



# PROGRESS IN PROGRESSO VILLAGE

THE ARTS AS AN ECONOMIC ENGINE



PHOTO BY ANTHEA THOMAS

JJ Hankerson - Progresso Village, Nancy Fry, Principal Commission Assistant - District 2, Commissioner Steve Glassman — District 2, and Ashley Cacicedo, Outreach Coordinator — District 2.



PHOTO BY NANCY FRY

Artists, Broward County Mayor Michael Udine, Commissioner Steve Glassman, Commissioner Robert McKinzie, Mayor Dean Trantalis, and Jonathan and Abraham Fish, developers of the project.



RENDERING PROVIDED BY THRIVE DEVELOPMENT GROUP

Original concept rendering.

I firmly believe that the arts are vital to our city. They not only nourish our souls but also connect each and every one of us to our community. In Fort Lauderdale’s District 2, the arts also serve as an economic engine. And, that engine is now, again, revving up.

Just a few weeks ago, I helped celebrate the groundbreaking of THRIVE Fort Lauderdale. It is an exciting Northwest-Progresso-Flagler Heights Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) project that will place Progresso Village in the company of successful arts districts like Wynwood in Miami.

Our project is transforming 60,000 square feet of warehouses sitting on more than five acres of property in the industrial portion of Progresso Village. Most of this area was being used for auto repair and paint and body shops. Now, the area itself is under repair and getting a brand-new body and coat of paint. Warehouses are being shifted into offices, artist flex spaces, and retail outlets.

It’s not just the buildings themselves. Along the way, the external infrastructure is also going on this revitalization ride. Sidewalks, curbing, landscaping, rain gardens, and bioswales are all being installed to make the exteriors as beautiful as the new interiors.

The first of these renovated warehouse spaces is expected to be ready by June. The goal is to have as many as eight of the ten industrial properties — around 80,000 square feet of total space — ready for 40 to 60 tenants by the end of the year. There will also be a new outdoor event space that can accommodate around 12,000 people.

We’ve come so far. It has been a long journey, though, to get to this point. Back in 2019, Fort Lauderdale contributed \$2.8 million to get this project going. The Fish brothers, Jonathan and Abraham, have also invested about \$15 million in the project.

The results will benefit and be in reach of the entire community. A full quarter of the leasable spaces will have rent limits in place making the facilities accessible to both small and large businesses. The remaining spaces will be rented at market rates to ensure the project keeps running strong.

This arts-centric project is expanding upon the redevelopment and excitement that we are already seeing in Flagler Village and MASS District. We are building on past successes and making sure our future prosperity is artfully constructed. In doing so, we are truly painting a beautiful community picture that is not only a site, but a sight to behold.