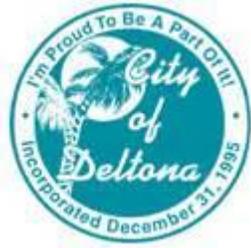


# CITY OF DELTONA

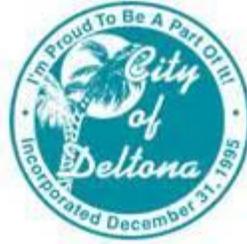


## Finding of Necessity

### Southwest Deltona RDA



# City of Deltona



## Finding of Necessity

## Southwest Deltona Redevelopment Area

July 20, 2015

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Deltona is trying to revitalize the City’s oldest commercial corridors: Deltona, Normandy and Saxon Boulevard. To assist in the redevelopment of the proposed Redevelopment Area (RDA), the City wishes to work with Volusia County to create a Southwest Deltona CRA, and Redevelopment Trust Fund.

Per Florida Statutes, Chapter 163, Part III, before the City can create a Community Redevelopment Area, Community Redevelopment Plan and Redevelopment Trust Fund; it must first determine that the proposed Redevelopment Area (RDA) shows evidence of slum or blight as defined by the Statute. The means of providing such evidence is Finding of Necessity (FoN) Report. The Finding of Necessity is the first of several steps that must be undertaken before the proposed RDA is approved as a Community Redevelopment Area. Per Florida Statutes, should the proposed RDA be approved by the City and the County, the City will work with Volusia County specific to its resolutions impacting CRAs.

Chapter 163, Part III lists a number of criteria that must be met in order for an area to be designated as “Slum or Blighted”. To be defined as “Slum” an area needs to meet one or more of the three definitions of Slum; or meet two or more of the fourteen (14) conditions of “Blight”. The Statute also states that in the case that all taxing districts that are subject to the Statute are in agreement that the area is blighted only one blight criteria needs to be met. This Finding of Necessity Report while not finding “Slum” conditions, has identified a minimum of six (6) of the 14 conditions necessary to define the proposed RDA as “Blighted”.

The six (6) conditions of blight are:

- 1) Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, bridges, or public transportation facilities. (Section 163.340 [8] a., F.S.)
- 2) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions. (Section 163.340 [8] d, F.S.)
- 3) Deterioration of site or other improvements. (Section 163.340 [8] e, F.S.)
- 4) Inadequate or outdated building patterns (Section 163.340 [8] f, F.S.)
- 5) Incidents of Crime. (Section 163.340 [8] j, F.S.)
- 6) Fire/EMS service calls (Section 163.340 [8] k, F.S.)

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## OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to document slum and blight conditions that exist within the proposed Redevelopment Area to comply with [Sections 163.335, 163.340, and 163.355, F.S.](#) The study focuses on existing conditions and regulatory constraints to development within the Redevelopment Area and its ability to eliminate or prevent the development or spread of blight within the City of Deltona; specifically the Saxon, Normandy and Deltona Blvd. commercial corridors.

## INTRODUCTION

This analysis focuses on the existing physical characteristics and support infrastructure of the Redevelopment Area and its ability to generate economic return and local tax revenues. As a general matter, areas that are in a state of physical decline, are underutilized, or are improperly deployed, limit the City's ability to remain competitive in a larger economic context, ultimately affecting its financial condition and its level of services.

Real property assets and the supportive infrastructure that are physically or functionally deteriorated or do not meet contemporary development standards are constrained in their ability to generate adequate tax revenues necessary to improve these conditions. As such, their physical character and utility are key factors in determining a community's economic health. The lack of real property value in these areas result in insufficient ad valorem revenue to improve these areas and necessary improvements are essentially subsidized by other areas of the City. This inequity and shift in the tax burden requires the City to consider additional tax revenues to improve these declining areas, with those revenues being generated in the area which requires improvement.

This analysis relies substantially on interpretations of government data, visual inspections of properties, and geographic information system data. While the County's tax roll data is assumed to be reliable, this analysis cannot guarantee its accuracy.

The State of Florida recognizes the potentially negative impacts to cities created by areas that may be inferior to community standards and quantitative and value-based expectations. These areas tend to be unsustainable and, ultimately, may become a burden on the jurisdiction in which they exist. The Act was created and adopted through [Chapter 163, Part III, F.S. \(Community Redevelopment Act of 1969\)](#), as a tool to assist in remedying areas to improve the general public welfare and local tax base and for redevelopment of specific geographic areas. The Act declares that the rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment of deteriorated and distressed areas are necessary in the interest of public health, safety, morals, and welfare.

To qualify for establishment under the provisions of the Act, a City must prepare a ["Finding of Necessity"](#) to determine that the rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment of an area meets criteria broadly described as "slum" or "blighted" and is necessary in the interest of the health, safety, morals, or welfare of the residents of the community. These terms carry specific statutory references and qualifiers distinct from their common understanding and use.

This Finding Report is intended to be consistent with the statutory requirements for establishing the Redevelopment Area pursuant to [Chapter 163, Part III, F.S.](#) Generally, this Redevelopment Area appears to contain similar conditions—infrastructure deficiencies, development hardships, and stunted investment—as those found in other existing community redevelopment areas within Florida.

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## THE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT ACT

The purpose of the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969 (the “Act”) is to assist local governments in preventing and/or eliminating blighted conditions detrimental to the sustainability of economically and socially vibrant communities. The following paragraphs describe those blighting conditions, their specific effects and the intentions of the community redevelopment system as a tool for implementing policy and programs as they apply to the Study Area.

**Section 163.335(1), F.S.** ...slum and blighted areas which constitute a serious and growing menace, injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and welfare of the residents of the state; that the existence of such areas contributes substantially and increasingly to the spread of disease and crime, constitutes an economic and social liability imposing onerous burdens which decrease the tax base and reduce tax revenues, substantially impairs or arrests sound growth, retards the provision of housing accommodations, aggravates traffic problems, and substantially hampers the elimination of traffic hazards and the improvement of traffic facilities; and that the prevention and elimination of slums and blight is a matter of state policy and state concern in order that the state and its counties and municipalities shall not continue to be endangered by areas which are focal centers of disease, promote juvenile delinquency, and consume an excessive proportion of its revenues because of the extra services required for police, fire, accident, hospitalization, and other forms of public protection, services, and facilities.

**Section 163.335(2), F.S.**...slum or blighted areas, or portions thereof, may require acquisition, clearance, and disposition subject to use restrictions, as provided in this part, since the prevailing condition of decay may make impracticable the reclamation of the area by conservation or rehabilitation; that other areas or portions thereof may, through the means provided in this part, be susceptible of conservation or rehabilitation in such a manner that the conditions and evils enumerated may be eliminated, remedied, or prevented; and that salvageable slum and blighted areas can be conserved and rehabilitated through appropriate public action as herein authorized and the cooperation and voluntary action of the owners and tenants of property in such areas.

**Section 163.335(3), F.S.** ...the powers conferred by this part are for public uses and purposes for which public money may be expended and police power exercised, and the necessity in the public interest for the provisions herein enacted is declared as a matter of legislative determination.

**Section 163.335(5), F.S.** ...the preservation or enhancement of the tax base from which a taxing authority realizes tax revenues is essential to its existence and financial health; that the preservation and enhancement of such tax base is implicit in the purposes for which a taxing authority is established; that tax increment financing is an effective method of achieving such preservation and enhancement in areas in which such tax base is declining; that community redevelopment in such areas, when complete, will enhance such tax base and provide increased tax revenues to all affected taxing authorities, increasing their ability to accomplish their other respective purposes; and that the preservation and enhancement of the tax base in such areas through tax increment financing and the levying of taxes by such taxing authorities therefore and the appropriation of funds to a redevelopment trust fund bears a substantial relation to the purposes of such taxing authorities and is for their respective purposes and concerns.

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## FINDING OF NECESSITY

The Finding of Necessity, as set forth in [Section 163.355, F.S.](#) is an assessment of the Study Area that provides the evidence of blight and need for redevelopment due to the area's deficiencies in attracting market-based investment of the same rate and quality as surrounding areas and the City as a whole. The analysis relies upon a variety of empirical data and observations by the City of all the parcels within the Study Area in determining the existence of slum or blighted conditions as defined by criteria outlined in [Section 163.340, F.S.](#)

If an area is deemed blighted under the Act, a resolution may be adopted by the City Commission finding that there are indeed such conditions within the defined study area, and that the repair, rehabilitation, and/or redevelopment of such areas is in the interest.

To qualify for establishment under the provisions of the Act, a City must prepare a "Finding of Necessity" to determine that the rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment of an area meets criteria broadly described as "slum" or "blighted" and is necessary in the interest of the health, safety, morals, or welfare of the residents of the community. As defined by [Section 163.340, F.S.](#), these terms carry specific statutory references and qualifiers distinct from their common understanding and use.

**Section 163.340 (7)** "slum area" means an area having physical or economic conditions conducive to disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, poverty, or crime because there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, whether residential or non-residential, that are impaired by reason of dilapidation, deterioration, age, or obsolescence, and exhibiting one or more of the following factors:

- a) Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces;
- b) High density of population, compared to the population density of adjacent areas within the county or municipality, and overcrowding, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies and the requirements of the Florida Building Code; or
- c) The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes.

**Section 163.340 (8)** "Blighted area" means an area in which there are a substantial number of deteriorated, or deteriorating structures, in which conditions, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies, are leading to economic distress or endanger life or property, and in which two or more of the following factors are present:

- a) Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, bridges, or public transportation facilities;
- b) Aggregate assessed values of real property in the area for ad valorem tax purposes have failed to show any appreciable increase over the 5 years prior to the finding of such conditions;
- c) Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness;
- d) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions;
- e) Deterioration of site or other improvements;
- f) Inadequate and outdated building density patterns;
- g) Falling lease rates per square foot of office, commercial, or industrial space compared to the remainder of the county or municipality;
- h) Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land;
- i) Residential and commercial vacancy rates higher in the area than in the remainder of the county or municipality;
- j) Incidence of crime in the area higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality;
- k) Fire and emergency medical service calls to the area proportionately higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality;

- 
- l) A greater number of violations of the Florida Building Code in the area than the number of violations recorded in the remainder of the county or municipality;
  - m) Diversity of ownership or defective or unusual conditions of title which prevent the free alienability of land within the deteriorated or hazardous area; or
  - n) Governmentally owned property with adverse environmental conditions caused by a public or private entity.

However, the term “blighted area” also means any area in which at least one of the factors identified in (a) through (n) are present and all taxing authorities subject to Section 163.387(2)(a), F.S., agree, either by interlocal agreement or agreements with the agency or by resolution, that the area is blighted. Such agreement or resolution should determine only that the area is blighted. For purposes of qualifying for the tax credits authorized in **Chapter 220, F.S.**, “blighted area” means an area as defined in this subsection.

The statutes further provide that a “community redevelopment area” is defined as “...a slum area, a blighted area, or an area in which there is a shortage of housing that is affordable to residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly, or a coastal and tourist area that is deteriorating and economically distressed due to outdated building density patterns, inadequate transportation and parking facilities, faulty lot layout or inadequate street layout, or a combination thereof which the governing body designates as appropriate for community redevelopment. For community redevelopment agencies created after July 1, 2006, a community redevelopment area may not consist of more than 80 percent of a municipality.” (**Sec. 163.340 [10], F.S.**)

## **REDEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES**

If the City Commission accepts this report and adopts the Finding of Necessity resolution, they must then comply with Volusia County CRA Resolutions per **Section 163.410 F.S.** ... “In any county which has adopted a home rule charter, the powers conferred by this part shall be exercised exclusively by the governing body of such county” ... “Any power not specifically delegated shall be reserved exclusively to the governing body of the county. This section does not affect any community redevelopment agency created by a municipality prior to the adoption of a county home rule charter. Unless otherwise provided by an existing ordinance, resolution, or Interlocal agreement between any such county and a municipality, the governing body of the county that has adopted a home rule charter shall grant in whole or in part or deny any request from a municipality for a delegation of powers or a change in an existing delegation of powers within 120 days after the receipt of all required documentation, or such request shall be deemed granted unless this period is extended by mutual consent in writing by the municipality and county. Within 30 days after receipt of the request, the county shall notify the municipality by registered mail whether the request is complete or if additional information is required. Any request by the county for additional documentation shall specify the deficiencies in the submitted documentation, if any. The county shall notify the municipality by registered mail within 30 days after receiving the additional information whether such additional documentation is complete. If the meeting of the county commission at which the request for a delegation of powers or a change in an existing delegation of powers is unable to be held due to events beyond the control of the county, the request shall be acted upon at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the county commission without regard to the 120-day limitation. If the county does not act upon the request at the next regularly scheduled meeting, the request shall be deemed granted.

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## VOLUSIA COUNTY CRA RESOLUTIONS

Volusia County has adopted numerous CRA resolution per [Section 163.410 F.S.](#); Resolution No. 2001-233, Resolution No. 2010-19, and Resolution No. 2015-046.

Assuming that the County approves the Finding Report, and subject to the above referenced County Resolutions, the City/CRA will comply pursuant to [Section 163.356](#) to prepare a Redevelopment Plan for the Area described in the Finding of Necessity Resolution. The Redevelopment Plan must provide physical information on the redevelopment area and identify potential project types that can diminish or eradicate the specified blighted conditions.

Per Statute, before the City Commission can adopt any resolution or enact any ordinance to approve a Redevelopment Plan or establish a Redevelopment Trust Fund, the City Commission must provide public notice of proposed actions to each taxing authority which as the power to levy as valorem taxes within the RDA boundaries, pursuant to [Section 163.346](#), which states that before the governing body adopts any resolution or enacts any ordinance required under [s. 163.355](#), [s. 163.356](#), [s. 163.357](#), or [s. 163.387](#); creates a community redevelopment agency; approves, adopts, or amends a community redevelopment plan; or issues redevelopment revenue bonds under [s. 163.385](#), the governing body must provide public notice of such proposed action pursuant to [s. 125.66\(2\)](#) or [s. 166.041\(3\)\(a\)](#) and, at least 15 days before such proposed action, mail by registered mail a notice to each taxing authority which levies ad valorem taxes on taxable real property contained within the geographic boundaries of the redevelopment area.

Such notice alerts these taxing authorities to any possible changes in their budgets as a result of a redevelopment action. As a policy matter, it is assumed that the entities listed within **Table 1** will receive notice of any actions stemming from either this analysis or subsequent initiatives should they be authorized under the terms of the Act. Some of these entities may be exempt pursuant to [Section 163.387\(2\) \(c\), F.S.](#) Should the FoN be approved, **the CRA is not requesting any contribution from the Volusia County School Board, Library, Volusia Forever/Bonds, and Volusia Echo.**

### Table 1. Volusia County Taxing Authorities

Volusia County General Government  
Volusia County School Board  
Library  
Volusia Forever and Forever Bonds  
Volusia ECHO  
City of Deltona

Under the Act, a Redevelopment Plan is subjected to a compliance review conducted by the Planning and Zoning Board before it can be submitted to the City Commission for approval. The Board has up to sixty (60) days to review the Redevelopment Plan as to its conformity with the [City's 2030 Comprehensive Plan](#) and provide comments to the Community Redevelopment Agency. After receiving recommendations from the Planning and Zoning Board, the City Commission acting as the governing body shall hold a public hearing on the approval of a Redevelopment Plan.

The next step under the Act is the creation of a [Redevelopment Trust Fund for the Southwest Deltona CRA](#). The most recent certified real property tax roll prior to the effective date of the ordinance will be used to establish the tax base (the "Base Year") in order to calculate the tax increment. In the present case, the assumed timetable to move forward suggests that the calculation of the tax increment will rely on the 2014 certified rolls.

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After implementation of the redevelopment procedures described above, the Redevelopment Trust Fund becomes funded upon the availability of tax increment revenues. Tax increment revenues become available as the result of increased property assessments associated with new development and redevelopment within the RDA beyond those of the Base Year. Funds allocated to and deposited into the trust account are used by the Community Redevelopment Agency to finance or refinance any community redevelopment it undertakes pursuant to the approved Redevelopment Plan.

## **SOUTHWEST DELTONA REDEVELOPMENT AREA**

### **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The existing conditions of the proposed RDA reflect the origins and age of what is now the City of Deltona. The City was originally platted as Deltona Lakes by General Development Corporation (GDC) beginning in 1962 at the same time as the completion of the Sanford/Deland section of I-4. Completion of the Interstate to Daytona was completed by the mid-1960s, placing Deltona Lakes (City of Deltona) between the two largest cities in the region: Orlando and Daytona Beach. As a GDC platted community, its initial sales were from the Northeast retirement market (mid 1960s and early 1970s) but later Deltona Lakes became largely an affordable bedroom community of Orlando. Deltona Lakes elected to incorporate on December 31, 1995 and according to the 2000 US Census is the largest municipality within Volusia County. The proposed RDA represents the early platted sections of the City, and today reflects its 50 year age.

### **Study area Description**

As discussed, the proposed RDA is located in the southwest section of the City and is primarily oriented to the Saxon, Normandy and Deltona Boulevard corridors. The RDA encompasses approximately 256 areas and primarily represents the old commercial sections of the City. The proposed RDA extends south from the Saxon Blvd. corridor, following properties abutting Normandy Blvd., to the intersection of Deltona Blvd. and Normandy Blvd. It continues down Deltona Blvd. to include commercial properties along the corridor and then expands to include residential lands near its southern terminus at DeBary Avenue. From an economic development perspective, the RDA is unique as it runs parallel to I-4 and shares two interchanges: the original interchange at DeBary Avenue and later the construction of the interchange at Saxon Boulevard. Prior to the construction of the Saxon Blvd. interchange, Deltona Boulevard was the major commercial center for Deltona Lakes (City of Deltona). The construction of the Saxon Boulevard, poor connectivity between Deltona Blvd and Saxon Blvd. and the many residential curb cuts abutting the boulevards have reduced the commercial appeal of the Deltona Boulevard Corridor as discussed later in this Finding of Necessity Report.

### **Boundary**

The following graphic shows the proposed boundaries for the Southwest Deltona RDA. As shown, most of the proposed RDA is commercial in nature.

Figure 1: Proposed RDA Boundaries (North to South)

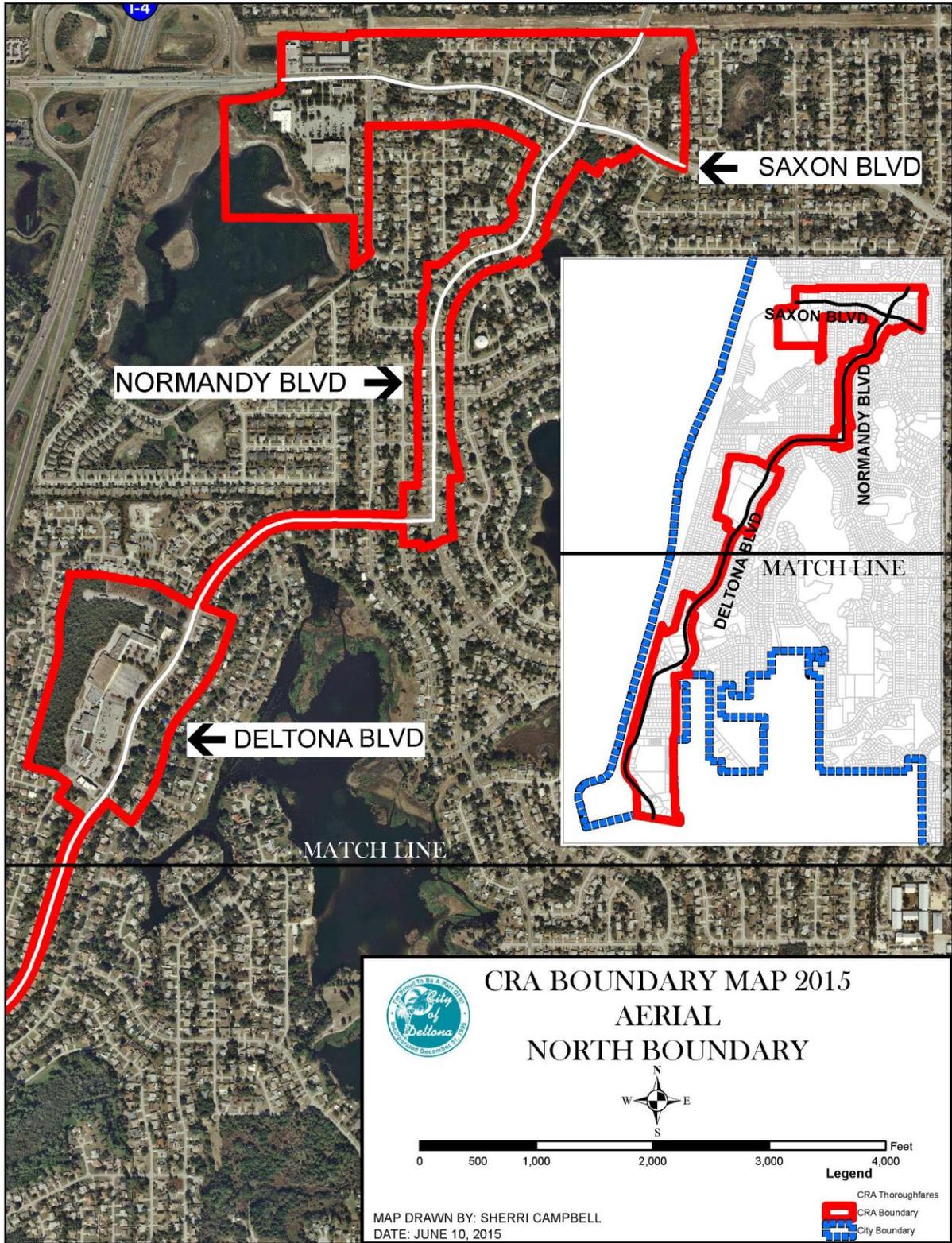
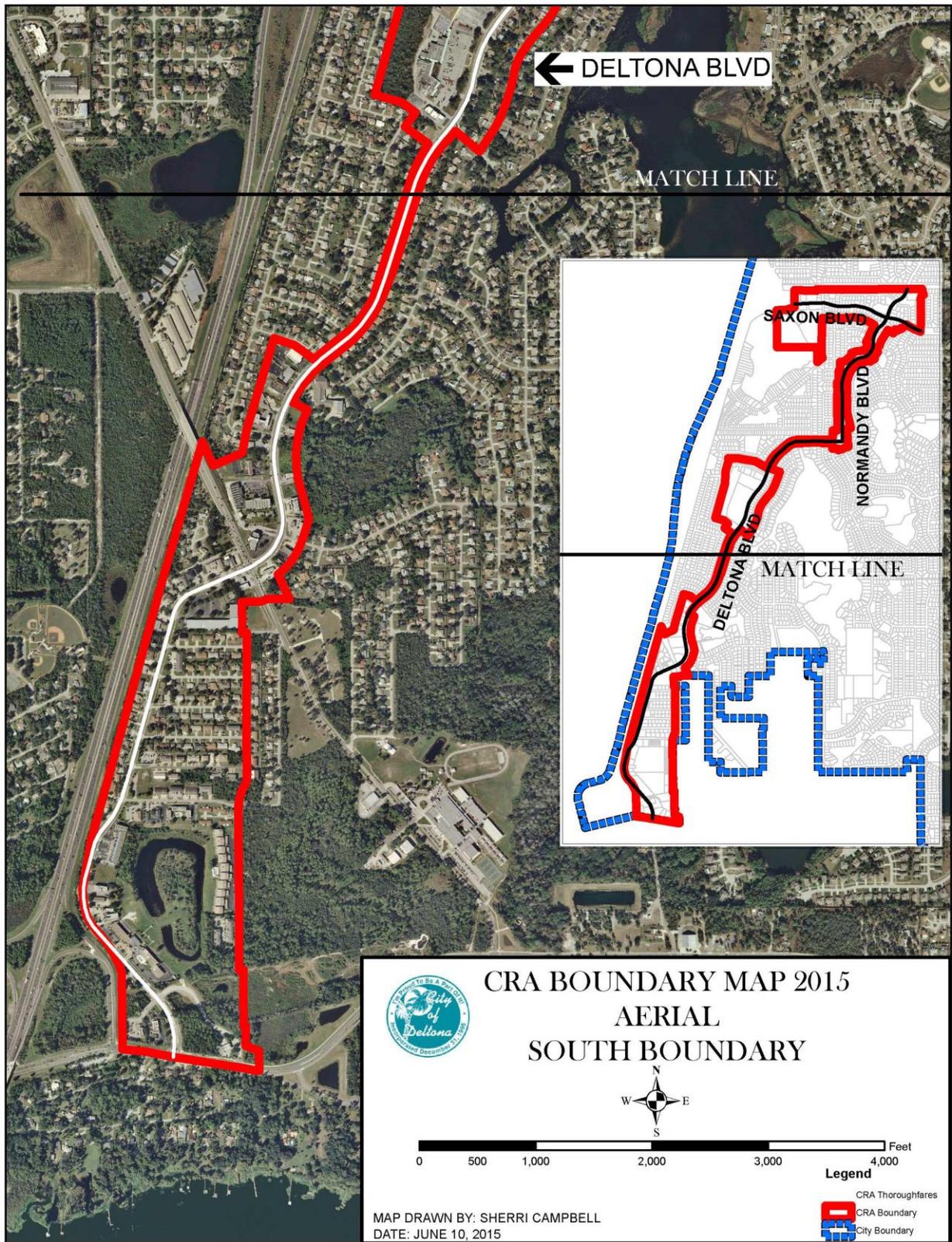


Figure 1, continued



## RDA Existing Land Use

Figure 2 shows the existing land uses with the three corridors. The dominate land use within the proposed RDA is commercial; however due to the residential nature of the original plats, there is significant residential uses abutting the three boulevards.

Figure 2, Proposed RDA Existing Land Use

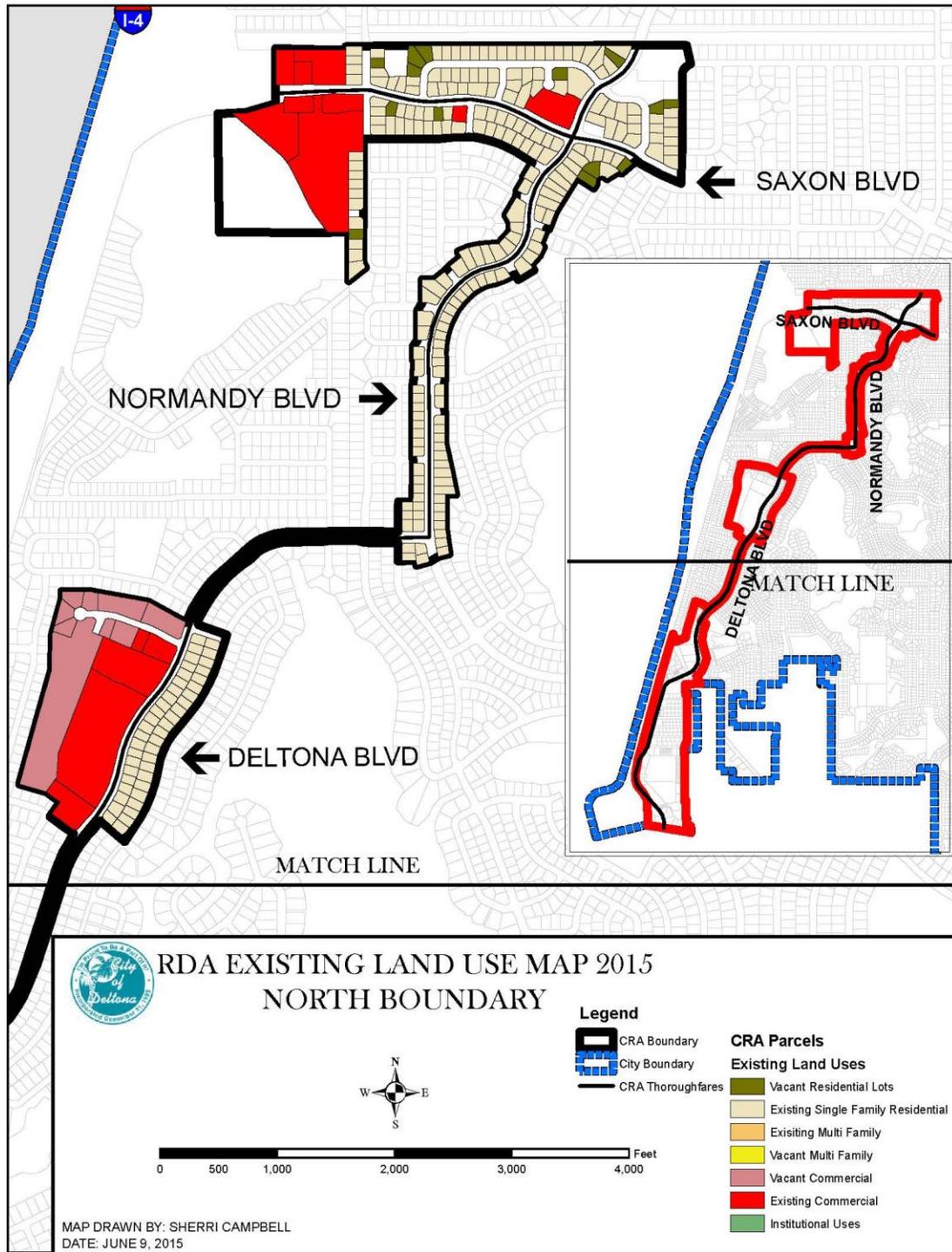
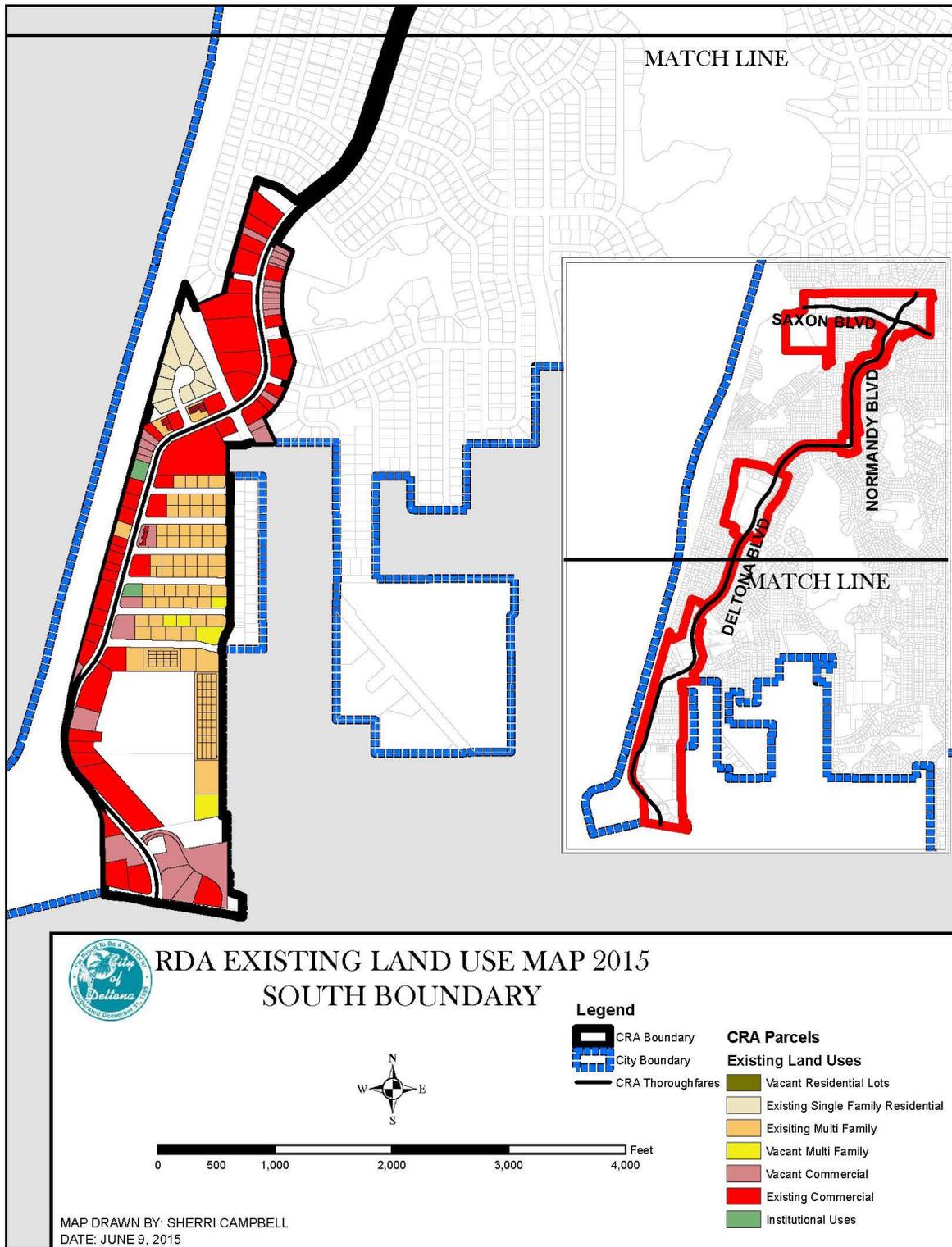


Figure 2, continued



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As shown in Table 2, the largest use of land is commercial (102 acres of existing commercial and 43 acres of vacant commercial). Single family uses (both existing and vacant) account for 55 acres, while multifamily uses account for 23.5 acres and institution account for slightly less that one acre.

Table 2: Proposed RDA Existing Land Use

<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Parcels</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Commercial	147	102.0
Vacant Commercial	43	43.0
Single Family	193	49.4
Vacant SF	13	5.5
Multi Family	119	22.0
Vacant MF	2	1.5
Institutional	2	0.8

## RDA Future Land Use (2030 Comprehensive Plan)

As shown in Figure 3, the City's 2030 Future Land Use Map designed six (6) Future Land Use districts within the RDA.

Figure 3: Future Land Use

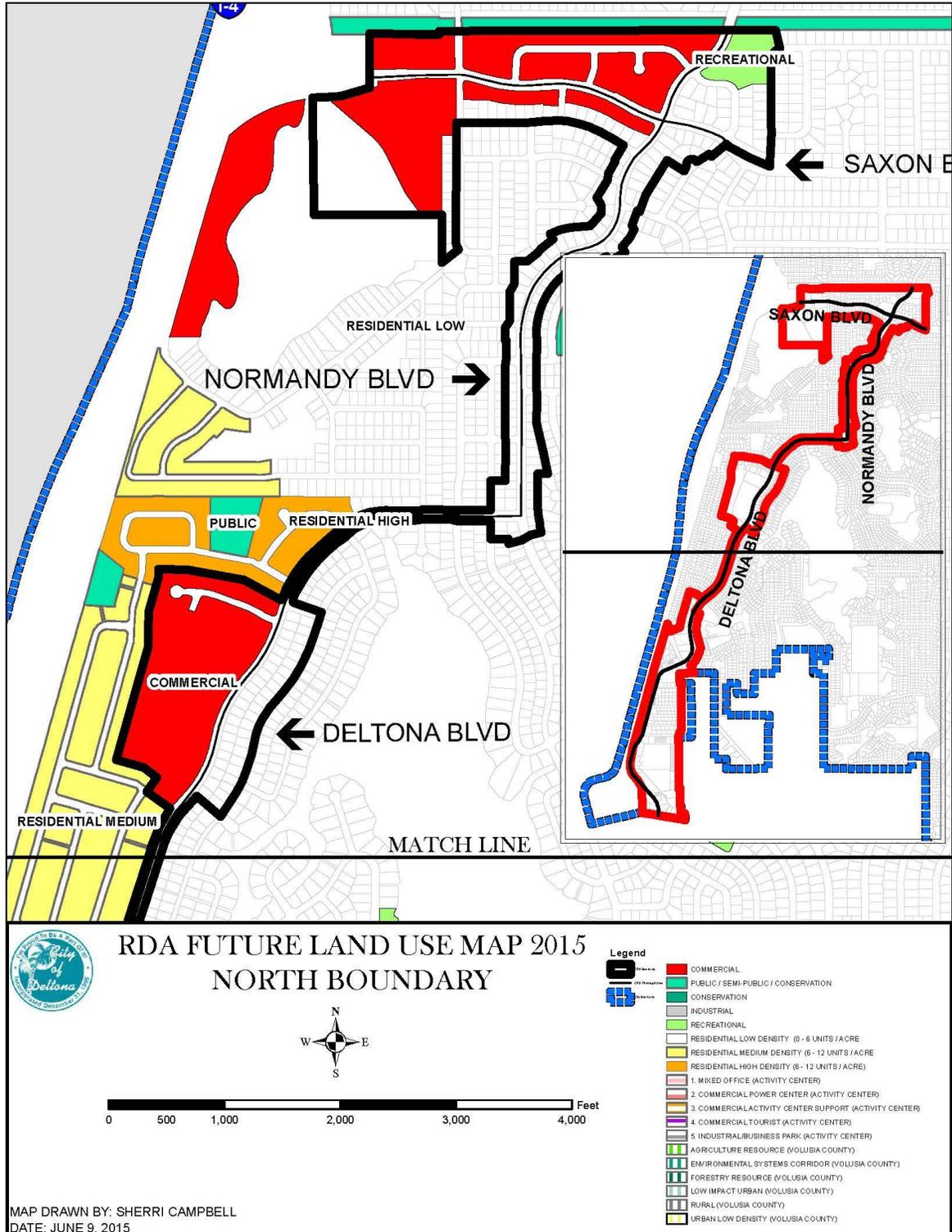
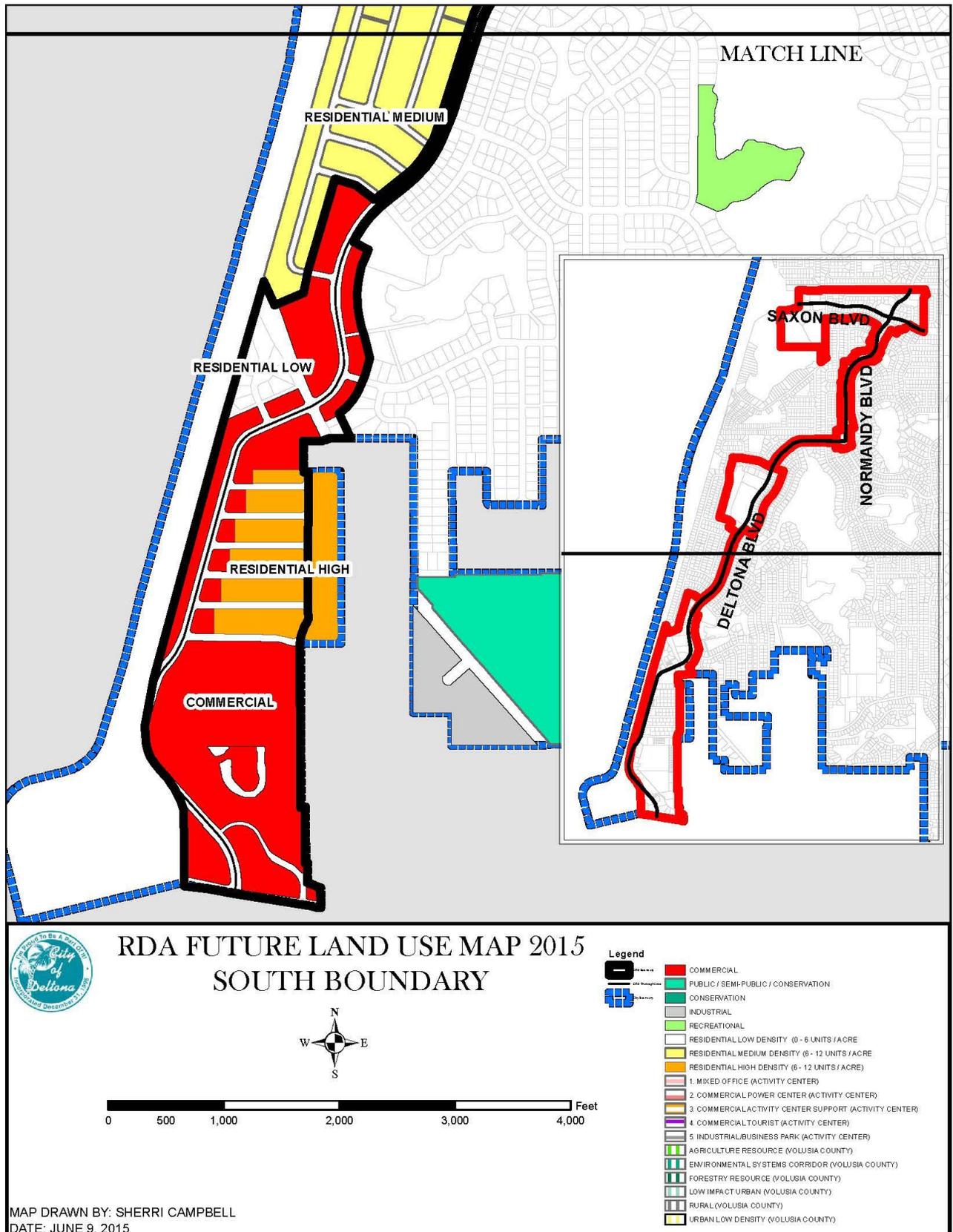


Figure 3, continued



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Table 3: Proposed RDA Future Land Use (City's 2030 Comprehensive Plan)

<b>Future Land Use</b>	<b>Parcels</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Commercial	257	165.9
High Density Residential	96	24.1
Low Density Residential	205	66.4
RecreationConservation	3	4.8

Having identified the Redevelopment Area as a unified and homogenous area, SPG reassessed and updated the blighted area conditions from the previous studies to consider the specific conditions that constitute slum or blight as indicated in the Community Redevelopment Act identified by the Florida Legislature, as described in [Section 163.340 \(7\) or \(8\), F.S.](#), and described previously.

To determine whether there is sufficient evidence to prove and document slum and/or blighted conditions, existing conditions data from government statistics and other available data were collected and analyzed, together with field observations. The following describes the analysis of the existing conditions and finding of slum and/or blighted area conditions.

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## CONDITIONS OF STRUCTURES

To determine if there was a “substantial number of deteriorating or deteriorated structures” within the Redevelopment Area, involved an examination of code enforcement cases within the proposed RDA area. While some of the buildings are in sound condition with general maintenance of the structures, such as painting, pressure washing, landscaping, etc., being at issue, many of the buildings and sites are underused and discourage reinvestment in the community. Some of these conditions relate to improper or poor maintenance of yards and improvements and structural deterioration such as broken signs, and cracked driveways and sidewalks.



Forty – two percent (42%) of the code compliance cases within the RDA were located in the multi-family areas locally referred to as the Caribbean Street area. Approximately 26% of the cases were from single family residential properties, most clustered in the 1300 and 1400 block of north Normandy Blvd, while 29% of the cases were associated with commercially zoned areas.



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Vacant and underutilized commercial space is common along Deltona Blvd. The Deltona Plaza, a 1970s shopping center is largely vacant. Other commercial properties have been foreclosed (Travelodge), while other commercial buildings have transitioned to non-taxable uses.



An example of commercial properties (Bank Building) being converted to nontaxable uses is shown below (Church), again indicating lack of market activity in the RDA.



## FINDING

This analysis demonstrates that there are “substantial number of deteriorating or deteriorated structures” within the Redevelopment Area ranging from improper or poor maintenance of yards and improvements and structural deterioration, such as broken signs, cracked driveways and sidewalks, and broken storm-water drainage systems, which also contribute to unsanitary or unsafe conditions.

These contributing factors serve as qualifying conditions for blighted area. Improper siting and placement of refuse collection creates unsanitary and unsafe conditions, which contribute to visual and physical blight. Lack of compliance with City regulatory and community design standards can contribute to the need for a focused community redevelopment emphasis

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## LAND USES

The City of Deltona's existing land use, zoning, and future land use were used to reach a reasonable understanding of the pattern of development activity within the Redevelopment Area, identify whether existing land uses are permitted under current zoning regulations, assess whether neighboring uses are compatible with each other, and determine whether certain uses assist or deter development activity.

The existing land use and future land use within the Redevelopment Area are shown in Figure 1 and 2 and within Tables 2 and 3.

The RDA contains a large number of residential properties (some converted to commercial usage) that were permitted when the City was part of unincorporated Volusia County. The result is dysfunctional driveway cuts onto high volume transportation corridors. The numerous residential driveway cuts within ingress with ingress and egress deduct from the function of the Boulevards by having them used having these thoroughfares function more like local roads causing gridlock and lowers the level of service. There is little to no defensive response time, and residential drivers backing into the Boulevards are often rear-ended. Many of the residential units that have converted to commercial usage typically exhibit substandard parking and stormwater management.



Many of the commercial land uses that once thrived have given way to uses that underuse existing sites. Some businesses have relocated, and buildings remain empty particularly in the older shopping center properties. There is a lack of a substantial commercial investment along all three corridors within the Redevelopment Area as witnesses by the amount of for sale or lease properties.

## FINDING

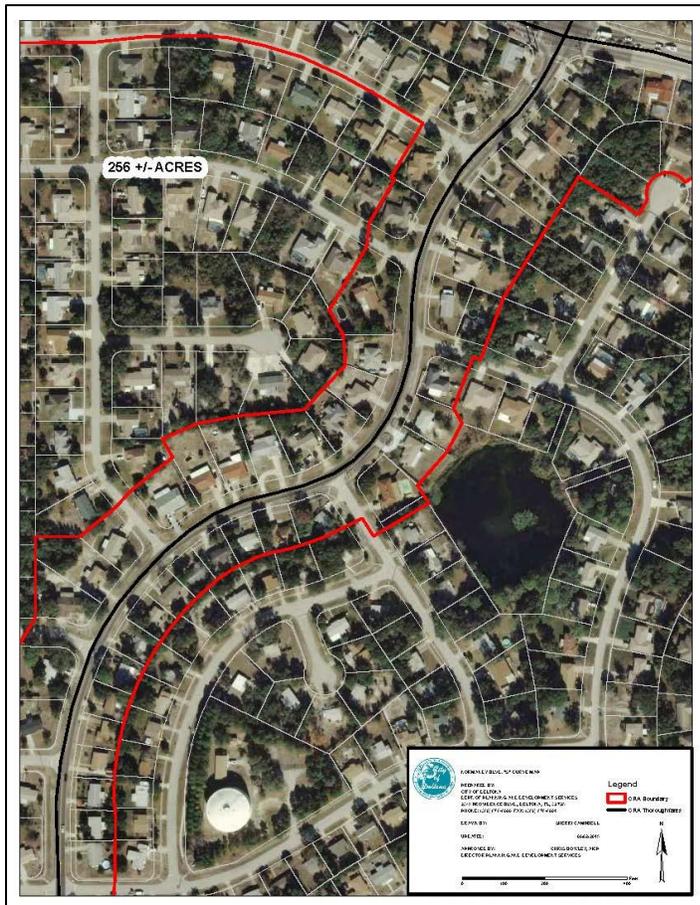
Even though the City's future land use and zoning are consistent and satisfy State of Florida's requirements, many of parcels designated as commercial are inadequate in size and cannot accommodate the maximum allowable density/intensity under the present designations without property aggregation or variances. These old platted lands provide a parcel system that fosters outdated building patterns and inappropriate accessibility, contributes to poor drainage, and negates development of a sufficient size and type to produce overall community benefits.

## TRANSPORTATION ACCESS

One of the major impediments to the economic revitalization of the RDA is the existing transportation network. With the construction of the Saxon Blvd/I-4 interchange in the 1990s, the connection between Deltona Blvd, a four lane arterial, connected to Normandy Blvd, a former local road; which in turn connects to Saxon Blvd., a 4 lane arterial. Of particular concern is Normandy Blvd. which was impacted by the by the opening of the Saxon I-4 interchange. Normandy Blvd. was not retrofitted to accommodate the high volumes of traffic associated with the interchange construction. The dangerous two lane S-curve, which was not designed or constructed to accommodate the additional traffic, in the road south of Saxon forced the need for a guard rail (which is replaced often) and has not resolved the vehicular or pedestrian safety of the Corridor.



Figure 4: Normand Blvd. S-Curve



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## FINDING

Existing roadways were not designed to meet up-to-date FDOT minimum spacing criteria. There are driveway openings located too close to the intersection of major roads. Also, there are driveways with no clear sight distances. Of particular concern is the Normandy Blvd connection to both Deltona Blvd and Saxon Blvd and its two lanes S-curve.

## BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

Field observations identified that many of the pedestrian and bicycle routes within the Redevelopment Area are defective or inadequate. There is limited formal pedestrian connection to city amenities, schools, or shopping. Existing sidewalks were not appropriately engineered and are substandard with respect to current design and accessibility requirements. The widths of the sidewalks do not accommodate Americans with Disability Act (ADA) accessibility. Few interior sites have a pedestrian connection to the commercial areas, and most residential neighborhoods are devoid of sidewalks.



There is also a lack of median landscaping, street trees, safe crosswalks, bikeways, and wayfinding signs, within the Redevelopment Area.

## FINDING

The lack of a viable, comprehensive system of accessible sidewalks, bicycle facilities, and dedicated multimodal facilities, and the absence of streetscaping, pedestrian lighting, traffic calming devices, and wayfinding signage creates additional support for defective or inadequate street layout and roadways as well as unsafe conditions that contribute to physical and visual blight. This may hamper new investment opportunities and may contribute to further deterioration of the Redevelopment Area.

## STORMWATER FACILITIES

There is a lack of stormwater management which dates back to the 1960s when a majority of the land uses were being constructed, and as a result there is no surface water storage and pretreatment/attenuation. The water table is high and inhibits percolation of rainwater. Storm drains are limited throughout the area. This lack of stormwater management is aggravated by the fact that the majority of the homes and some commercial facilities located within the RDA are served by septic tanks and are over 30 years old and failing.

## FINDING

Lack of an overall stormwater management system (including lack of retention storage) and the RDA's dependence on septic tanks has a significant impact on not only the health and safety of the RDA but impacts the economic vitality of the area.

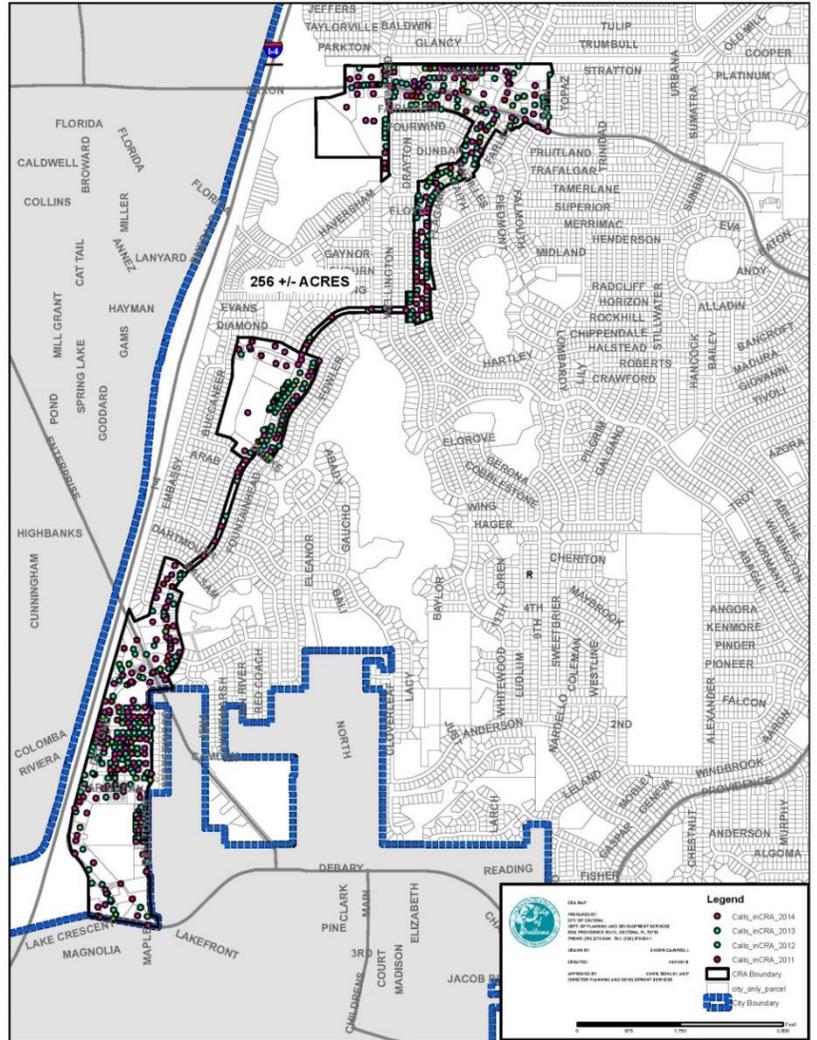
## OCCURRENCES OF CRIME

The City in late 2012 analyzed five years (2007-2012) of law enforcement activity within the proposed RDA and compared it to the City as a whole. That analysis showed that the RDA crime activity was **17,617 per 1,000** people over the five year period compared to **4,467 per 1,000** for the City as a whole. The City updated the previous study as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4. Comparative Crime Date**

Year	City		RDA	
	Calls	Calls per 1000	Calls	Calls per 1000
2012	65,534	769	4,038	3,434
2013	65,534	767	3,801	3,232
2014	24,905	288	1,402	1,192

Note: 2014 is not a full year.



## FINDING

Crime within the RDA are significantly higher than the City as a whole. The RDA's crime rate, is due in large part by the areas aging residential stock, commercial vacancies and overall visual appearance of the area.

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## FIRE/EMS RESPONSES

The proposed RDA reported 2,359 fire or emergency medical service (EMS) responses between June 1, 2009 and June 1, 2012 or an incident rate of 1.572 calls per 1,000 compared to the City's 290 per 1,000. The City just updated the Fire/EMS incidents within the RDA as shown in Table 5. The proposed RDA has significantly higher incidents of Fire/EMS service calls than the City as a whole.

**Table 5. RDA Fire/EMS Service Calls**

Year	City		RDA	
	Calls	Calls per 1000	Calls	Calls per 1000
2012	7,286	85	286	243
2013	7,334	86	285	242
2014	7,747	90	311	264

## FINDING

Fire/EMS responses within the RDA are significantly higher than the City as a whole. Like the RDA's crime rate, this is due in large part by the areas aging residential stock, commercial vacancies and overall visual appearance of the area.

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# DETERMINATING SLUM AND BLIGHT

Determining if slum or blight conditions exist within the proposed Redevelopment Area is an initial step in ascertaining an area’s appropriateness for designation as a Redevelopment Area. This Finding Report concludes the following based on the physical, economic, and regulatory conditions, as well as government-maintained statistics.

Based on the definition and criteria for determining “Slum Area” as specified in **Section 163.340 (7), F.S.** (see Section 1.3.2 of this report) and the findings concluded in this report, the proposed Redevelopment Area is not considered a "Slum Area."

However, the proposed Redevelopment Area is considered a **“Blighted Area”** as specified in **Section 163.340 (8), F.S.** (see Section 1.3 of this report) based on the findings concluded in this report. From the 14 criteria, of which 2 or more conditions are required to be considered a “Blight Area,” **at least six (6) conditions** exists in the proposed Redevelopment Area, as follows.

**1. Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, bridges, or public transportation facilities (Section 163.340 [8] a, F.S.)**

There is a predominance of defective or inadequate street layout with in each of the Corridors. Early, historic platting of the city left lots that are generally undersized or lack the desired lot widths or depths to accommodate current parking, stormwater, land development requirements, and other regulations.

Multiple driveway connections along the corridors do not meet current driveway or intersection separation criteria, which contributes to poor traffic circulation by creating potential vehicle and pedestrian or bicycle conflicts, poor sight triangle visibility, or difficulty in achieving accessible routes. Lack of inter-connectivity between existing developed sites also contributes to traffic congestion.

FDOT and Volusia County transportation requirements are not being met for safe roadway design. There is lack of a viable, comprehensive system of accessible sidewalks, bicycle facilities, and dedicated multimodal facilities. There is limited and no formal pedestrian connection to city amenities, schools, and shopping. Existing sidewalks are substandard with respect to current design and accessibility requirements. Few interior sites have a pedestrian connection to commercial areas. Public transportation facilities along the corridors generally reflect deteriorating conditions, poor physical placement, or lack of appropriate facilities.

Uncontrolled access points, lack of parking, poor signage, and poor or nonexistent drainage, faulty street lay-out, no curb and gutter in many places, and other factors are detrimental to private reinvestment and a successful economic development environment.

**2. Unsanitary or unsafe conditions (Section 163.340 [8] d, F.S.)**

The multiple driveway connections that create poor traffic circulation, inadequate parking facilities, and lack of viable, comprehensive system of accessible sidewalks and bicycle facilities create unsafe conditions within the Redevelopment Area. A substantial number of buildings are substandard, with many reaching toward a state of dilapidation and clear underutilization.

**According to the City's Code Enforcement data, there was an increase in property deterioration, lack of maintenance, nuisances, and other physical decay between 2010 and 2014.** Sanitary conditions, in particular, siting and placement of refuse collection consistent with City design standards, was noted as lacking in a majority of existing facilities and sites, such as placement of additional dumpster facilities within designated parking or landscape areas, placement of dumpsters that block potential emergency access routes, and damaged or deteriorating enclosures.

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Many of the existing developed sites pre-date current environmental and stormwater management requirements. Many existing stormwater management facilities are not under proper maintenance and exhibit conditions that contribute to on-street and adjoining property ponding or flooding, such as standing water, damaged inlet structures, clogged piping, and inappropriate use of facilities (parking, storage, etc.), which may cause stormwater runoff into the regional water bodies, polluting the water and ecosystem.

The absence of sanitary sewer lines within portions of the Redevelopment Area creates unsanitary and unsafe conditions and limits redevelopment efforts to provide for higher quality health. To meet current and future development within the Redevelopment Area, the City/CRA should add sanitary sewer lines and extend central sanitary sewer service to all developed properties to protect public health and the environment.

### **3. Deterioration of site or other improvements (Section 163.340 [8]e, F.S.)**

The RDA is visually distressed with aged and vacant commercial properties and some of the oldest residential areas in the City. Some of these conditions relate to improper or poor maintenance of yards and improvements, structural deterioration, or unrepaired storm damage. In all land use categories, there are substantial numbers of deteriorating structures and underused properties that are contributing to conditions that are not supportive of redevelopment and private investment within the Redevelopment Area. Some of the structures also reflect conditions relating from prior right-of-way acquisitions and impacts from the widening of Saxon and Deltona Boulevards rendered some of the properties functionally obsolete.

### **4. Inadequate or outdated building patterns (Section 163.340 [8]f, F.S.)**

The Redevelopment Area contains a mix of land uses—commercial, office, single-family, and multi-family residential. Several of the residentially-used lands have been zoned for other uses, such as commercial, professional, or office for many years, and a few conversions have occurred along all three corridors. One problem with the current system of lots is the number of County/City, institutional, and other lands that are off the tax rolls in Redevelopment Area.

The Redevelopment Area is affected by a lack of parking and stormwater management, small buildable areas, lacking proper depth, insufficient land to expand, incompatible adjacent uses, and problematic access due to archaic rights-of-ways. Residences still occupy commercially-zoned lands, creating non-conformities. Changing the land development regulations will be needed to address these issues, creating a new plan. A new zoning and design system in the area will aid in attracting new development.

Deltona Boulevard served as the historical commercial center of the area. The nature of retail and business along this corridor has changed dramatically. With the exception of the few large retail/commercial sites, small-scale sites are sometimes at a disadvantage. The original platted lots have insufficient area to meet standard development requirements desired for today's commerce. There is a lack of a substantial commercial investment along the corridors within the Redevelopment Area.

Many of the residential structures appear to be substandard and reflect conditions inconsistent with current zoning. This area is devoid of sidewalks and good drainage, and many Code violations exist.

Faulty lot sizes and shapes, poor locations, and problematic title situations offer little if any value to a community. Lots and buildings may be left vacant, leaving them subject to physical deterioration. These conditions contribute to visual and physical blight.

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**5. Incidents of Crime** in the area are higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality **(Section 163.340 [8]j, F.S.)**

The RDA has a crime incident rate that exceeds the City as a whole since at least 2009. This is largely a result of the deterioration of commercial structures, older/unmaintained housing and overall blight.

**6. Fire/EMS service calls** in the area are higher than in the remainder of the City as a whole **(Section 163.340 [8]k, F.S.)**

The RDA has higher incidence of Fire/EMS service calls that exceed the City as a whole since at least 2009. This is again largely a result of deterioration of commercial structures, older/unmaintained housing and overall blight.

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# APPENDIX

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## A. SURVEY OF THE RDA

Section 163.362 F.S. states that “Every community redevelopment plan shall:

- (1) Contain a legal description of the boundaries of the community redevelopment area and the reasons for establishing such boundaries shown in the plan”.

A full legal survey will be provided as part of the CRA Master Plan should the proposed FoN be approved and the County/City are in agreement to create the proposed CRA.