

FRA Award Submission

Category: OUT OF THE BOX

Submission: BROWARD COUNTY'S FIRST SHIPPING CONTAINER RESTAURANT



Description:

Shipping containers provide a flexible, sustainable, and creative alternative to land use. They enable developers to assemble geometrically diverse structures for applications including retail, production, and housing. The Hallandale Beach Community Redevelopment Agency (HBCRA) is working to bring the first shipping container restaurant to Broward County. Partnering with Tomassi LLC. & Elias Benaim, the destination will serve as a restaurant, lounge and bar called Kao Sushi Bar and Grill. The property, which is located adjacent to the Florida Brightline is comprised of a very small parcel of land that has been vacant for many decades which is only 4,581 SF.

Innovation - How the project used new ideas to solve problems or to carry out the project or program*

The conversion of shipping containers into modular building blocks for homes and businesses may sound unappealing, but it offers a profound opportunity to reshape the landscape architecturally and economically. Shipping containers range in sizes from 8' x 10' to 8' x 20' to 8' x 40'. With regard to aesthetics, the shipping container is nothing more than a steel rectangular box. Before refurbishment, they may even be dented, rusty, and poorly painted. However, once rehabilitated, the shipping container provides a durable, uniform, and creative medium: shipping containers are modular and can give 3-dimensional variation to plain, open spaces or conform to oddly shaped lots.

Community Impact – How the project improved economic, social, design, cultural assets of the community.

The HBCRA recognized that the creation of Kao Sushi Bar and Grill would not only be Broward County's first shipping container style restaurant; it would also lend unique character to its burgeoning Food, Fashion, Art, and Design District (FFADD), a destination for trendy restaurants, art studios, and murals that attract visitors from all over South Florida. The restaurant is built adjacent to the FEC railway (and Brightline Train) thus it is visible to anyone who transits in north-southerly directions every day. The two-story structure consists of multiple, interconnected shipping containers that have been converted for dining and bars. The juxtaposition of post-industrial imagery with post-modern symbolism of fusion-style restaurants, eye-opening murals, and sub-tropical palms conveys the promise of Hallandale Beach's future. The City has undergone a century-long transformation from wilderness to industry and tourism. It is now evolving into a hotspot for young professionals and global culture.



Funding – How the project leveraged funding and in-kind assistance.

On May 13, 2019 the HBCRA Board of Directors approved resolution no. 2019-021 to aid in the development of a shipping container restaurant in the Food Fashion Arts and Design District (FFADD). This project is slated to be the one of the first shipping container restaurants in Broward County. The Developer, Tomassi LLC was awarded \$590,000. Their total project exceeded \$1 million including the cost of the land.

Problem Solving – How the project used problem-solving to address unique local issues*

Kao Sushi Bar and Grill is one solution to the problem of post-industrial transformation. The challenge: how do we transform empty lots warehouses and manufacturing facilities (most of which are functionally obsolescent) into new assets for the community? How do we repurpose old space into something that creates new value for the local marketplace? Shipping containers provide an easy, lower cost construction alternative. They allow the developer to retrofit structural specifications to nearly any parcel of land – despite its geographical or infrastructural features. In Hallandale Beach, the FEC railway crosses directly into the area the HBCRA has designated for its FFADD. The thin strip of property adjacent to the tracks would naturally limit the construction of many types of structures. Shipping containers provided an excellent geometric medium for such property. In addition, the appearance of these steel structures, reminiscent of Hallandale Beach's manufacturing history, gives the neighborhood greater character and credibility.

Applicability to Other Communities – Why this project or program could be transferred to other communities.

This project consisted of the HBCRA supporting the development of a modular-style shipping container restaurant. The types of support provided were the provision of loans and grants specifically targeted for commercial interior, exterior, and kitchen equipment; guidance with zoning and land-use (in a special use district); and marketing and public awareness. The property owner was responsible for the research, planning, sourcing, and acquisition of all materials (shipping containers, refrigeration, and customized parts) to execute the project. We encourage any city or neighborhood to consider the low-cost benefits of using shipping containers for a variety of projects.

Other Things to Tell the Judges – N/A

