DDA
DOWNTOWN
DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY
Downtown Delray Beach, Florida

Delray Beach
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

# Strategic Plan 2020



Facilitated by Tom Fleming, working under the banner of
Institute for Civic Achievement, Inc.

Adopted October 10, 2016

# Delray Beach DDA
## Strategic Plan 2020

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## Section One: Executive Summary

Technological advancements are occurring at an ever-accelerating pace. These rapid and often dramatic changes would suggest to some that strategic planning can no longer look too far into the future due to rapidly changing circumstances.

While true to a point, another truth is more compelling: effective plans inevitably reflect strategies that cannot be successfully achieved before a certain passage of time. Goals and strategies are by definition longer term in nature.

A properly crafted strategic plan is flexible. It reflects longer term components, such as vision, mission and goals, that are clearly expressed and readily understandable, yet are expressed so as to be amenable to unforeseeable future circumstances.

This plan reflects a 3-year look into the future of the Delray Beach (Florida) Downtown Development Authority (DDA). It anticipates being updated in 2020 as a 5- to 7-year strategic plan. It also recognizes that changes are afoot in Delray Beach and that City-wide visioning and strategic planning may have taken place by then. A new, City-wide Comprehensive Land Use Plan will have been adopted.

Another note relates to the nature of the DDA's work plan for 2016-2017 that was adopted while this Plan was evolving. The work plan comprises three points of Main Street America's Four Point Approach™. As is often the case, generally successful community development organizations commonly incorporate three of four areas of focus, specifically, initiatives variously described as Design, Promotion, and Economic Vitality initiatives. Rarely do they specifically address Organization initiatives, and the DDA is no exception.

This failing commonly causes programs to fall short of achieving their fullest potential. Again, the DDA is no exception. Organizational shortcomings, and strategies to address them, are accordingly addressed to a considerable extent in this plan.

DDA board members and executive staff engaged in exercises and addressed issues posed likewise to DDA constituents. Their responses are incorporated into the plan; more importantly, however, their responses are compared with constituents' responses to measure DDA's awareness of, and sensitivity to, constituents' priorities.

A listing of all who participated is reflected in Attachment A.

This Plan is largely driven by alliance partners' and constituents' input, its strategies reflecting consensus concerns, observations and suggestions expressed by representatives of alliance partner organizations, downtown businesses and downtown property owners.

## Section Two: Introduction

### Why Plan?

There is broad agreement among organization leaders and experts that planning is a critical component of good management and governance. Planning helps assure that an organization remains relevant and responsive to the needs of its community. It provides a basis for monitoring progress and for assessing results and impact. It facilitates new program development. It enables an organization to look into the future in an orderly and systematic way. From a governance perspective, it enables the Board to set policies and goals to guide the organization, and provides a clear focus to the Executive Director and staff for program implementation and agency management.

Most organizations understand the need for the annual program-focused work plan. Longer-range planning often seems more difficult and less rewarding. Board members and senior staff question whether they can develop plans that will remain relevant. With so little control over external events, how can the organization hope to influence them in a way that benefits the community?

In fact, planning is no less important in a changing environment; it may well be more important.

Planning is not an easy process; it can be difficult to pause, stand back and take a hard look at what the organization wants to accomplish. It is easy to believe that planning takes too much time. True effectiveness, however, is readily be a function of how well the organization can see the broad perspective, to take the long view of what needs doing and how the organization is going to do it.

One of the best ways to develop this skill is through ongoing strategic planning. The real benefit of strategic planning is the process; the plan document itself is really of secondary importance. There is no "perfect" plan. The planning process is a series of small moves that together keep the organization doing the right things right as it heads in the right direction.

### The Flow of the Plan

The Strategic Plan is crafted from relevant interactions with organization insiders, alliance partners, stakeholder constituents and the general public, as might be appropriate to a particular plan. Results of the interactions inspire a Vision for the organization and the Vision is the overarching statement that guides everything else.

Extending from – and within the context of – the Vision, the interactions inspire the organization's mission and its core values. The Vision, mission and core values reflect

the essence of the organization. Drilling down from the Vision, the interactions are used to determine the strategic plan's goals, the strategies associated with each goal, and the initiatives associated with each strategy. The organization can then list project and tasks associated with prioritized initiatives and, by so doing, craft annual work plans and budgets.

Essential to the process is that everything the organization undertakes is driven by and serves to move it ever closer to realizing its Vision

## Goals of the Planning Process

Before undertaking the process of strategic planning, it is vital to reflect on why an organization chooses to do it and what the organization hopes to accomplish. These reflections translate into goals, not of the Plan (which the process does, of course, produce) but of the planning process. For this Plan, the DDA expects to:

**Goal 1**: Pause to take a "big picture" look at the downtown and at itself.
**Goal 2**: Objectively focus the board and staff on both positive and negative factors.
**Goal 3**: Engage in the process of honest and fearless self-evaluation.
**Goal 4**: Instill strategic approaches to short term and longer term implementation.
**Goal 5**: Expand the DDA's scope of work, credibility and community impact.

## The Process

The DDA underwent some notable changes during the second half of 2015 and early 2016 that included the matriculation of leadership and new ways of doing business. Newly incorporated into its practices are (1) a greater level of active, meaningful participation by the board and (2) strategic planning.

In order to jump-start its new practices, the DDA opted to engage in an abbreviated planning process that entails key components of community outreach but excludes some of the broader exercises such as City-wide town meetings and more extended focus groups. The following activities were undertaken during April through August, 2016:

- Participation in a Town Hall Meeting attended by approximately fifty downtown businesses, property owners and alliance partners.
- A day-long DDA board retreat.
- One-on-one discussions with DDA Board members and its Executive Director, City officials and CRA officials.
- Four Focus Groups with DDA alliance partners and downtown constituents.
- A half-day board goals setting workshop focused on FY 2016-17.
- A two-hour board workshop for plan review, prioritization, and implementation.

## Section Three: DDA Background and Profile

The Delray Beach Downtown Development Authority (DDA) was created by state Resolution 9-71, which became law on March 22, 1971, as a dependent special district of the City of Delray Beach. It shares responsibility for the economic development and improvement of the downtown area of Delray Beach with the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), City government and other alliance partners.

According to its authorizing Resolution of 1971, the DDA is organized to:

- Analyze economic conditions including traffic, parking, structural obsolescence and deterioration, and metropolitan growth.
- Formulate long-range plans for downtown Delray Beach.
- Recommend to the City best actions for formulating plans.
- Participate in plans and programs for economic growth.
- Carry on all projects "as assigned by law or within statute (given authority by law)".

The Authority's primary source of revenue is derived from real property taxes collected from the property owners in the central business district of the City of Delray Beach. The Authority is authorized to levy in each fiscal year an *ad valorem* property tax not to exceed one mill to finance its operations.

Principle areas of DDA involvement in recent years have included:

- marketing the downtown with emphasis on driving sales and revenue generation;
- business development;
- maintenance, security and crime prevention;
- traffic and parking (lighting, street banners, wayfinding sign systems); and
- acting as a liaison with City staff, local boards and organizations.

The DDA is governed by a board of seven members appointed by the Delray Beach City Commission. Its team of professional staff is headed by an Executive Director who teams with two full-time support staff, specifically, a Program Marketing Coordinator and an Operations Coordinator.

Board Meetings are regularly scheduled for the second Monday of the month, 12:00 - 2:30 p.m., in the First Floor Conference Room of City Hall. Meeting agendas & minutes are available on the DDA web site at DowntownDelrayBeach.com.

## Roster – DDA Board of Directors, October, 2016

Peter Arts
Bonnie Beer, Treasurer
Ryan Boylston, Chair
Alan Costilo
Mark Denkler
Frank Frione, Vice Chair
Albert Richwagen, Board Secretary

## Team Members

Laura Simon, Executive Director
Alex Farnsworth, Program Marketing Coordinator
Lauren Lyall, Operations Coordinator

## Service Area

The DDA's district extends along Atlantic Avenue, in Delray Beach, Florida, from I-95 eastward to US A1A and generally includes a block or so to the north and south. In the area of Atlantic Avenue between Swinton Boulevard and NE 7th Avenue, the district extends for the most part four blocks to the north and south of Atlantic Avenue. Neighborhood commercial centers within the District include SOFA (South of Atlantic), The Set (along the West Atlantic Avenue corridor), Pineapple Grove Arts District, and the so-called Federal Highway corridors just north and south of Atlantic Avenue.

A district map is included in Attachment B to this plan.

H. Blount Hunter Retail & Real Estate Research Co. concluded, in its "2004 Patron Profile, Cluster Analysis and Retail Development Strategy Update", that downtown Delray Beach draws patrons from a broad area extending from central Palm Beach County in the north, to Pompano Beach in the south, the area that forms its functional "retail trade area" for Downtown Delray Beach. Hunter's trade area map is included with this plan as Attachment C.

## Stakeholders and Strategic Alliances

The 2006 study *"Cultural Delray Beach: creative, authentic, intimate"*, by Coletta & Company, emphasized the vital need for local stakeholder colleagues (i.e., alliance partners) to actively engage in "synergy, inter-organization innovation, development of collaborations, shared planning and visioning". Today's DDA must be and remain committed to the principle of collaboration and must strive continually to collaborate actively with its alliance partners.

A central objective of these strategic alliances is to leverage resources, avoid unnecessary duplication of services and ensure a comprehensive approach to "being community".

The DDA's principal alliance partners are those whose work most directly impacts the DDA's work, City government and the Delray Beach Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) being the two most impactful. In the same tier but with a more limited scope is the Delray Beach Marketing Cooperative (DBMC).

It is imperative that these four alliance partners, the DDA, City, CRA, and DBMC, are actively and continually collaborating, planning, coordinating and communicating.

Strategic alliances are similarly important with West Atlantic Redevelopment Coalition (WARC), the Greater Delray Beach Chamber of Commerce, Old School Square, Delray Beach Public Library and Pineapple Grove Arts District.

Beyond these "core" alliance partners, whose missions and goals are most closely aligned with those of the DDA, numerous agencies, programs and nonprofits operate within the District and/or have – or could have or should have – a profound impact on the character of the District.

The DDA is encouraged to interact regularly and support the missions of organizations such as Arts Garage, Delray Art League, Spady Cultural Heritage Museum, Delray Beach Historical Society, Sunflower Creative Arts, the Palm Beach Technology Association, Tomorrow's Promise, and Sandoway Discovery Center, among others.

Alliances will also prove fruitful with traditional educational institutions (e.g., local area public schools, FAU, Lynn University, Palm Beach State College, etc.) and educational programs unique to Delray Beach such as Toussaint L'Ouverture, Milagro Center, Village Academy, Achievement Center, and Dare to be Great.

**The overriding emphasis is *collaboration!***

Any number of the undertakings reflected in this Plan, suggested by the general consensus of planning participants, can be undertaken with the collaboration of alliance partners and need not add costly, full-time, supplemental internal capacity.

Active collaboration is also the most effective and lasting way to build credibility.

## **Section Four:** Key Findings

What follows are distilled, summary compilations of responses received from participants in retreats, workshops, focus groups and one-on-one discussions. The responses were compiled from all who participated and form the basis for statements of vision, mission, core values, goals, strategies and initiatives, collectively the substance of this Plan.

### General Observations

**Growth management.**[1] Stakeholders, alliance partners and constituents are generally satisfied with the way in which overall growth downtown has been managed over time, specifically in recent decades. Growth management received an overall rating of 7.2 on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being highest. All but a few respondents rated growth management from 7 to 10; only a few rated it a 2 or 3.[2]

**City-wide vision.** Widespread concern was expressed in connection with today's downtown growth management. Consensus prognostication for the future was, at best, guarded. New businesses and investments, in the view of many respondents, are being driven away. The City lacks a current, community-based and comprehensive vision, strategic plan and direction.[3]

**Awareness of the DDA.** Alliance partners' level of awareness is fairly strong but must become considerably stronger, especially among those who have served in downtown leadership roles over a number of years. Constituents' awareness levels are likewise pretty good but by no means great.

A continuing and heightened emphasis on raising awareness and understanding among alliance partners and constituents must be and remain a top priority of the DDA. For example, and of interest given public comments that are being made by some in the public sector, few know the actual mix of district property uses, with most respondents assuming that restaurants are the predominant uses, followed closely by retail. "Professional offices" is the category that actually tops the list.

The residential population downtown is growing rapidly as many hundreds of new units are coming on line. This will continue for the foreseeable future.

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[1] The term "growth management" was expressly explained to respondents as being without regard to any one organization.
[2] The low ratings tended to be expressed more about current rather than historic trends.
[3] At the time of this Plan's adoption, the City has embarked on an extensive update to its Comprehensive Land Use Plan, but not a visioning process *per se*.

Input from others tends to reinforce the board's perception that stakeholder awareness – and consequently, the DDA's influence on public policy associated with the downtown – is lacking.[4] Closely related is the sense that heightened levels of proactive undertakings is in order.

**Level of Influence.** Several board members expressed their frustration that the DDA is lacking in credibility and influence on matters of public policy affecting the downtown. Frustrations associated with public policy engagement and influences are not limited to specific issues – although "parking' was mentioned often – but extend to include the myriad issues and initiatives affecting the downtown. These and related observations reflect the inadequate emphasis on strategic initiatives of an "organizational" nature and are addressed to a considerable degree in this Plan.

**Several Downtowns.** Most respondents view "the downtown" as being actually a collection of multiple "downtowns", ranging from two—one east of and one west of Swinton Avenue—to several neighborhood "town center" locations.

**Art, culture and innovation.** A renewed emphasis on the cultural arts and innovation is considered desirable on several levels, "economic" being key among them. Delray Beach lacks, and needs, an inventory of public and outdoor art in the downtown area.[5] Expanding the presence, awareness and impact of public art and arts venues was noted by several as an exciting opportunity available for the DDA to undertake as a leading downtown participant.

**Business resource center**. Downtown businesses would benefit from a conveniently available resource center that, by design, would expressly address the strengthening and retention of locally-owned businesses. An effectively structured center would likewise facilitate strategically focused business recruitment as a counter to the tendency of national chains and trendy, non-authentic businesses to diminish the uniqueness of downtown.

**Negative messaging.** Several participants noted the extent to which internal discussions of governance and the current political environment affecting the downtown are taking on an increasingly negative tone. Caution is expressed that these "behind the scenes" planning conversations not inadvertently drive outgoing messaging.

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[4] Public awareness initiatives are being phased in during the time that this plan is evolving and levels of public awareness are on the rise. Raising the awareness of, and engagement with, alliance partners must continually be a Tier One priority.

[5] As one respondent put it: "Inventory, enhance and celebrate."

## Notes on Leadership

The general consensus of responses was that the most eminent threat to the downtown and to the DDA, in one way or another, can be categorized under the heading of "leadership". Numerous responses reflected a troublesome political climate, a general lack of direction, lack of a current-day community Vision, and a troubled City Hall.[6]

The second tier of consensus concerns relates to factors associated with the DDA board. These factors may be perceptions more than realities, but must be explored and addressed in one fashion or another. Ongoing professional training is essential.

## Notes on Transportation and Parking Issues

The topic of public parking and its many related issues is a dominant theme of interest among the DDA board. Members are not satisfied with the attention paid to matters associated with downtown parking and the board's concerns are shared by others. Specific topics included metered parking, parking inventory, enforcement of existing parking regulations, and the absence of a special fund set aside to accumulate parking related revenues and fees for future parking-related improvements.

Transportation alternatives in, to and from the downtown remain limited and transportation management remains largely oriented toward accommodating the individual passenger vehicle. This condition negatively affects a number of factors such as walkability and the mix of property uses.

Downtown Delray Beach transportation management—a topic that, by definition, includes parking management—is lacking in terms of recognized leadership, formalized strategies and organizational focus. No one seems to be "on top of it". This observation is made with full awareness that the City recently filled a crucial staff vacancy and maintains the Parking Management Advisory Board (PMAB), on which is designated a seat for a DDA liaison representative.

The DDA needs to be actively engaged in a leadership role. Before that can happen, however, considerable training, orientation and education is required of the DDA board and staff.

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[6] Respondents noted, for example: "the city is difficult to deal with", "waiting time for permits is far too long", appearing before Commission, frustrations, time it takes, "hoops", poor customer service/hospitality, "not helpful for new small businesses", "these are the people interacting with our businesses who are not customer friendly".

## Notes on the East/West Nature of the District

As earlier noted, the DDA's district extends along the Atlantic Avenue corridor east of Swinton Avenue to US A1A and west of Swinton Avenue to I-95. This geographic consideration is repeated here because it also defines a vitally important cultural consideration with any number of sub-texts.

The ethnicity of the district to the west of Swinton Avenue, comprising the commercial corridor of the neighborhoods recently branded "The Set", is largely populated by residents of African, Haitian, and Caribbean Island descent. The ethnicity of the district to the east of Swinton is largely white, non-Hispanic. Swinton Avenue itself is widely considered a "dividing line" of sorts, and this perceived division is widely and appropriately considered a very large negative.

These considerations are emphasized in this sub-section for several reasons:

1. For the most part, negative responses to alternatively worded questions are centered on this perceived "divide", and this is no less true of respondents who live and/or work east of Swinton than it is of respondents west of Swinton.

2. **There is no formal, strategic, functioning alliance** between any of the organizations located and/or largely focused to the east of Swinton and any of the those that are located and/or largely focused to the west pf Swinton.

3. The <u>perceived</u> levels of public sector investments made to the east of and to the west of Swinton vary considerably.

4. The <u>perceived</u> "value" of public sector investments made to the east of and to the west of Swinton varies considerably.

5. Effective communication, interaction and collaboration between the "east side" and the "west side" needs improvement.

Of greatest significance, though, is that every one of these observations represents an exciting opportunity for advancement and achievement.

## Notes on Strategic Alliances and Public Policy

- Delray Beach is viewed by some as falling into the trap of "resting on its laurels".
- The DDA and other alliance partners should have both voice and vote on the City's Special Events Technical Advisory Committee (SETAC) and perhaps others of which the author is unaware. That it does not would tend to reinforce a widely-held perception that City government is becoming increasing ham-fisted.

- Organizations in the downtown that could be, and likely should be, complementing the work of the DDA are not being challenged to demonstrate relevance. This challenge can also be applied to the DDA itself as a healthy, ongoing method of monitoring and improving upon its effectiveness (both real and perceived).

- Several respondents noted the prominent role played in the past by professionally managed, community-based and community-driven public-private partnerships (P3s) and the notable achievements they have made. A reflection is probably in order on the successes logged in larger cities that have fashioned city-wide "Main Streets" programs with individual P3s organized and functioning in downtown neighborhood commercial centers.

- Team Delray was noted by many as a welcomed new factor in the downtown with potential to be of considerable, positive influence.

- The Delray Beach Marketing Cooperative (DBMC) expressed its desire that the relationship with the DDA be re-established, that goals—presumably marketing goals—of the two organizations be aligned, and that collaborative planning become a regular part of their yearly work.

## Downtown Pluses

- The downtown is clearly a dominating factor in outsiders' positive impressions of Delray Beach. Ask anyone who knows this community what they like most about it and the response will almost always be "the beach", "the downtown" or a combination of the two.

- People tend to like the downtown more for its intangibles—how it feels—than for its so-called "brick-and-mortar" features. Respondents, when asked what they like most, use descriptors such as "character", "unpretentious", "inviting", "authentic", "vibe", "excitement", "fun", "well-managed" and "pedestrian activity".

- Downtown Delray Beach reflects a business mix that is generally appreciated for its eclectic nature.[7] The appeal is shared more or less equally by today's locals and by tourists. It includes, with emphasized appreciation, the presence of the cultural arts. Old School Square was especially and frequently mentioned as a stand-out feature.

- Sidewalk cafes are an acknowledged plus.

- The so-called downtown "entertainment core"—Atlantic Avenue from Swinton Avenue east to about NE 3rd Avenue—is an especially popular night spot destination, particularly on weekends.

- Vehicular traffic downtown was noted by several respondents as a positive.

- The presence of on-street parking is recognized as a benefit.

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[7] One respondent fondly suggested the term "Mayberry-to-Manhattan" as an apt descriptor.

## Downtown Minuses

- Downtown is expensive.

- Downtown lacks a clear definition of "who/what it is and who/what it wants to attract". Participants expressed their hope that a clear and comprehensive downtown branding strategy will evolve.

- Signage and wayfinding needs updating and needs to employ current technologies.

- The ever-growing presence of the "homeless" population, and its attendant perception of safety concerns, is widely regarded as a threat to continued prosperity.[8]

- Major upcoming construction projects threaten the public's continued perception of the downtown as a desirable destination.

- Downtown lacks an Ambassador program. It also lacks an Ambassador Safety program and the two programs, though related, are different.

- The limited availability of open "green" space is increasingly noted by respondents as environmental awareness becomes more of an influencing factor downtown.

- Public access to WiFi is severely limited in the downtown.

- Maintenance was noted as a concern by several respondents, though the positive influence and impact being made by the downtown "Clean & Safe" program was also acknowledged.

- Physical access to the downtown in the form public transportation links to outlying areas of the City is lacking. This factor contributes to how poorly the downtown is connected to Delray Beach populations south of Linton Boulevard and west of I-95.

- One issue that arose several times was variously described as "missing the locals" and "not seeing my friends/people I know downtown anymore." An observation of note was that we no longer have "that place where the locals go" – the place that reflects the character and the authenticity of the community.

- The extent to which the downtown entertainment core has become an especially popular night spot destination is viewed by many as a concern that the downtown could lose the appealing sense of place that it currently enjoys.

- Vehicular traffic downtown was noted by several respondents as a negative.

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[8] The term "homeless" is often used as a euphemism for the "recovery" community. The term "recovery" is commonly used to describe not only recovering substance abusers but also active substance abusers.

## DDA Pluses

- The DDA is widely and highly regarded for the quality of its promotional events and activities, and also for the focused, merchant-oriented nature of its initiatives in general. This was widely regarded as one of the DDA's greatest strengths.

- Comparably regarded is the DDA itself, especially its executive director and staff. Today's "DDA team" is esteemed and appreciated pretty much universally by all who have interacted with it.

- Almost without exception, the DDA is a valued player among the downtown constituents and alliance partners.

- The DDA is valued as a reliable source of useful data and information that serves to the benefit of both its constituents and its alliance partners.

- Some key words and phrases used to describe the DDA are: supportive; nurturing; personal; independent; helpful; advocacy; stays relevant; DDA is where to turn.

## DDA Minuses

- Awareness levels among downtown non-retail, non-restaurant businesses, and among downtown residents, is lacking.

- Awareness levels among alliance partners in lacking.

- The DDA board is viewed as average in terms of its function and operations. It is not much better and not much worse than most boards, committees, commissions and councils. Notably, though, is that it probably has a far higher-than-average potential to excel and set local standards as a governing body.

- Although regarded favorably by many, interaction and engagement with district constituents could nonetheless be improved.

- The demographic make-up of the DDA board does not reflect the make-up of its district constituents.

- The DDA has not positioned itself to take on a defined and acknowledged leadership role in the downtown "Clean and Safe" program.

## Section Five: Analysis of Internal and External Forces (SWOT)

### Explanation of the SWOT Matrix

The SWOT matrix on the next page reflects two general strategic components that the DDA should to pursue:

- It reflects organizational potential by identifying a fit between the DDA's internal strengths and external opportunities. Developing initiatives around this fit will help give the DDA an edge in developing resources required to best serve its constituency.
- By pairing weaknesses with opportunities, the DDA is alerted to factors that must be overcome in order to pursue additional opportunities.
- And by pairing weaknesses with threats, the DDA is alerted to factors that must be reversed to avoid significant setbacks.

To develop strategies that take the SWOT profile into account, a matrix of responses noted during the DDA board retreat was constructed. The SWOT matrix reflected on the following page is reinforced by relevant input gleaned from focus groups and one-one-one conversations.

In keeping with SWOT best practices, the long lists of responses have been "ruthlessly pruned" and prioritized so that energies are focused on the most significant factors.

# Delray Beach DDA

## The SWOT Matrix

### Strengths (Internal to the DDA)

Generally reliable funding
Financial stewardship
Staff
Creative
Focused; objective
Data-driven
Respect
Stability/longevity
Becoming strategic
Progressive

### Weaknesses (Internal)

Lack of focus
Not strategic; pro-active; objective
Board make-up: diversity; experience; limited to biz owners
Board orientation and professional development
Losing focus on the part of the board
Lack of collaboration
Limited options to expand resources
Narrow scope of DDA initiatives vis-à-vis its authorized scope

### Opportunities (External)

Improved, targeted communications; branding
Alliance partner relations
Public policy influence
Alliance partners' resources
Databases of information; merchant services
Business recruitment; business retention; business mix
Relations; engagement
Diversity; culture; history
Downtown residential population – both an O and a T
Improvements to walkability and, thereby, livability
Health & wellness attitudes and services
Incorporation of technical advancements

### Threats (External)

Transportation management including parking; multi-modal
Deteriorating physical infrastructure
Local political environment
Racial, cultural tensions
"Revisioning" for the Downtown – from scratch, not updating
Recovery community/public safety/crime
Local job base
Local schools
Access to higher educational institutions
Pricing ourselves out of competitiveness
Declining relevance of place
Tourist-dependency
Downtown residential population – both an O and a T

## Interplay of SWOT

Strategies are developed by comparing the four matrix quadrants. Resulting strategies, categorized below, can then be aligned with relevant DDA goals.

Absent compelling circumstances that dictate otherwise, the DDA should pursue strength-opportunity (SO) and weakness-threat (WT) strategies as its highest priorities.

### Strength-Opportunity (SO) Strategies

The SO Strategies reflect opportunities that are a good organizational fit.

- Actively engage with alliance partners and constituents.
- Expand the availability of resources.
- Foster a program of business recruitment, strengthening and retention.

### Weakness-Threat (WT) Strategies

A defensive plan to prevent the DDA's weaknesses from making it highly susceptible to external threats is established by engaging in WT Strategies.

- Cultivate and maintain exemplary governance and internal operating functions.
- Structure an appropriate role in downtown transportation management.[9]
- Support with resources the economic specialties that set the downtown apart.

### Strength-Threat (ST) Strategies

Identifying ways in which the organization can use its strengths to reduce its vulnerability to external threats are the intent of ST Strategies.

- Position the downtown with the Delray Beach local population.

### Weakness-Opportunity (WO) Strategies

WO Strategies overcome organizational weaknesses in order to pursue additional opportunities.

- Advocate for incorporation of technological advancements in the downtown.
- Empower Team Delray with capability and capacity.

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[9] Transportation management includes issues related to parking.

## Section Six: Vision, Mission and Values

The DDA's vision, mission and core values reflect the consensus priorities of alliance partners and constituents who participated in the planning process.

### Vision

The Delray Beach Downtown Development Authority is a model of credibility, professionalism and productivity generating valued outcomes.

### Mission

The DDA stimulates, enhances and sustains the economic vitality of downtown Delray Beach and the quality of life enjoyed by locals and visitors.

### Core Values

**Enhancements** to quality of life lead to incomparable levels of livability.
**Economic Vitality** is a requisite to quality of life.
**Community** must be enhanced and maintained as a healthy, compelling place.
**Preservation** of cultural heritage is essential to community pride.
**Awareness** of the DDA's role serves to ensure its ongoing contributions.

## Section Seven: Goals, Strategies, Initiatives

We know from proven approaches to downtown enhancement that the greatest, most desired and sustained outcomes are achieved in communities that consciously and continually engage in a *comprehensive* program of work. In that vein, these same successful communities consciously and continually address a comprehensive, ever-evolving array of issues.

This seemingly daunting challenge—staying on top of the myriad initiatives and issues—is facilitated greatly by a common-sense, strategy-driven framework that groups initiatives and issues into four key areas: Promotion, Design, Economic Vitality, and Organization.[10]

As often happens in communities not consciously practicing the Four Point Approach™, the DDA and its alliance partners nonetheless engage in programs and activities that, for the most part, fall within three of the four areas. With the DDA:

- **Promotion** initiatives are called "Position Marketing" and are branded with the phrase "Live It Up";
- **Design** initiatives are grouped in the category of "Placemaking", also known as "Sustain"; and
- **Economic Vitality** initiatives are reflected under the heading of "Economic Development", tagged in DDA publications under the catchword "Grow".

The area not receiving formalized, strategic attention is "**Organization**".[11]

Perhaps Organization is given little more than passing attention, if any at all, due to a lack of understanding of just what the area of focus entails.

As emphasized in Main Street America's Four Point Approach™, "a strong organization… is key to a sustained downtown enhancement effort." This observation has been reinforced time and time again since the 1980s by successful programs undertaken in more than 2,000 communities. It has become, quite simply, an indisputable reality.

Largely taken for granted, if not outright overlooked, Organization is the one area of focus that enables the "business"—be it public or private, profit seeking or nonprofit—to

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[10] The four key areas comprise a program known as the Main Street Approach™, the core component of the program for downtown revitalization originally developed and supported today by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Known today as Main Street America™, this comprehensive program of principles and practices harnesses the social, economic, physical, and cultural assets that set a place apart, and ultimately leads to tangible outcomes that benefit the entire community.

[11] Some of the DDA's undertakings can be considered as Organization initiatives, specifically, those related to public relations and public communications.

do best what it exists to do at all. It is fundamentally essential and yet commonly under-appreciated.

It should come as no surprise, then, to discover that many of the newly identified initiatives arising from this planning process are organizational in nature.

The components of this Section Seven:, are laid out to reflect the DDA's overarching Goals, the Strategies associated with each Goal, and a listing of Initiatives associated with each Strategy. The next section lists the initiatives sorted into priority order.

## Goal 1: Economic Vitality – "Grow"

Create a supportive business environment and harness local economic opportunity.

### Strategy 1.1

Formalize an ongoing process of data collection and access.

#### Initiatives

1.1.a Downtown economic market study
1.1.b Downtown customer demographics and lifestyle factors
1.1.c Inventory of existing uses
1.1.d Inventory of available properties
1.1.e Ongoing constituent and customer surveys
1.1.f Outreach and information networking

### Strategy 1.2

Foster a program of business recruitment, strengthening and retention.

#### Initiatives

1.2.a Downtown planning activities
1.2.b Collaboration with business enhancement organizations, services
1.2.c Delivery of resources[12] to district constituents.
1.2.d Downtown resource and information guides
1.2.e Communications (progress, vitality, happenings, etc.); interaction
1.2.f User-friendly experiences and advocacy with the public sector
1.2.g Financial assistance and resources

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[12] To include promotion, economic enhancement and possibly design-related resources.

### Strategy 1.3

Cultivate economic specialties that set the downtown apart.

#### Initiatives

1.3.a Know the locals—all the locals
1.3.b Advancement of "locals' zones"
1.3.c Fostering the creative culture in all its innovative forms
1.3.d Public outdoor art features and activities

### Strategy 1.4

Advocate for technological advancements in the downtown.

#### Initiatives

1.4.a Tech-related leadership and team recruitment
1.4.b Technology infrastructure research and plan development
1.4.c Resource development
1.4.d Hardware procurement and maintenance
1.4.e Physical infrastructure

## Goal 2: Placemaking – "Sustain"

Foster a compelling destination by enhancing the physical elements of the downtown.

### Strategy 2.1

Structure an appropriate role in downtown transportation management.[13]

#### Initiatives

2.1.a Public awareness activities (parking; events; special activities; tips, etc.)
2.1.b Employee parking program
2.1.c Internal training, capacity considerations, resource requirements
2.1.d Public parking regulation and management
2.1.e Multi-modal transportation alternatives
2.1.f Downtown navigation enhancements

### Strategy 2.2

Maintain a clean, safe and welcoming environment.

#### Initiatives

2.2.a Maintenance responsibilities—what, how, and who
2.2.b Ambassador Public Safety programs

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[13] Transportation management includes issues related to parking.

2.2.c Special seasonal and holiday considerations

2.2.d Hospitality Zone and nighttime management activities

2.2.e Environment; conservation; recycling

2.2.f Green space; rooftop gardens, plazas; urban agriculture

### Strategy 2.3

Keep the downtown "people friendly".

#### Initiatives

2.3.a Public comfort areas and projects

2.3.b Pedestrian circulation and safety

2.3.c Public access to technology and communications

2.3.d Dealing with homeless and "recovering" communities

2.3.e Outdoor illumination

2.3.f Visual messaging and district definition components

## Goal 3: Position Marketing – "Live It Up"

Create a positive image that showcases the downtown's unique assets.

### Strategy 3.1

Increase the collective sales revenues in the downtown district.

#### Initiatives

3.1.a Events focused on retail sales generation[14]

3.1.b DDA-to-business marketing; digital/cyber marketing

3.1.c Showcasing downtown authenticity and experience

3.1.d Collaborative "cluster" marketing

3.1.e New residents' incentives and value-added features

3.1.f Merchandising, marketing and sales training for businesses

### Strategy 3.2

Position the downtown with the broader Delray Beach population.

#### Initiatives

3.2.a DBMC collaborations

3.2.b Targeted outreach activities

3.2.c Top of Mind messaging to "the rest of" the city (south, west)

3.2.d Sponsored FAM tours and events

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[14] Event production should include dissemination of event-oriented sales tips and training for businesses.

3.2.e Transportation and access enhancements

## Strategy 3.3

Continually strive to achieve perfect communications

### Initiatives

3.3.a Updates and strategic distribution of guides and publications.
3.3.b Media relations
3.3.c Branding activities and communications
3.3.d Interactions, collaboration and engagement with alliance partners
3.3.e Visitor information
3.3.f Advocacy of alliance partner initiatives and issues

## Strategy 3.4

Employ the use of media alternatives efficiently and effectively.

### Initiatives

3.4.a Knowing the customers and what influences their choices
3.4.b Measuring the effectiveness of media alternatives
3.4.c More and better use of video
3.4.d Staying on top of technology

## Goal 4: Organization – "Connect"

Ensure that resources are available to implement the DDA's enhancement strategies.

### Strategy 4.1

Cultivate and maintain exemplary governance and internal operating functions.

#### Initiatives

4.1.a Board orientation and ongoing professional development
4.1.b Ongoing professional development for staff
4.1.c Incorporation of supplemental services as warranted[15]
4.1.d Ongoing formalized internal evaluations
4.1.e Executive transition plan
4.1.f Board member recruitment program

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[15] Supplemental services might include management, planning, or *ad hoc* (i.e., specific to a defined project or activity) and are distinguished from services shared by and with alliance partners.

### Strategy 4.2

Actively engage with alliance partners and constituents.

#### Initiatives

4.2.a East-west operating alliances

4.2.b Outreach and networking with downtown residential population

4.2.c Outreach and networking with alliance partners[16]

4.2.d Development of standards and practices for public policy advocacy

4.2.e Sharing financial resources with alliance partners

4.2.f City-wide visioning and strategic planning[17]

### Strategy 4.3

Expand the availability of resources.

#### Initiatives

4.3.a Resource development planning

4.3.b Development of sub-district – e.g., neighborhood – organizations

4.3.c Support organizations

4.3.d Project/program-specific funding

### Strategy 4.4

Empower Team Delray with capability and capacity.

#### Initiatives t/b/d[18]

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[16] This focus requires an evaluative component, specifically, does the DDA have enough alliance partners? Does is have too many? Are the ones that it has (and appreciates) doing as well as they could be? Can the DDA do anything to help its alliance partners, as and if warranted, build capacity and relevancy?

[17] Participate with the Chamber to initiate a City-wide visioning process, the start-over-from-scratch-vision. The process, if structured properly, will also define a new consensus vision for the downtown.

[18] In concert with Team Delray participants

## Prioritizing Initiatives

Having first adopted the strategic initiatives reflected above, the DDA board and staff were guided through the process of prioritizing the initiatives into three tier groupings. Prioritized initiatives, some of which are ongoing, will direct the preparation of annual work plans and budgets during the ensuing years that are embraced by this plan. The three priority tiers are more fully defined in Attachment D.

### Ongoing Initiatives

1.1.c Inventory of existing uses
1.1.d Inventory of available properties
1.1.e Constituent and customer surveys
1.1.f Outreach and information networking
2.1.a Public awareness activities (parking; events; special activities; tips, etc.)
2.2.b Ambassador Public Safety programs
2.1.e Multi-modal transportation alternatives
4.1.a Board orientation and ongoing professional development
4.1.b Professional development for staff
4.2.f City-wide visioning and strategic planning

### Priority Group One

These initiates are already ongoing and generally successful or are relatively inexpensive and easy to add

1.2.b Collaboration with business enhancement organizations, services
1.2.c Delivery of resources to district constituents.
1.2.d Downtown resource and information guides
1.2.e Communications (progress, vitality, happenings, etc.); interaction
2.2.a Maintenance responsibilities—clarify the DDA's and partners' roles
2.2.c Special seasonal and holiday considerations
2.3.e Outdoor illumination – background and groundwork
3.1.a Events focused on retail sales generation
3.1.b DDA-to-business marketing; digital/cyber marketing
3.1.c Showcasing downtown authenticity and experience
3.1.d Collaborative "cluster" marketing
3.1.e New residents' incentives and value-added features
3.2.a DBMC collaborations
3.2.b Targeted outreach activities
3.3.a Updates and strategic distribution of guides and publications
3.3.b Media relations
3.3.c Branding activities and communications
3.3.d Interactions, collaboration and engagement with alliance partners
3.3.f Advocacy of alliance partner initiatives and issues

3.4.b Measuring the effectiveness of media alternatives
3.4.c More and better use of video
3.4.d Staying on top of technology
1.2.a Downtown planning activities
4.1.c Incorporation of supplemental services as warranted
4.1.d Ongoing formalized internal evaluations
4.1.e Executive transition plan
4.2.c Outreach and networking with alliance partners
4.2.e Sharing financial resources with alliance partners
4.3.c Support organizations

## Priority Group Two

Initiatives in this group require a reasonably management expansion of current capacity.

1.1.a Downtown economic market study
1.1.b Downtown customer demographics and lifestyle factors
1.2.f User-friendly experiences and advocacy with the public sector
1.2.g Financial assistance and resources
1.3.a Know the locals—all the locals
1.3.b Advancement of "locals' zones".
1.3.c Fostering the creative culture in all its forms
1.3.d Public outdoor art features and activities
1.4.a Tech-related leadership and team recruitment
1.4.b Technology infrastructure research and plan development
2.1.b Employee parking program
2.1.c Internal training, capacity considerations, resource requirements
2.1.d Public parking regulation and management
2.1.f Downtown navigation enhancements
2.2.b Ambassador Public Safety programs
2.2.d Hospitality Zone and nighttime management activities
2.2.e Environment; conservation; recycling
2.3.b Pedestrian circulation and safety
2.3.c Public access to technology and communications
2.3.d Dealing with wayfarers – a/k/a "homeless" a/k/a/ "recovering"
2.3.e Outdoor illumination—initiate the improvements
2.3.f Visual messaging and district definition components
3.1.f Merchandising, marketing and sales training for businesses
3.2.c Top of Mind messaging to "the rest of" the city (south, west)
3.2.d Sponsored FAM tours and events
3.2.e Transportation and access enhancements
3.3.e Visitor information
3.4.a Knowing the customers and what influences their choices
4.2.a East-west operating alliances

4.2.b Outreach and networking with downtown residential population

4.2.d Development of standards and practices for public policy advocacy

4.3.a Resource development planning

4.3.b Development of sub-district – e.g., neighborhood – organizations

4.3.d Project/program-specific funding

## Priority Group Three

These are undertakings that will fundamentally expand the scope and dimensions of the DDA. They will require considerable lead time for research, planning, training, and significant expansion of current capacity.

1.4.c Tech-related resource development

1.4.d Tech-related hardware procurement and maintenance

1.4.e Tech-related physical infrastructure

2.2.b Ambassador Public Safety programs

2.2.f Green space; rooftop gardens, plazas; urban agriculture

2.3.a Public comfort areas and projects

## Benchmarks and Measuring Success

Healthy enhancement programs are built on a commitment to measure outcomes. Public resources are scarce and competition for private resources is fierce. The DDA must be able to demonstrate the wise use of resources and how it translates to real change on the ground: new jobs added in the district, new businesses opened, buildings redeveloped, new construction, and other identifiable metrics of success.

Actual benchmarks will be selected by the DDA board who should look to the DDA team for recommendations. Benchmarks must be relatively easy to measure, i.e., should not place undo added burdens on staff, and must relate specifically to initiatives set forth in the relevant work plan.

Benchmarks should be tracked continually and reported out no less than quarterly.

## Section Eight: Looking Ahead

### Implementation, Work Plans, Budgets

The DDA should revisit and, when appropriate, re-prioritize its strategic initiatives no less than annually in a special board workshop especially set aside for this purpose.

A new and more extensive strategic plan should be on the DDA's calendar for early in 2020 and should look at least 5 years into the future. At least every few years thereafter, an update to the strategic plan is appropriate and is best accomplished under professional facilitation.

**Work Plans.** Specific initiatives are broken down into individual components of the annual work plan. Each is assigned a project name; it is given a start date and a target completion date (or, when appropriate, is shown as "ongoing"); a project team leader is named and team members, if any, are identified; and the tasks required to make it happen are ideally listed in detail.

The compilation of named projects, programs and activities—collectively the "initiatives"—taken together with ongoing general and administrative functions (G&A), comprises the DDA's annual work plan.

**Budgeting.** Each task is assigned a cost, if applicable, associated with a line item in the DDA's chart of accounts. The total budget for any given initiative is the total cost of tasks associated with the initiative, and the annual programmatic budget is the sum of all initiatives' budgeted costs.

The total of the budgeted costs for program initiatives, together with the annual G&A budget, comprise the DDA's annual overall budgeted costs. Adjustments will be

required when budgeted costs exceed anticipated revenues, either to the work plan, to anticipated revenues, or to a combination of both.

By strategically formulating and organizing the annual work plan and budget along these lines, the presentation and communication of the DDA's annual program of work, including its budget, takes on a clear and compelling form.[19]

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[19] Sample templates for project, program and organization work plans and budgets are available upon request as a value added service.

## Section Nine: Supporting Attachments

### Attachment A  Acknowledgements and Participation

The author expresses grateful appreciation to all who participated in the planning process.

**Town Hall meeting**: approximately 50 downtown businesses and property owners together with: DDA board members Frank Frione, Albert Richwagen, Mark Denkler; DDA Staff Laura Simon, Alexandra Farnsworth, Lauren Lyall; County Commissioner Steve Abrams; City Commissioner Shelley Petrolia; City Staff Steve Hynes, Mark Stiers, Ana Puszkin-Chevlin, Tim Stillings; from Delray Beach Police Department Rachel Saunders; Joan Goodrich, Delray Beach/CRA office of Economic Development; CRA Staff Jeff Costello and Kristyn Cox; WARC board members Joycelyn Patrick and Ann Stacey-Wright; DB Housing Authority Executive Director Dorothy Ellington

**Board retreat** participation: Bonnie Beer, Ryan Boylston, Mark Denkler, Frank Frione, Albert Richwagen, Seabron A. Smith, Alan Costilo, Laura Simon, Lauren Lyall, Alexandra Farnsworth, Stephanie Immelman, Rita Rana, Sandra Fogell, Terra Spero, City Commissioner Mitch Katz

**Focus Groups** participation: Joan Goodrich, OED; Karen Granger, Chamber of Commerce; Alan Kornblau, Delray Beach Public Library; Rob Steele, Old School Square; Laura Simon, DDA; Stephanie Immelman, DBMC; Christina Morrison, Chamber ED Committee chair; Ingrid Kennemer, OSS board; Kristyn Cox, WARC; Roy Simon, PO/BO[20]; David Cook, BO; Jestina Boughton, PO/BO; Bill Morris, PO; Bruce Gimmy, BO; Rich Viens, PO/BO

Board **goals setting workshop**: Bonnie Beer, Ryan Boylston, Mark Denkler, Frank Frione, Albert Richwagen, Seabron A. Smith, Alan Costilo, Laura Simon, Lauren Lyall, Alexandra Farnsworth, Stephanie Immelman, Joan Goodrich, Jules Guaglardi (Roxy Lulu)
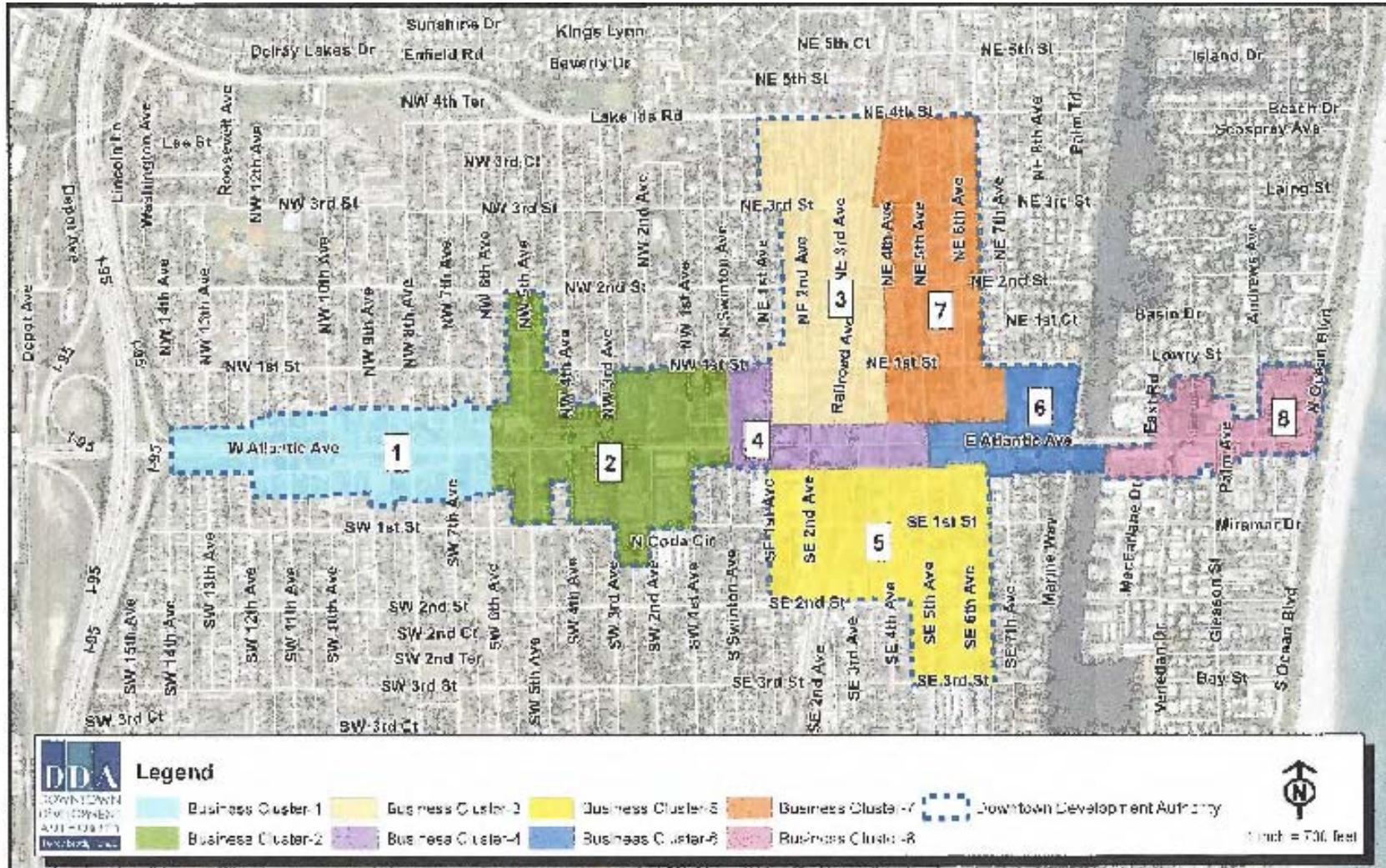
**One-on-one interviews**: Mayor Cary Glickstien and City Commissioners Jordana Jarjura, Mitch Katz and Shelly Petrolia; City Manager Don Cooper; CRA Board Chair Reggie Cox; Board member Cathy Balistreri; CRA Executive Director Jeff Costello; Christina Morrison, Chamber Economic Development Committee

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[20] PO = downtown property owner; BO = downtown business owner
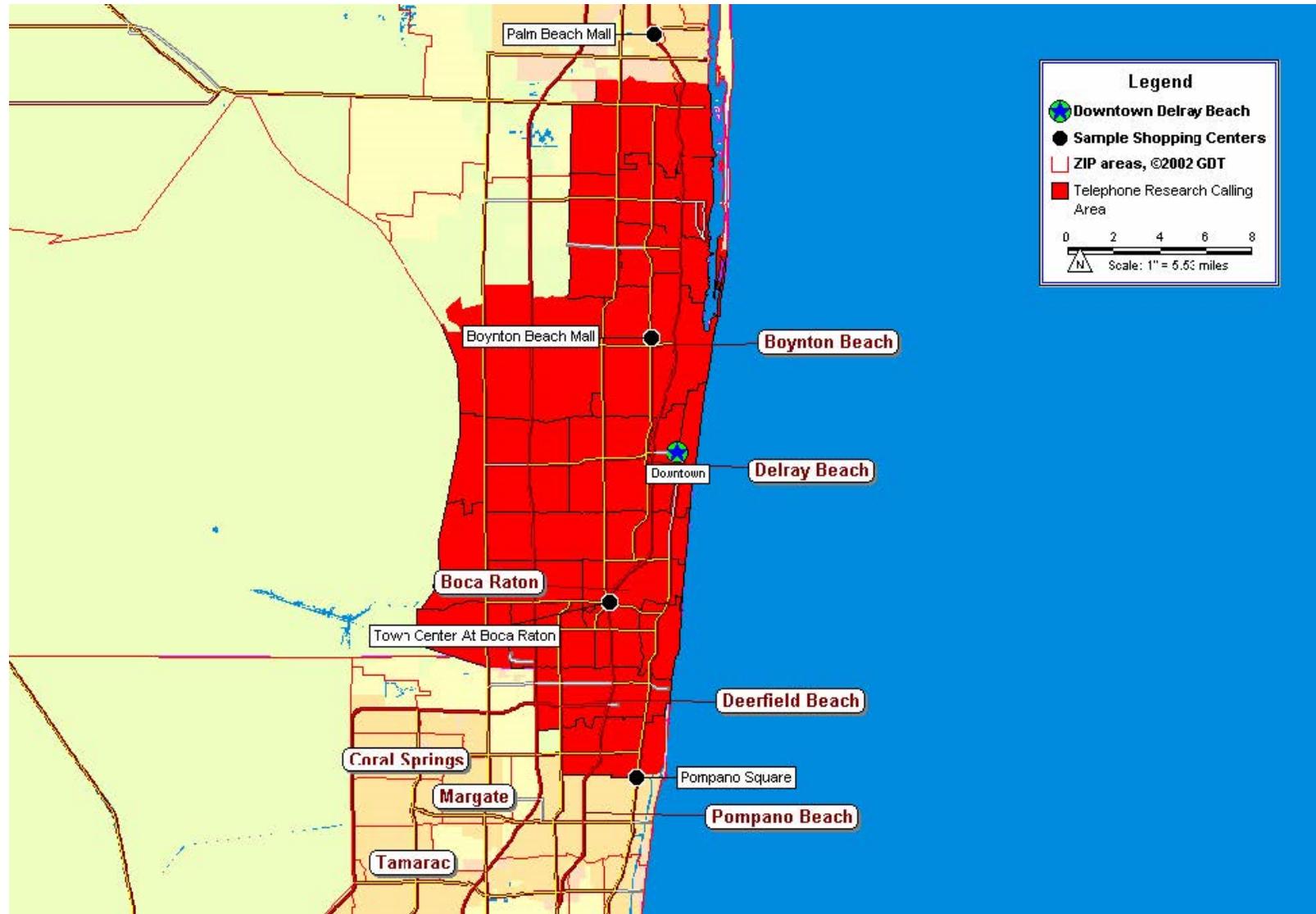
# Delray Beach DDA
## Strategic Plan 2020

**Attachment B**   **DDA District Map**

**Attachment C  DDA Trade Area Map**

**Attachment D  DDA Prioritization Guidelines**

Board members and staff used the following guidelines during the prioritization exercises. Each board member prioritized the initiatives individually, as did staff collectively, and responses were then compiled and analyzed in spread sheet format. The outcome reflects a consensus prioritization.

1. **Prioritize each initiative** either a 1, 2 or 3. The objective is to group the initiatives into three Priority Tiers.

    a. **Tier 1** initiatives are either "cheap and easy" to do, already included as part of our annual plan of work (even if tweaking is needed), or need to be undertaken immediately to address a crisis situation.

    b. **Tier 2** initiatives are those that will need to be started from scratch and/or will require more time, money and other resources then are currently on hand.

    c. **Tier 3** initiatives will require a "big leap" from where the DDA is now and what it is capable of undertaking today. These initiatives will fundamentally expand the dimensions of the DDA and will require a good bit of lead time for research, planning, training, and gathering together new resources.

2. **Note**: While the word "initiatives" is used, each line being prioritized is actually an initiative group, i.e., any number of specific projects or activities might be specified in a work plan within each "initiative". For example: Initiative 1.1.a, "Focused, sales-oriented events", includes the events that you are now doing – Fashion Week, Savior the Ave, etc. – and could be expanded to include new events. Each event, in turn, is a project within the Initiative 1.1.a.

3. **Please <u>prioritize each initiative</u>.** Fill in each blank with a 1, 2, or 3.

4. You are prioritizing, **not ranking** the initiatives by order of importance or preference. All of the initiatives are equally important or they would not be incorporated into the Plan. Instead, you are suggesting how immediately and/or urgently you believe the initiatives should be undertaken.

5. **Add initiatives** if you think I missed something.

**If you feel strongly** that an initiative grouping is something that the DDA simply **should not pursue**, please draw a line through it. If enough of you agree, it will be deleted.