

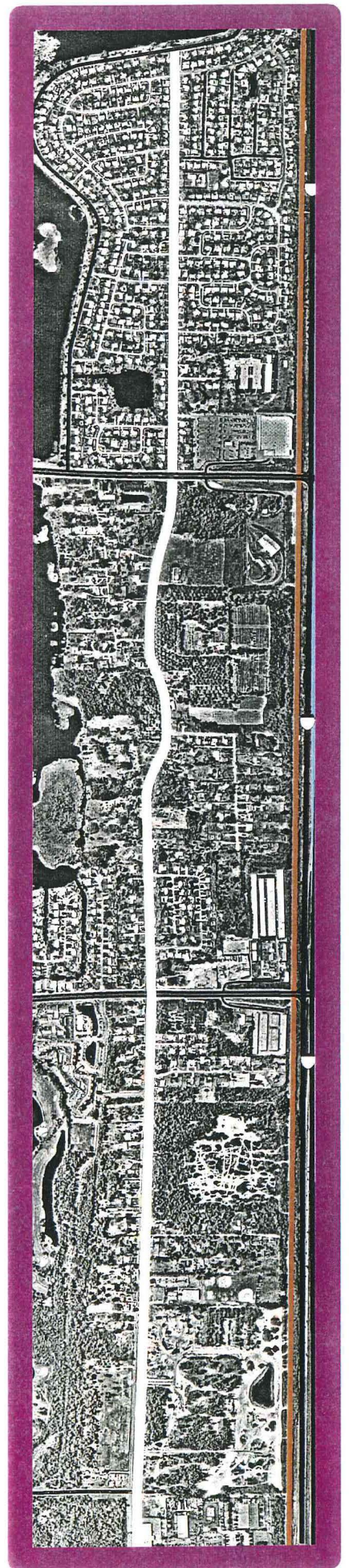
High Ridge Road Corridor Study



Department of Planning,
Zoning & Building

PLANNING DIVISION

February, 1998



I. OVERVIEW

The Area

The High Ridge Road Corridor is a predominantly residential area, unique in eastern Palm Beach County. The setting encountered by someone passing through the area -- a well-maintained older residential subdivision giving way, south of Lantana Road, to lower-density, large-lot residences tucked among abundant vegetation, along a narrow road, *winding and hilly* by south Florida standards -- belie the corridor's actual location: adjacent to I-95 and the CSX railroad, surrounded by relatively high density residential development and in close proximity to retail and employment centers.

Origin of This Study

Concerns about protection of this distinctive area's character have been prompted in recent years by a number of non-residential uses that have located in, or been proposed for, the area. These include a solid-waste transfer station, a Costco store, and a now-defunct proposal for an excavation and construction recycling operation. Most recently, following a proposal for the expansion of a service station/convenience store in the area, the Planning Division was requested to identify potential problems or opportunities related to preserving the area's character.

Purpose and Method of This Study

The purpose of this report is to identify any actions that could be taken by the County or area residents in order to preserve or enhance the area's character. Because the area is largely built-out and stable, this is not intended to be a detailed neighborhood plan, nor a community revitalization strategy. This report focusses on two basic issues: first, the development potential of key vacant and developable sites within the corridor, and second, other items such as future transportation plans which may affect the character of the area.

Study Objectives

This study assumes that the goal, to protect and enhance the character of the area, would be achieved through the following objectives:

- Maintaining the predominantly residential character of the area through residential, as opposed to non-residential, development of vacant parcels
- Developing any new residential areas at densities consistent with existing densities and housing types
- Maintaining and/or enhancing the existing vegetative buffer along the roadway

- Limiting access and traffic on High Ridge Road
- Limiting the intensity of any commercial uses;
- Enhancing community identity and enjoyment of the area.

Use of Study Recommendations

This study identifies some actions to be carried out in the near future; others are recommendations to be applied at the time of development of key parcels. It is intended that the recommendations would be implemented as follows: the action items would be initiated by Palm Beach County or by interested area residents, as appropriate; and the site-specific development recommendations would be applied in the development review process as proposals for these sites are evaluated

Public Participation

As part of the study process, the proposed recommendations were presented to the various residents' associations in a series of evening meetings, at which additional concerns and ideas were raised and addressed through the study recommendations. Staff has attempted to contact the property owners whose vacant and developable parcels are the focus of this study. Staff has discussed draft recommendations with those property owners that could be reached, and has continued attempts to reach the remainder. Finally, County staff presented the draft recommendations to staff from the three municipalities in the study area, whose comments were reflected in this report as appropriate. A copy of the draft report was provided to each neighborhood association, property owner and local government in preparation for the BCC Workshop of December 9, 1997.

II. BACKGROUND

Study Area Description

The study area extends along High Ridge Road from its intersection with Miner Road north to its terminus at Lake Osborne, a length of about three miles. The study area covers about 630 acres, and is bisected at one-mile intervals by major thoroughfares, Lantana and Hypoluxo Roads. I-95 serves as the eastern boundary. North of Hypoluxo Road, Lake Osborne is the western boundary. South of Hypoluxo Road, the High Ridge Country Club serves as the western boundary. These boundaries encompass those areas which either front on, or otherwise have access to, High Ridge Road. The study area is shown on Map 1.

Population and Housing

The population of the area is about 2,500, according to the 1990 census. Median household income and housing value are somewhat lower than, but in the general range of, the median values for the County. About three-fourths of the dwelling units were built prior to 1970. The area is fairly stable, with about half of the residents in the same home for at least five years, as compared to eighteen percent of residents, countywide. About three quarters of the area's population and dwelling units are in the northernmost portion of the study area, north of Lantana Road. The area south of Hypoluxo Road contains only about 3% of the population, and the highest income and housing values in the study area.

Existing Uses

The study area is predominantly single-family residential, with just over half the land area in residential use; five percent (5%) is in commercial or industrial use, primarily along the major east-west roads near access points to I-95; six percent (6%) is institutional, three percent (3%) is utility; eleven percent (11%) is in agriculture; and about twenty percent (20%) of the land area is vacant. Of the vacant land area, about 20% is designated for commercial use, with the balance designated residential.

The area north of Lantana Road is a largely homogeneous area of predominantly single family homes at a density of about five dwelling units per acre (5 du/ac), and having virtually no vacant lots. This area is part of the Lake Osborne Estates subdivision, the remainder of which is within the Town of Lake Worth. In addition, in proximity to the High Ridge Road intersection with Lantana Road, there are three churches, two day care centers, a retirement home, a Costco store, a solid waste transfer station, and several vacant parcels designated for commercial use.

The central portion of the corridor, south of Lantana Road and north of Hypoluxo, exhibits a somewhat different character. Residential densities are generally 1 to 2 units per acre, and

other major uses include a thirty-eight (38) acre mango farm on the east side of the corridor. There is also a group of vacant parcels to the north of the farm, totaling about 19 acres.

At Hypoluxo Road is another concentration of non residential uses on the north and south sides of the thoroughfare, including mini-warehouse facilities, a service station, a church, a small (3 acre) mango farm and a day care facility. There are also several vacant commercial parcels at the intersection.

South of the commercial cluster along Hypoluxo, the area returns to a general low density of 1 to 2 units per acre. There is a vacant tract of land of about forty-one (41) acres on the east side of the corridor. Additional uses in the area include Lake Worth Christian School, and the Cedar Ridge development approved for 135 single and multiple-family units (25 single family units completed; 110 townhouses under construction). At the southern end of the corridor is the High Ridge Commerce Park, an industrial park of one acre parcels now under construction, and a riding stable on a fourteen (14) acre site. There is additional vacant land, within the City of Boynton Beach, owned by the High Ridge Country Club which wraps around the east and south sides of the country club's golf courses.

Local Governance

In addition to the unincorporated county, the local governments of Lake Worth, Lantana and Boynton Beach each have jurisdiction in portions of the described study area. The northeastern quadrant of the Lake Osborne Estates neighborhood, north of Lantana Road, is within the City of Lake Worth. The Costco store near the northeast corner of the intersection of Lantana Road and I-95 is in the Town of Lantana. Boynton Beach has jurisdiction in the south portion of the study area, on the east side of High Ridge from Lake Worth Christian High School south, and up to the rear property lines of the parcels lining the west side of High Ridge.

III. ANALYSIS

This analysis focusses on two issues: first, the development potential of key vacant and developable sites within the corridor; second, the analysis examines other issues, such as future transportation plans, which may affect the character of the area.

A. ANALYSIS OF VACANT AND DEVELOPABLE SITES

1. ASSUMPTIONS

In order to analyze the development potential of vacant and other developable parcels in the study area, study parameters or assumptions must be defined. These are:

Residential Land Use

- Residential development would occur pursuant to the future land use designation now on the property. Future land use designations on vacant and other developable parcels in this area are generally consistent with surrounding designations and built densities, and it is therefore assumed that changes in densities will not be needed.
- All discussions of allowable units are estimates only. Actual determination of the permitted number of units would be made at the time of development, and would be subject to site development regulations and other limiting factors which have not been considered for the purposes of this analysis.
- “Underdeveloped” residential parcels are not likely to redevelop. For the purposes of this analysis, underdeveloped residential parcels or neighborhoods (developed at less than the permitted density) are not considered likely to redevelop to their maximum allowable potential. (It should be noted that, even if additional units were to result from these parcels, impacts would be minimal due to the relatively low densities throughout the area.)

Commercial Land Use

- All discussions of allowable commercial intensities are preliminary assessments, based on an overview of current conditions. An official determination of a CL (Commercial Low Intensity) or CH (Commercial High Intensity) is made at the time of a rezoning request.

- CL vs. CH determinations are based on the following criteria, located in the Introduction/Administration Element of the Comprehensive Plan:

- Criterion 1 Only CL sub-categories shall be assigned in the Rural Service Area
- Criterion 2 If a property is contiguous on two or more sides (intersection property) or three or more sides (non-intersection property) by land possessing CH (or determined to be such pursuant to these criteria) or a residential land use of at least five dwelling units per acre, or both, then the subject property shall be assigned a CH sub-category. This requirement does not intend to limit CH assignments to these conditions only.
- Criterion 3 If a property is contiguous on two or more sides (inter-sectional property) or three or more sides (non-intersection property) by lands possessing CL (or determined to be such pursuant to these criteria) or a residential land use of less than five dwelling units per acre, or both, then the subject property shall be assigned a CL sub-category.
- Criterion 4 If a property is contiguous on two or more sides to a residential designation less than five dwelling units per acre, or if a property is contiguous on two or more sides to development built at densities less than three dwelling units per acre, then a CL sub-category shall be assigned.
- Criterion 5 CH sub-categories shall only be located on roadways classified as arterial roadways by the Office of the County Engineer. This criterion does not preclude CL uses from such roadways.
- Criterion 6 CL sub-categories shall be located on streets classified as local, collector, or arterial by the Office of the County Engineer.

In areas such as the High Ridge Road corridor, typical uses allowed under CL would include banks, self-storage, retail, fast food and other restaurants, car sales, offices and retail building supply sales. CH designation would also allow other more intensive uses such as auto repair, hotels, and wholesale building supply sales.

- Allowable uses in the corridor are further limited by location relative to a major intersection. Certain traffic intensive uses such as automobile service stations and convenience stores are required to be located only at major intersections. Criteria for a *major intersection* are set out in the Unified Land Development Code:

.... to be considered a *major intersection*, each roadway must meet at least one of the following standards:

- is currently a 4-lane road; or

- appears in the 5-Year Plan as a 4-lane road; or
- has an average traffic volume of 10,000 trips per day on the Traffic Volume Map; or
- has a 120 foot ROW on the Thoroughfare Plan; or
- the applicant agrees to pay to improve the roadway to meet one of these standards as a condition of approval.

Neither the intersection of High Ridge Road with Lantana Road nor its intersection with Hypoluxo Road meet these criteria.

2. ANALYSIS AREAS

As noted in the discussion of existing land uses, vacant and underdeveloped parcels are concentrated primarily in three areas: the intersection of Lantana Road and High Ridge Road; the intersection of Hypoluxo Road and High Ridge Road; and south of Hypoluxo Road along High Ridge Road toward the intersection with Miner Road. For the purposes of this analysis, these areas are discussed separately below.

Area 1: High Ridge Road and Lantana Road

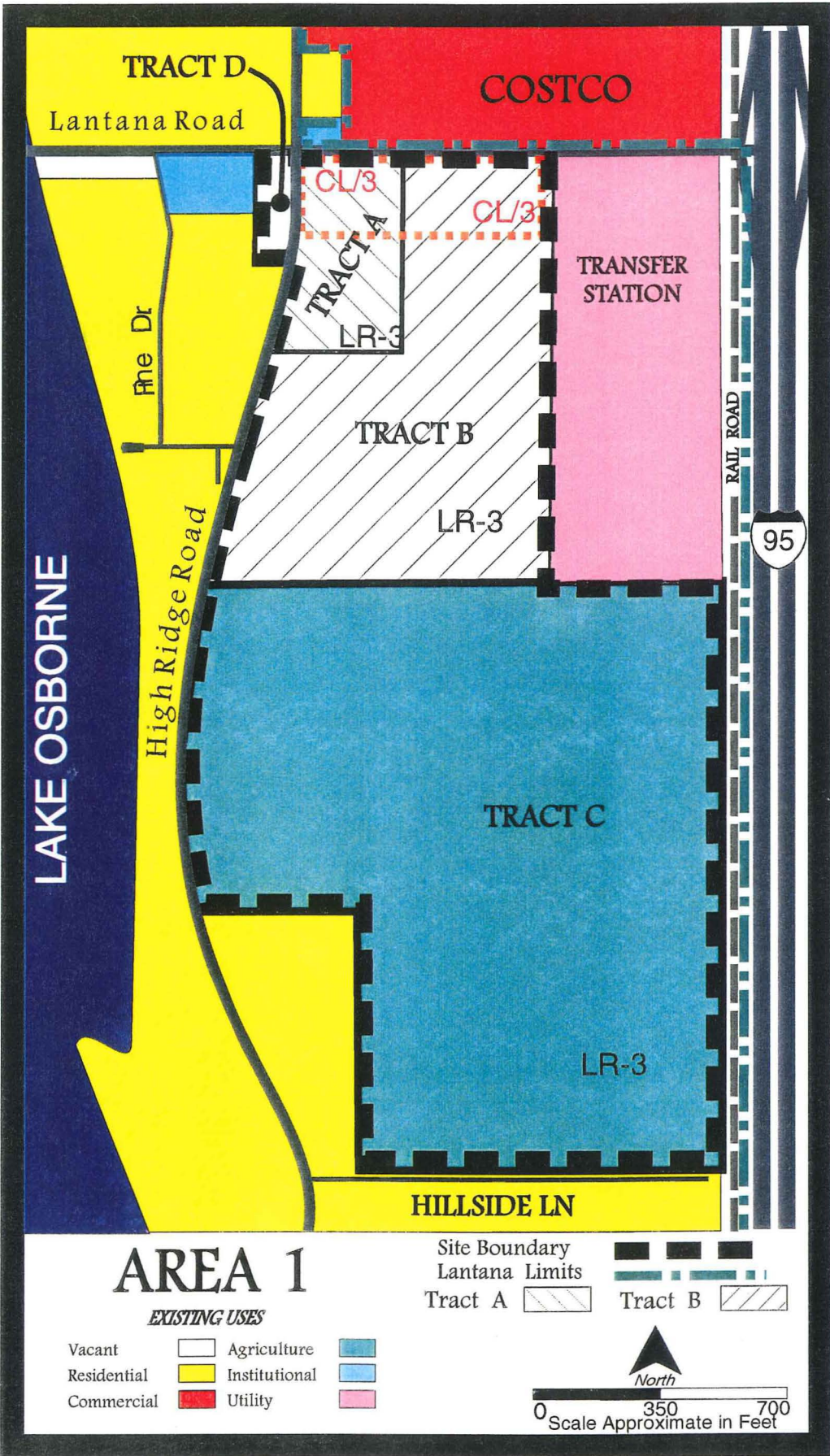
This area comprises several parcels on the south side of Lantana Road at High Ridge Road. Vacant and developable land in this area totals just under 60 acres. There is a vacant one (1) acre parcel at the southwest corner of the intersection. The remainder of the parcels are in the southeast quadrant of the intersection. For the most part, the area has low density residential future land uses (LR-3 or three dwelling units per acre). The top portion of the two northern most parcels has a commercial designation (C/3 or Commercial with an underlying land use of LR-3). The area is within the future annexation area of the Town of Lantana. For the purposes of discussion the subarea is divided into four tracts based on ownership. A map of Area 1 is attached.

Tract A

Description: This is a 3.60 acre parcel located on the southeast corner of Lantana Road and High Ridge Road. As previously mentioned, two different future land use designations split the parcel in half; the top portion is designated C/3 while the bottom portion is designated LR-3. Currently, there is a vacant single family residence accessible from Lantana Road on this parcel. There are no approvals or pending requests.

Development Potential: The northern portion of the parcel would be interpreted as "Commercial Low" based on Criterion 2 of the "Criteria and Process for Determining Commercial Sub-Categories" as noted in the assumptions. The parcel is eligible to develop consistent with the allowable uses permitted under the Commercial Low category. Convenience stores and service stations would not be permitted based on the major intersections criteria noted previously.

On the south expanse of the tract, four residential units could be accommodated under the LR-3 designation. Should the owner develop the



entire 3.6 acre property as residential, seven units could be accommodated. For Tract A to be developable entirely as commercial, the property owner would have to seek and obtain approval for a land use plan amendment.

Tract B

Description: Tract B consists of two parcels under single ownership (14.7 acres total), that wrap around the east and south sides of Tract A. The site is depicted on Map 2. The northern third of the top parcel has a C/3 designation, contiguous to the commercial portion of Tract A discussed above. Access to this site is via a service road from Lantana Road to the solid waste facility to the east. There is no history of development approvals or petitions on file for this northern portion.

The remainder of the top parcel, combined with the bottom parcel, is approximately 11.5 acres. It has a land use designation of LR-3, and abuts the solid waste transfer station to the east. There is a vacant house on the southern parcel which has a history of code enforcement violations related to accessibility of the building, overgrowth of the property, and roof disrepair. In February, 1997, a lien was recorded against the property, and condemnation proceedings are currently underway to remove the dilapidated structure.

Development Potential: The northern portion of the top parcel, designated C/3, would be interpreted as CL based on the aforementioned Criterion 2. This would allow for uses such as retail and services, restaurants and offices, excluding auto service stations and convenience stores due to the major intersections criteria. If the two commercial segments of Tract A and Tract B were to develop jointly, the combined area would also be interpreted as CL.

Combination of these areas can be effectuated without a land use amendment. For Tract B to develop entirely as commercial, the land owner would be required to request and gain approval of a land use plan amendment.

The 11.5 acre residential-designated portion, under its current land use designation (LR-3), would allow for 23 units (*under LR- 3, a minimum of 30 acres would be needed to develop as a Planned Unit Development and receive the maximum 3 dwelling units per acre density*). Finally, the entire 14.7 acres could be developed as residential, accommodating approximately 29 units.

Tract C

Description: Tract C refers to the two parcels (38 acres) that comprise the large mango farm located on the east side of High Ridge Road 1,000 feet south of Lantana Road. The area, like Tract B, bounds the solid waste transfer station at its northeast corner. In 1995, the property owner attempted a voluntary annexation into the Town of Lantana. The proposed use included excavation and construction recycling on the eastern portion of the property, and residential (total of 16-18 units) along the western and southern perimeter of the parcel on High Ridge Road and Hillside Lane, respectively. Based on County and resident concerns and objections, the proposal was withdrawn. Town staff has indicated that the Town would consider additional proposals from the property owner regarding annexations or uses. However, to date there has been no additional activity regarding this site.

Development Potential: The future land use of this parcel is LR-3 which means the property can accommodate 115 units if developed as a Planned Unit Development (PUD).

Tract D

Description: Tract D is a one acre parcel at the southwest corner of Lantana and High Ridge Roads.

Development Potential: The site has a future land use designation of CL/1, and an existing zoning approval (CC/SE) for any use consistent with the CL designation, except for auto service station, convenience store and automatic car wash.

Assessment of Area 1

The size, location, and configuration of the vacant and developable parcels in the southeast corner of the intersection (Tracts A, B, and C) present a unique opportunity for a unified development approach at a highly visible access point to the High Ridge Road area. Combining the tracts under one development plan could provide several opportunities:

- 1) to enhance one of two “gateways” to the High Ridge Road area
- 2) for more flexibility in mitigating the impacts of the transfer station through buffering and clustering of units away from the facility
- 3) to reduce access onto High Ridge Road to one entrance, with an additional access point onto Lantana Road

- 4) to create a continuous landscape buffer along High Ridge Road
- 5) to better configure any environmentally sensitive lands that may be preserved on the sites

If Tracts A, B and C were combined and developed as residential, this site could accommodate approximately 173 units. Although a low density is preferable in terms of compatibility with existing residential to the west and south, a higher density of no more than 4 to 5 units per acre could be considered in order to provide an incentive for residential use of the entire area, including the northern portions now designated commercial. A density of up to 5 units per acre would be consistent with the density of Lake Osborne Estates on the north side of Lantana Road. The added density could be pursued through either a plan amendment process or through the transfer of development rights (TDR) program offered by the County, subject to appropriate analysis and approval by the BCC. In order to maintain compatibility with surrounding residential areas, no density greater than 5 units per acre should be considered.

If this approach is not feasible due to ownership patterns or other concerns, then it is preferable that any non-residential development on the commercial portions of Tracts A and B (along Lantana Road) be developed jointly. This would provide the opportunity to minimize the impacts of the transfer station by providing for substantial buffering, and address access issues associated with the northern portion of Tract B. The rest of the area should be developed as residential, preferably in a joint development. Any extension of the commercial designations further south would create an incompatibility with existing residential on the west side of High Ridge Road.

Tract D presents a different set of challenges. Because of its size and location, the site is unlikely to develop according to its underlying residential land use. Because of the configuration of the parcel, a landscape buffer consistent with the character of the corridor likely could not be accommodated. The lower intensity uses under the CL designation would be most appropriate to maintain the character of the area.

Area 1 Recommendations

To be applied at the time of development review:

- Favor a unified residential development of combined Tracts A, B and C at the current density of 3 dwelling units per acre.
- Accommodate a higher density of up to 5 units per acre under a unified plan if necessary to achieve residential development of the commercially designated tracts.

- Should the County's Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program be revised to allow for the provision of units at a reduced cost in order to further specific Comprehensive Plan objectives and aims (such as coastal area redevelopment and reducing commercial land use intrusion into residential neighborhoods), then consideration should be given to the use of such discounted TDRs on combined Tracts A, B, and C to facilitate unified residential development.
- Encourage a site plan that provides for compatibility with the existing single family homes to the south and west.
- Should a unified residential plan not be pursued, limit commercial land uses on the commercially designated portions to those allowed in Commercial Low (CL), and minimize access to High Ridge Road.
- Minimize the number of access points on High Ridge Road, for any residential development.
- Require an appropriate landscape buffer along High Ridge Road for all new development, consistent with the existing landscape pattern of the corridor. (This recommendation may not be applicable to Tract D due to size limitations described above.)

To be carried out in the near term:

- The area neighborhood associations should consider requesting that the Solid Waste Authority enhance the landscaping scheme of its transfer station, as well as explore other modifications that might reduce the nuisance factor of that facility.

Area 2: High Ridge Road and Hypoluxo Road

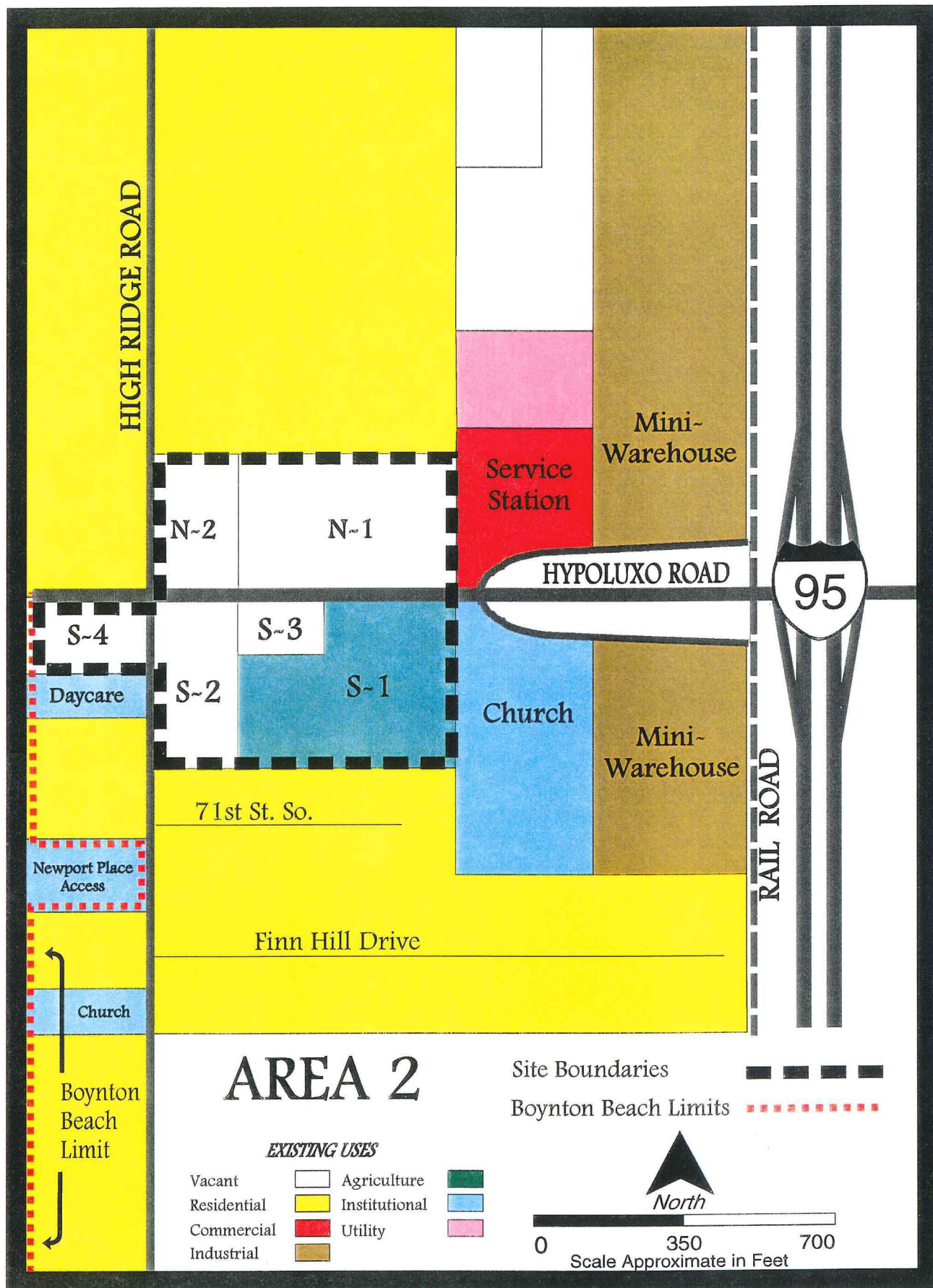
Generally, this second area of vacant and developable parcels includes those parcels fronting Hypoluxo from Interstate 95 up to and including the High Ridge/Hypoluxo intersection. The area north of Hypoluxo Road is in the future annexation area of the Town of Lantana, and the area to the south is in the City of Boynton Beach's future annexation area. A map of Area 2 is attached

Area 2 -- North Side

Description: On the north side of Hypoluxo is a 4.3 acre area comprising 3 parcels. The eastern 2.8 acres (hereafter N-1) is vacant; the western 1.5 acres (hereafter N-2) is vacant with two dilapidated structures. N-1 has a Conditional Overlay Zoning district which limits uses to retail only. Entrance-only access was permitted from High Ridge Road under the condition that any future rezoning of the parent property would require this access be closed. The N-1 parcel is adjacent to a service station on the east. The service station and parcels N-1 and N-2 are under the same ownership. All parcels have a future land use designation of Commercial with an underlying residential land use of 3 units per acre (C/3). In 1995, the owner was denied a rezoning for the entire 6.1 acre site, which includes the service station. The owner was proposing a full service truck stop.

According to the Code Enforcement Division, since 1995, the Code Enforcement Board has cited the property owner for a series of violations of the site's conditions of approval, primarily regarding the overnight unlawful storage of tractor trailers. The owner appealed these actions, as well as an injunction issued on behalf of the Zoning Division which sought compliance with the site's conditions of approval. The Court found in favor of the County in both actions. In the case of the overnight truck storage, the County limited truck parking/storage to two hours and the property owner appears to be abiding by this ruling, though he has appealed both actions. As of August 1, 1997, County liens against the property total \$318,600 based on accumulated fines associated with the various code violations.

Development Potential: At the time of the property owner's request for rezoning, the Board of County Commissioners rezoned parcel N-2 to Community Commercial (CC) based on a Zoning Division recommendation that CC was the appropriate zoning for the site. At the time of these actions, a determination of CL land use was made for these properties. In addition, the intersection does not meet the *major intersection criteria* of the ULDC, preventing high traffic generating uses such as a service station or a convenience store.



Area 2 -- South Side

Description: The easternmost developable parcel on the south side of Hypoluxo Road is a 3.08 acre mango farm (hereafter S-1), which has a future land use designation of C/5 (Commercial - underlying Residential 5). This parcel has access on Hypoluxo Road. An adjacent 1.45 acre parcel (hereafter S-2) is in the same ownership and extends west to High Ridge Road. Parcels S-1 and S-2 surround two small parcels under one ownership, totaling .23 acres (hereafter S-3). This site currently has a C/5 future land use. On the southwest corner of High Ridge and Hypoluxo, are two vacant parcels totaling 1.27 acres (hereafter S-4) under single ownership, having a future land use of a C/5 and no current approvals.

Development Potential: Parcel S-1 would likely be interpreted as CL. If developed as residential, it could accommodate approximately 12 units. Parcel S-2 has a land use designation of C/5, and was granted a special exception in 1992 for a convenience store, gas station and automatic car wash. Final site plan approval was received for this use in November, 1996. Parcel S-3 would likely be interpreted as CL. If developed as residential, it could accommodate approximately 5 units. S-4 would be interpreted as CL.

Assessment of Area 2

Due to their location and size, it is not likely that these sites will be developed pursuant to their underlying residential designations. Commercial development of the sites will require a determination of CL or CH. Properties on the north side of Hypoluxo Road were previously determined to be CL. The lands on the south side of Hypoluxo Road appear to meet the criteria for CL designation. However, depending on the order in which parcels in the area might develop, there are scenarios which could result in a CH determination for one or more of the parcels. This is in part due to the density of the residential area south of the commercial parcels. The area is built-out at a density of 2 to 3 units per acre, but is designated MR-5. The Comprehensive Plan criteria for commercial intensity determination do not clearly address whether the built or the designated density should be taken into account when applying the criteria.

Area 2 Recommendations

To be applied at the time of development review:

- Favor a CL determination for all commercial properties in this area, absent any outcomes to the contrary of the ongoing legal proceedings on the north sites.

- Encourage unified development of parcels N-1 & N-2, also considering expanding that aggregate to include the existing service station under the same ownership.
- Limit or eliminate, if possible, any access on to High Ridge Road for all the sites.
- Require an appropriate landscape buffer for all new development, consistent with the existing landscape pattern of the corridor.

To be carried out in the near term:

- Consider a Comprehensive Plan text amendment in round 98-2 to clarify how surrounding built and designated densities are to be applied in determining appropriate commercial intensity. Specifically, *the actual density should be considered when the residential property is built or approved for development, and the designated density should be considered when the property is vacant.*
- If such a Comprehensive Plan text amendment is not feasible, initiate a Future Land Use Map amendment, redesignating the neighborhood south of S-1 & S-2 to LR 3 to reflect built density. This would clarify the interpretation of the commercial intensity on S-1 and S-2 as CL, which is most compatible with the character of the area.

Area 3: South to Miner Road

Area 3 includes the vacant residential properties between Hypoluxo Road and Miner Road. It comprises 3 parcels. One is on the east side of High Ridge Road, and two are on the west side, including one within the City of Boynton Beach.

Tract A

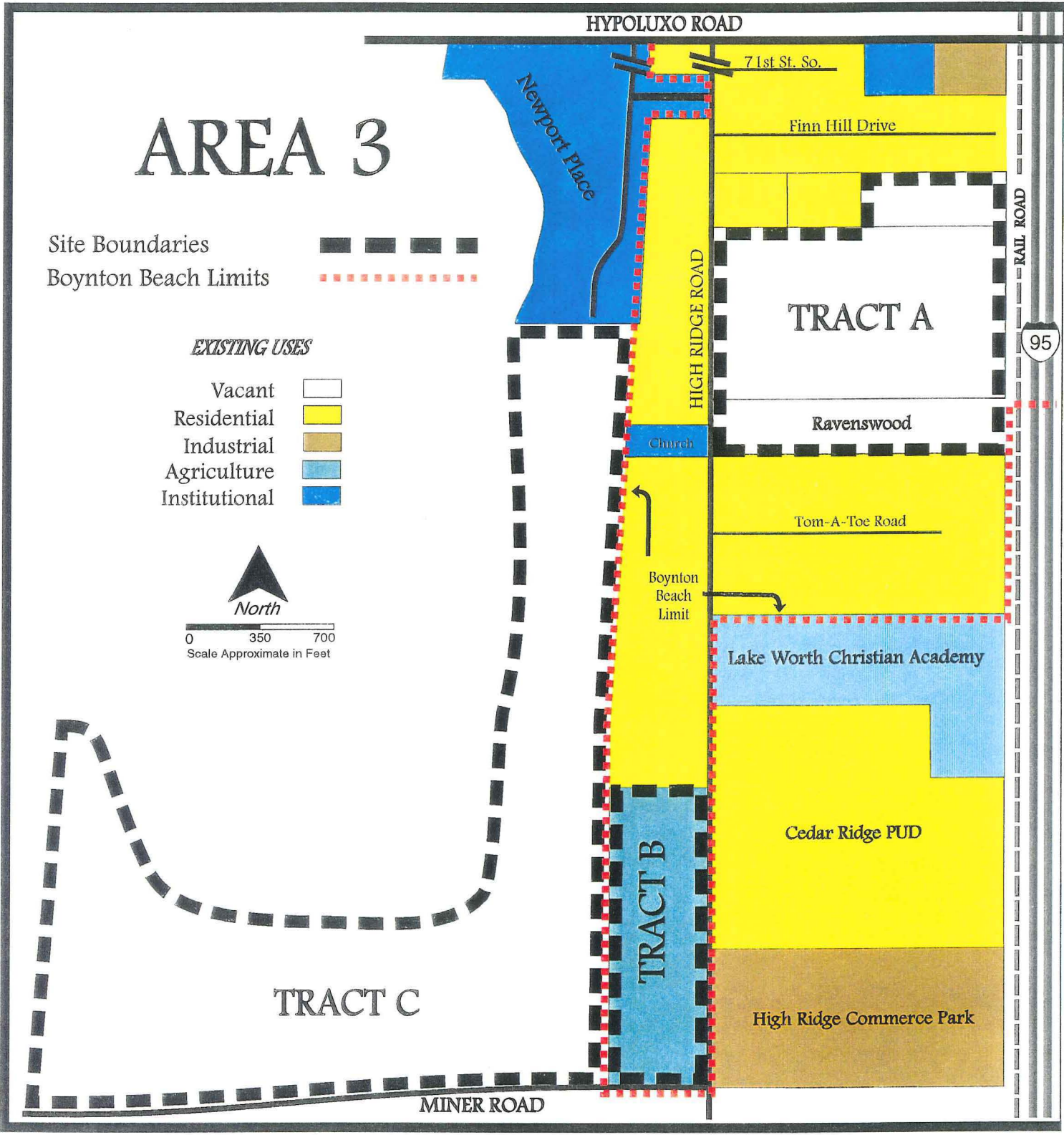
Description: Tract A is about thirty-eight acres, and located on the east side of High Ridge Road approximately 1,000 feet south of Hypoluxo Road. This site consists of five parcels with three property owners. Presently the site is undeveloped and has been identified as significant on the County's Environmentally Sensitive Lands Map. This site has also been recently upgraded by the County's Environmental Sensitive Lands Acquisition Selection Committee (ESLASC) to *high priority for acquisition*. Appraisals of the property have been completed, and offers are expected to be tendered beginning in November, 1997. The site has a Future Land Use designation of Medium Residential 5 (MR-5).

In November, 1996, the final site plan was approved for the *Ravenswood* subdivision, located on the southernmost nine acres of Tract A. Ravenswood is platted for thirty-five (35) single family detached dwelling units and includes a 1.5 acre environmentally sensitive lands preserve.

Three of the remaining four parcels are under single ownership totaling about twenty-six (26) acres. This property is currently subject to a settlement agreement stemming from an illegal partial lot clearing by a contract purchaser. The terms of the agreement call for the contract purchaser to maintain barricades on access points created during the illegal actions and to post "no trespassing" signs.

Development Potential: Without the Ravenswood nine acres, Tract A has about thirty contiguous acres in four parcels that could be developed as one project in order to utilize the maximum residential development potential of five dwelling units per acre. If not developed jointly, the three parcels under single ownership (26 acres) are still of sufficient size to develop at the 5 units per acre. The remaining parcel could develop individually at 4 units per acre.

Tract A is located within the Future Annexation Area of the City of Boynton Beach. The City's Comprehensive Plan states that if these properties are annexed they should be placed in the Low Density Residential land use category, which permits up to 4.84 dwelling units per acre, and developed so as to be compatible with the surrounding low density, single family housing.



Tract B

Description: Tract B is approximately fourteen (14) acres located on the west side of High Ridge Road immediately north of Miner Road. This site consists of two parcels in one ownership, and is currently used for riding stable.

Development Potential: The future land use designation is MR-5. The development potential of this site is four dwelling units per acre (56 dwelling units). As with Tract A, the property is located within the Future Annexation Area of the City of Boynton Beach and is recommended for a Low Density Residential land use designation.

Tract C

Description: Tract C is the only undeveloped site in this study which is currently under the jurisdiction of a local government other than Palm Beach County: the City of Boynton Beach. The site is approximately sixty-nine (69) acres in total with about a third included in this study (because of its likely impact on High Ridge Road if developed). This site curves along the east and south sides of the High Ridge Country Club, west of High Ridge Road, and adjacent to Miner Road. Tract C is owned by the High Ridge Country Club, but is presently undeveloped, and is not included within the existing development approvals for the club.

Development Potential: Tract C has a City of Boynton Beach future land use designation of Low Density Residential, or 4.84 dwelling units per acre, which would accommodate 72 dwelling units on the 15 acres in the study area. Residential development of the entire sixty-nine (69) acres at 4.84 dwelling units would accommodate 333 total dwelling units.

Assessment of Area 3

The land use designations for Tracts A and B are consistent with the designations identified as appropriate in the City of Boynton Beach future annexation plan. Residential development of all three tracts at the designated densities represents a continuation of the density pattern already well established in the area, and therefore consistent with the character of the area.

Area 3 Recommendations

To be applied at the time of development review:

- Require an appropriate landscaped buffer for all new development along High Ridge Road, consistent with the existing landscape pattern of the corridor.
- Limit the number of access points on High Ridge Road for any new development.
- Require primary access for Tract B on Miner Road. Any secondary access to High Ridge Road should be shared with existing development to the north, and aligned with the entrance to the Cedar Ridge PUD if possible.
- Require primary traffic access for any development on Tract C onto Miner Road, with limited access to High Ridge Road through the existing roads that serve the Newport Place development to the north.
- Locate any multifamily development proposed for Tract C on the larger western portion, and locate lower density single family development on the narrow eastern portion.

B. ANALYSIS OF OTHER ITEMS

In addition to the development potential of key vacant and developable sites, several other items were identified which could potentially enhance or detract from the character of the area. These include a number of items such as municipal annexation plans, traffic plans, bike and pedestrian pathways, scenic highways/byways designation programs and I-95 interchange beautification programs. The extent to which these might affect the character of the area, and possible actions to be pursued, are discussed below.

1. Traffic

Situation: Currently, High Ridge Road is a 20-foot-wide paved road within a 50 foot right-of-way (ROW). It carries about 4,000 trips per day (tpd) in the study area, and is not on the 5-year road improvement program for expansion. High Ridge Road is well under its design capacity of 12,000 tpd, and future land use build out of the study area would result in approximately 6,000 additional trips per day. However, the *2015 Roadway Network*, adopted in the Comprehensive Plan, indicates an expansion to 4-lanes for the portion of High Ridge Road south of Hypoluxo Road. This map is based on the Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) *WPBUSA 2015 Plan* (adopted in November, 1995), which indicates that the same section of High Ridge is cost-feasible to be improved to 4-lanes during the 2011-2015 phasing period. The

County's *Thoroughfare Right-Of-Way Identification Map* (TIM), which identifies ultimate ROW, indicates that segment's ultimate ROW as 80 feet (4-lanes).

Potential Impact: Widening of any section of High Ridge Road beyond its present two lanes would greatly detract from the character of the area, and an analysis should be done to determine the basis for the four-laning shown on the 2015 Plan. Gateway Boulevard was expanded and an I-95 interchange constructed there to serve the development of Quantum Park to the south of the study area. The traffic analysis for the Quantum Park DRI indicated no significant impacts to High Ridge Road in the study area. The basis for the four lanes identified in the 2015 Plan is therefore unclear.

Traffic Recommendations

To be carried out in the near term:

- Pursue an assessment of this portion of the *2015 Roadway Network* and adjustment, if viable, to reflect High Ridge Road from Miner Road to Hypoluxo Road as 2-lanes on the 2015 network, and revise the TIM accordingly.
- Seek a corresponding amendment to the MPO's *WPBUSA 2015 Plan* to remove the expansion to 4-lanes of this segment.

2. **Annexation**

Situation: The potential exists for annexation of all or part of the study area. The Town of Lantana does not have a formally adopted annexation program, but identifies the following future annexation area within its comprehensive plan: extending north of Hypoluxo Road to one mile north of Lantana Road, and extending west to State Road 7. This would cover the portion of the study area north of Lantana Road. In addition, the Town of Lantana previously considered annexation of parcels south of Lantana Road, and Town of Lantana staff have indicated that the Town would likely consider any similar proposals in the future. The portion of the study area south of Hypoluxo Road is within the City of Boynton Beach's future annexation area. The City's Comprehensive Plan states that the area should be annexed prior to development, and should be developed consistent with the County's residential designations. The northern portion of the study area is adjacent to the City of Lake Worth, but is not identified in the City's future annexation area.

Potential Impact: Annexation by Boynton Beach or Lantana does not, per se, represent potential problems for the maintenance of the character of the area. Any changes in the designated land use following an annexation, however, could raise

concerns, as was the case with the proposed annexation of the mango farm by the Town of Lantana. It is not within the scope of this analysis to evaluate all potential uses of lands within future annexation areas for possible impacts on the corridor. An assessment of compatibility issues, such as that which was performed at the time of the Lantana annexation, is part of the County's review process for both proposed annexations and municipal future land use changes.

Annexation Recommendation:

To be carried out in the near term:

- The High Ridge Road study should be conveyed to the local governments as an informational item to be considered at the time of annexation and/or development approval for any of the sites discussed in this area.

3. Scenic/Historic Roadway Designation or Enhancements

Situation: Several additional tools may be available to enhance the corridor's distinctive character. For example, the Florida Department of Transportation administers the Florida Scenic Highways Program, *to preserve, maintain, protect and enhance Florida's outstanding cultural, historical, archaeological, recreational, natural and scenic resources*. Nominations are made at the local level, fostering local commitment to preserve and maintain intrinsic resources important to local communities and the region. The County also has a program for the designation and protection of historic sites or districts. Designations are approved by the BCC, based on criteria for qualification for such designation. Additional programs, including sound barriers such as those provided by DOT in specific areas, and/or interchange and median landscaping programs of the County and non-profit agencies such as Beautiful Palm Beaches, Inc., may be applicable.

Potential Impact: Though scenic or historic corridor designation is more commonly applied in areas with landmark vegetation, buildings or sites, residents could opt to pursue designation under these programs. Even if not designated under such programs' criteria, residents could pursue obtaining signage or other indicators of entrance to this unique corridor. Identification of the corridor at its access points could provide a source of community identity for residents and visitors, and could help establish local partnerships with the common goal of protecting and enhancing the features of the corridor. If the corridor was determined to meet the requirements for historic designation, such designation would provide a measure of protection from alteration under the ULDC. Additional landscaping or sound barriers may provide additional enhancement opportunities.

Scenic Highways/Byways Program Recommendations

To be carried out in the near term:

- Encourage residents' groups to evaluate the desirability and feasibility of pursuing applicable improvements under the above programs.

4. Bike and Pedestrian Pathways

Situation: Bike paths currently exist along Lake Osborne, north of Lantana Road, and within Quantum Park just to the south of the study area.

Palm Beach County presently has a Long Range Bikeway Facilities Corridor Plan which identifies all of the County's arterials, collectors and State highways which already have or will have bicycle facilities when the roads are constructed or reconstructed. The only road within the study area which is identified in the Long Range Bikeway Facilities Corridor Plan is Lantana Road, which presently has the bicycle lanes.

In addition, the County Engineering Department has an existing "Pathway Program" which provides pedestrian pathways near schools. This program is currently funded at approximately \$1.5 million, two-thirds for new construction and one-third for maintenance. The program is self supporting through a portion of the County's gas tax revenue. The Engineering Department has indicated that the construction of a bike and pedestrian pathway on the east side of High Ridge Road, north from Lantana Road to Lake Osborne has been recently approved, and necessary easements are being sought from the affected homeowners. Also, the Engineering Department has included, for FY 97-98, the construction of a bike and pedestrian pathway on the east side of High Ridge Road from Lantana to Miner Roads. The BCC approved the FY 97-98 program, which includes this item, on November 4, 1997. The design and survey for this segment will begin in the near future. When construction of this pathway is completed this will allow for a connection to the existing pathways on the east side of High Ridge Road, south of Miner Road (within the City of Boynton Beach), which presently provide a connection to the existing pathways within Quantum Park. On the north end this pathway will connect to the existing bike lanes on Lantana Road and, upon its completion, to the pathway segment on the east side of High Ridge Road, north of Lantana Road.

Potential Impact: A bike and pedestrian path along the entire length of High Ridge Road would provide both a means of enjoyment of the corridor by residents and visitors, and an important link between existing paths to the north and south.

Bike and Pedestrian Pathways Recommendations

To be carried out in the near term:

- Homeowner easements should be encouraged to allow a more timely completion of the Bike and Pedestrian Pathways.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION

- *Incorporate any BCC comments and directives from the December 9th Workshop, and return with a finalized Study Report for BCC approval on a future consent agenda.*
- *Provide the approved report to all affected neighborhood associations, subject property owners, local governments, and any other interested parties, and convey the BCC's intent to use the study to guide decision-making for issues affecting this area.*
- *Continue to work with interested property owners and neighborhood associations to facilitate implementation of the study recommendations, or to explore additional issues and options that arise, and bring items to the BCC's attention as needed.*
- *Initiate items identified for Palm Beach County implementation.*
- *Provide monitoring, reporting and any new issues to the BCC through periodic neighborhood planning program reports.*

