



Plantation
the grass is greenerSM

**Mirror Lake Area
Neighborhood Plan Report**

September 2005

Prepared by the City of Plantation Planning, Zoning and Economic Development Department in conjunction with Mirror Lake Estates, Marcano Estates, Alpine Woods, Plantation Sunrise Heights, Apple Creek, Del Oro, Omega Condominiums, Omega Villas, Plantation Forest, Plantation Meadows, Village Square Condos, and Villas of Plantation

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Mirror Lake Area Neighborhood Plan Report

I. PLANNING PROCESS

A. Neighborhood Organizational Structure and Process

The City of Plantation's approach to neighborhood planning in the Mirror Lake Area neighborhood was developed and implemented to directly solicit the needs and desires of the people who reside in their own neighborhood. The citizens are the ones that can best identify issues and concerns and help provide solutions for the issues. The neighborhood citizens worked in partnership with City staff to identify and assess needs, build consensus and create a work plan for resolving issues. A series of monthly meetings were held beginning in March 2005 to take the neighborhood through the planning process.

Based upon input through survey forms and meetings, City staff created an initial planning framework to guide the neighborhood, and prepared a series of recommendations for improvements. This framework was intended to assist the neighborhood in moving forward, create manageable priorities and establish a process for implementing recommendations.

B. Statement of Purpose

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Plantation commissioned the Mirror Lake Area Neighborhood Plan in response to the concerns regarding the long-term quality of life in the neighborhood. This neighborhood plan is a specific strategy to plot a course for the ongoing investment by the City in the Mirror Lake Area neighborhood.

C. Citizen Participation

As part of the City's ongoing commitment to public participation, the City initiated a neighborhood planning approach for the Mirror Lake Area neighborhood. City staff proposed a geographic area for inclusion in the neighborhood (see Appendix B). The City and residents confirmed the geographic study area. City staff coordinated with the Mirror Lake area neighborhood in distributing a survey to solicit input from as many residents as possible.

As the plan was devised and put in place for the Mirror Lake Area neighborhood, information was continually made available to the entire neighborhood to ensure continued communication between the city and the residents.

D. Implementing the Planning Process

At the initial meeting with residents, City staff provided background information on the neighborhood planning process to ensure a sense of comfort with the process. Staff outlined the advantages to neighborhood planning which include:

- Grass Roots Level Planning
- Plan is Developed Together: Neighborhood Residents and City
- Plan Serves as a Concrete Statement of Direction for the Neighborhood

Staff also discussed the following keys to success of the process:

- Must Move Efficiently - Not Take Too Long
- Residents & City Must be Committed to Process
- Plan Must be Developed by Residents - They Need to Know That the Plan is Theirs
- Everyone Must Maintain a Positive Attitude, and Focus on the Future

Once the basic groundwork was laid for the development of a successful neighborhood plan, a schedule of meetings was developed to ensure citizen participation throughout the process:

- Meeting 1 -March10: Kick-off Meeting / What is Neighborhood Planning?
Distribute Surveys (see Appendix C)
- Meeting 2 -April14: Present Survey Results /
Issue Discussion / Categorize & Define Issues
- Meeting 3 -June 9: Recommendations on Issues / Neighborhood Feedback
- Meeting 4 -August 11: Present Report to Residents / Approval of Draft Report
- Meeting 5 -September 21: Jointly Present Report to City Council

II. NEIGHBORHOOD ESTABLISHMENT

A. Boundary Delineation

Mirror Lake Area is comprised of approximately 680 acres and is located in the north/central portion of the City, east of University Drive, west of the Sunrise Boulevard, north of the C-12 Canal, and south of the City limit (just north of Sunrise Blvd.). For the purposes of neighborhood planning, the Mirror Lake Area has been defined to include areas with Commercial, Community Facility, Park and Residential land uses, creating an easily identifiable “neighborhood.” (See attached Mirror Lake Area map – Appendix B.)

B. Neighborhood History

Howard Miller, who became a leading builder and developer in Plantation in the Sixties and Seventies, developed the Mirror Lake area in large part. Besides Mirror Lakes Estates, H. Miller & Sons built other subdivisions throughout the City, including Plantation Secluded Gardens, Royal Palm Estates and Lakeview Estates. A “Miller Built Home” was a definite draw because of the build quality of their product. The Mirror Lake Elementary School was completed in 1969. Good Schools, central location, easy access to Sunrise Blvd, and a large lot with a “Miller Built Home” made the Mirror Lake area attractive to home buyers, some who bought here over 30 years ago and remain today.

Marcano Estates on the other hand started with a pretty bumpy ride. Development began in the late Seventies; with the developer going bankrupt shortly thereafter leaving many homebuyers without a deposit and without a house. Eventually everything got sorted out and Marcano Estates developed into a lovely subdivision.

C. Existing Conditions

Mirror Lake Area is a thriving and diverse community made up of approximately 6,400 residents in over approximately 2,500 households. The single family housing stock is similar in appearance; mostly ranch style. Multifamily housing stock consists of duplex, townhouse and mid-rise. The neighborhood is considered stable, and includes many long-term homeowners, as well as newcomers. Surveys indicated people have lived in the neighborhood for as long as 33 years. The housing stock is generally in good condition and most homes are well kept.

III. NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS – COMMUNITY VISION

According to the survey taken of the entire neighborhood, most agree the same characteristics that attracted residents to the neighborhood in the first place still hold true today, however, some aspects, i.e. traffic management, landscape and infrastructure, could use improvement. Most surveyed agreed that Mirror Lake Area is their favorite neighborhood in the City and that they enjoy living there. 45 of the 140 surveys distributed or 32% were returned for tallying. As response rates go, that's a fantastic percentage.

Surveys revealed that residents identified only a few related issues. A few identified crime as an important issue to address. In addition, residents identified various public services and facilities including police protection with an overwhelmingly good rating. Residents should be aware that Community Policing, Crime Watch and Outreach Center Programs exist, and that these programs serve to elevate the awareness of crime prevention measures. Education issues were apparent where physical issues with the schools themselves were raised and conduct of the student population.

In order to organize the recommendations and prioritization process for the community, City staff created the following framework for issues: Identification of the issues affecting the neighborhood (Neighborhood Issues), statement of desired outcome (Goals), and steps to achieve these outcomes (Recommendations / Action Steps).

ISSUE 1 – TRANSPORTATION / CIRCULATION

Neighborhood Issues

1. Perceived speed and/or volume issues on the following streets:
 - 75th Terrace between 12th Street and 16th Street
 - 74th Avenue from 12th Street to 13th Street
 - Along 11th Place, 11th Street, 12th Street, and 16th Street
 - 15th Street at 68th Avenue
 - 11th Place and Sunrise Boulevard
2. Short traffic signal timing at 11th Place and Sunrise Blvd.

Goals

1. Educate neighborhood regarding traffic calming and traffic enforcement.
2. Find solution(s) for confirmed neighborhood Traffic issues.

Recommendations / Action Steps

1. Offer neighborhood participation in the City's traffic calming program. If yes, initiate petition process.
2. Perceived traffic issues on several roads are local to the neighborhood – not a traffic calming issue.
3. Consider possibility of closing 11th Place bridge except for emergency purposes.

4. Look into possibility of wall and/or enhanced landscaping between Sunrise and 68th Ave and reconfiguration of 68th Avenue to limit access.
5. Submit request to Broward County for adjustment in signal timing.

ISSUE 2 – CODE ENFORCEMENT

Neighborhood Issues

1. Better housing and yard maintenance especially duplexes and apts.
2. Litter and trash on 70th Ave, 15th Street and 16th Street.
3. Greater all around code enforcement needed.
4. Too many cars per house and parked on lawn.
5. Request for driveway expansions to handle a number of cars at duplexes.



Unkempt house and yard

Goals

1. Enhance and enforce property maintenance standards.
2. Familiarize community with code enforcement policies.



Peeling Paint



Outside Storage

Recommendations / Action Steps

1. Increased code enforcement, especially around duplexes and apartments.
2. Permit application for widening of duplex driveways to accommodate additional parking on case-by-case basis.



Attractive Yard



Attractive Home and Landscape

ISSUE 3 – INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES / LANDSCAPE & BEAUTIFICATION

Neighborhood Issues

1. Street lighting
 - More and brighter lighting (nicer poles) along with tree trimming
2. Landscape improvements:
 - Landscape swales along Sunrise and 70th Avenue
 - Landscape along canals on 12 Street and 75 Terrace
 - Trees poorly trimmed on 74th Avenue
 - Maintain shrubs along 68th Avenue
 - Black Olive trees issue
3. Improve street pavement and sidewalks.
4. Entryway monuments.
5. Underground utilities.
6. Improve drainage at 16th Street and 70th Avenue (around High School), 10th Street and 74th Avenue, and 11th Place and 73rd Avenue.
7. Canal maintenance behind 15th Street between 72nd and 73rd Avenues
8. Playground equipment in Mirror Lake Park never replaced.
9. Look into possibility of wall between Sunrise and 68th Ave and reconfiguration of 68th Avenue to limit access. Redo Landscape buffer along Sunrise if wall is not feasible.

Goals

1. Evaluate current street lighting levels and improve if required.
2. Improve landscaping.
3. Improve drainage if required.

Recommendations / Action Steps

1. Tree canopy inventory, assessment and trimming where necessary.
2. Continue tree installation program (150 street trees).
3. Street lighting assessment for public roadways, implement improvements as required.
4. 70th Ave between NW 7th Ct. and NW 11th Place roadway improvements and beautification.
5. 70th Ave north of 11th Place to eventually undergo curbing, resurfacing and landscaping.
6. Explore acquiring a canal easement from OPWCD for landscape improvements.
7. Repave streets in 2005/2006, sidewalks repaired as needed.
8. Develop project scope for neighborhood entryway improvement at 11th Place/ 70th Avenue intersection through Brick Entryway Partnership Program.
9. Evaluate drainage conditions against Stormwater Ordinance.
10. Check to ensure proper maintenance of canals.
11. Look into playground equipment replacement for park.

ISSUE 4 – OTHER ISSUES

Neighborhood Issues

1. High School Students:
 - Destructive behavior, littering before and after school including lunchtime.
 - Need more garbage cans
 - Lunchtime lockdown (2006?)
 - Spread out bus stops on 70th Avenue
 - Drug activity
2. General crime concerns.

Goals

1. Resolve student issues.

2. Resolve crime issues.

Recommendations / Action Steps

1. Follow-up with School Board regarding providing and maintaining trash receptacles on west side of 70th Avenue and on 16th Street. Look into partnering with School and implement Adopt-A-Street program for 70th Avenue.
2. Follow-up with School Board regarding lunchtime lockdown timeframe (2006). Initial meeting scheduled for September 16, 2005.
3. Follow-up with BCT regarding moving or eliminating bus stop at the 16th Street and 70th Avenue intersection.
4. Resolve school drop-off issue at 68th Avenue and 15th Street.
5. Evaluate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) techniques to deter potential drug activity.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE – CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

After the community carefully considers the entire range of issues affecting their neighborhood, it must prioritize the activities that can be undertaken to alleviate problems and result in the most benefit to all of the community citizens. The Mirror Lake Area neighborhood and City staff created a capital improvements plan that sets a timeframe for implementing projects and identifies a funding source (or funding sources) for each project. (See Appendix A.)