

## FINAL REPORT

### Program Development

#### INTRODUCTION

1. The vitality of neighborhoods relies on informed and involved citizens participating in community growth.
2. Many residents lack knowledge about planning choices and improving planning outcomes.
3. Gentrification transforms low-value neighborhoods into high-value ones, benefiting the city but potentially displacing long-time residents.
4. Displacement occurs due to increased rents, mortgages, and property taxes.
5. Gentrification impacts housing, economics, health, culture, and social capital.
6. While gentrification offers benefits like crime reduction and economic improvement, it can also displace residents and alter a community's culture.
7. We need planning models that promote community improvement without displacement.
8. Interior architecture can play a role in mitigating gentrification's negative effects.
9. The FIU Interior Architecture Graduate Studio 1 Formative Student Design Charrette aims to explore gentrification's pros and cons, stimulate social justice ideas, and introduce students to community planning by incorporating retail components into their designs.

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

1. **Lemon City:** A historical community on the shores of Biscayne Bay, predating Miami's incorporation, inhabited by both White and Black pioneers.
2. **Impact of I95 Construction:** In the early 60s, the construction of I95 adjacent to Lemon City led to disinvestment, loss of residents, decreased tax base, disrepair, and insecurity.
3. **Haitian Community:** Over the last 50 years, Haitians have moved into the area, enriching Miami-Dade's multi-ethnic character.
4. **Challenges:** Lack of private and public investment, isolation due to language, crime, poverty, unfamiliar culture, and perceived racial and ethnic animus.
5. **Need for Regeneration:** The neighborhood desperately needs physical and economic revitalization and support.
6. **Positive Changes:** Miami 21 Zoning code and Magic City Special Area Planning (SAP) designation have brought positive changes, including increased property values and improved urban infrastructure.
7. **Threats to Community:** Changes in the neighborhood threaten community cohesion, character, and local businesses. Rent increases and lack of low-income housing displace residents.
8. **Gentrification Complexity:** Gentrification is a complex process with critics and advocates. Longtime property owners may benefit, but the vulnerable population in Little Haiti consists mainly of renters who are Black, Caribbean, and non-native speakers.

## QUESTIONS...

This charrette seeks to answer the question:

1. How can interior architecture be positive partner with communities in need?
2. What role can interior architecture play in reducing displacement of residents and in preserving community culture?
3. How can we achieve equity in urban redevelopment?
4. How can retail design components help in the design of a community center that facilitates the integration of a community displaced by gentrification?

## SUMMARY

- **Charrette Duration:** Three weeks, starting in the first week of September.
- **Student Groups:** Eleven groups with four students per group, self-selected.
- **Faculty Guidance:** Faculty provided a prospectus to the students.
- **Scenario:** A Community Land Trust purchased a building at 4100 SE 2nd Ave, bordering Little Haiti, and tasked students with developing proposals for its **retail adaptive reuse**.
- **Goal:** Develop uses that benefit Little Haiti residents and address gentrification's negative effects.
- **Programmatic Proposals:** Students developed programmatic proposals and presented them to faculty and researchers.
- **Community Context:** Little Haiti is experiencing gentrification due to the Magic City development project.
- **Building Location:** The building is situated at the border between the Design District Luxury Commercial Area and Little Haiti.
- **Approach:** All teams aimed to leverage the Design District's market to support black and Haitian-owned businesses.

- **Community Land Trust's Role:** The trust offered space to Haitian-owned retail owners below market price and provided development grants for space modification and design.
- **Preserving Character:** The goal was to ensure that Haitian-owned businesses could bring the character of Little Haiti into the Miami Design District's high-end retail market.
- **Information Gathering:** Groups collected information through interviews, observational analysis, and demographic research of both Little Haiti and the Miami Design District.
- **Analysis:** Students developed an analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges within the community and the project.

## PROCESS

### Phase I Problem Definition

- During the initial charrette, students engaged in comprehensive learning on topics related to redlining, gentrification, and strategies to mitigate its effects. They also conducted site visits to gain a better understanding of the community in need.
- During the visits, the students visualized the site and collected information through photographs, data, and surveys to gain a better understanding of the site's characteristics.
- The students accessed the building to gain a better understanding of its characteristics, including measurements, structural components, the quality of spaces, and important issues that could inform the design proposal.

### Phase II: Need Finding

- Students then conducted investigations to define community needs and identify positive options for the adaptive reuse of an existing building.
- They gathered and analyzed data, focusing on how the program and design of a building can benefit a community, what types of businesses and services would be suitable for this location and beneficial for the community. Additionally, students explored and identified the opportunities and constraints of the site and building.
- Identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges, the students found that the needs of the community could be organized into **five basic pillars:**

1. The students in their research found that **Art** is a common point among all the teams. Reaching the conclusion that art is a crucial part of the cultural

development and preservation of this displaced community. Art holds a central and unifying role in the context of the displaced community.

2. **Education** is not only a means of personal development but also a fundamental tool for the overall well-being and resilience of displaced communities. It empowers individuals, preserves culture, and contributes to the long-term stability and development of these communities, helping them overcome the challenges they face.
3. **Economic opportunities** through retail and job creation play a crucial role in community development and can be particularly beneficial for communities facing challenges like displacement. They provide not only employment but also a range of social and economic benefits that contribute to the overall well-being and resilience of the community.
4. **Health** benefits are essential for both displaced and gentrified communities as they address a wide range of health disparities, support well-being, and contribute to the overall resilience and vitality of these communities. Ensuring access to quality healthcare services is a vital step in creating healthier and more equitable communities.
5. **Sustainability** is a vital consideration for displaced and gentrifying communities as it offers a path to preserving community identity, enhancing quality of life, mitigating displacement, and ensuring long-term resilience in the face of environmental and social challenges. Sustainable practices can help these communities thrive while maintaining their unique character and values.



## Phase III Ideation

### ART



Galleries | Art Installations | Arts & Craft | Handmade Art | Artisan Markets | Art Therapy



Artistic Collaborations | Music performances | Handmade Instruments | Life Music | Dance performances



Musicals | Folklore | Storytelling | Spiritual Exhibitions | Heritage & History Plays

### EDUCATION



Language | Technology | Real State



Dance & Music Classes | Cooking Classes



Handwoven | Pottery | Wood Carvings | Jewelry & Accessories Work | Textiles

### ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES



Job Opportunities



Food tenders | Bartenders | Instructors | Local Artisans | Dancers | Musicians



Mentors | Community Collaborations | Community Involvement



# Phase IV Prototyping/visioning

Making Different Combinations



Galleries | Art Installations | Arts & Craft | Handmade Art | Artisan Markets | Art Therapy



Dance & Music Classes | Cooking Classes



Food Tenders | Bartenders | Instructors | Local Artisans | Dancers | Musicians



Clinic | Botany



Use of Sustainable Materials | Biophilic Design

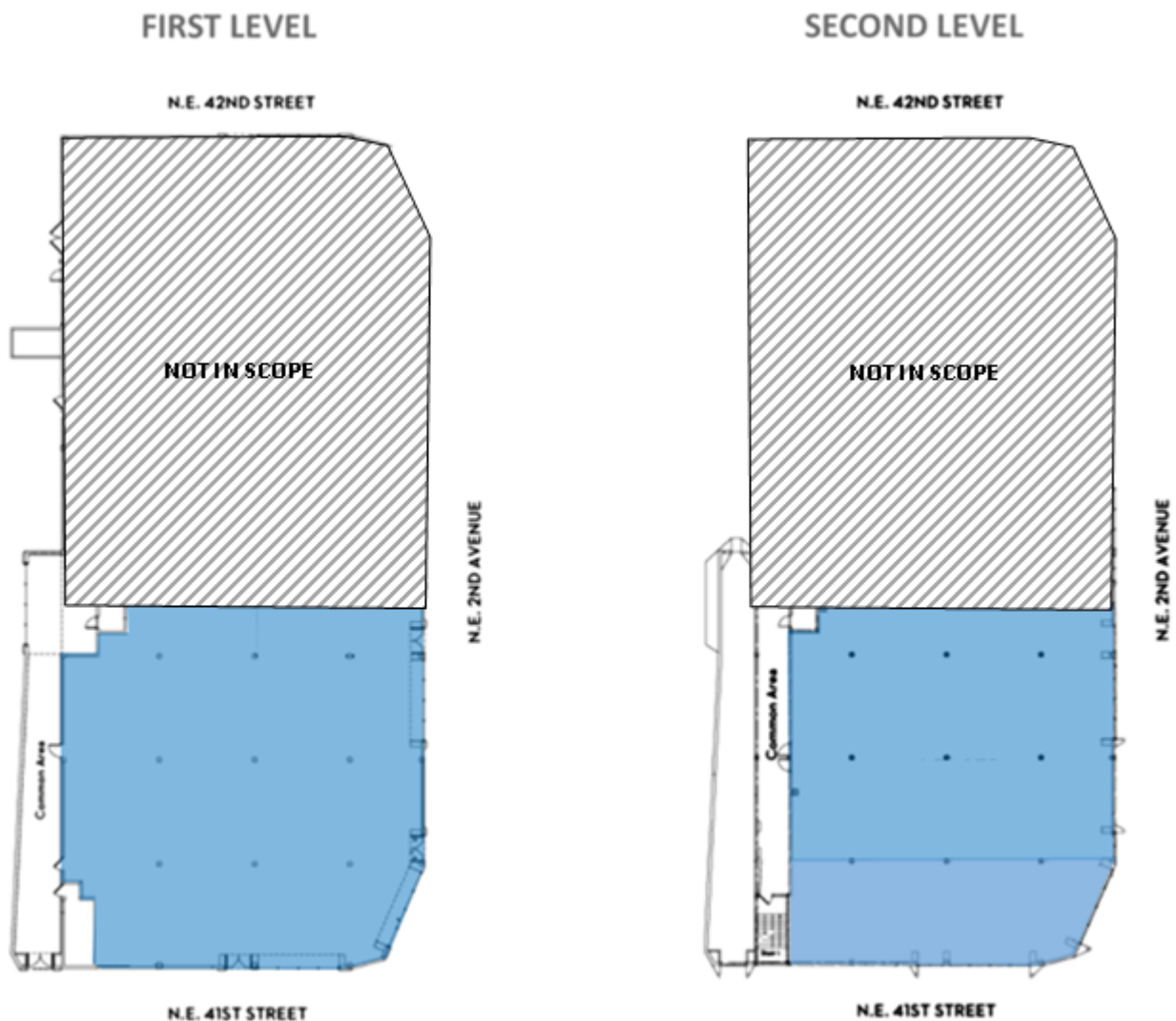


## RESULTS/CONCLUSION

After their research, the students stated the following conclusions:

- Little Haiti, is a symbolic center of a vibrant immigrant community famous throughout the world for its art, music, and culture, represents an unmatched value not only for those who live and work in it but for Miami and South Florida.
- Adult and after school education can give the community members a path out of poverty and into the middle class.
- Celebrating Little Haiti Arts and Culture will help the Community involvement into Miami's tourist economy.
- Expand the reach of Little Haiti business retailers and take advantage of the market the Design District has cultivated to build business success and stability.

## FINAL PROJECT PROPOSAL



## IDEA OF A BASIC PROGRAM

### **LEVEL 1**

#### **Haitian Market/Dining /etc = 4,900sq**

- Entrance
- Main Dining/market
- Food Tenants (1-6)?
- Stage
- Maintenance Room
- Restrooms

Interior must be viewed from the street.

#### **Haitian owned Retail 4,000 sqft**

- Entrance(s)
- Management Office
- Pop up Stores (3-6)?
- AID Unit
- Restrooms (can be shared with Market?)

Must be able to view from street.

### **LEVEL 2: 5020 sqft**

#### **Educational Center**

- Lobby entrance sequence
- Stairs to connect first with second Floor.
- Director/Manager Office
- Projection Room
- Meeting/Networking Room
- Server Room
- Computer Room
- Classrooms
- Restrooms.....