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## **CRA TEAMS WITH COMMUNITY COMMITTEE TO TARGET HOB QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES**

**Boynton Beach, FL** —On March 10, the Boynton Beach Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) voted to end talks with Auburn Development for the redevelopment of 26.3 acres along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in the Heart of Boynton neighborhood. Board members then directed staff to work with the community to come up with strategies to improve the neighborhood.

The creation of a Community Committee was crucial to assist the CRA in identifying priorities and developing strategies to keep redevelopment efforts on track.

The CRA brainstormed with residents on the Community Committee which resulted in developing consensus to move forward with a number of strategies. The initial focus will be on addressing quality of life issues that will significantly increase the area's desirability as a place to live and work. Some of the recommended strategies include:

**Nuisance Properties:** The CRA will purchase or assist the City in its efforts to foreclose on properties with significant code liens as a strategy to remove blighted properties from the community.

**Trash Pick-up:** Committee unanimously agreed that the continual dumping of debris on vacant lots and in alleys diminishes the quality of life for residents. An as-needed debris removal was discussed and the Committee felt the idea had merit.

**CRA Policing:** CRA staff and the CRA police have been working to institute measures that help reduce the opportunity to commit crime in HOB using Community Policing and Crime Prevent Through Environmental Design Initiatives (CEPTD). One recent CPTED initiative was to place bright lights on a CRA owned building at NW 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Seacrest Blvd. to illuminate dark spots where loitering occurs. CRA staff will continue to identify areas where CEPTD principles can be instituted to prevent crime.

**Alley/Easement Abandonment and Closure:** Committee recommended that the 24 unused alleys and easements in the Heart of Boynton be abandoned and closed to prevent criminal activity and illegal dumping.

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**Economic Development Opportunities:** Committee felt economic development activities and technical education would help to revitalize the neighborhood. Staff is working on selecting partners to bring in technical expertise to assist business owners and property owners.

Based on comments from the public, staff also recommended the board consider designating 480 acres of HOB a “Brownfield,” which would create a source of financial incentives for development. Vice Mayor Woodrow Hay, who represents the Heart of Boynton community, commented, “Residents need to get past the perceived stigma of the brownfield, as there are financial incentives for job creation and tax credits for clean-up activities within an area with this designation.”

The Boynton Beach CRA is committed to serving the community by guiding redevelopment activities and stimulating economic growth within its 1,650 acre district. The agency focuses on creating a vibrant downtown core, providing affordable housing, and revitalizing neighborhoods. For more information on the CRA, its events and activities, call (561) 737-3256, or visit [www.boyntonbeachcra.com](http://www.boyntonbeachcra.com).

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