

Delray Beach Innovation Corridor

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SECTION EDITOR RUBEN CUETO » 954-574-5330 » rcueto@tribune.com

Innovative plans in Delray

Innovation Park, discussed for former Office Depot site, would be a technology hub

By **DAVID DiPINO**
Staff Writer

Planning is under way to transform the former Office Depot site between Germantown Road and South Congress Avenue into Delray Beach Innovation Park, a center for the development of new technology and research jobs.

Although the plan consists only of renderings at this point, city leaders and a real estate consultant

say it could help revitalize a corridor that was thriving before Office Depot moved to Boca Raton.

"We'd like this to be designated an enterprise zone by the state of Florida," said Vin Nolan, economic development director for the city's Community Redevelopment Agency.

According to FloridaEnterpriseZones.com, an enterprise zone is a specific geographic area tar-

geted for economic revitalization. The state has 59 enterprise zones, which encourage economic growth and investment in distressed areas through the use of tax incentives for businesses within its boundaries.

The CRA has contracted with David Wilk, a real estate consultant who has been working on the Innovation Park project. Nolan said Wilk did much of the background work and created the logo and other brand initiatives.

"We're hopeful that a development team will attract the right investors," Nolan said. "We encouraged Mr. Wilk to come up

with the Innovation Corridor concept and to try and reinvent the old corridor. Key property owners and investors are linchpins to the Innovation Corridor initiative."

The area could be used to house a college research park or a creative media hub.

"Our goal is to bring innovative industries and implement sustainable technologies to the Delray Beach Innovation Park," Nolan said.

According to the city's Public Information Office, the economic development goals for Innovation Park include improving the perception of Delray Beach as busi-

ness-friendly and a viable corporate destination, creating livable-wage jobs within the city, encouraging entrepreneurship and increasing the tax base.

City commissioners recently approved Phase II of the project promoting the Innovation Corridor Strategic Marketing Plan for Congress Avenue. The plan's implementation is expected to encourage redevelopment of underused land parcels in the corridor by reaching out to new businesses and firms interested in expansion.

David DiPino can be reached at ddipino@tribune.com.