standard (single-trunk); 6’-7’ clear-trunk height.

Characteristics:

- Deciduous.
- Summer color...showy flowers.
- High drought-tolerance.
- Will require annual pruning of trunk to maintain clear trunk.
- May be planted underneath overhead electric lines.
- Minimum planting area: 6’ width. Roots not overly aggressive.
**Shrubs, Groundcovers, and Vines:**

**African Iris** (*Morea iridoides*)
- Characteristics: 2’ ht.
- High drought-tolerance.
- Low-maintenance.
- Spring color...white flowers.

**Muhly Grass** (*Muhlenbergia capillarensis*)
Characteristics:
- 3’-4’ ht.
- High drought-tolerance.
- Late summer to mid-fall color...purplish / pink flowers.

**Flax Lily** (*Dianella spp.*)
Characteristics:
- 2 ft. ht.
- Drought-tolerant.
- Variegated leaves.
‘Gold Mound’ Lantana (*Lantana camara*)

**Characteristics:**

- 2’ ht., sprawling habit.
- High drought-tolerance.
- Year-round color...yellow flowers.

*Lavender Lantana* (*Lantana montevidensis*)

- Year-round color...lavender flowers.
- High drought-tolerance.
- 2’- 4’ ht.

**Creeping Fig** (*Ficus pumila*)

**Characteristics:**

- Evergreen climbing vine can be planted in minimal space along walls.
- Drought-tolerant.
### 7. Semoran Boulevard – Recommendations:
#### (E) Public Improvements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entries &amp; Gateways:</th>
<th>Page ref.</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• SR 408 Bridge – Flags, lighting, cross-walk enhancements, bridge span signs, trees, landscaping, directional signage</td>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>No funding identified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lake Underhill Road Entry – trees, directional signage</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>No funding identified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Curry Ford Road Gateway – Columns</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>No funding identified.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retail Areas:</th>
<th>Page ref.</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• La Costa Drive Intersection – Cross-walk enhancements, directional signage, traffic signal mast-arms</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>No funding identified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bus shelters</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>No funding identified. Lynx federal stimulus money (803 S. Solandra is part of Community Wall ).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• La Costa Wetlands park-front road – right-of-way acquisition, engineering &amp; design, City’s share of construction cost</td>
<td>57-58</td>
<td>No funding identified.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>East Side Utility Corridor</th>
<th>Page ref.</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Bicycle and pedestrian path</td>
<td>29-30</td>
<td>No funding identified.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Wall</th>
<th>Page ref.</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Concrete block wall from Andora St. to Casa Blanca Ln.</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>CDBG funding FY 2010.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office District – North:</th>
<th>Page ref.</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Interim improvements to frontage road – street resurfacing and repairs, low-cost streetscape</td>
<td>75-76</td>
<td>City street resurfacing &amp; repair budget FY 2010.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
City-initiated rezoning to incorporate proposed design guidelines through an SP Overlay District will not be presented to MPB until after all related recommendations of the Semoran Boulevard Vision Plan are considered and approved by MPB and City Council.