

# DES FOCUS

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT • HOUSING ASSISTANCE • COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT

SUMMER 2012

*Our Mission: To advance community sustainability by increasing economic competitiveness and improving the elements that create a high quality of life for Palm Beach County's residents*



## Business Briefs



International construction chemicals manufacturing company – **Schomburg Latin America LLC** opens new plant in Riviera Beach with funding through the PBC Section 108 Loan Program  
[http://www.pbcgov.com/newsroom/0612/06-11-12\\_schomburg.htm](http://www.pbcgov.com/newsroom/0612/06-11-12_schomburg.htm)

**Perfect Paradise Hotel** in Riviera Beach will undergo energy improvements thanks to Energy Loan Program  
[http://www.pbcgov.com/newsroom/0512/05-29-12\\_paradise.htm](http://www.pbcgov.com/newsroom/0512/05-29-12_paradise.htm)

**America's Sound** audio distributor/manufacturer to expand in Belle Glade through Section 108 and Energy Loan programs and Brownfields grant  
[http://pbcgov.com/newsroom/0512/05-23-12\\_americas\\_sound.htm](http://pbcgov.com/newsroom/0512/05-23-12_americas_sound.htm)



**Jupiter CY Marriott Hotel** project receives conceptual approval  
[http://webdev/newsroom/0412/04-18-12\\_jupiter\\_hotel.htm](http://webdev/newsroom/0412/04-18-12_jupiter_hotel.htm)

**Promoting HUD Livability Principles and Green Building Concepts on all projects**

## Florida Enterprise Zone Program

DES serves as Palm Beach County's coordinator for the Florida Enterprise Zone Program. The Enterprise Zone (EZ) areas, which are targeted for revitalization, consist of portions of Riviera Beach, West Palm Beach, and Belle Glade, unincorporated areas surrounding Belle Glade, South Bay, and the city of Pahokee. The program offers tax incentives to businesses located in the designated areas of urban and rural communities to encourage private investment and increase employment opportunities for the areas' residents.

Incentives under the program include tax credits for wages paid to employees who reside in the EZ, tax refunds for equipment and materials purchased, tax credits against Florida corporate income tax, sales tax exemptions for the purchase of electrical energy, and ad valorem tax exemptions for child care facilities located in the EZ.

The 2011 Florida Legislature passed a measure which has allowed the County to collaborate with its municipal partners to amend and expand the EZ boundaries. DES is currently working with the municipal partners on the expansion process.  
<http://www.pbcgov.com/edo/programs/florida/enterprise-zone/>

## Urban Job Tax Credit Program (UJTC)

DES also serves as the local contact for the State's UJTC program, created in 1997 to encourage job creation and the expansion of new and existing businesses. The program provides tax credits against corporate income or sales and use tax to businesses that are located in State-designated areas and hire employees and engage in activities according to established criteria.

Palm Beach County's UJTC Area (UA-5001) consists of portions of Lake Park, Riviera Beach, West Palm Beach, Delray Beach, all of Mangonia Park, and unincorporated areas of West Palm Beach in the vicinity of Okeechobee Boulevard and Belvedere Road. This UJTC area qualifies for the Tier One category, which provides the highest credits available.

Applications can be filed at any time and tax credits are granted on a first come, first served basis until the maximum amount of credit allowable per calendar year has been exhausted. [http://pbcgov.org/edo/programs/florida/urban\\_job\\_tax\\_credit\\_program.htm](http://pbcgov.org/edo/programs/florida/urban_job_tax_credit_program.htm)

**GETTING THE MOST FROM OUR ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT ANALYSES:**

DES utilizes the nationally recognized **Regional Economic Models, Inc. (REMI) program** to conduct accurate and timely studies to determine a project's potential economic impact on a community.

**CHECK OUT PBC INTERACTIVE'S NEW LOGO:**



<http://maps.co.palm-beach.fl.us/edo>

Looking for the best site for your business relocation or expansion? Interested in surrounding commercial or industrial uses? Our real-time research tool will help you locate future and existing land uses, zoning districts, North American Industry Classification Systems (NAICS) codes, census data, enterprise zones, ownership and property tax information, and more.

**Interactive update:** Industries monitored through the NAICS code function of the site reflect an increase of 373 business registrations received by the Property Appraiser's Office in the first half of 2012.



## **Community Redevelopment**

**FY 2012-2013 Draft Action Plan:** Representing the third year of the Five Year Consolidated Plan 2010 -15 which was adopted by the PBC Board of County Commissioners on July 20, 2010, the Action Plan serves to meet the annual planning and application requirements for HUD's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), and HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Programs. These formula grants are made available to Palm Beach County yearly, as long as the federal budget allocates funding to the programs. A public meeting was held June 20, 2012 to take public input and the plan received final approval from the BCC on July 10.

<http://www.pbcgov.com/des/pdf/DRAFT%20ACTION%20PLAN%206-18-12.pdf>

**CDBG Public Service RFP:** On July 10<sup>th</sup>, the BCC approved the award of Community Development Block Grant funds to local non-profit agencies to undertake various social services. Preference was given to agencies providing services to the disabled and the elderly.

**Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program:** DES issued an RFP for non-profit agencies engaged in activities to assist homeless individuals and families move toward independent living and prevent homelessness. ESG funding recommendations were made on May 7<sup>th</sup> by the Homeless Continuum of Care Grant Review Committee. The BCC gave final approval on July 10<sup>th</sup> as part of the FY 2012-2013 Action Plan.

### **Community Challenge Planning Grant**

The close of 2011 was highlighted by a \$1.98 million award to Palm Beach County from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Transportation and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, to fund the creation of a master plan for the entirety of the Glades Region, including the cities of Pahokee, Belle Glade and South Bay and unincorporated areas of the region.

The plan will serve to enhance economic competitiveness, infrastructure sustainability, transportation choices, workforce training and housing in proximity to employment centers. Incorporating principles of livability and sustainability, the comprehensive planning process will include input and participation from affected communities, policy coordination and investment leveraging. Visit <http://pbcgov.com/des> for future updates on the planning schedule.



## **Housing Highlights**

**NSP2 and HOME Multi-family Development (RFP DES.2012.1):** On June 5<sup>th</sup> the Board of County Commissioners conceptually approved an award to HTG of Palm Beach II, LLC, in the amount of \$5,536,818 for the construction of 63 new affordable townhomes known as *Pine Run Apartments*. The proposed \$13 Million project is located at 5212 Sunset Trail, in unincorporated Palm Beach County.

[http://www.pbcgov.com/newsroom/0612/06-13-12\\_htg\\_pb.htm](http://www.pbcgov.com/newsroom/0612/06-13-12_htg_pb.htm)

**NSP3 Homebuyer Assistance Program:** Palm Beach County has made available first and/or second mortgages to eligible households (income of up to 120% of the Area Median Income) to purchase and rehabilitate, if necessary, single-family residential properties which have been foreclosed upon. The maximum acquisition cost of the home (including rehabilitation) will not exceed \$211,375. A sum of \$7,321,712 is to be distributed under this program. DES has approved 31 applicants to date and is conducting orientations to familiarize borrowers with the process.

*Under its NSP programs, DES has funded \$23M in homebuyer assistance, resulting in acquisitions of 132 foreclosed homes that are now restored to productive use and helping stabilize the community's hardest-hit neighborhoods.*

### **Senator Philip D Lewis Center – Palm Beach County's first Homeless Resource Center celebrates Grand Opening**

On June 25<sup>th</sup> Federal, County and City officials along with community representatives and homeless service provider

(Housing Highlights, continued.)

organizations marked the grand opening of the Senator Philip D Lewis Center, located at 1000 45<sup>th</sup> Street in West Palm Beach.

The \$9.382 million project was supported by \$8.523 million in HUD funds from the Neighborhood Stabilization and Community Development Block Grant Programs administered by DES.

The project consisted of the acquisition, rehabilitation and redevelopment of improved real property, and the conversion of existing buildings into a Homeless Resource Center. The City established a neighborhood committee to provide input on the Center's programming and renovation plans. Design and construction took roughly 2 ½ years.

The Center will provide shelter and comprehensive related services to homeless individuals and families residing in Palm Beach County. It represents a truly effective public/private partnership in carrying out the objectives under NSP to redevelop demolished or vacant properties in order to benefit people of low to moderate income, including homeless persons.

## FOCUS FEATURE

### DES Helps Riviera Beach Resident Rehab Storm-Ravaged Home



Gwendolyn Martin will never forget the 2004 and 2005 storm seasons. By the time Hurricanes Frances, Jeanne and Wilma swept through this area, her single-family home in Riviera Beach had

sustained severe interior and exterior damage. Ceilings collapsed in three rooms, and the entire house suffered extensive water intrusion. Wallboards eventually crumbled, and what remained was saturated with mold and mildew.

Because so much of the home's structure was compromised, every time it rained, water would enter the home. Even after the city replaced Gwendolyn's roof, rain water still flooded the home at the ground level. Gwendolyn and her young son had to unplug all appliances immediately after use or before going to bed, in case it rained. City inspectors urged her to vacate the home, but she had nowhere else to go.

In addition to these hardships, Gwendolyn, 52, who is disabled and a military veteran, suffers from pericarditis and lupus. While these ailments had already limited her ability to work, the dilapidated condition of her home, the growing mold and mildew, and the related stress aggravated the symptoms of her illnesses, resulting in frequent hospitalizations.

Just when things seemed like they might never improve, in 2011 Gwendolyn learned about a home rehabilitation assistance program administered by Palm Beach County. In less than one year,

with the help of the county's Department of Economic Sustainability (DES) staff and funding from the State Housing Initiatives Partnership – Owner Occupied Rehabilitation Loan Program, Gwendolyn's house has been completely restored and is now a place she is proud to call home.

The rehabilitation was undertaken by Sunco Construction, a certified S/WBE contractor, and included demolition of the damaged interior and replacement of electrical wiring and circuitry, water lines, lighting, central A/C, drywall, baseboards, tile flooring, doors, windows, interior and exterior painting, and a new kitchen and bathroom. Gwendolyn is ecstatic about the results and feels very certain that without the county's assistance, she would not have been able to make the repairs.

Despite all she has suffered, Gwendolyn has maintained a strong and abiding faith, which she firmly believes has brought her through her struggles. She makes it a practice to reach out to others in need. "When we open our hearts to help people, the help comes back to us when we need it," she said.

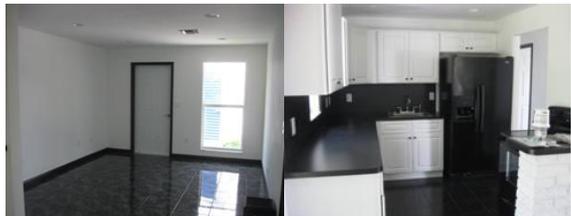
Gwendolyn is now enrolled in school to obtain a beautician's license and hopes others will be encouraged by her story.

For information on the county's housing and business assistance programs, contact DES.



Before photos of damage prior to rehab

Bill Munker/DES Inspector



After photos of new windows, walls, ceilings and kitchen

Bill Munker/DES Inspector

## Office of Small Business Assistance

*Small Business is Big Business in Palm Beach County*

DES partners with OSBA to promote the economic growth, expansion and increased productivity of small business enterprises in Palm Beach County through certification, contract compliance, training, and referral to resources for financial or technical assistance. The programs are tailored to support the growing number of small business in the county develop skills needed to operate an efficient and profitable business. To find out more, visit <http://www.pbcgov.com/osba>.

**DES** – creating partnerships and leveraging dollars to support a sustainable community.