

AN ADVISORY SERVICES PANEL REPORT

Port St. Lucie Florida



Urban Land
Institute

Port St. Lucie Florida

**A Comprehensive Development Strategy for Port St. Lucie
and Policy Framework for the Annexation Area**

February 1–6, 2004
An Advisory Services Panel Report

ULI—the Urban Land Institute
1025 Thomas Jefferson Street, N.W.
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About ULI—the Urban Land Institute

ULI—the Urban Land Institute is a non-profit research and education organization that promotes responsible leadership in the use of land in order to enhance the total environment.

The Institute maintains a membership representing a broad spectrum of interests and sponsors a wide variety of educational programs and forums to encourage an open exchange of ideas and sharing of experience. ULI initiates research that anticipates emerging land use trends and issues and proposes creative solutions based on that research; provides advisory services; and publishes a wide variety of materials to disseminate information on land use and development.

Established in 1936, the Institute today has more than 20,000 members and associates from 70 countries, representing the entire spectrum of the land use and development disciplines. Professionals rep-

resented include developers, builders, property owners, investors, architects, public officials, planners, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, academics, students, and librarians. ULI relies heavily on the experience of its members. It is through member involvement and information resources that ULI has been able to set standards of excellence in development practice. The Institute has long been recognized as one of America's most respected and widely quoted sources of objective information on urban planning, growth, and development.

This Advisory Services panel report is intended to further the objectives of the Institute and to make authoritative information generally available to those seeking knowledge in the field of urban land use.

Richard M. Rosan
President

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About ULI Advisory Services

The goal of ULI's Advisory Services Program is to bring the finest expertise in the real estate field to bear on complex land use planning and development projects, programs, and policies. Since 1947, this program has assembled well over 400 ULI-member teams to help sponsors find creative, practical solutions for issues such as downtown redevelopment, land management strategies, evaluation of development potential, growth management, community revitalization, brownfield redevelopment, military base reuse, provision of low-cost and affordable housing, and asset management strategies, among other matters. A wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit organizations have contracted for ULI's Advisory Services.

Each panel team is composed of highly qualified professionals who volunteer their time to ULI. They are chosen for their knowledge of the panel topic and screened to ensure their objectivity. ULI panel teams are interdisciplinary and typically include several developers, a landscape architect, a planner, a market analyst, a finance expert, and others with the niche expertise needed to address a given project. ULI teams provide a holistic look at development problems. Each panel is chaired by a respected ULI member with previous panel experience.

The agenda for a five-day panel assignment is intensive. It includes an in-depth briefing day composed of a tour of the site and meetings with sponsor representatives; a day of hour-long interviews of typically 50 to 75 key community representatives; and two days of formulating recommendations. There are many long nights of discussion. On the final day on site, the panel makes an oral presentation of its findings and conclusions to the sponsor. A written report is prepared and published.

Because the sponsoring entities are responsible for significant preparation before the panel's visit, including sending extensive briefing materials to each member and arranging for the panel to meet with key local community members and stakeholders in the project under consideration, participants in ULI's five-day panel assignments are

able to make accurate assessments of a sponsor's issues and to provide recommendations in a compressed amount of time.

A major strength of the program is ULI's unique ability to draw on the knowledge and expertise of its members, including land developers and owners, public officials, academicians, representatives of financial institutions, and others. In fulfillment of the mission of the Urban Land Institute, this Advisory Services panel report is intended to provide objective advice that will promote the responsible use of land to enhance the environment.

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Special thanks go to Cheryl Friend and Steve Ball, and the entire staff of the planning and zoning department. Their countless hours preparing

for and assisting during the panel were very much appreciated. Their hard work and dedication are a true asset for the city of Port St. Lucie.

The panel would also like to thank all of the community members who volunteered their time by sharing their thoughts and experiences during the interview process. This group of more than 40 individuals included government officials, residents, business leaders, and property owners. They provided the panel with valuable information and insights that were critical in the completion of the panel's assignment.

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Foreword: The Panel's Assignment

At the invitation of the city of Port St. Lucie, a ULI Advisory Services panel was convened to study an annexation area of more than 26,000 acres of land west of Port St. Lucie, along Interstate 95 (I-95). As development in south Florida continues to expand northward, Port St. Lucie finds itself in the epicenter of the next major housing boom. The city is at a point where it must fully revive its history and prepare for the future.

Background

Located in St. Lucie County and incorporated by the General Development Corporation (GDC) in 1961, Port St. Lucie was originally platted into 80,000 quarter-acre lots with no water or sewer infrastructure. The lots were mostly sold to northeasterners seeking a retirement paradise. After many broken promises, GDC filed for bankruptcy in 1990 and was required to set up a restitution fund for selling overvalued properties. Four GDC officers spent two years in jail for fraud and conspiracy.

Currently the fastest-growing city in the state of Florida, with a population of approximately 112,000 residents, Port St. Lucie has been recognized as Florida's safest city among those with a population exceeding 75,000. It is the largest of the cities along the Treasure Coast (the region composed of Indian River, St. Lucie, Martin, and Palm Beach counties).

Port St. Lucie's amenities include campuses for Indian River Community College and Florida Atlantic University, the 6,000-acre Savannas preserve, the Indian River Lagoon estuary, the spring training camp for the New York Mets, a Professional Golf Association (PGA) learning center and resort, a family-oriented Club Med at Sandpiper, and the Smithsonian's Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution.



Location maps.



The study area consists of vast orange groves and ranchland.



With about 40,000 scattered undeveloped GDC single-family lots located east of I-95 remaining and the potential for more than 30,000 homes to be developed in those areas west of I-95 that have already been annexed or have annexations pending, Port St. Lucie has both a threshold challenge and an opportunity to balance its future growth so that the original section of the city is enriched while the new section of the city develops.

The Assignment

The city of Port St. Lucie invited ULI to conduct a five-day Advisory Services panel to show how growth could be balanced with the desired mix of retail, commercial, and industrial uses and residential development so that the quality of life of local stakeholders could be enhanced. The study area included 42 square miles or 26,000 acres of land located west of I-95 to Range Line Road, from the C-23 Canal in the south to Midway Road in the north. The panel expanded its scope of consideration beyond this western annexation area to consider the city as a whole because the two distinct areas are dependent on one another. (See vicinity diagram.)

In the panel's judgment, the overarching issues were the following: what is the necessary circulation network to accommodate growth; how can the city attract and retain major employers offering high-paying jobs; what should the community development strategies be for the annexation area; how can the original area (eastern side) of the city

be enriched; and how can intergovernmental coordination among the bordering cities and counties be improved?

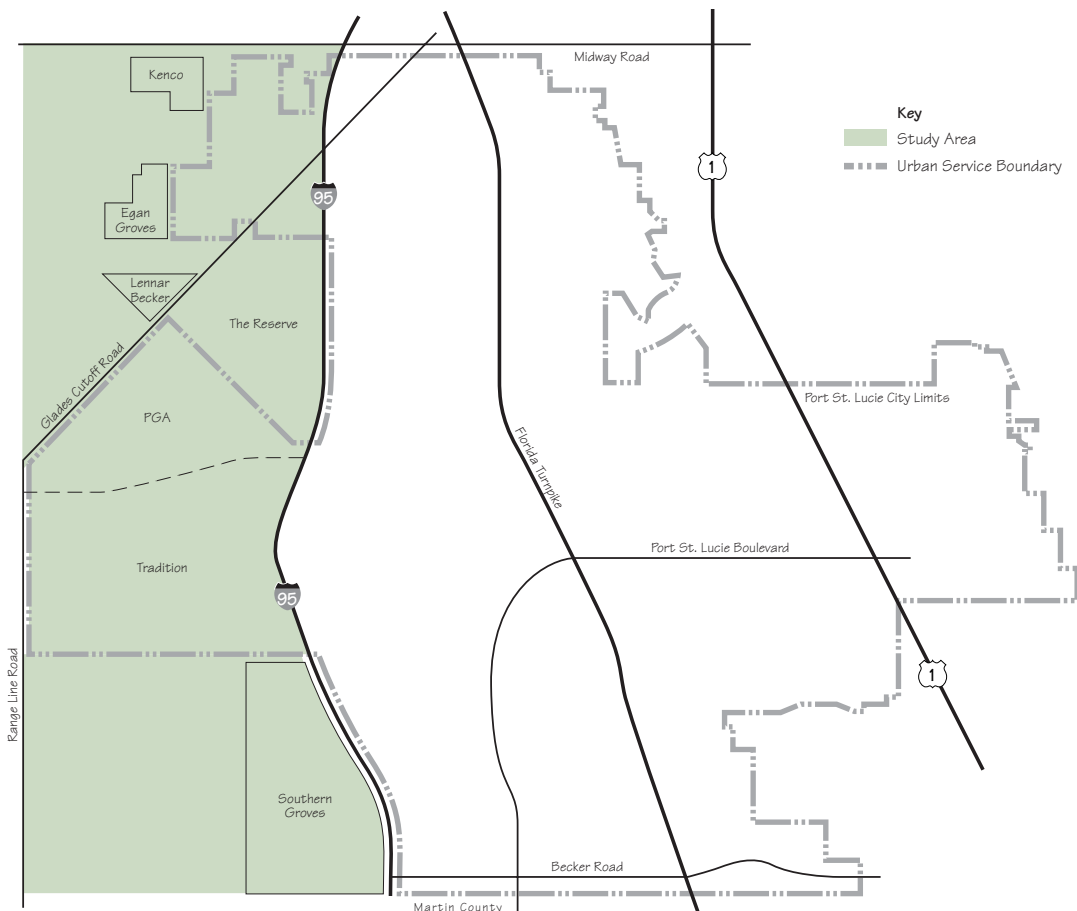
In order to address these issues, the ten-member Advisory Services panel divided the work for this assignment into the following four categories:

- market opportunities;
- community design;
- transportation and circulation; and
- community development strategies.

The Vision

When the ULI Advisory Services panel convened to study the city of Port St. Lucie, it soon realized that the city was about to write a new chapter in its 40-year history. Now situated squarely in the path of unprecedented growth, the city is diligently working to address how to meet the vexing demands that explosive growth creates.

The panel worked to understand the challenges and opportunities facing Port St. Lucie. The panelists reviewed a comprehensive briefing book prepared by the city. Interviews were conducted with over 40 community leaders in person and by telephone. The city and surrounding areas were toured extensively by helicopter and vehicles and on foot—all of which contributed to the



Port St. Lucie and vicinity.

panel's ability to give recommendations on the future of this city.

The panel's vision soon crystallized around the notion that Port St. Lucie is a story about people. Because after all, what else is a city if not people? It is about people who work, raise children, go to college, ride bikes, walk dogs, visit hospitals, go to movies, coach little league, commune with nature, and want to buy homes in safe and connected neighborhoods. It is about birth and death and everything that happens in between.

The panel envisions a Port St. Lucie where east meets west. Where open space and residential development are connected. A city that is safe and financially secure. An area that offers interesting and varied employment opportunities. A place

that addresses the needs of a vehicular as well as a pedestrian society. A municipality rich in diversity and choices: residential, commercial, educational, cultural, recreational, spiritual, and communal. A city of vibrant neighborhoods and meaningful opportunities.

The ULI Advisory Services panel believes Port St. Lucie can be such a city: "a city for all ages and all wages." The path that the city chooses to follow after this report is delivered will shape its future for the next 50 years. But one thing will ultimately remain the same: Port St. Lucie will still be about people.

Overview and Summary of Recommendations

The panel was able to frame the issues and see opportunities available in Port St. Lucie and formulate its recommendations. It devised a plan to manage development both in the western annexation area and in the eastern section that would create a strong environment for growth and job creation. The recommendations set forth are summarized below and described in more detail in this report.

Market Opportunities

As the population of Port St. Lucie is projected to nearly double to approximately 240,000 people in the next decade, the city must be prepared to handle all of the growth-related issues that will come along. To fully capture the benefits of such rapid growth, Port St. Lucie must proactively recruit employers to the area. It is essential for the city and other local jurisdictions to collaborate to market the region as a whole. It is also necessary to have firm plans in place and to be committed to the creation of new schools, parks, libraries, fire and police stations, and other public facilities. To attract major employers, the public and private sectors need to cooperate to designate land that is properly zoned with infrastructure in place.

With all of this anticipated growth, the city is in need of office, industrial, retail, and residential land in both the western annexation area and in the east side of Port St. Lucie. To avoid becoming a bedroom community for the rest of south Florida, the city must remain pro-business and further expedite the development process.

Community Design

Port St. Lucie is faced with the challenge of weaving two very different communities together. With the rapid growth on the western edge of town and the GDC legacy, the city must act as a “master developer” to effectively bring these two communi-

ties together. The panel recommends that the city refine the villages and neighborhood plan proposed by the panel and determine the process that sets desired goals and provides a means to accomplish them.

To better mesh the two communities, it is important that the city not forget the eastern side of town. The GDC neighborhoods must be upgraded and enhanced to complement the new master-planned communities in the western annexation area or they will fall into disrepair and tarnish the image of the entire area. It is also essential that these two communities be connected on many levels to avoid becoming an area of disconnected subdivisions. There needs to be access to and connections among all areas: neighborhoods, open space, and civic and commercial facilities—by vehicle, bicycle, and foot.

Transportation and Circulation

The panel recommends creating a major thoroughfares plan to provide circulation in the western annexation area and connectivity to the east side of Port St. Lucie. The plan should include the designation of all primary and minor arterial roads with connections to I-95 and the Florida Turnpike, and the dedication of rights-of-way prior to road construction and land development. The panel also recommends the planned extensions of West Virginia Avenue and Becker Road across I-95, and extends Parr Drive over I-95. To relieve congestion on the east side of Port St. Lucie, it is essential that the city continue to investigate ways to seek additional capacity where possible.

It is also recommended that Port St. Lucie review street standards to further enhance the connectivity among villages and neighborhoods. To complete all of these transportation projects, it will be essential for the city and other jurisdictions to cooperate and agree on clear priorities in

order to secure funding from local, state, and federal sources.

Community Development Strategies

Port St. Lucie is at a crossroads. The city is faced with unprecedented growth and must act quickly to strengthen the existing neighborhoods and encourage high-quality development in the western annexation area.

To prepare for this growth, the panel recommends that the city and region effect an environment of collaboration among all of the various jurisdictions. This is critical in attracting employers to Port St. Lucie. The city also needs to create a clear and compelling vision of what Port St. Lucie wants to be now and in the future. This strong vision will be a catalyst for growth and for civic pride in Port St. Lucie. The city should enhance its efforts in creating civic pride and engagement

by increasing the number of activities and events that bring the community together.

As the annexation area develops, it is essential that the neighborhoods on the east side of town not be ignored. The panel recommends that the city create mechanisms to preserve the affordability of housing in Port St. Lucie. It is also important to regulate rental housing and enforce code violations to prevent the decline of vulnerable neighborhoods.

The city has demonstrated great vision and leadership in creating value for the city and its citizens by effectively addressing the failures of its past. The panel firmly believes that these recommendations will help the city adequately prepare for the growth and transformation that are to come.

Market Opportunities

As the fastest-growing city in the state of Florida, Port St. Lucie is centrally located with access to a market of over 11 million people within a four-hour drive from the Fort Pierce–Port St. Lucie Metropolitan Statistical Area. The 26,000-acre study area is located adjacent to the I-95 corridor, providing excellent access to the entire state.

Overview

Port St. Lucie has many opportunities for economic growth, but it faces challenges along the way. The region has many attributes that will attract future residents and employers: affordable land for all types of development, adequate natural resources to allow for growth, recreational amenities that include world-class golf courses and beaches, spring baseball, fishing, and many other outdoor activities including trails, river walks, and parks.

However, several important issues must be addressed in order for Port St. Lucie to fulfill its potential. These are discussed further below but include the following: a current lack of developed land for office, industrial, and retail/commercial uses; a lack of diverse housing types and high-quality affordable housing; few large parcels of well-located land to accommodate job growth; restricted east-to-west traffic flow; a school system that suffers from inadequate funding and a wide variation in the quality of educational facilities; and fragmented marketing and promotional efforts for the Treasure Coast region.

Population and Housing Growth and Demand

In the Fort Pierce–Port St. Lucie MSA, 350,752 people reside in 146,681 households. The region has doubled in size since 1980, when 151,196 people lived in 58,369 households. The city of Port St.

Lucie has witnessed even more dramatic growth, with population increasing from 14,690 people in 1980 to an estimated 111,265 people today in an estimated 43,057 households.

Residential building permit activity has also shown substantial increases. In 2003, 8,997 residential permits were issued in the Fort Pierce–Port St. Lucie MSA. Over the last three years, an average of 6,638 permits were issued; over the last five years, 5,186 permits were issued; and the ten-year average is 4,177 permits.

The city of Port St. Lucie has issued an annual average of 3,611 permits over the last three years, 2,696 permits over the last five years, and 1,962 permits annually over the last ten years. In 2003, the city issued 5,504 residential permits.

Over the next decade, the panel estimates that the Fort Pierce–Port St. Lucie MSA region is projected to increase its population base by 12,810 persons per year, indicating that by 2014 the Fort Pierce–Port St. Lucie MSA population will be 478,860. The number of households is projected to rise to 205,800 by 2014, or 5,910 annually.

Seasonal housing units are becoming an increasingly important part of the community and will gain momentum in the years to come. At this time, there are an estimated 21,836 seasonal units in the Fort Pierce–Port St. Lucie MSA and 3,950 in the city of Port St. Lucie. In Port St. Lucie, the number of seasonal units has increased by an average of 659 since 2000. Over the next decade, the number of seasonal units is estimated to increase by 1,490 annually to almost 19,000 seasonal units by 2014.

When seasonal households are combined with a current inventory of 2,444 hotel/lodging units, and the eight recreational vehicle parks in St. Lucie County, the panel estimates the annual number of visitors to the county at 900,000.

The panel estimates that the total housing demand for the Fort Pierce–Port St. Lucie MSA is projected to increase by about 8,400 units per year through 2014. Of that total, single-family units will account for 6,060 units, attached (townhome/condominium) units will account for 1,070 units, and multifamily rental units will account for 1,260.

The housing demand in the city of Port St. Lucie is estimated to be for 5,420 units annually, of which 3,800 will be for single-family units, 670 will be for townhome/condominium units, and 950 will be for multifamily rental units. The current median family income in St. Lucie County is \$53,352, which indicates that the average resident can afford a moderate-priced residence. Only 50 percent of the community can afford a single-family home priced above \$165,000. There will be pressure to ensure that housing policies are in place to allow for adequate workforce housing because the city is extremely vulnerable to an increase in interest rates. For example, a 1 percent increase in interest rates would cause the affordable median home price to decrease by approximately \$19,000. On the other side, 40 percent of the market can afford a home priced above \$200,000 and only 20 percent of the market can afford a home priced above \$300,000.

Employment Projections

The Fort Pierce–Port St. Lucie MSA, comprising St. Lucie and Martin counties, has a current employment base of 154,556. The employment base has grown to this level from 33,285 in 1970. Over the last ten years, the region has added 4,210 jobs annually. Services and construction lead the way in industry growth, followed by wholesale and retail trade.

Over the next decade, the panel believes that the Fort Pierce–Port St. Lucie MSA can grow by 6,040 jobs annually, again led by services, construction, retail, and wholesale trade if the increased economic development strategies discussed later in this section are undertaken and coordinated in the region.

Efforts are underway to attract industries to the area that include biotechnology, distribution, and services. Jobs that will be most beneficial to the

area will be those in industries that are less affected by interest rate increases, service jobs in the medical and research industries, and government jobs (police, fire, educational, and administrative jobs). These employees are much more likely to become more established in the community, be less transitory, and help create community spirit and identity. Although the construction industry supplies a large number of jobs to the region, minor increases in interest rates, public policies, or economic changes can have sudden and dramatic impacts. Also, while service jobs such as hospitality, food service, call centers, and retail have added to the job base, many of these employees lack sufficient income to take part in the long-term economic vitality of the city.

Diversification and Expansion of Employment

Diversification and expansion of the employment base are two of the city's key concerns. The job base has an overabundance of lower-wage jobs, with few jobs available for professionals in areas other than government and medical research. During the panel's interviews, it became apparent that some major institutional employers were having trouble attracting and retaining staff due to the lack of employment opportunities for a primary household wage earner who is in a professional or management field. Likewise, graduates of local schools who grew up in the Port St. Lucie area often move away because they find few opportunities to keep them there.

The current tax base is overwhelmingly residential and retail, which is not adequate to cover gaps in basic infrastructure such as schools, roads, and other public and community facilities. Communities often seek a balance in jobs and housing, expressed in a jobs/housing ratio that takes into account the local labor force. Port St. Lucie has a high unemployment rate and a rather low labor force participation rate. There is a clear need for more employment. A more diversified job base will benefit the whole community. The key question is how to achieve that better job base and what level of employment versus housing the city should be seeking.

Jobs/Housing Ratio

The ratio of jobs to housing is at the lower end, at about one to one. Without concentrated efforts to improve the situation, it will be difficult to maintain even the current level of jobs to housing. The panel's projections indicate there is a potential to increase the level of job creation in the MSA from the current level of about 4,000 up to 6,000 in the MSA per year if the major efforts outlined in the report are undertaken. Without these efforts, the current level of job creation is more likely to continue at its lower level. These higher metropolitan projections show a capture of about 26,000 jobs in St. Lucie County (including the cities), while household increases are about 54,000 households over a ten-year period. This new development would result in a 0.48 jobs-to-housing ratio, only half the existing ratio. When new development is added to the base, the resulting ratio will be significantly lower. This suggests that a dramatic increase in economic development activities will be required as outlined below.

Recommendations for Jobs/Housing Ratio. The panel recommends that the city obtain available statistics to monitor the balance of jobs and households more closely, and calculate this ratio on at least a yearly basis. If the ratio falls below a threshold of about 0.8 job per household, then the city should not rezone any commercial land to residential.

Commercial/Industrial Zoned Land

Land zoned for commercial and industrial uses will need to be created in both the annexed area or on infill sites in the city. Given current levels of job growth and commercial development activity, the new master-planned developments would seem to have at least doubled the level of acreage that can be absorbed over the next ten years. From a purely private market perspective, these developers are taking a great risk that this land can be marketed successfully. From a public policy point of view, it is in the best interests of the city and county governments that these lands be made available and the infrastructure be in place for immediate occupancy. The city and its economic development partners need to look closely at ways to share in the marketing and provide infrastructure as a marketing tool to attract appropriate

users. It is imperative that the region step up its economic development activities dramatically. The city cannot do this alone.

Recommendations for Commercial/Industrial Zoned Land. The panel recommends that the city provide more immediately available land for commercial, office, and industrial uses. Such parcels must be well located with regard to transportation and visibility along major routes. With north-south access and high visibility, the I-95 corridor is clearly a major asset. The designated lots must be ready for users. Investment in finished lots is very important so that the infrastructure is there for immediate occupancy by a user. Utility service also must be in place to avoid concerns about future availability. Industrial parks of adequate size and facilities will be important to attract users. Sites of 100 to 250 acres are desirable to accommodate expansion and to allow for related users to cluster.

The city should also increase staffing and funding for economic development for the region to be effective in capturing the market. The current level of funding—about \$350,000—is inadequate to get the job done. An appropriate level of staffing with several additional economic development professionals who have the resources to get their message out is critical. The panel recommends a continued and expanded joint effort by St. Lucie, Indian River, and Martin counties and by the municipalities of Port St. Lucie, Fort Pierce, and Stuart. A Web site and appropriate marketing materials ought to be developed. These should include the following:

- elements that promote a varied housing stock, ranging from affordable units in the city to new master-planned communities and the estate areas along the waterfront;
- a large labor force;
- an available land inventory; and
- other government incentives.

The organization must also have the operating funds for required trips to meet prospects or to go to conferences and events.



An incentive program also must be created by the city of Port St. Lucie and be adequately funded. Key elements of such a program should strive to achieve the following for both the private and public sectors.

Private Sector

- Provide and hold finished commercial/industrial land.
- Contribute to economic development funding.
- Donate land, provide rent concessions, or make other contributions where necessary.

Public Sector

- Offer tax abatement to allow land to be held for longer-term industrial development.
- Develop infrastructure, including water/sewer and roadways.
- Provide the entitlements/zoning for a balanced community.
- Maintain an expedited permitting process—a “green-tape zone” as opposed to red tape.

- Set up a “one-stop shop” permitting process for large developments.
- Contribute to economic development funding.
- Give incentives to major employers such as tax abatement or a fund to reward job creation.
- Fund programs to train the labor force.

Regional Cooperation

It is recommended that Port St. Lucie and the surrounding communities align their interests and develop a shared vision to market the area. The current friction and lack of shared goals will not be effective in attracting companies. Companies look for a leadership base that is cohesive and has developed a shared vision of what the community can be, and is working to find the resources for roads, schools, and community facilities that are needed.

The city should engage the private sector by guiding and participating in economic development marketing and strategy. Many business and civic leaders have much to offer in developing a strategic plan and undertaking some of the marketing efforts. Taking advantage of the abilities and re-

Figure 1
Port St. Lucie Land Use Mix, 2004–2014

Land Use	Ten-Year Projected Demand	Approved or in Process Annexation Area	Process East of I-95	Surplus (Deficit)
Residential				
Residential (units)	54,204	30,952	36,715	13,467
Commercial				
Retail (square feet)	2,925,000	4,154,720	600,000	1,829,720
Office (square feet)	1,924,700	4,198,500	768,000	3,041,800
Industrial (square feet)	2,070,000	6,544,000	832,000	5,306,000
Subtotal	6,919,700	14,897,220	2,200,000	10,177,520
Hotel/Lodging (rooms)	850	1,450	250	850

Figure 2
Port St. Lucie Public Facilities, 2004–2014

Land Use	Ten-Year Projected Demand	Approved or in Process Annexation Area	Process East of I-95	Surplus (Deficit)
Elementary/Middle Schools	14	3	0	(11)
High Schools	4	1	0	(3)
Fire Stations	9	1	1	(7)
Police Substations	2	0	1	(1)
Medical Facilities (beds)	300	200	106	6

sources of the existing community and embracing the ideas and resources available through new private sector partners in the area is critical. Monthly meetings, retreats to develop ideas and partnerships, and identification of actions the region must take are important. Other communities in Florida have undertaken these efforts and much can be learned from their approach.

So that marketing efforts can be focused on the most desirable industries, the panel recommends that the city commission a target industry study to determine which industries are likely to have the best fit with the assets of the region. This study will guide the future strategic plan. The emphasis should be on attracting and retaining more professional, executive, and managerial jobs, with less emphasis on retail and low-wage service jobs. Manufacturing and the technology sectors, especially those that relate to the medical industries, would be good initial candidates. A target industry study and a strategic plan are most important.

The region needs to improve its educational options to attract major employers of professional

and technical workers who seek worthwhile opportunities for their families. These companies may also need assistance in vocational technology training to make sure the existing labor force has the technical skills appropriate for their company.

Land Use Opportunities

With the tremendous amount of growth expected in Port St. Lucie, there are numerous needs and opportunities for development. The city needs to be prepared to capture the economic activity.

Office and Industrial

In addition to demand for residential units, the community will need to promote office and industrial opportunities. Based on projections of employment and visitation for the region, assuming that there are adequate policies and incentives in place to attract employers, the Fort Pierce–Port St. Lucie MSA, as estimated by the panel, could have an annual demand for 313,780 square feet of office space. Approximately 65 percent of that demand, or 203,960 square feet, may find its way to the city of Port St. Lucie, if appropriate sites are

available and other economic development activities take place.

The panel believes an annual demand for 460,050 square feet of industrial space in the Fort Pierce–Port St. Lucie MSA could be achieved with appropriate stepped-up efforts in economic development. Of that total, 207,200 square feet, or 35 percent, could be captured in the city of Port St. Lucie.

The panel's estimates for office and industrial space appear to be well above historical production and absorption of office and industrial space. In order for the panel's projections of demand to become a reality, intense and coordinated efforts to create a "jobs corridor" in the city of Port St. Lucie should be undertaken. Without such efforts, the panel's estimates for office and industrial demand could be significantly overstated.

Lodging

Forty-four hotel/lodging facilities are located in St. Lucie County and contain 2,444 rooms. In addition, there are eight recreational vehicle parks. Occupancy rates average 62 percent annually. The panel estimates that 900,000 people visit the area annually and this is projected to grow to 1.1 million by 2014. In order to accommodate the visitor base (tourist and business), the St. Lucie County area will need to add over 1,000 hotel rooms during the next decade. Of that total, the panel estimates that 850 rooms will locate in the city of Port St. Lucie.

Retail

As the population, household, and business base expands in the area, additional demand for retail goods and services will follow. At this time, there is an estimated 3.2 million square feet of retail space in the city of Port St. Lucie. Based on the current number of households in the city and a median household income of \$44,232, there is a total demand for over 3.6 million square feet of space today. Therefore there is a retail leakage from the city of Port St. Lucie of nearly 400,000 square feet of retail space to other areas. In other words, out of every dollar spent on retail goods by a resident of Port St. Lucie, 11 cents are spent outside the area. Assuming sales per square foot of \$250, this translates into \$500,000 in losses of sales taxes to the city.

Over the next decade, the panel estimates there will be demand for an additional 2.9 million square feet of retail space in the city of Port St. Lucie. Assuming that retail sales average \$250 per square foot, this retail demand, if captured, would generate \$3.6 million in annual sales tax revenues to the city of Port St. Lucie, at current tax rates.

Summary of Land Use Opportunities

Based on the panel's findings and projections regarding market opportunities, Figure 1 offers a summary of land uses that are supportable in the city of Port St. Lucie over the next decade.

Of the total demand for residential and commercial development, a significant portion can be captured with appropriate expanded marketing efforts in proposed annexation area. The conceptual land use plan (on page 15) shows the location of housing, town centers, retail corridors, and employment areas. Based on the location of proposed annexations, access, utilities, and current land use plans approved in the annexation area, Figures 1 and 2 provide estimates of what the panel believes the land uses will be for the annexation area over the next decade.

Necessary Facilities and Support Services

In order to support this new growth, the city of Port St. Lucie will need to provide a variety of institutional and public services. Figure 2 shows the ten-year demand for public facilities in Port St. Lucie.

Schools

Schools will be one the greatest needs created by new population growth. At present, the school district is short of facilities and funding. Approximately 12 percent of the population in the region is between the ages of five and 14 years old, and 6 percent of the population is between 14 and 19. In the city of Port St. Lucie, these age groups will create approximately 25,170 new students, or 0.46 student per housing unit, of which 12,000 are in the annexation area. Over the next decade, 16,780 (8,000 in annexation area) will be in kindergarten through eighth grade and 8,390 (4,000 in annexation area) will be in ninth through 12th grade.

The panel has assumed that the typical K-8 school will accommodate 1,200 students and the typical high school will accommodate 2,200 students. Assuming the panel's projections are accurate, in the city of Port St. Lucie alone, there will be a need for 14 additional elementary and middle schools and four additional high schools. Of that total, seven elementary/middle schools and two high schools will need to be located in the annexation area.

Police

Police ratios in Port St. Lucie are currently set at 1.75 officers per 1,000 people. To maintain this ratio, the city will need to add 245 positions to the police force over the next decade based on the panel's projections, 115 of which will need to be added in the annexation area. This will require at least one major police station in the annexation area, in addition to the proposed facility near I-95 and Gatlin Boulevard.

Fire Protection Facilities

Fire protection facilities will need to be strategically placed in the community. The St. Lucie County Fire District currently provides one fire station per 14,000 people. Over the next decade, nine new fire stations will be needed to serve the city, four or five of which will be in the annexation area, based on the panel's projections.

Medical Facilities

Medical facilities also will be needed on the west side of Port St. Lucie in the annexation area. The current medical facility has 194 beds and has plans to expand to nearly 300 beds. While there are hospital facilities in Martin County and Fort Pierce, an additional 200- to 250-bed hospital and support facilities should be added in the annexation area.

Recreation Facilities

Recreational facilities, in addition to the standard park requirements, should include at least one major community/recreational center in the annexation area and a satellite municipal library.

Community Design

One of the unique design challenges presented by Port St. Lucie is the complexity of knitting together two communities of very different vintages. While it is not uncommon to have new forms of development spring up and adjoin older, more historic patterns of settlement, the challenge in Port St. Lucie is complicated not only by the form and uniformity of the GDC lot pattern, but also by the fact that about 50 percent of the platted area has yet to be built out.

This creates both design opportunities and challenges. The opportunity is the lower cost of land assemblage of undeveloped lots that may be required to “retrofit” the land use pattern to make it more consistent with best practices in community development. The challenge rests in creating a more consistent fabric and neighborhood structure than that which is currently in place.

In approaching this challenge, the city of Port St. Lucie cannot act as a passive administrator. The city, for better or worse, has inherited the unusual role of becoming the “master developer” of the platted lots. In this capacity, the city has already demonstrated leadership and creativity through the delivery of “gray infrastructure”—water and sewer facilities. The city must continue a diligent program of enhancing and upgrading each neighborhood to keep pace with new development occurring west of I-95, or risk losing the value created in the platted lots. The panel sees one potential future for Port St. Lucie that looks like this:

As the newly developed area west of I-95 continues to flood the market with appealing residential choices close to amenities and employment, new parks, and walkable streets, the eastern neighborhood’s advantage will be limited to cheaper lot pricing. The ultimate end of this scenario is an eroded tax base and pockets of socioeconomically challenged residents.

To avoid this potential future, the city, wearing its master developer’s hat, must move from being basic utility provider to neighborhood builder.

Creating a Plan

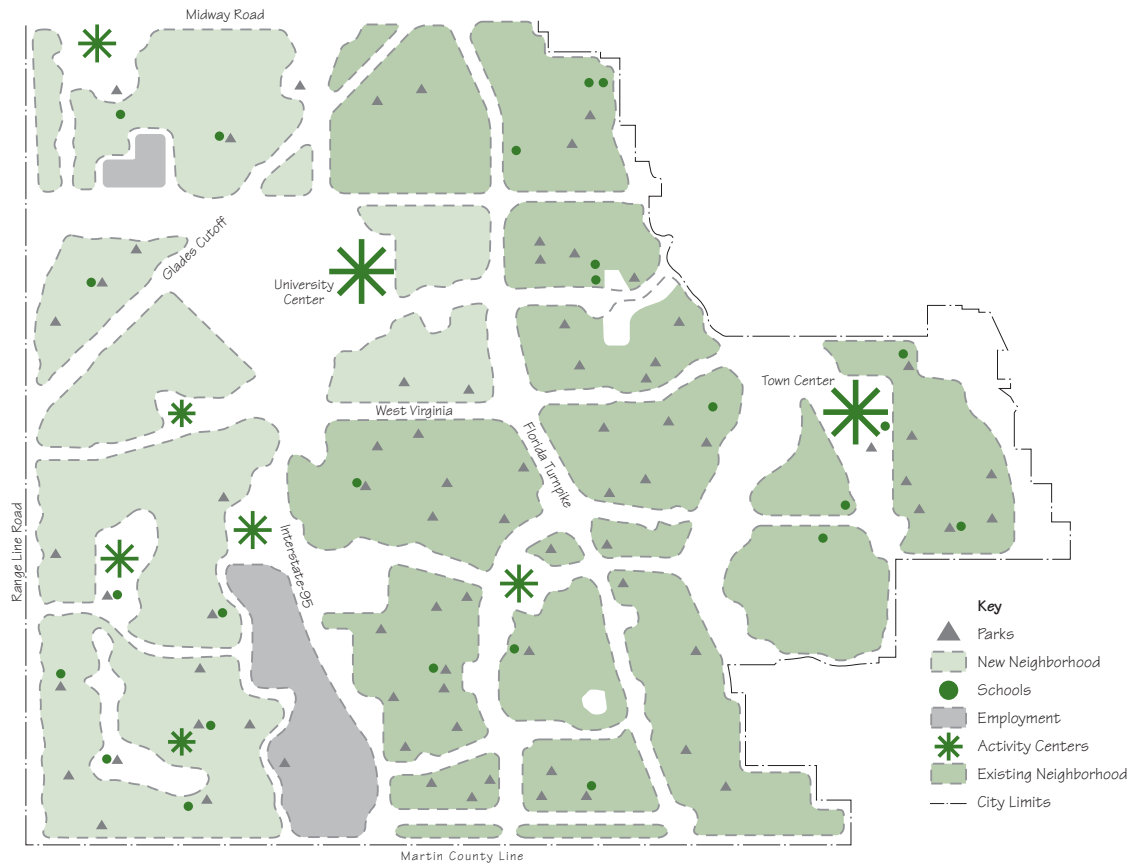
The plan the panel has developed provides only a small number of ideas and best practices employed elsewhere. The city must undertake aggressive and creative efforts to develop a “villages and neighborhoods” master plan for the area east of I-95. (See neighborhood plan diagram.) The panel focused on this area because the historic development pattern created by GDC does not reflect some of the essentials of strong neighborhood development that are being employed in the annexation area to the west such as:

- a hierarchy of streets that are interconnected;
- sidewalks separated from the roadway by a landscaped edge (tree lawn);
- bicycle trail options;
- a mix of housing types and lot sizes; and
- location of central facilities within walking distance of most residents.

The city’s current planning areas serve as a good platform for defining neighborhoods east of I-95. The panel recommends developing a hierarchy and vocabulary of neighborhood, village, and community facilities based on best practices employed in both developed cities and new communities.

The panel’s recommended organizing principles include certain typologies. The neighborhood plan is a detailed version of the conceptual land use plan, showing current and future neighborhoods, locations of schools, town centers, parks, and employment areas. Port St. Lucie should review

The panel's neighborhood plan.



Don Bauer working on the neighborhood plan.



these specific metrics against existing conditions and patterns of development to confirm or refine the specific sizing criteria.

Neighborhood

There should be 1,500 to 2,000 residences with a clear focus, such as a small five- to eight-acre park. Depending on its proximity to major transportation, a small (1,500- to 3,000-square-foot) neighborhood-serving commercial area may be supportable. Each neighborhood should have an identifiable name and a clear set of internal streets that connect to the larger collector street system. Neighborhoods should include an elementary school.

Village

Three to five neighborhoods make up a village. Each village should have a clear focus that may include a village park (five to ten-plus acres), a middle school, and a village commercial center (5,000 to 50,000 square feet in size) that offers daily goods and services.

Community

More than two villages make up a community. Each community should offer its villages a variety of services that afford amenities to residents, including a community park (ten to 20-plus acres), a community shopping center (100,000-plus square feet), a high school, and a library.

Using this hierarchy, and based on the panel's initial concept, the panel envisions that the city's area east of I-95 can be easily organized into 28 neighborhoods, gathered into eight villages, as part of four communities.

A Village Planning Process

This concept should be confirmed as part of a city-sponsored village and neighborhood planning process. Once neighborhoods are designated, a public planning process that includes the resi-

dents of each neighborhood should be undertaken to help identify and organize the elements that will make each neighborhood unique. The panel recommends the following three-step process as a minimum.

- A data-gathering and analysis phase can help to ascertain and update detailed information for each neighborhood, including existing conditions, areas of concern, level of homeownership, and number of units built, under construction, and in review. Proposed roadway, utility, park, or civic improvements that may affect the neighborhood should be identified.
- A public workshop should be held, where collected data are shared and confirmed, and a vision for the neighborhood can be created. The workshop might take several evenings or a full weekend, and should be managed by a professional facilitator. The output from the workshop should include a confirmed set of existing conditions, an understanding of potential future impacts, a shared vision for the neighborhood, a list of desired program elements for each neighborhood, and a concept plan for locating those elements.
- The neighborhood plan is a written and graphic document created for each neighborhood that describes the concepts developed at the workshop and establishes a physical plan that will serve as a basis for review and future capital budgeting. A plan for implementation, design guidelines, the relationship of the plan's elements to existing city ordinances, and roles and responsibilities should all be identified as part of the plan.

Good examples of this process and products can be obtained from the cities of Denver, Phoenix, Seattle, Portland, and Washington, D.C.

Adding Value to Existing Neighborhoods

A menu of neighborhood upgrades is recommended by the panel, as a way to cost-effectively create identity, amenity, and additional value in each of the neighborhoods. While the neighborhood planning process will create a forum for

refining these elements and their location, several elements that the panel felt would be important for the city to be prepared to discuss include the following.

Pocket Parks

Pocket parks can be a quarter-acre (i.e., one lot) up to a half-acre (two lots). They should provide opportunities for passive (sitting, reading, picnicking) and active (tot lot, throwing a Frisbee) recreation. Park spaces should be designed and located to provide a source of pride to the neighbors. For security purposes, such public spaces should be easily viewed from the street, creating a sense of ownership. A pocket park should be no more than a half-mile from the furthest residence, and ideally each resident would be within a quarter-mile walking distance.

Enhanced Streets

A clear circuit of streets within each neighborhood should be identified for upgrading including the addition of sidewalks, streetlights, and street trees. The panel recognizes that upgrading every street would be cost prohibitive, but creating a single loop of streets that acts as the primary circulation route for vehicles and pedestrians will further reinforce each neighborhood's functionality and identity. The concept includes improving the street design cross section within these streets to include a separated, five-foot sidewalk and a street-tree planting program on 30- to 40-foot centers, along both sides of the street. The panel also recommends that each neighborhood be given a specific type of tree for its street, and that homeowners be encouraged to plant at least one of these trees in their frontyards. In this way, the identity of each neighborhood is further reinforced by its landscape overstory.

Signage and Lighting

The city should explore the possible implementation of a signage system that helps to demarcate each neighborhood and village. In addition, each village should have a unique streetlight fixture as a way to reinforce neighborhoods and villages.

Design Review

The use of design guidelines may be desirable for some of the neighborhoods that are least built



Above: A typical street in the Tradition development with wide sidewalks, planting strips, street trees, and decorative lighting. Right: To accommodate rush-hour traffic, Port St. Lucie Boulevard has a wide right-of-way.



out—for example, planning areas 1, 4N, and 4S—as a way to protect or increase property values and make the eastern neighborhoods competitive with recently annexed master-planned communities. Guidelines could be presented either as true guidelines (offered to suggest compatible design elements and character without formal review) or as a requirement prior to receiving a building permit. If a neighborhood expresses an interest in having guidelines during the village and neighborhood planning process, it may be worth the effort to test the concept on a small scale to understand the level of public acceptance, administrative requirements, and impact on adding value to existing neighborhoods.

Recommendations for a Design Review Process

The city should establish a design review process that can be given to homebuilders and prospective lot buyers, to share ideas and “best practices” in design.

To gauge the level of interest in having a formal design review process applied to one existing neighborhood as a test case, the impacts (both positive and negative) of a design review process and the administrative costs of managing such a process should be monitored. It is recommended that the existing citywide design standards as a model, with helpful sketches of appropriate details such as porches, rooflines, and building massing. Information on building setting with a preference for “push-backed garages” (detached and pushed to rear of the yard) or side-entry garages also should be included.

Design Guidelines

The city’s existing design guidelines for commercial, industrial, residential, office, and institutional sites provide a good basis for nonresidential development. The panel recommends that these be further strengthened by emphasizing stronger landscaping and siting guidelines to include:

- a minimum number of trees per parking space ratio to reduce heat island effects;
- shared parking and driveways;
- more specific criteria to generate a stronger building plane along public streets with parking in the rear; and
- reduction or elimination of curb cuts on major arterials, relying instead on rear access to parking, served from shared entries.

In addition, the city should look for select areas where an increased height might be permitted to create a more varied skyline and to define identifiable centers more clearly.

Connecting the Communities

While Port St. Lucie enjoys the advantages inherent in strong north-to-south access, it suffers from a lack of strong east-to-west connectivity. While

recently completed or proposed arterial improvements will significantly enhance vehicular movement, connecting the communities “psychologically,” feeling part of the larger city, knowing one’s neighbors, and sharing in the city’s sense of pride are much harder to achieve.

Port St. Lucie now has the opportunity to offer existing and prospective residents a variety of residential options ranging from new, resort-oriented communities to more traditional neighborhoods. What is needed, however, to avoid becoming a collection of disaggregated subdivisions is a variety of connections that include vehicular; walking and biking; parks and open space; civic and institutional; and lifestyle.

The last items on the list are much harder to “engineer,” but in today’s competitive economy are as important as, if not more important than, sewer and water considerations. The panel’s recommendations to achieve these objectives are described below.

Vehicular

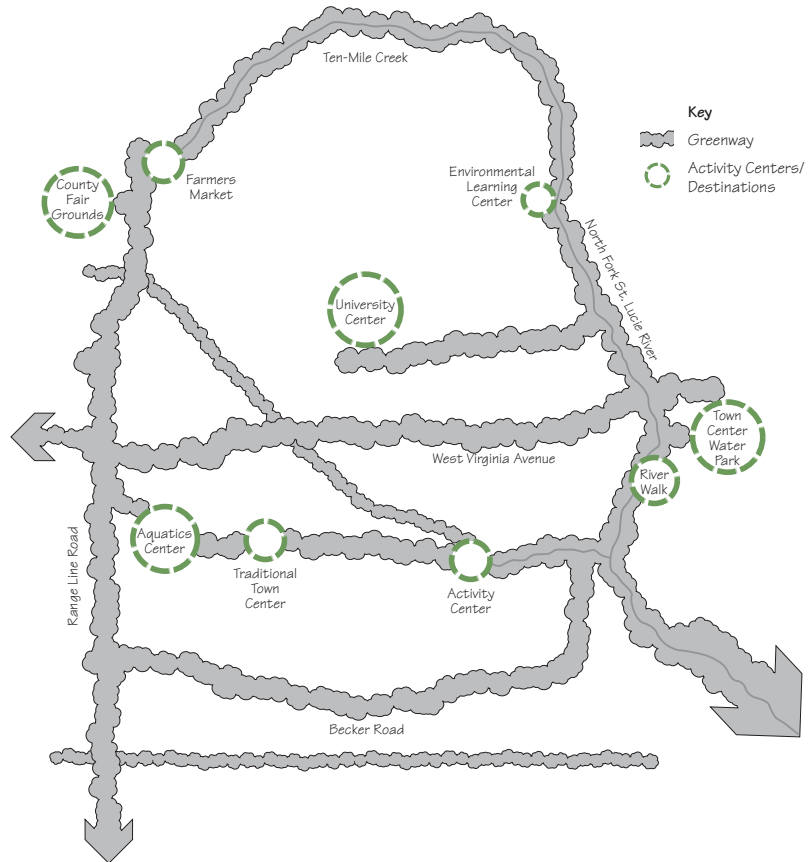
The city should move ahead rapidly with its plans for arterial upgrades, including the major redevelopment and expansion of West Virginia Avenue and the expansion of Becker Road and Parr Avenue as new east-to-west connectors. The street design cross sections employed to date, with medians, separated sidewalks, and generous landscaping, are to be applauded and should be continued. (See traffic circulation plan diagram on page 26.)

Walking and Biking

In addition to arterial improvements, every effort should be made to offer a complete and interconnected pedestrian and bicycle trail system that provides transportation options throughout the community. In neighborhoods, on-street bike lanes are adequate to accommodate bicycle traffic. At the village and community level, dedicated bike lanes should be included in roadway designs either as an additional eight feet in the road or as a completely separate paved lane, detached from the roadway and distinct from pedestrian paths.

Parks and Open Space

While Port St. Lucie has a number of park sites, it lacks an interconnected system of parks or a clear



Greenway network plan.

hierarchy of open space. Also, it does not appear to have a wide variety of parks, which would provide a diversity that residents might enjoy.

A parks and recreation master plan ought to be created based on outputs of the 2001 Needs Assessment. The plan should show an integrated and diverse set of recreational opportunity locations and be updated annually to reflect the needs of the increasing population, as well as sites required in recently annexed property. The parks and open space need to be linked by roads and bicycle and pedestrian trails, with clear signage, creating a recreation network throughout the city. The greenway network plan shows the connections among parks and civic places through trails, bike lanes, and roads. (See greenway network plan diagram on page 23.)

Civic and Institutional

The civic and institutional backbone of the community consists of its schools, public buildings,

community centers, and fire and police stations. A master plan approach would properly identify where these elements should be placed based on specific population projections and need, as well as where their presence would provide an important civic or landmark message. High-quality architecture that makes each of these buildings an icon of civic pride and commitment to a high quality of life should be considered essential in the budgeting process for each building.

Lifestyle

People's lifestyles—their aspirations, and how they spend their day working, playing, and learning—represent an important way to orga-

nize neighborhood elements and differentiate one living option from another. But while differentiation is key to both sales and diversity, providing an element of continuity throughout the community by creating a balance of facilities located along the community's interconnected trails and bikeway system will allow people to take full advantage of the community's offerings while enjoying a full lifestyle.

Transportation and Circulation

As the fastest-growing city in Florida, combined with its GDC legacy, Port St. Lucie has more than its fair share of traffic and transportation problems. During the interview process, the panel heard over and over about the unbearable traffic congestion and the need for new roads both in the annexation area and on the east side of town.

To address these issues, the panel created a transportation plan for the city. There are two major, interrelated components to the transportation plan: a major thoroughfares plan to provide circulation in the annexation area; and upgrades to the arterial street system in Port St. Lucie between I-95 and US 1. Coordinating those two components so that they work together will be essential to achieving a stable and prosperous future. (See traffic circulation plan diagram on page 26.)

Approximately 17 square miles of the study area's 42 square miles have already been annexed, and an additional 11 square miles are currently being considered for annexation. While some degree of roadway coordination between these developments has occurred, project proponents have been largely free to lay out a road network convenient to their development but not to the public at large (the Reserve provides the most obvious example). Limited coordination between county and city plans leaves open the issue of where to provide major streets and raises the risk of fragmenting the region's future transportation network, resulting in unnecessary congestion and limited job growth.

Annexation Area Recommendations

Annexation policies should require new development to connect wherever possible to both north/south and east/west arterials to provide good regional circulation and expedient emergency access. The panel suggests that the city adopt crite-

ria guiding the recommended arterial street system for the study area as follows.

- Locate primary arterials approximately every two miles to serve both north-to-south and east-to-west travel.
- Extend primary arterials connecting to I-95 and the Florida Turnpike west to Range Line Road.
- Space minor arterials at approximately one-mile intervals.
- Dedicate arterial rights-of-way prior to road construction and land development.

Street Standards

Current city standards governing arterial rights-of-way appear reasonable and should be continued. However, it may be useful to consider additional standards for local streets serving primarily residential areas to allow for a variety of housing developments that might, for example, propose alleys or alternate street widths and parking options, which are becoming increasingly common throughout the country. While the trend of developing private, gated residential enclaves continues locally, this may not always be the case, and the possibility remains that some private streets could eventually revert to the public. Appropriate standards, recognizing a variety of residential development patterns, would increase developers' flexibility and still assure the public of well-built streets. Figure 3 describes the current and recommended right-of-way street standards.

The panel recommends that the city follow the current adopted standards for arterial streets and augment the standards to define additional local street types. (See residential collector road diagram on page 27.)

Street Character

Port St. Lucie has established an attractive new standard of boulevard streets with planted medi-

Traffic circulation plan.



ans. Gatlin Boulevard is the most recent example. This is a distinctive local feature that should be emulated in the study area's streets with four or more lanes.

The Western Boundary of the Urban Service Area

Range Line Road forms the western limit of city water and sewer utility extensions. St. Lucie County sees Range Line Road as the limit of urban development. Three needs are apparent:

- Provide adequate circulation for new development east of Range Line Road;
- Demark the edge of the urban service area and the transition to rural lands; and
- Preserve a corridor for transportation, wildlife, and landscape enhancement.

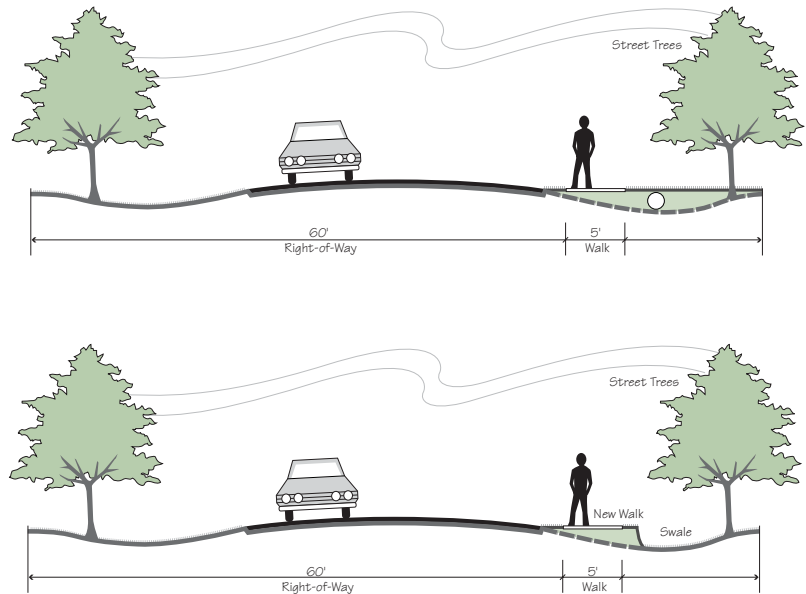
Preserving the edge of urban development for transportation and landscape enhancement can be accomplished by designating a corridor ranging from 500 to 1,000 feet in width that reserves up to 200 feet for transportation rights-of-way, and that creates a landscape buffer ranging from 150 to 300 feet and a trail corridor of 50 feet. The panel recommends that the city create a landscaped/wildlife/transportation corridor along Range Line Road. (See greenway corridor diagram on page 28.)

Connecting New Streets to Existing Streets

Linking the developing area west of I-95 to the existing city east of I-95 will be essential not only to maintain adequate circulation and road capacity, but also to build one city rather than two. Potential commercial development west of I-95 will attract residents from the east to work and shop. Port St. Lucie has already anticipated this need in its plan to upgrade and extend West Virginia Avenue from US 1 to the west side of I-95. Similar plans have been proposed for Becker Road.

Recommendations for Connections Between East and West

The panel strongly recommends completing the planned extensions of West Virginia Avenue and Becker Road west across I-95, and extending Parr Drive over I-95. It is also suggests that the city investigate a Parr Drive crossing of the turnpike to connect to South Bend Boulevard, which would

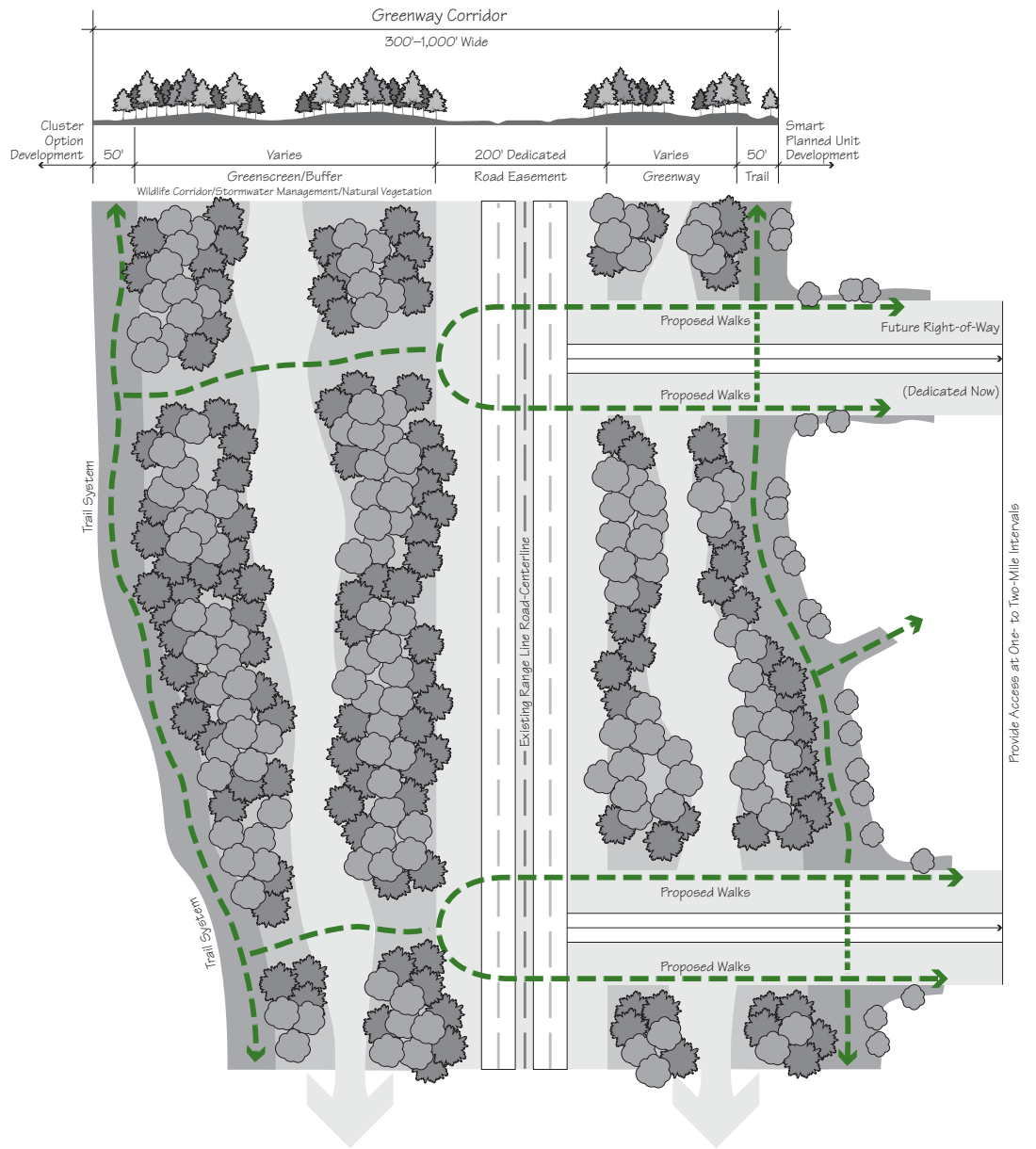


Above: The panel's residential collector road diagram shows a residential right-of-way with a five-foot sidewalk and underground stormwater drainage (top), and with an exposed swale (bottom). Left: A typical Port St. Lucie street section with swale and sidewalk.

Figure 3
Rights-of-Way Consistent with Adopted City Standards

Type of Street	Lanes	Right-of-Way (Feet)
Primary Arterial (divided)	4-6	130
Minor Arterial (divided)	2-4	100
Collector	2-4	80
Recommended Additional Standards		
Local (including alley)	1-2	16-60

Greenway corridor diagram.



relieve traffic on Port St. Lucie Boulevard and offer residents a new choice in traveling across town.

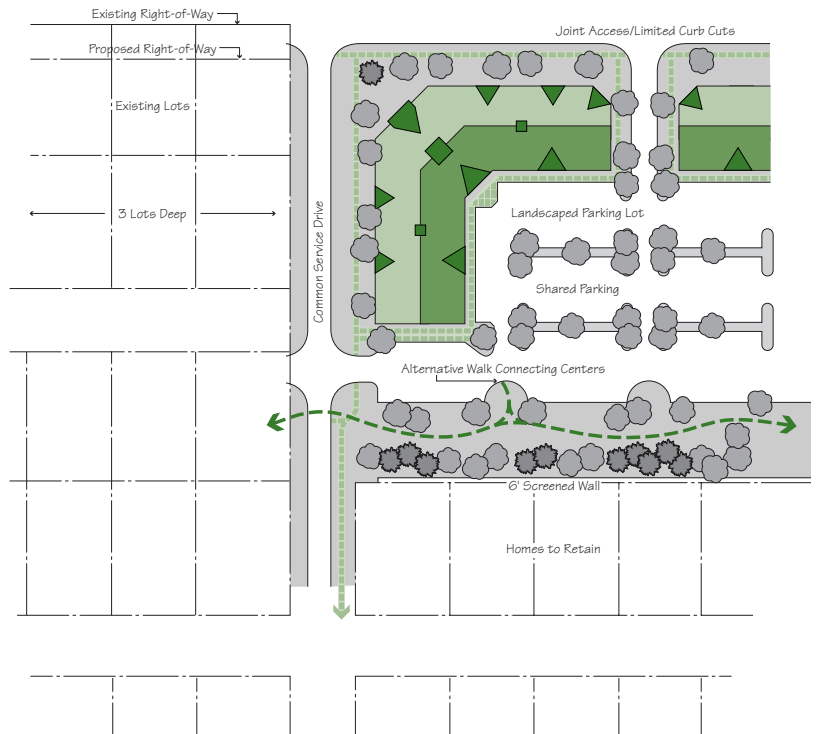
The panel strongly supports these plans as essential elements of the city's transportation improvement program. These connections should occur as soon as practicably possible.

Additional rights-of-way will be required in those corridors, necessitating purchase of residential lots. While expensive, early right-of-way purchases will prove less expensive than waiting and will enable timely road expansion to meet demand. The Conversion Alternative diagram shows how these rights-of-way, once acquired, can be designed to meet transportation needs while respecting the surrounding neighborhood.

Upgrades to the Local Street System

Many improvements have already been completed and others are underway to improve capacity and circulation within the city between I-95 and US 1. Most notable among these are the widening of Port St. Lucie Boulevard and Gatlin Boulevard, and the planned improvement to West Virginia Avenue. However, continued growth of this area will greatly increase traffic volumes over the next ten to 20 years. A variety of projections indicate traffic increases ranging from 30 to 100 percent over today's volumes on major streets.

Greater traffic demand will further burden an already congested street system. A study released in December 2003 (*St. Lucie County Developments of Regional Impact Transportation Study* [DRI], Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council) considered the effect of developments approved through the DRI process on countywide streets and highways through the year 2025. Even with already programmed improvements, future (2025) levels of service are projected to deteriorate on key streets including Port St. Lucie Boulevard, St. Lucie West Boulevard, Floresta Drive, California Boulevard, Commerce Center Parkway, and portions of US 1. The study also examined traffic conditions with and without West Virginia Avenue's upgrade and showed significant improvements with West Virginia Avenue in place, though not sufficient to alleviate all deficiencies.



Above: Conversion alternative diagram. Left: A house in the conversion zone on Port St. Lucie Boulevard in the process of being moved.

The panel recommends that the city seek additional capacity where possible to help reduce the demand on the already congested roads and to establish a greater hierarchy of streets to handle neighborhood trips, trips across neighborhoods, and those to regional highways, within the city and those without.

An enhanced street network consisting of additional collectors and arterials also helps define neighborhoods, locate neighborhood centers and parks, and develop trail systems. If neighborhood streets accommodate drivers making short trips,

Figure 4
Increases in Population, Housing, and Traffic, 2004–2014*

Land Use	East of I-95	Annexation Area	Entire City
Population	73,161	66,685	139,846
Single Family (units)	19,005	19,005	38,010
Attached Townhome (units)	3,186	3,522	6,708
Multifamily (units)	6,166	3,320	9,486
Total Residential (units)			54,204
Daily Auto Trips	253,000	246,000	499,000

*Projected.

Panelists Ralph Núñez and Ross Tilghman discussing the circulation plan.



traffic on arterial streets will be reduced, thereby minimizing the degree of future congestion.

Congestion Reduction Strategy

Given the amount of potential development and the fast pace at which it is happening, it is vital to the city's future to investigate now the effects of added traffic on the street system in order to identify the most effective transportation improvements. While the December 2003 Regional DRI study was one step in assessing those needs, much additional development may occur in the larger annexation area; it remains to be learned what effect additional growth will have on traffic. Figure 4 shows the ten-year increase in daily auto trips in relation to population and housing growth.

To anticipate levels of congestion and create effective measures to counter it, additional traffic mod-

eling is needed. The panel recommends that traffic modeling should:

- Test the performance of the arterial network in the entire annexation area using a range of land use assumptions for low, medium, and high levels of development. Such testing would confirm the minimally necessary street network to serve potential development and would allow priorities to be set for the sequence of street extensions.
- Investigate options to improve the city's existing local street network to minimize future congestion. This should begin as a pragmatic analysis to identify the most effective improvements, independent of cost and political considerations. Once the improvements have been identified, their costs should be estimated to determine which ones provide the greatest congestion relief for the money. The combination of congestion reduction and cost-effectiveness would allow a ranking of projects for public consideration.
- Improve the city's and county's ability to target exactions and impact fees to critical transportation projects required to support new development.
- Complete the congestion reduction analysis prior to any subsequent annexations, in order to incorporate appropriate road requirements in the annexation agreements.

Need for Cooperation

Future funding for transportation will have to come from a mix of local, state, and federal resources. Motor fuel taxes contribute a substantial share of money for capital projects and local taxes have been dedicated to capital projects (for example, a \$1 million levy contributes more than \$3 million per year to West Virginia Avenue's upgrade), but in themselves are not sufficient to meet all transportation investment needs. Additional federal money is available through the St. Lucie Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), approximately \$17 million of which has been allocated to the West Virginia Avenue project. Future needs will be in the range of several hundred million dollars.

To secure adequate future funding, excellent regional cooperation will be required to agree on investment priorities. In order to be eligible for state and federal funding, transportation projects must be listed in the region's Transportation Improvement Plan and in the MPO's Long-Range Transportation Plan. It is vital that regional leaders work together to address regional needs and set regional priorities to establish the strongest case for funding critical improvements.

The panel recommends that the city and county agree on a major thoroughfares plan for the annexation area, acknowledging the effects that development can have on roads outside a jurisdiction's boundary. They will also need to develop annexation policies that will address key transportation-related land use concerns.

Community Development Strategies

The preceding section presents an exciting vision for Port St. Lucie, as a unified and vibrant community of choice for existing and prospective residents. The vision combines many of the aspirations presented by the more than 40 people interviewed by the panel. Many common themes were heard, including the desire for a high quality of life, more employment opportunities, greater clarity about the future, the character resulting from imminent growth, and an appreciation of creating a positive image and relationships with neighboring communities.

These are complex issues that are not easily addressed using a checklist approach. There is no “recipe” for creating a high quality of life. However, national examples of best practices being used by comparable cities do exist. Drawing on the panelists’ experience in many of these communities, a series of recommendations have been prepared that will help shape and direct the long-term development of Port St. Lucie as a “community beyond its real estate.”

While the panel was asked primarily to address issues related to the annexation land to the west, it was difficult and considered somewhat dangerous to look at only the annexation issue without considering the community as a whole. The panel’s primary concern lies in what might be the unintended consequences of building a new west side of Port St. Lucie while neglecting the eastern side of the city, and in the end bringing the entire community down. The panel encourages a balanced investment in both the existing and new areas of the city.

Toward this end, the panel’s recommendations fall into two categories: community-wide strategies and annexation strategies. It is important to emphasize that neither of these should be considered mutually exclusive, and that each recommendation is contingent on the success and concurrent implementation of the other recommendations.

Community-wide Strategies

As Port St. Lucie grows, pressures and impacts on surrounding communities will intensify accordingly. When dealing with land use and development issues, communities can no longer look only within their boundaries.

Creating an Environment of Collaboration

Traffic movement, employment opportunities, and stormwater and drainage considerations are just a few of the growth and development issues that are blind to political boundaries. As Port St. Lucie charts a path for its future, with an emphasis on high-quality job creation and continually improving quality of life for its residents, it cannot ignore its neighbors.

It was obvious from the interviews conducted that there is widespread concern that the city has not been communicating effectively with its neighbors. On the other hand, the city is frustrated with current methods of interjurisdictional coordination. The problem is so great, and takes so much of people’s energy, that it is undermining the city’s future objectives. Threatened lawsuits or withdrawal of funding detracts from the city’s potential for job creation and the development of a sustainable community.

For example, any Fortune 500 company that might consider locating a facility in Port St. Lucie would only have to check the archives of the local media to come up with an extensive list of headline articles that show that the city, county, and neighboring communities are combative, conflicted, and uncooperative.

The city of Port St. Lucie’s Comprehensive Plan contains an intergovernmental coordination element, the purpose of which is to identify and resolve incompatible goals, objectives, and policies, among developments proposed and to determine and respond to the needs for coordination with ad-

adjacent local, regional, and state agencies. The document identifies all of the agencies with which the city must coordinate its plans and establishes methods to communicate with all affected or involved parties. Clearly stated in the plan is the goal to establish effective coordination measures among pertinent public and quasi-public entities to best maintain Port St. Lucie's quality of life and efficient use of resources. In order to address this goal, the objective states that formal, specific means of coordination with adjacent municipalities, state, and federal agencies that have permitting and regulating authority, and quasi-public entities that provide services but lack regulatory authority in Port St. Lucie must be established.

It is the panel's recommendation that the city undertake new methods of intergovernmental relations to assist in obtaining regional support for city growth objectives. If Port St. Lucie were to take the lead in creating a new forum, it could potentially gain valuable support from its neighbors for its land use planning and annexation initiatives. Other benefits may include agreements on a consensus approach with the state legislature, pooling of resources for attracting high-quality businesses and jobs, and avoidance of potential litigation or state intervention.

Specific Recommendations

The panel recommends that Port St. Lucie immediately recognize that the city's current image and desirability to employers are severely compromised by the poor press it generates. As such, the city should follow guidelines established in the city's Comprehensive Plan on Intergovernmental Coordination.

It is also recommended that Port St. Lucie convene a regional task force to discuss regional coordination issues including traffic and circulation, infrastructure, growth management, land use, and job creation. Because of his reputation as an effective mediator, Senator Ken Pruitt would be an excellent leader to convene such a task force. The city should consider inviting Indian River Community College and Florida Atlantic University to host and facilitate this ongoing task force.

The objective would be to address issues of regional concern and create a vehicle for fostering

intergovernmental dialogue and cooperation. The task force should be composed of the top elected official and the chief administrative officer of each agency. Initial membership should include the cities of Port St. Lucie, Fort Pierce, and Stuart, and the counties of Saint Lucie, Indian River, and Martin.

Creating a Clear and Compelling Vision

As people and employers increasingly have more and more choices of where to locate, they will constantly look for cities that offer a high quality of life and a vision of a future that is compelling and captivating. In the coming decade, people will have increased mobility, and as such they will be carefully analyzing their options in light of education, amenities, security, affordability, and opportunities for personal growth.

Many cities have taken a cue from successful planned communities, creating an image of vibrancy, opportunity, and quality to express to potential employers and residents what moving to their community might mean.

Currently, Port St. Lucie offers many attractive attributes: access to high-quality housing at a reasonable price, good north/south access, a fiscally responsible city government, a favorable climate, and proximity to the ocean.

What the city does not have is a clear understanding of what it is today and, more important, what it wants to be tomorrow. Without a clear vision that engages residents, excites prospective employers, and guides the look and feel of future development, the city risks becoming nothing more than a collection of disconnected subdivisions with common water and sewer infrastructure. Therefore, to clarify and formalize the city's vision of the future, a number of steps should be taken.

Cities across the country are beginning to understand the powerful economic driver that is "city image creation." New York City, Baltimore, Roanoke, Philadelphia, Asheville, and others of all population sizes have taken to heart lessons learned from the corporate world on brand management. Cities now understand that creating and managing an image is good policy. Clearly, Port St. Lucie is a candidate for image clarifica-

tion and brand awareness. Not a task to be taken lightly, the image creation process begins with a common vision for the city.

Implementation Methods

The panel recommends that a visioning exercise be conducted with interdisciplinary participants from the public and private sectors to begin to crystallize an image for the city. This report may start the process, but the authorship of identity must come from within, with the goal being consensus on a city image that can then be communicated to many different types of constituents. City image plays a major role in economic development strategies. The benefits of clarity of image are innumerable.

- Conduct consumer focus groups as well as mail and Internet surveys to discern the current image of Port St. Lucie.
- Publish the findings of the focus groups and surveys and then act on the results.
- Use many different vehicles to reinforce the city's image; newspaper advertising, public relations, street banners, and an engaging Port St. Lucie Web site that is constantly updated.
- Augment funding through dollars derived from visitors and convention bureau tourism.

A Community of Vibrant, Connected Neighborhoods

The legacy of GDC is a classic case of making lemonade out of lemons. What some areas of Florida have as an almost intractable anchor for their community's growth and image—subdivision lots—Port St. Lucie has creatively turned into a significant asset and attractant for entrepreneurs looking to build and families seeking to buy affordable homes.

While the primary focus of the study is the annexation area, the panel feels strongly that the retention of and reinvestment into existing neighborhoods is equally important to maintain the quality of the community. Older neighborhoods can easily deteriorate if their housing stock is not maintained with special care. As momentum moves to new development at the western edge, the stabil-

ity of older properties and neighborhoods could become more problematic.

Code Enforcement

The city's code enforcement program seems to have been shifted from one department to another. The panel suggests that it be included with other neighborhood housing programs and that it be used as part of a comprehensive neighborhood reinvestment program. The focus of this effort should be on both rental properties and those owner-occupied housing units that are in a state of decline. The program needs an adequate level of staffing and good management to be an effective and welcomed approach to community maintenance.

Rental Properties

A concentration of single-family rental homes in an older area can often suffer from a lack of maintenance. Regular code enforcement of such properties will ensure that they are maintained. The signal to landlords that the city requires a basic level of maintenance will go a long way toward stabilizing neighborhoods.

Owner-Occupied Problem Properties

Some properties are not well maintained even by owners. Such properties usually are well known by neighbors and are of concern to surrounding landowners because of their effect on property values. Code enforcement should entail a complaint process to notify the city of the state of such properties. Rehabilitation loans, such as those available through the State Housing Improvement Program for those people who are financially strapped and who qualify for low- or moderate-income loans or grants, should be made available. Occasionally, people who do have the resources to maintain their properties do not do so. In this case, code enforcement is often the best way to effect change.

Licensing of All Rental Properties

Licensing of rental properties is a good way both to identify them and, when necessary, to contact the owners or rental agents responsible if either maintenance problems or tenancy problems occur. Notice of changes in laws or upcoming meetings or events can then be sent out. Training and infor-

mation forums will allow local landlords to become more informed and more effective in their duties.

Adequacy of Codes

Landlord/tenant law ensures that the rights and responsibilities of both landlords and tenants are understood. A minimal housing code should include, in addition to health and safety regulations, the minimum maintenance and occupancy standards. A landlord/tenant mediation staff or commission can be employed to resolve major disputes regarding maintenance, security deposits, and other serious issues.

The panel recommends that Port St. Lucie expand its code enforcement program focusing on rental properties, as well as limited owner-occupied code enforcement for problem properties, and establish a rental housing licensing program. It also should review its housing code and landlord/tenant code to ensure their enforceability.

Workforce Housing

In Port St. Lucie, the promise of homeownership for people of all incomes, including working families and retirees, has been a source of pride. The balance of housing at all prices has been skewed to the moderate end of the spectrum. Recent statistics show that the double-digit increase in the prices of homes will quickly reduce the affordability of housing in the older area. The provision of sewer and water lines caused the value of lots to shoot upward. The new communities, with their emphasis on amenities and lifestyle, provide a much-needed upper end to the housing market.

If this trend continues, the panel is concerned that housing may become increasingly unaffordable to moderate-income households, including teachers, nurses, firefighters, and police officers, as well as to entry-level workers in many private industries. This trend has been witnessed nationally in markets with similar growth profiles.

A primary goal should be to maintain a high level of affordability for people who make up the workforce of Port St. Lucie. This should be achieved through the creation of mixed-income communities throughout the city, especially in newer de-

velopments coming on line at the city's western boundary.

The city's leadership needs to monitor housing affordability and make sure that it is not lost as the city grows, and that all affordable housing is not concentrated in one area of the community.

Need to Define Workforce Housing

The panel recommends that Port St. Lucie clearly define what constitutes workforce housing in the community (typically, housing that can be purchased by individuals making 80 to 120 percent of median income) and monitor housing prices and availability of housing that is accessible to people in this income range. The city should encourage developers of new planned community developments to include products that meet this threshold as an appropriate part of their product offerings.

If these strategies do not work, more specific affordable housing strategies should be followed. The city should develop rental garden apartment properties, with some owned by nonprofit organizations or for-profit developers using tax credit and bond programs under the Florida Low-Income Tax Credit (FLITC) program. Operated through the state, it provides tax credits to raise needed equity, and low-interest bond financing to keep costs low. The program has income restrictions—namely, most residents must be in the range of 50 to 60 percent of areawide median income, in effect the moderate-income population seeking rental units.

The city should establish inclusionary zoning programs to provide for-sale or rental units to moderate-income households. Additional density on a given property is allowed if a developer sets aside 10 to 15 percent of the units for moderate-income purchasers and imposes resale restrictions on those units. Such programs can be voluntary or mandatory or apply only to certain zones or developments of a certain size. The units are then sold at cost, with the land cost in effect at zero due to the bonus density given to the developer.

The price of the units is restricted by a covenant for a period of about ten to 20 years. The owner must live in the unit for this period and at the end of it can share in the appreciation of the unit. This

Port St. Lucie residents enjoying the Riverwalk, viewed from the observation deck.



program has been used successfully in a number of jurisdictions around the country. Typically, such units are available to persons making 60 to 80 percent of areawide median income, which usually includes police officers, firefighters, and teachers, as well as entry-level workers in other fields. (Examples of this type of program are the Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit [MPDU] program in Montgomery County, Maryland, and the Affordable Dwelling Unit [ADU] program in Fairfax and Arlington counties, Virginia. Similar programs are available in Boston and Cambridge, Massachusetts, and in several communities in Denver, Colorado, and California.)

The panel recommends that a program of this sort be used in the master-planned communities in the western portion of the city, where little moderate-income or affordable housing will be provided without programs of this nature. The city should commit to preserving some of the affordable units over a given period of time, say, ten years. In order to do this, the city could offer low-interest loans to the owners of small rental properties in return for a year's tax abatement.

Civic Pride and Community Ownership

Two of Port St. Lucie's most valuable assets are the commitment and sincerity of its population. Unlike other Florida communities that have become second-home ghost towns or retirement enclaves, Port St. Lucie has a depth of families and a diversity of age groups that together can create a truly vibrant intergenerational community. New successes like the Indian River Community College and Florida Atlantic University campuses

have offered high school students the opportunity to stay in Port St. Lucie after they graduate and pursue college educations.

The recruitment of the New York Mets for spring training at the new facility, the excitement inherent in and name recognition of a PGA training facility, and the construction of a riverwalk create venues for residents to take pride in, allowing them to participate in the community beyond their neighborhood. These "wins" must be expanded upon and the city needs to play a strong role in providing a variety of "soft infrastructure" programs such as monthly concerts, fairs, and events that bring people together, offer residents a chance to interact with each other, and, most important, volunteer and get involved in activities that give them a sense of pride and ownership in their community.

Recommendations for "Parks St. Lucie"

The panel suggests using parks and water, in multiple forms, to create a palette of experiences for the city. These enhanced parks not only are an asset to the quality of life available in Port St. Lucie, but also are a tool for the city's economic development.

Aquatics Center

A major aquatics center at the very center of the community could be designed to bring swimming, instruction, and competition to the city. At this type of civic amenity, citizens could learn to swim, train for competition, and commune in many styles of pools and enjoy other water features. From rehabilitation to fitness to recreation and relaxation, this feature begins to tell the story of a city

with a vision and a rekindled sense of civic pride. A major aquatics center could draw people from all over the Southeast to Port St. Lucie for regional swim meets and training camps and would be an asset for the city's local economy.

Water can take on active and passive uses in other parts of the city, enhancing parks, neighborhoods, and commercial centers. Capitalizing on the success of the Port St. Lucie Riverwalk, the city should create water features in as many public spaces as possible. Such water features can include the following: traditional and classic fountains at civic buildings and commercial centers, traditional and interactive fountains in neighborhood parks, and smaller aquatic centers in the larger community parks. Linked by signage and intelligent site selection, this network of water, by word of mouth, would create recognition of Port St. Lucie as an evolving city.

Annexation Strategies

As the city begins to bring in the westerly annexation properties, the panel agrees with the DRI recommendations that the city should see its position as one of strength in negotiating with developers over the future expansion of the city. The resource team recommended that any proposed annexation be examined carefully to determine the fiscal impact and responsibility it incurs for the city. The panel believes that new development must pay for itself and that fiscal impact analysis must demonstrate the development's ability to cover the city's cost, over both the short and long term. The panel also recognizes that east-to-west circulation improvements are critical to both existing and future residents and businesses.

In further recognition of the importance of the pending development of the annexation area, in order to ensure the logical and orderly future development of the Urban Service Area, and to ensure that the city's elected officials have adequate information upon which to base their decisions regarding the impacts and benefits of annexation, the city must undertake both planning and fiscal analyses. While the smaller annexations recently approved by the council may not be able to benefit from the planning process recommended be-

low, because of timing issues, the remaining area surrounding the Kenco and Lennar properties will benefit from and require the recommended analyses.

Critical Actions

The panel recommends that additional annexations should not be approved until a number of critical actions have been accomplished. The city must update the existing comprehensive plan to include areas that have been newly annexed (some of which are under construction) since the time the existing plan was adopted.

The city should prepare a comprehensive plan for the Port St. Lucie Urban Service Area that includes all of the area within the western annexation urban boundary. On the basis of the updated comprehensive plan, specific plans for each of the proposed annexations should address the following:

- Circulation requirements including an extension of the four-lane divided parkway (Commerce Drive) from north and south of the canal and which parallels I-95 from Becker Road to Midway Road. Such east-west connectors are necessary to accommodate existing and planned traffic volumes, to facilitate cross-town traffic, and to ensure connections between the existing community and future development and conceptual street patterns.
- Land use designations that will allow for a variety of housing types and potential employment opportunities.
- Drainage solutions that do not rely on existing improvements west of I-95 and that meet best-practice water quality standards.
- Open-space/park plans that link parks, trails, community focal points, and other amenities based on the city's standard of five acres of green space per 1,000 residents.
- Analysis of school needs on the basis of population and optimal sizing and locational criteria.
- Public facilities that are necessary and desirable for providing community services to the projected population.

- Fair-share obligations to major community infrastructure required for the overall Urban Service Area that exceed the development impacts and required improvements.
- A fiscal impact analysis that provides a cost/benefit analysis of each of the proposed annexations and demonstrates that each development area will pay for itself and will cover costs of the city's ongoing maintenance.
- A conceptual phasing plan that ties development levels to provision of services and infrastructure.
- Use of development agreements for all annexation projects to provide the city with certainty as to the completion of improvements in conjunction with development, and to provide developers with certainty of the protection of entitlements.

The panel recommends that the city of Port St. Lucie undertake a review of its service capabilities every five years to determine any probable changes in the city's future boundaries.

Capital Resources and Funding Opportunities

The projected growth will not come without a price and it is important to ensure that new growth and development pay their fair share of infrastructure expenses. While the traditional sources of federal and state funds should always be sought, such funds are not always available, especially in a timely manner. In addition to those sources, a complete review of impact fees needs to be undertaken to make sure that all development, not just that which occurs in the annexation area, pays for itself. Revenue sources could and in many areas already include property taxes, increased sales and use taxes, utility fees, gasoline taxes, school impact fees, park fees, street fees, and other sources. The panel recommends the adoption of a transfer fee on platted lots.

A comprehensive review of all city fees and taxes, school funding, and other revenues, compared with estimated capital and operating expenses, must be undertaken to ensure that the city has a viable fiscal policy to maintain the area's quality of life.

Conclusion

With the amount of growth Port St. Lucie has experienced over the past decade, the city has done an excellent job of addressing the failures of its past. Now at a crossroads, Port St. Lucie has the opportunity to take charge of its destiny by taking the appropriate measures to allow for high-quality growth in the western annexation area while enhancing the neighborhoods on the east side of town.

To achieve this task, Port St. Lucie must approach its growth and development issues proactively. The city needs to designate and prepare developable land to help lure employers to the area. It is essential to increase economic development efforts and that they be collaborative and adequately funded. The city must take the lead and create an environment of collaboration in the Treasure Coast region. Strong standards must be set for the western annexation area while not ignoring the east side of town, and significant investments must be made to connect the two sides of town to reduce traffic congestion.

To further enhance the quality of life in Port St. Lucie, there must be adequate investment in parks and open spaces. The concept of water con-

necting the city must be expanded beyond the Riverwalk. The notion should be incorporated into all of the city's civic and institutional buildings, parks, and recreation centers. Port St. Lucie ought to consider the construction of a major aquatics center to enhance residents' sense of civic pride and serve as an engine for economic development. The city also must commit to a greenways master plan to connect the parks, open spaces, and recreation facilities to improve its image as an active, livable place. All of these investments are necessary to strengthen the neighborhoods and to increase the quality of life in Port St. Lucie.

The panel strongly believes that its recommendations will help Port St. Lucie reach its full potential as a city that is prepared for and encourages growth. A city that attracts employers because of its highly skilled workforce and excellent educational institutions. A city with a strong sense of pride and identity. A city for all ages and all wages.

About the Panel

Franklin (Frank) A. Martin

*Panel Chair
Boise, Idaho*

Martin is president of Martin Community Development, LLC. His primary responsibility is the development of Hidden Springs, Idaho, a 1,844-acre planned community in the Boise front foothills.

Between 1971 and 1997, Martin was responsible for the development of over 3,000 homes, primarily in the metropolitan Chicago market. From 1989 to 1997, he was the CEO of Shaw Homes, Inc., a position in which he oversaw the development of several communities, including Homan Square, Garibaldi Square, and Prairie Crossing.

Martin is a vice chair of the Urban Land Institute's Sustainable Development Council, a member of the National Association of Home Builders, and a member of the Ada County, Idaho, Planning and Zoning Commission. He has previously served on five ULI Advisory Services panels, three of which he chaired.

Martin holds a bachelor's degree from Hanover College and an MBA from the University of Chicago and is a licensed real estate broker in Idaho and Illinois.

Donald R. Bauer

Santa Ana, California

Bauer is owner and founder of Bauer Planning & Environmental Services, Inc. With over 28 years of experience in urban and regional planning, he has expertise in strategic planning, economics, and design for new communities and large-scale development programs. His emphasis on the quality of life, environmental integrity, and long-term economic value and return of new developments

has resulted in a number of national and international projects.

Bauer's experience includes residential villages and commercial complexes for the Irvine Company; large mixed-use projects in Baltimore, Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Dallas, Orlando, Denver, and Washington, D.C.; new towns such as the Woodlands, Texas; and resort communities including Ventana Canyon in Tucson and the Cojo-Jalama Ranch in Santa Barbara. His international work includes projects in Indonesia; the summer national capital of Saudi Arabia; the new national capital of Nigeria; Colombia; China; Kao Shung, Taiwan; and the Bahamas.

Bauer is a member of the American Planning Association. Between 1992 and 1996, he was ULI district council coordinator for Orange County, California. Bauer studied sculpture and architecture at the University of Oregon and participated in an exchange program at the University of Florence in Italy. He is a frequent university guest lecturer.

Kathleen Cecilian

Flemington, New Jersey

Cecilian has been involved in the strategic marketing of master-planned communities since 1985. Prior to that time, she was a copywriter with the Leo Burnett Company in Chicago, one of the largest advertising agencies in the world. There she worked on such accounts as McDonald's, Heinz, Memorex, and Kellogg's.

Cecilian is the president and CEO of KC & Associates, located outside of Princeton, New Jersey. The company is responsible for the major strategic initiatives that launch or reposition master-planned community brands and products for blue-chip developer clients nationwide. Her client list includes but is not limited to the Howard Hughes Corporation/the Rouse Company, HMB

Partners, Del Webb/Pulte Homes, the Bonita Bay Group, Toll Brothers, Terrabrooke, and Victor International.

A full member of the Urban Land Institute, Cecilian is the current chair of the Community Development Council Blue Flight. She serves as a frequent lecturer and moderator at various ULI meetings throughout the country. In addition, she is the author of the marketing chapter of a recent Urban Land Institute book titled *Developing Active Adult Communities*.

Elizabeth B. Davison

Rockville, Maryland

Davison is an urban economist who has spent her 30-plus-year career both in the private sector as a real estate and land use consultant and in the public sector as a planner and manager of a range of housing and community development programs.

Since 1996, she has been the director of the Department of Housing and Community Affairs for Montgomery County, Maryland, a northwestern suburb of Washington, D.C., with a population in excess of 870,000. Davison directs the department of 110-plus staff members and a combined budget of over \$33 million per year, in the arenas of community development, consumer affairs, commercial revitalization, affordable housing programs, and land use policy in the county.

She was the director of the Office of Planning Implementation for the county from 1991 through 1996, and also worked for the Maryland–National Capital Park and Planning Commission from 1974 through 1980, in the research divisions in both Montgomery and Prince George’s counties conducting demographic studies and commercial revitalization studies.

Before joining the county, Davison was vice president of Hammer, Siler, George Associates and, prior to that, was vice president with Real Estate Research Corporation. In her 15-year consulting career, she conducted market studies and financial feasibility studies for real estate development firms specializing in mixed-use developments. Davison also prepared commercial revitalization

studies, growth management studies, and infrastructure needs studies for local and state governments. Her clients included major corporations, nonprofit organizations, real estate syndicates, real estate developers, banks and other financial institutions, universities, and federal, state, and local governments.

Davison is a member of the Urban Land Institute, the American Planning Association, and the honorary society Lambda Alpha International. She has been an active speaker at numerous conferences and has authored several articles for national journals on planning, real estate, and community development.

Davison’s academic training was at George Washington University as an undergraduate in economics, and at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, for graduate study in economics and urban studies. Most recently, she completed the program at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University for senior officials in state and local government.

E. Peter Elzi, Jr.

Aurora, Colorado

Elzi has been with THK Associates, Inc., since 1981 and during that time has assisted clients with development decisions concerning all types of land uses including golf courses and residential, office, industrial, hotel/motel, and related opportunities. Elzi has completed more than 75 golf course feasibility and cash-flow studies during his career. Over the last 20 years, he has examined projects in over 50 major metropolitan areas around the nation.

His recent projects include the following: an analysis of golf course and residential potentials, and lot pricing strategies for a luxury development on the Big Island of Hawaii; an examination of moderate-priced housing on a 200-acre site in Bayamón, Puerto Rico; and an analysis of office and industrial potentials for a 400-acre business and industrial park along the emerging E-470 corridor in southeast Denver. Within the last year, Elzi has been retained as an expert to assess damages to an 1,800-acre site in Brighton, Colorado, resulting from a condemnation; the damages re-

lated to a down-zoning in Boulder County, Colorado; and lost opportunity from discriminatory zoning related to manufactured housing in Pueblo County, Colorado.

Prior to joining THK, Elzi was involved in the real estate appraisal and brokerage fields. He is currently a state-certified appraiser (Colorado). Elzi was recently elected to a four-year term on the board of directors for the East Cherry Creek Valley Water and Sanitation District, as well as being appointed to the Park View Metropolitan District.

Elzi received his bachelor of science degree in business administration, majoring in real estate and construction management, from the University of Denver in 1977.

Jim Heid

San Francisco, California

Heid is president and founder of Urban Green, LLC. Founded in 2000, the firm provides advisory services and techniques for successful regional, new community, and urban infill development, while also taking on select development assignments as a partner or principal.

In over 20 years of practice, Heid has established startup offices and led multinational design practices. He has been involved in some of the country's most prestigious resort and large-scale primary home communities, including Summerlin, Nevada; Hualalai, Hawaii; Las Campañas, New Mexico; and Desert Mountain, Arizona.

Nationally recognized as an advocate for environmentally responsible land development, Heid focuses on what he calls "commonsense sustainability." His current assignments include the following: strategic planning/product advisory services for a 90,000-acre private island in Hawaii; development and program strategies for a 15,000-acre new town in west Phoenix; development concepts, environmental and cultural resource easement strategies, and entitlement processing for a 14,000-acre conservation community on the California coast; managing director of development for a 2,000-acre, \$250 million resort community located in southeast Arizona; development adviser

for two new workforce housing developments providing over 1,500 new residential units; and researcher and author of a ULI publication titled *Greenfield Development Without Sprawl: The Role of Planned Communities*.

A member of the Urban Land Institute, he is a regularly featured speaker at annual meetings and conferences such as the Symposium on Sustainability, sponsored by the Heinz Foundation and ULI's annual Golf Course Community Forum. In 1999, Heid was selected to instruct the ULI/Conservation Fund's workshop in environmentally sensitive development, a role he continues to play as the program enters its fifth year of national workshops. In 2003, he taught ULI's Advanced Residential Development School in San Francisco and in 2004 will be presenting at the Annual Partners for Smart Growth conference in Portland, Oregon.

Heid holds a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture from the University of Idaho and a master's degree in real estate development from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Carol A. Hoffman

Newport Beach, California

A former corporate officer and vice president of Entitlement and Community Relations for the Irvine Company for over 13 years, Hoffman directed entitlement projects and community relations programs for the nation's largest master-planned urban environment on almost 54,000 acres of land it owns in Orange County. She brings more than 30 years of planning, government, and community relations experience to the assistance of clients.

Hoffman's recent experience has spanned multiple agencies and communities in Orange County in working with elected and appointed officials, city and county staff, and community, business, and environmental organizations. Hoffman recently completed an extensive community ascertainment in Costa Mesa for C.J. Segerstrom and Sons' 93-acre Home Ranch project. The findings of this community ascertainment, which included interviews with key public officials, city management and

planning staff, homeowner groups, and business leaders, provided the foundation for the community outreach program and entitlement strategy. The Costa Mesa City Council ultimately approved the project, and a referendum was averted.

Hoffman has represented the Irvine Company and other clients in jurisdictions from San Diego to Modesto. She is also able to navigate the California Coastal Commission. Key projects in recent years have included the Newport Coast Planned Community for county and coastal approvals of residential, commercial, and resort development on 9,000 acres; Lower Peters Canyon Planned Community for Orange County approvals of 8,000 units and 1.4 million square feet of retail and mixed uses; and Bonita Canyon for a complex jurisdiction adjustment involving two cities, two school districts, and the Local Agency Formation Commission. Most recently, Hoffman entitled 415,000 square feet of R&D development in Newport Beach without any environmental or community opposition despite a recently voter-approved slow growth initiative.

Hoffman's community involvement includes serving as past president of Speak Up Newport, member of Newport Beach Environmental Quality Affairs Committee (EQAC), board member of Hoag Hospital and the Pacific Club, past chair of Irvine Medical Center, board member and secretary of Irvine Health Foundation, former board member of the Orange County Performing Arts Center and the Laguna Canyon Foundation, and a wide variety of civic and charitable organizations. She has been widely honored, receiving awards from the Irvine Chamber, Irvine Education Foundation, YWCA, Orange County Red Cross, Sales & Marketing Council of the Building Industry Association, and *OC Metro* Magazine. She is a full member of the Urban Land Institute and a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP).

Ralph L. Núñez

Southfield, Michigan

Núñez is design principal with Design Team Ltd., a landscape architecture and planning firm he established in Houston, Texas, in 1984. He has experience in wide-ranging areas of project develop-

ment, including direction and management of land planning, landscape architecture, and land development projects in the private and public sectors. Within tight time frames and budgets, Núñez has brought complex projects on line for many large, nationally known organizations. He also has directed multidisciplinary teams in broad-based problem-solving assignments and has had significant personal involvement in the management and administration of large master plans throughout the United States and overseas.

His responsibilities have encompassed the master planning of residential communities; park and recreation amenities; commercial, industrial, and office campuses; and resort developments ranging from ten to several thousand acres in size. The governor of Michigan appointed him chairman to the state board of landscape architects.

Núñez is a registered landscape architect in eight states and is an adjunct faculty member at Lawrence Technical University—College of Architecture and Design. He received his bachelor of science degree from the Pennsylvania State University.

Erling D. Speer

Atlanta, Georgia

Speer is senior vice president of Cousins Properties, Inc. In this position, his primary responsibilities include managing a joint venture with the Ida Cason Callaway Foundation for the redevelopment of the Callaway Gardens Resort and the master planning of a 4,000-acre community adjacent to the resort.

Prior to joining Cousins, Speer was vice president and mid-Atlantic regional manager of Terrabrook, responsible for all the company operations and acquisitions within the region, which comprises Georgia, North and South Carolina, and Tennessee.

Before joining Terrabrook, he was chief executive officer of his own development company specializing in the development of golf course communities. Communities developed by Speer include Mariner Sands Country Club and Willoughby Golf Club, located in Stuart, Florida. He has also been

involved in the development of resort properties in Georgia; Hilton Head Island, South Carolina; and the North Carolina mountains.

Speer attended Washington and Lee University and received a bachelor of science degree in business management from the University of South Carolina.

F. Ross Tilghman

Seattle, Washington

Tilghman is a principal of TDA, Inc., in the Seattle office. He operated TDA's Illinois office for ten years, and prior to that had been a senior associate with TDA in Seattle. Over the last 17 years, Tilghman has managed a variety of land use and transportation projects.

His work experience includes master planning for redevelopment districts, downtown revitalization, state capitol campuses, planned unit developments, recreation projects, and mixed-use projects in Maryland, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Colorado, California, Florida, Hawaii, Minnesota, Louisiana, Texas, and Washington.

Tilghman has worked on projects involving parking and circulation plan development, market/feasibility analysis, historic preservation planning, recreational and special event development, as well as a variety of environmental impact analyses for office, retail, industrial, and residential developments.

Tilghman served for three years as executive director of the Galesburg Downtown Council, a business improvement district and Main Street program in Illinois. He oversaw downtown maintenance, facade improvements, parking, and upper-story redevelopment efforts conducted in concert with Main Street redevelopment principles. He successfully authored a TEA-21 Enhancement Grant application for a \$1.9 million streetscape reconstruction project that is now being implemented.

Tilghman received a bachelor of arts degree, magna cum laude, in history from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, and a master's degree in geography from the University of Washington at Seattle.