

Center City

Issues + Opportunities Report

November 2012

InVision Tampa



INVISION TAMPA
People. Place. Progress.

Foreword

Bob Buckhorn
Mayor, City of Tampa



Citizens, stakeholders, and civic leaders throughout Tampa have embraced InvisionTampa, our strategic master plan for the urban core of Tampa. With our keen focus on people, place, and progress, our City Center and surrounding neighborhoods are brimming with renewed hope and energy.

As you will read in the following pages, we have been thoughtful, collaborative and inclusive in our community engagement. In fact, we've had over 1,000 online users and 800 in-person citizens share their thoughts and ideas. Whether it was through I-town hall meetings and social channels or traditional neighborhood meetings, charrettes, walking tours, and one-on-one discussions, Tampa was engaged.

And you are making a difference. Already, we are experiencing the

benefits of these new insights and citizen commitment to our City Center. We are seeing our Hillsborough River center our downtown neighborhoods with an eclectic integration of business, community, arts and culture, and green space. We are welcoming new jobs by growing companies and start-ups alike. And I am absolutely confident, there is more to come.

This is an exciting time to be Mayor of Tampa. With your help and continued support, I know we can create that urban environment that catalyzes prosperity and high quality of life for all of Tampa. I envision a downtown that is livable, walkable, and pedestrian and retail oriented with strong vibrant, adjoining neighborhoods. From Ybor City to the West Bank, it is time to connect the dots. Together, we can make this happen!

This document has been prepared by AECOM on behalf of the City of Tampa, Florida. This project was made possible through a Sustainable Communities Challenge Grant provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

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I-Town Halls + Social Media

From Twitter to Facebook, YouTube to Tumblr, we used a variety of social media to engage with the community in discussions about a range of topics from transportation to parks and culture. **Page 14**

Neighborhood Workshops and Walking Tours

In eight neighborhood areas throughout the Center City, residents and business owners joined us on walks and in roundtable sessions to share their hopes, dreams, and ideas for the future of their communities. **Page 16**

Knowledge Exchanges - Insights from Experts

Hundreds of community members spent four evenings hearing from experts and engaging in community conversations about key topics for the future.

21st Century Cities. *What does it mean to be a vital city in the 21st century and what are the most important things to do and not to do in the next 15 years?*..... **Page 37**

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Camera Exercise - Center City Tampa Through the Eyes of the Community

Thirty people volunteered to be "Citizen Photographers" to document the Center City neighborhoods and photograph things that they liked most or valued most about the area, things that they wished were different, and things they wished a successful master plan would accomplish. Their photographs are used extensively throughout this document to illustrate key ideas and conditions within the Center City. **Page 44**

Issues to Address

Major Topics of Discussion

After listening to the community, nearly all of what we heard fell into one of five topic areas. Each of these topics has specific issues associated with it - issues that will drive the master plan.

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Participation List

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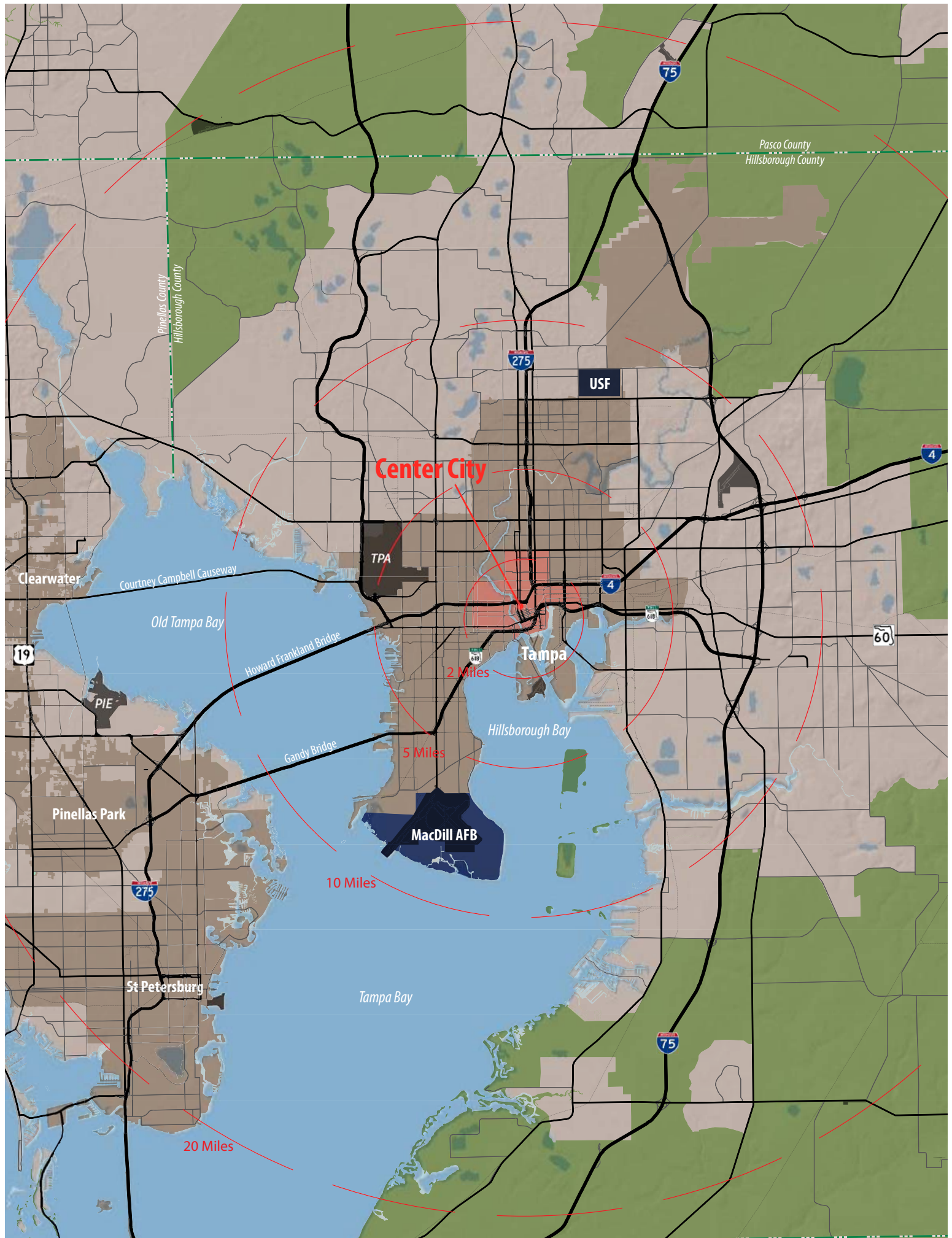
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“We need voices, insights and ideas from anyone and everyone who works, lives, or visits Tampa, and in mid-2013, we will have a living workbook of initiatives that we can actually get done that will shape Tampa into a 21st century city.”

”

Mayor Bob Buckhorn





Listening and Learning

Using federal grant dollars, InVision Tampa is creating a master plan for Center City Tampa, spanning from downtown to Ybor City on the east, Armenia Avenue on the west, and north along historic Nebraska Avenue to Hillsborough Avenue.

Working closely with Mayor Buckhorn, experts and scholars with worldwide experience and insight have walked, talked, photographed, mapped and — most importantly — listened to you about the nuances of your neighborhood as well as the things that matter to you and your families now and in our future.

The following pages are a summary of your input, which is at work leading to a community master plan that will catalyze prosperity and a high quality of life for all of Tampa and Hillsborough County.

For the first time in its history, the City of Tampa used a robust social media strategy in connection with its traditional public outreach and engagement to support and advance the city center master planning objectives. Branding as InvisionTampa, we garnered more than 800 in-person attendees and over 1,000 social and virtual town hall users. The outreach included online social platforms within our website, 8 neighborhood walking tours and community meetings, Knowledge Exchange sessions, over 20 stakeholder group meetings, a citizen photography exercise and our July public design workshop. Together, these layered techniques allowed us to obtain the perspective of a wide cross section of the community, including those traditionally marginalized, through multiple vantage points.





“The plan should help address and make downtown Tampa the people’s downtown for the next 20 years, responding to the ideas and needs of the community. It really depends on the priorities of the community and what they think the role of downtown should be whether that be the center of the community, activity area, or place to live.”

Center City Study Area

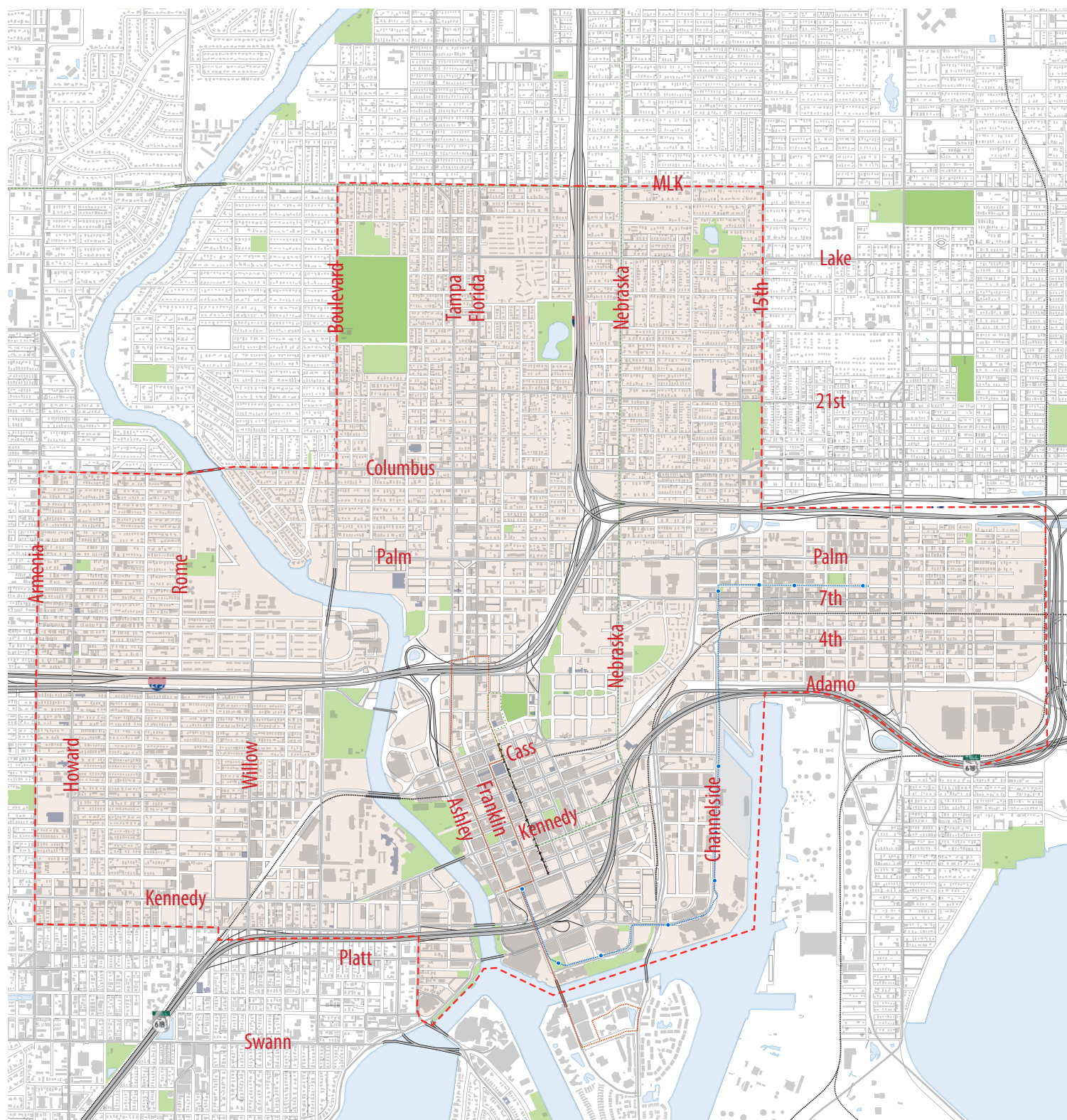




Photo: Mike Vanetta

I-Town Halls and Social Media

InVision Tampa includes an I-Town Hall, online forums and social channels where people, residents and visitors alike may share opinions, engage in discussions, and even vote on ideas that they feel are best for our community. This method was set up to hear from everyone and have their active, frequent participation, thoughts, ideas, and even their criticism.

This virtual idea sharing site allows users to submit their ideas on a particular category and receive “seconds”, or “likes”, as well as receive comments from other users. Discussion topics included sustainable neighborhoods and prosperous business districts, economic development and

competitiveness, transportation and connectivity, and parks, arts, and culture.

A project specific Facebook page was established to provide the public with related news articles, meeting reminders, photos and update from meetings. By mid-June, 394 people or groups had “liked” the Invision Tampa Study. Facebook has been used for ongoing communication throughout the project and a key method to push out content throughout the project.

A Twitter account was established and has been used throughout the study to provide information about the project and to advertise upcoming

meetings and/or events. By mid-June, @InVisionTampa had 222 followers.

Other methods included a Tumblr account providing the public an opportunity to blog or share their vision of Tampa and a YouTube channel. We used this layered information to be informed of public discussion in real time, monitor social media dialogue on relevant questions, provide updated blog & chat topics while monitoring statistics regarding input and subject matter. This allowed us to calibrate and adjust our media updates and outreach techniques to meet the needs of our audiences and advance the goals of Invision Tampa.



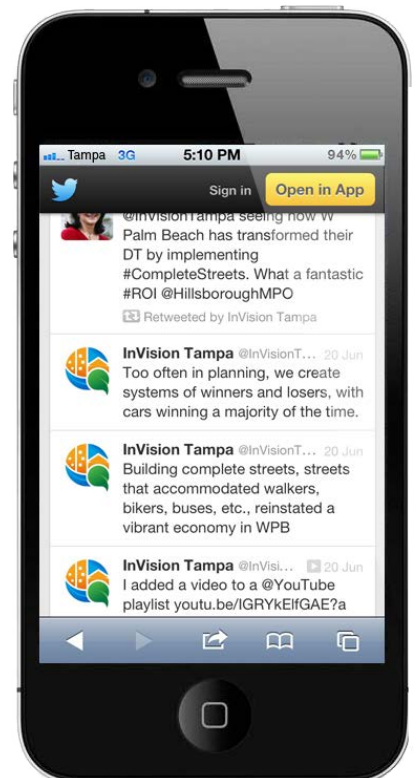
What is InVision Tampa?

Using federal grant dollars, InVision Tampa is creating a master plan for the City Center of Tampa, Fla., spanning from downtown to Ybor City on the east, Armenia Avenue on the west, and north along historic Nebraska Avenue to Hillsborough Avenue. Working closely with Mayor Buckhorn, experts and scholars with worldwide experience and insight have walked, talked, photographed, mapped and — most importantly — listened to you about the nuances of your neighborhood as well as the things that matter to you and your families now and in our future. We are now working on a community master plan that will catalyze prosperity and a high quality of life for all of Tampa and Hillsborough County.

What is Your Vision?

To create a Center City plan that become a reality, we must also be thoughtful, collaborative and inclusive. We need your thoughts, your ideas, experiences and your voice. Please share your vision of Tampa with us.

Share Your Ideas
Virtual Town Hall Meeting



- » Clean up the area around the casino!
- » Changing Gasparilla parade and fireworks displays
- » A bayside park
- » Resume comprehensive bus service

SHARE



Where Did We Meet and Tour?

4/28/2012 | Ybor/VM Ybor
Ragan Park: 1200 East Lake Avenue

4/28/2012 | Tampa Heights
Robles Park: 3305 North Avon Avenue

5/2/2012 | Central Business District
John F Germany Library: 900 North Ashley Drive

5/5/2012 | West Tampa
MLK Recreation Complex: 2300 North Oregon Avenue

5/10/2012 | Channel District
Florida Aquarium: 701 Channelside Drive

5/10/2012 | North Hyde Park
Mt. Olive AME Church: 1902 West LaSalle Street

5/19/2012 | Historic Ybor City
Hampton Inn and Suites: 1301 East 7th Avenue

5/19/2012 | Nebraska and Hillsborough Avenues Corridors
Seminole Heights Branch Library: 4711 North Central Avenue

Neighborhood Workshops and Walking Tours

An integral part of the InVision Tampa plan is to incorporate citizen ideas, issues, and comments into the Center City Master Plan. To capture this insight, eight Neighborhood Design Workshops were held in each of the neighborhood areas around the center city. The workshops were held on weekdays in the early evening and on weekends in the mid-day. Activities were geared to a variety of input methods, including a walking tour of the neighborhood where community members could point to specific “on the ground” issues and opportunities, and a follow-up meeting with group exercises to discuss site observations, values, and opportunities for change in the community.

Each meeting opened with a brief review of the project and introductions. Those participating in the walk disembarked for the neighborhood walking tour. The group followed a one-mile route intended to view a cross-section of the neighborhood and to view specific issue examples. The walk lasted approximately 1 ½ hours. Upon returning to the meeting location, attendees were greeted with light refreshments and a break. Not all attendees participated in the walking portion of the meeting.

To begin the workshop, the Project Team gave a presentation about the study covering the goals, schedule, and methods for public interaction. Following the presentation, a series of exercises were held. The attendees were divided into smaller, equally-sized groups.

In the initial activity, each member was asked to write down on sticky notes three things they valued about their neighborhood, and three things they wanted to change about it. Project Team members then categorized the notes on either side of the room.

The next exercises had participants working with table top maps. On the first map, participants placed sticker dots to denote special areas, yellow dots to indicate a place, or an example of, something they valued and blue dots for to indicate a place, or an example of, something they would like to change. The second map exercise had participants draw lines between their neighborhood and a place or area where they would like to be connected.



Neighborhood Workshop: Ybor Heights/VM Ybor

Where Did We Meet and Tour?

4/28/2012 | Ybor/VM Ybor
Ragan Park: 1200 East Lake Avenue

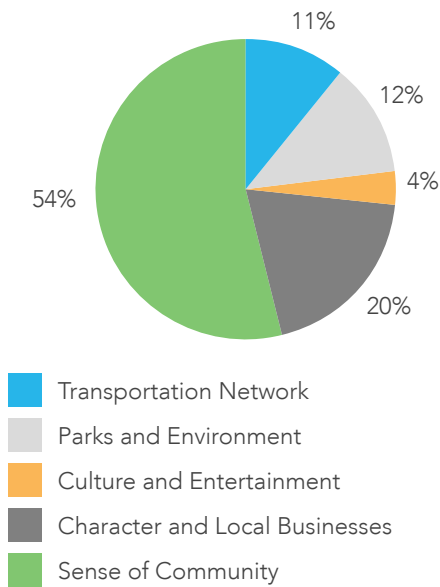
Neighborhood participants value the history (architecture) and diversity of their neighborhood. The parks throughout the area are also of great value, they provide activities for children in the neighborhood. The active neighborhood association has been held in high regard for their efforts. The central location of the neighborhood is another value, being in close proximity to downtown and other communities. However, many of the residents at the workshop would like to see improved connections between the neighborhood and downtown and between other

community amenities such as Ragan Park and the Hillsborough River.

Participants would like to see a decline in criminal activity, such as prostitution, sexual assault, theft, and drug trafficking. Also, the homeless population has become overabundant and the residents would like to see those numbers to decline in order to attract new homeowners and business move into the area. The code enforcement, zoning laws, and number of bicycle lanes need to be improved as well.



What do you value most about your community? | Workshop Responses - Ybor Heights / VM Ybor:



A sampling of specific responses:

Transportation Network:

Walkability
Public transportation availability

Parks and Environment:

Great parks and space for events for community gathering
Parks and numbers in proximity to residential base

Culture and Entertainment:

Diners - Nico's, Three Coins Diner

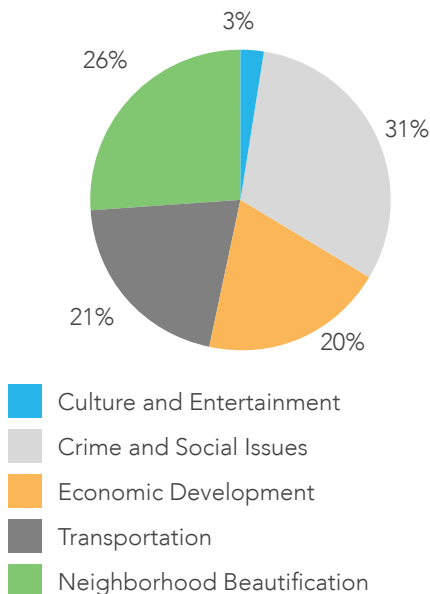
Character and Local Businesses:

Love the individual unique businesses
Diversity in housing stock
No corporate crap!

Sense of Community:

Historic architecture and neighborhood
Nice neighbors
Families have had many of the homes for generations

What would you most like to change about your community? | Workshop Responses - Ybor Heights / VM Ybor:



A sampling of specific responses:

Culture and Entertainment:

Make Cuscaden Pool operational

Crime and Social Issues:

Reduce homeless overload
Eliminate sexual predators
Eliminate prostitution
No more halfway houses

Economic Development:

Way more liquor stores than places to get food
Enforcement of zoning protections on neighborhood

Transportation:

Arterial roads are not pedestrian friendly - hard to cross on foot
More bike lanes

Neighborhood Beautification:

Code enforcement needs to be more vigilant (e.g., trash/furniture dumps)
Remove chain link fences on front lawns

Neighborhood Workshop: Tampa Heights

Where Did We Meet and Tour?

4/28/2012 | Tampa Heights
Robles Park: 3305 North Avon Avenue

The majority of participants value the sense of community within the Tampa Heights neighborhood. The location of Tampa Heights, especially its proximity to the river and downtown, is another value to the community. Attendees also place great value on a nearby park, Robles Park.

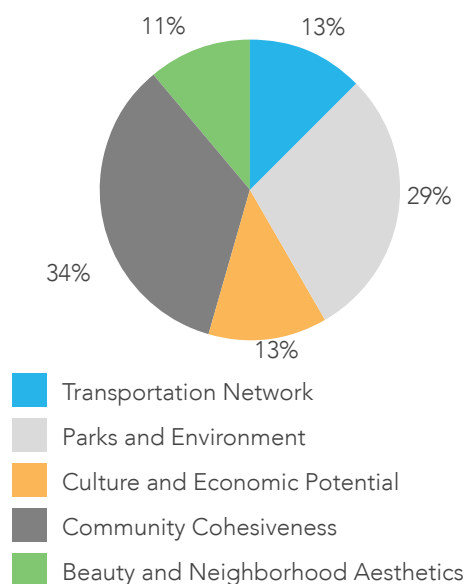
Improvements or changes participants would like to see include a boost in economic development, for example more small businesses. For housing, participants would like to see more homes and have existing homes or public housing (Robles Park Apartments) revitalized. They are

hopeful for the continued progress of The Heights, a redevelopment at the southern end of the neighborhood along the river. Attendees would like to have an improved transit system. Also, improvements to existing parks along with more green space in the area would be a beneficial to the area.

The participants expressed a great deal of support for the conversion of Tampa and Florida Avenues from one-way to two-way travel. The speed of the traffic through the neighborhood was called out on the walking tour as particularly detrimental to the livability of the neighborhood.



What do you value most about your community? | Workshop Responses - Tampa Heights:



A sampling of specific responses:

Transportation Network:

Centrally located in Tampa
Easy to get to regional destinations

Parks and Environment:

Robles Park
Adjoining downtown core and river

Culture and Economic Potential:

Playgrounds
Good restaurants

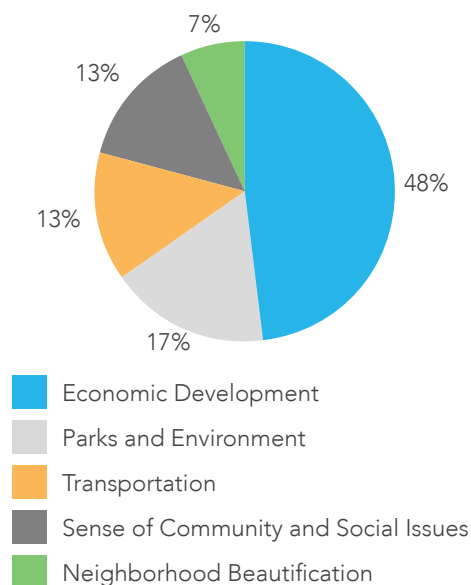
Community Cohesiveness:

Historic fabric
Families, people, diversity among neighbors

Beauty and Neighborhood Aesthetics:

Street trees
Brick streets

What would you most like to change about your community? | Workshop Responses - Tampa Heights:



A sampling of specific responses:

Economic Development:

More small businesses along Florida and Nebraska Avenues
Renovation of public housing
CBD extend north on Franklin Street into Tampa Heights commercial center

Parks and Environment:

New parks and improvements to existing parks
Greenway connection from community to Riverwalk and extend Riverwalk

Transportation:

Viable transit
Make Tampa and Florida Avenues two-way roadways through neighborhood

Sense of Community and Social Issues:

Greater sense of community bond and unity
Sense of ownership among overall residences wanting to keep community clean

Neighborhood Beautification:

More street lights
More vibrancy - walking, jogging, festivals, boating

Neighborhood Workshop: Central Business District

Where Did We Meet and Tour?

5/2/2012 | Central Business District
John F Germany Library: 900 North Ashley Drive

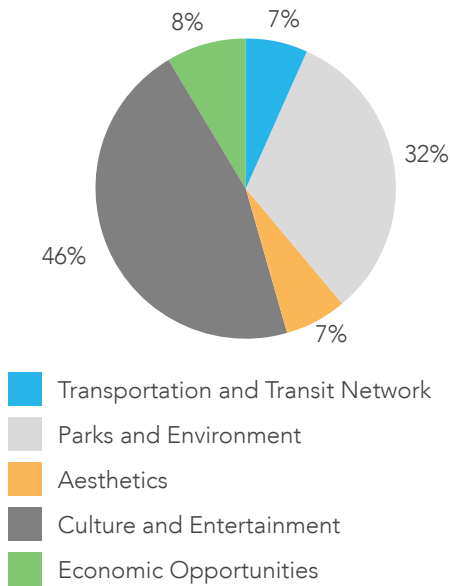
Two major values that stood out were culture and entertainment; which include cultural events, theaters/museums, diversity of the neighborhood, and restaurants. The environment is another valued aspect of the area; attendees would like to see more river access, connectivity, destinations, and parks.

Attendees would like to see changes in support of the emerging residential community downtown.

For transportation, this might include removing one-way streets, decreasing traffic speed, and including on street parking instead of surface parking lots. Adding bicycle paths and connecting sidewalks is another area they would like to see changed. Participants would like to see an increase in economic development by incorporating more grocery stores, retail, and high-tech job opportunities as seen at the new CAMLs facility.



What do you value most about your community? | Workshop Responses - Central Business District:



A sampling of specific responses:

Transportation and Transit Network:

Walkability
Public transportation (streetcar)

Parks and Environment:

Riverwalk connectivity and destinations
Curtis Hixon Park

Aesthetics:

Landscaping
Commitment to unique lighting

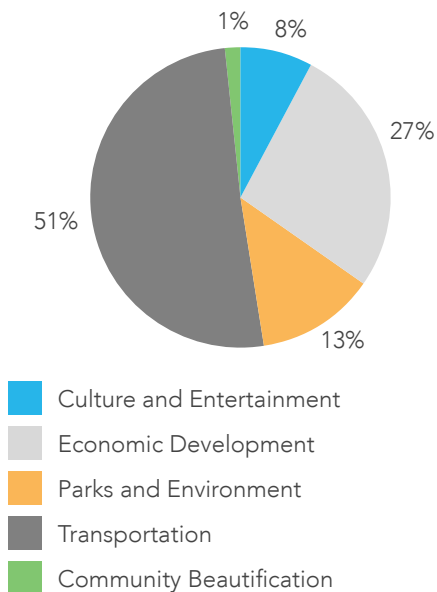
Culture and Entertainment:

Community and cultural facilities (e.g., museums and theaters)
Restaurants
Events (e.g., festivals and concerts)

Economic Development:

Growing residential presence
Commitment from investors and citizens

What would you most like to change about your community? | Workshop Responses - Central Business District:



A sampling of specific responses:

Culture and Entertainment:

More activities after business hours
More outdoor public events like festivals and concerts

Economic Development:

Build density - currently underdeveloped
Grocery store in downtown

Parks and Environment:

Improve water quality
More parks and river access locations

Transportation:

Remove one-way streets, lower speeds, and ped/bike focus rather than car focus
Improve transit accessibility within downtown and adjacent neighborhoods
Ashley Street - reduce lanes and speed so it's not a barrier to riverfront
Too many surface parking lots - need to redevelop/reimagine/reposition

Community Beautification:

More attractive streetscapes

Neighborhood Workshop: Old West Tampa

Where Did We Meet and Tour?

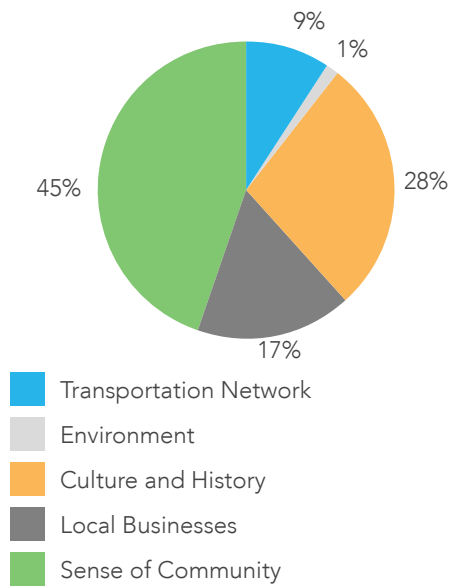
5/5/2012 | West Tampa
MLK Recreation Complex: 2300 North
Oregon Avenue

Participant's main value is their community; they expressed the strong sense of community within the area as well as their value of educational opportunities. The cultural history and architecture within the area are held in high regard. The central location and access to highways are also valued among attendees. Lastly, they value the new businesses that have stimulated the local economy.

Attendees would like to see improvements with crime and redevelopment of homes and public housing, specifically North Boulevard Homes. Attendees would like better access to the river and would like to see the street barriers removed for crime prevention purposes. Participants would like to see an increase in economic development by incorporating more grocery stores, retail, and job opportunities.



What do you value most about your community? | Workshop Responses - Old West Tampa:



A sampling of specific responses:

Transportation Network:

Walkability
Access to highways

Environment:

Waterfront

Culture and History:

History - long-standing African-American neighborhoods
Architecture
Cigar factories

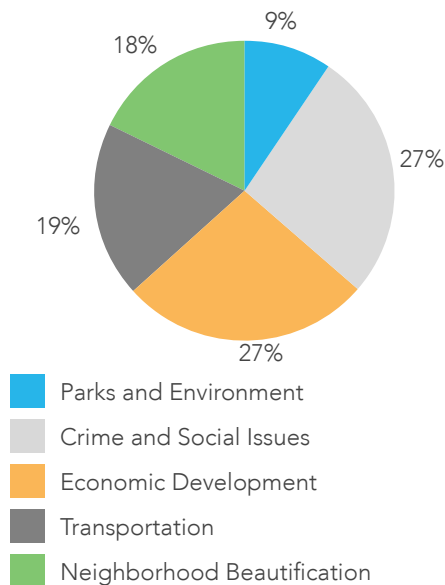
Local Businesses:

New/local businesses
Affordable

Sense of Community:

Schools
Neighborhood organizations
Diversity
Street trees

What would you most like to change about your community? | Workshop Responses - Old West Tampa:



A sampling of specific responses:

Parks and Environment:

More activities for children
Open waterfront

Crime and Social Issues:

Less crime and drug deals
More security
Negative stereotype

Economic Development:

Redevelop/relocate public housing - North Boulevard Homes
More amenities - grocery and retail
Opportunities for local businesses

Transportation:

Remove dead-end streets
Walkability

Neighborhood Beautification:

Improve landscaping and street lighting
More property maintenance

Neighborhood Workshop: Channel District

Where Did We Meet and Tour?

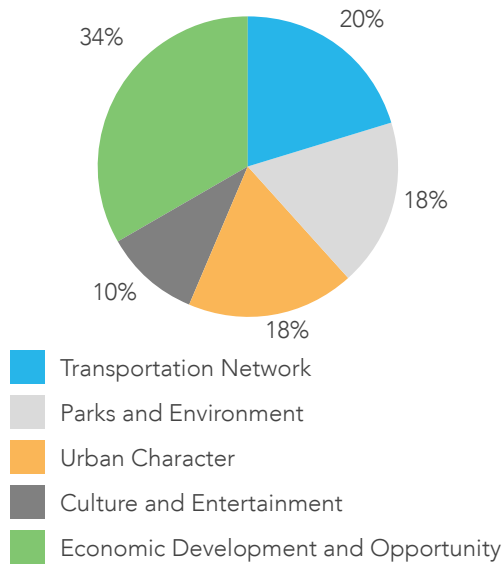
5/10/2012 | Channel District
Florida Aquarium: 701 Channelside Drive

Participants appear to value the economic development that has taken place in the Channel District, such as retail and restaurants, tourist attractions like the Florida Aquarium, and the Washington Street Park. The culture of the area is another focal point in the Channel District; the community values the history and urban feel to the neighborhood. The Channel District location is also valued, due to its convenient location to amenities as well as Downtown and Ybor City.

Economic development is also what the community would most like to see improved. Several participants would like to see the Channel District redeveloped, especially Channelside Bay Plaza and ConAgra. Daily needs and services also seem to be lacking in this area, many participants would like to see an increase in retail, restaurants, and night life for younger crowds. In particular, many participants discussed the need for a grocery store in the area. Lastly, parking and connectivity have been an issue in this area.



What do you value most about your community? | Workshop Responses - Channel District:



A sampling of specific responses:

Transportation Network:

Walkability within Channel District
Streetcar to Ybor

Parks and Environment:

Riverwalk
Close to water

Urban Character:

Urban neighborhood feel
New up and coming area with cool-looking condos

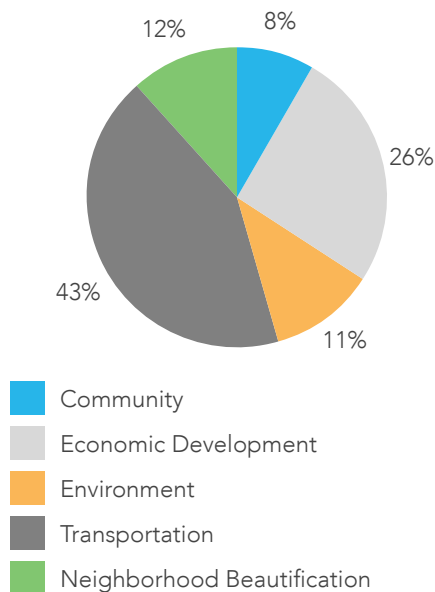
Culture and Entertainment:

Unexpected, unpredictable culture

Economic Development and Opportunity:

Good mix of shops and restaurants
Proximity to amenities
Great location in the city

What would you most like to change about your community? | Workshop Responses - Channel District:



A sampling of specific responses:

Culture and Entertainment:

Make Cuscaden Pool operational

Crime and Social Issues:

Reduce homeless overload
Eliminate sexual predators
Eliminate prostitution
No more halfway houses

Economic Development:

Way more liquor stores than places to get food
Enforcement of zoning protections on neighborhood

Transportation:

Arterial roads are not pedestrian friendly - hard to cross on foot
More bike lanes

Neighborhood Beautification:

Code enforcement needs to be more vigilant (e.g., trash/furniture dumps)
Remove chain link fences on front lawns

Neighborhood Workshop: North Hyde Park

Where Did We Meet and Tour?

5/10/2012 | North Hyde Park
Mt. Olive AME Church: 1902 West LaSalle Street

The majority of participants value the location of North Hyde Park, being in close proximity to downtown activities and other amenities. Attendees also have a great value for the common sense of community, safety, and diversity in age and ethnicity within the neighborhood.

Major changes needed for North Hyde Park include connecting sidewalks and including bike paths. The infrastructure and/or drainage needs to be reconstructed due to constant flooding. Also, participants would

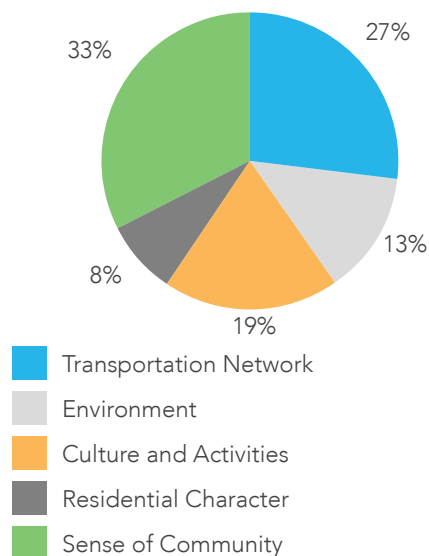
like to have the streets improved (i.e. widening, cross lights, take out speed bumps) and redirect truck traffic out of the neighborhood.

New multi-family residential projects are seen as a positive improvement in the community, but quality architecture is desired to help fit with the scale of the neighborhood.

Participants discussed the need for jobs within the neighborhood, particularly reinvestment in the light industrial areas in the eastern portion of the area.



What do you value most about your community? | Workshop Responses - North Hyde Park:



A sampling of specific responses:

Transportation Network:

Bike lanes and convenient proximity of major roads
We are close to doctor, pharmacy, grocery, stores, church

Environment:

Being able to see the sky toward horizons
Proximity to bay and river

Culture and Activities:

Close to activities
Proximity to downtown, culture, arts

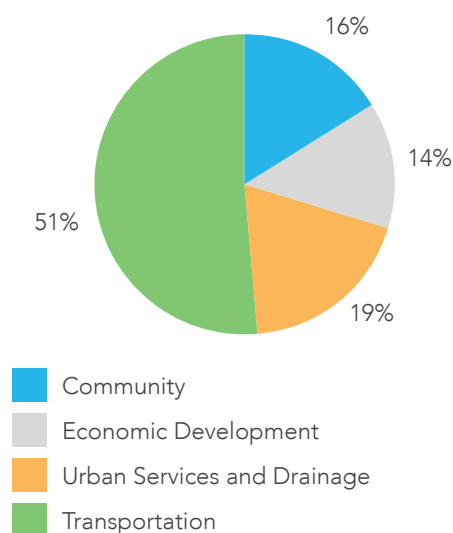
Residential Character:

Single-family dwellings

Sense of Community:

Architecture of original structures
Community-based law enforcement

What would you most like to change about your community? | Workshop Responses - North Hyde Park:



A sampling of specific responses:

Community:

Cooperation from City to allow people to live organically and sustainable while keeping residential properties tidy
Get rid of men on bicycles after dark - less tolerance for drug soliciting

Economic Development:

Not too many jobs
Employment centers

Urban Services and Drainage:

Improve drainage and stormwater system
Communal composting facilities

Transportation:

Better walkability - more sidewalks
Too many trucks through neighborhood
Make room for bicycle paths
Widen streets - no more speed bumps

Neighborhood Workshop: Ybor City

Where Did We Meet and Tour?

5/19/2012 | Ybor City
Hampton Inn and Suites: 1301 East 7th Avenue

Participants value the history (architecture) and diversity of their neighborhood. The cultural events and unique entertainment opportunities are also of great value. Walkability is another asset to this area.

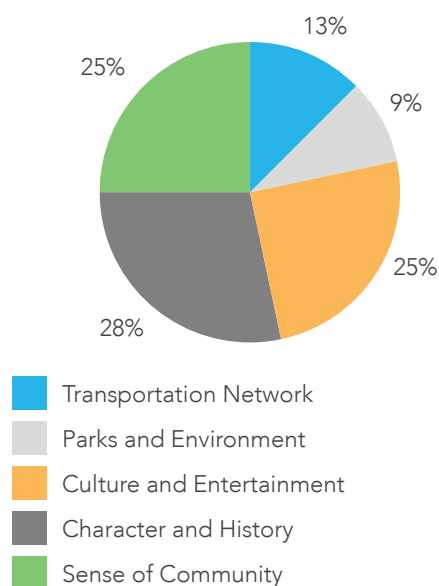
Participants would like to see better connectivity throughout the neighborhood, with connected sidewalks, bicycle paths, as well as transit options. Key connecting

streets include 7th Avenue, Palm, and 21st/22nd Streets. These streets were called out on the walking tour as particularly difficult to cross on foot and barriers within the neighborhood.

Ybor City has a good neighborhood plan in effect, according to the participants, who stressed that implementation of the vision needs to continue to work through the plan.



What do you value most about your community? | Workshop Responses - Ybor City:



A sampling of specific responses:

Transportation Network:

Walkability
Proximity to streetcar

Parks and Environment:

Trees and green space

Culture and Entertainment:

Proximity to urban amenities and other districts
Diverse entertainment - festivals, markets, parades, food, restaurants

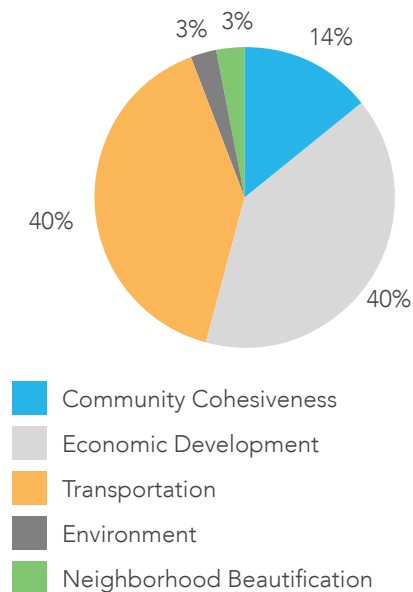
Character and History:

Historic structures
Independent businesses

Sense of Community:

Diversity of residents that call Ybor City home
Close-knit neighborhood/community and activities
New small offices

What would you most like to change about your community? | Workshop Responses - Ybor City:



A sampling of specific responses:

Community Cohesiveness:

Community misconception of crime in Ybor
No more bars and nightclubs; more upscale restaurants

Economic Development:

Add a grocery store/pharmacy
Fill in vacant lots - urban infill and more affordable mid-income housing
Balance the offering of retail, nightlife, and residential

Transportation:

More connectivity to downtown and adjacent neighborhoods
Improve streetscape in residential areas
Invest in mass transit - light rail

Environment:

Add blue box recycling within City

Neighborhood Beautification:

Volunteer for street cleaning

Neighborhood Workshop: Nebraska/Hillsborough Corridor

Where Did We Meet and Tour?

5/19/2012 | Nebraska and Hillsborough Avenues Corridors
Seminole Heights Branch Library: 4711 North Central Avenue

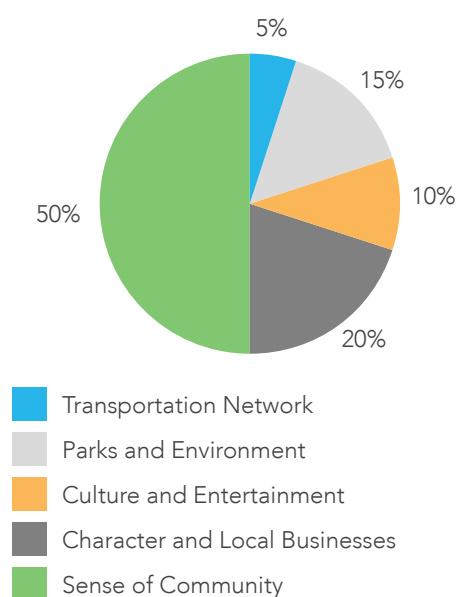
The majority of participants value the sense of community within the Nebraska-Hillsborough corridor. The corridor location is also a great value to the area, being in proximity to downtown, Ybor City, Tampa Heights, and Seminole Heights. Participants expressed a desire to capitalize on this proximity through better and safer connections to other downtown assets, features, and neighborhoods.

New locally-owned businesses are popular, as is the recent three-laning of Nebraska Avenue.

Crime is a major issue participants are having in this area, especially with prostitution. The code enforcement or interest in the appearance of the area is another major problem participants would like to see alleviated.



What do you value most about your community? | Workshop Responses - Nebraska / Hillsborough Corridor:



A sampling of specific responses:

Transportation Network:

Access to regional network

Parks and Environment:

Trees
Rivercrest Park

Culture and Entertainment:

Newer restaurants and lounges - The Independent, Ella's, and Southern Brewing

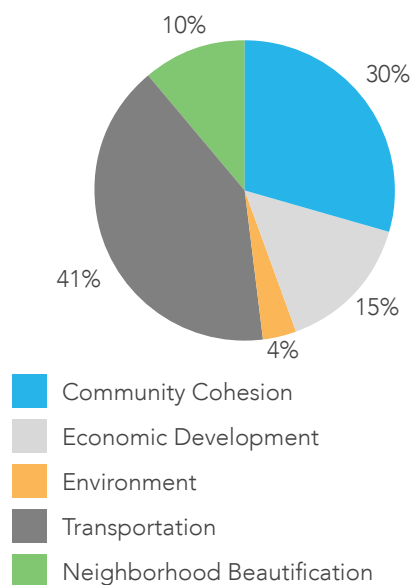
Character and Local Businesses:

Increasing quality businesses for local shopping
Historic nature of our buildings both business and residential

Sense of Community:

Independent spirit
Very active neighborhood association
Location - access to Tampa Heights, Seminole Heights, and Ybor City
Neighborhood scale - closeness to everything

What would you most like to change about your community? | Workshop Responses - Nebraska / Hillsborough Corridor:



A sampling of specific responses:

Community Cohesion:

Community focal point
Remove prostitution from Nebraska Avenue

Economic Development:

Hotel/motels need to be reclaimed
Need more neighborhood-friendly businesses and fewer pawn shops

Environment:

More parks

Transportation:

Lack of support of walkability
Too much cut through traffic
Needs to be more bikeable
Increase traffic flow

Neighborhood Beautification:

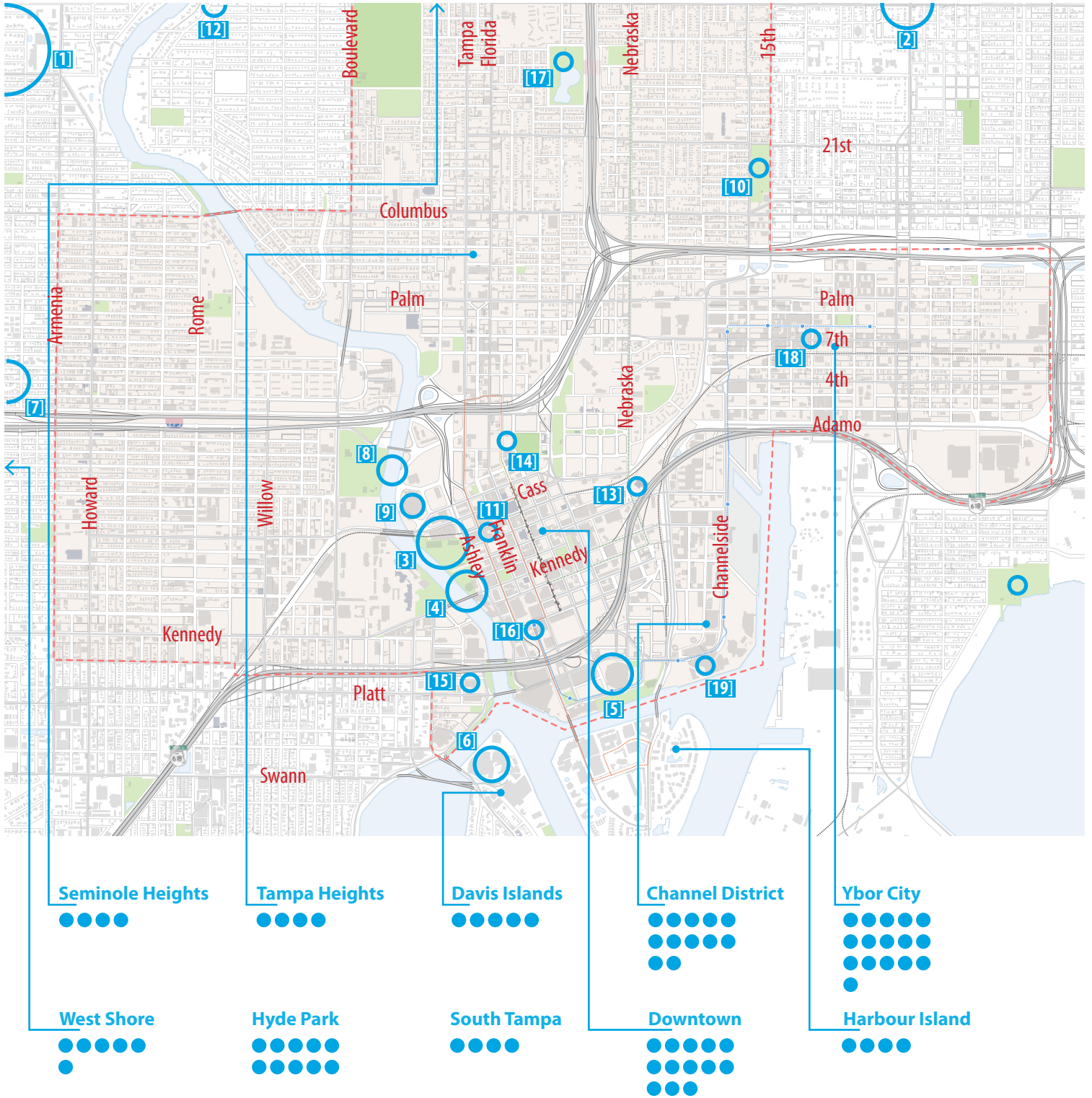
Lack of proper code enforcement
Rusty cars behind rusty chain link fences

Preferred Destinations and Connections

During each neighborhood workshop, the design team asked participants to draw lines to other neighborhoods and specific destinations that they either frequent or would like to obtain better access to. Many of these areas were other popular neighborhoods (e.g., Channelside, Hyde Park/South Tampa, and Ybor City), entertainment areas (e.g., parks and beaches), or other locations within the region (e.g., Tampa International Airport). Based on responses from all neighborhoods, the most popular individual destinations are shown below and most popular neighborhoods or districts are indicated on the page at right.

Places I Want to be Connected With | Neighborhood Workshops Feedback:







Knowledge Exchange: 21st Century Cities

The first InVision Tampa Knowledge Exchange included a standing room only crowd as about 200 people, eager with their own ideas for Tampa's future, filled the ballroom to capacity.

Joe Brown led the Knowledge Exchange with a discussion on 21st Century Cities and identified relatable cities—San Diego, Charlotte, Austin, and Atlanta. A common thread among these cities is the rich diversity and attention given to the 2-mile radius around the downtown core. In Tampa, this encompasses places as diverse as

Downtown, Old West Tampa, Channel District, Ybor City, North Hyde Park, and Tampa Heights.

"Whatever plan our city comes up with would need to tell the story of each of these unique cultures," Joe said. He urged us not to shy away from being an edgy city and explained that fear will cripple creativity, change and any sort of momentum this project hopes to achieve. "Fearlessness is key to innovation," he explained.

As participants broke-out into small groups, they discussed things that they believed Tampa as a community MUST DO and MUST NOT DO over the course of the next 15 years and one big idea to present to the larger group. Among the top concerns were mobility, connectivity and jobs expressed through want of the Riverwalk's completion, more transit options, and a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Most Important Things TO DO in Next 15 Years | Knowledge Exchange Feedback - (size of words scaled to number of mentions):



Most Important Things NOT TO DO in Next 15 Years | Knowledge Exchange Feedback - (size of words scaled to number of mentions):





Learning From Successful Cities: Chattanooga, Tennessee

In our journey to rediscovering our riverfront, we learned that cities, like forests, are in a constant state of renewal. While forests cycle in rhythm with natural laws, the city is recycled by the collective will and conscience of its citizens.

- Stroud Watson



Knowledge Exchange: Economic Development - Connecting the Dots

The third Knowledge Exchange on economic development stressed the importance of public-private partnerships (PPP) as a means to revitalize urban cores.

“Partnerships are key to development,” said Joe Brown of AECOM. “No one silo can do everything.”

The first example of the night came from San Diego, the eighth largest city in the U.S. Many of the elements that make San Diego’s downtown great

are PPPs, including the trolley system, its historic Gaslight District (which has quite a few similarities to Ybor), open-air shopping areas and a strong focus on mixed-income housing. The city also put heavy emphasis on maximizing its waterfront, an aspect Tampa can and is leveraging.

As the entire panel took turns speaking, it became evident that even though Tampa had many of the keys to success, there was one major issue:

“You need to connect the dots,” Joe Brown said.

Our residents don’t have a seamless way of getting to each destination. Thriving downtowns feature close-knit districts that are easily accessible and encourage visitors to stay all day. Tampa has many of the right destinations; we just need to connect them.

What Does an Economically Vital Center City Mean to You? | Knowledge Exchange Feedback:

“A place that encourages economic + cultural diversity that is viable for all, a place to live, work, play and collectively enjoy the same places, a clean & sustainable environment where people can move about freely without relying on personal car, a place that is comfortable an where people want to be.”

“Pride – to live in a culture of urban appreciation – to be part of a place that generates innovation and industry. It would mean that we did more than talk about it.”

“It means a city center that is alive with activity, well connected amenities, a variety of different land uses and retail uses. It is a place with a strong identity that the entire region can relate to as the community center. A city center must be attractive, preserve its history, while also being focused on the future.”

“A center city that attracts people, retains business and is a regional draw. It must be connected locally and regionally.”

“Thriving retail businesses (not just restaurants)-wrap retail up Franklin St. and develop along Palm Ave. Mass Transit-rubber Wheel trolley to connect from light rail to Tampa Heights, Ybor, Riverside Heights, SoHo, Central Park/Encore, Channel District.”

“A place where people live, work, shop and are entertained, where there are great restaurants, good places to hear music, etc. There should be more people living downtown, maybe 20,000+. It should be easy and convenient to move around downtown and nearby neighborhoods, perhaps via an inexpensive downtown circulator, something like Denver’s transit mall. Has a grocery store! The art museums, history museums and performing arts center are a start.”

“It has a variety of industries, demos, services, housing and visitor friendly attributes that can withstand economic peaks and valleys. It has density, yet preserves views and recreational offerings which attract businesses. Use the “empty milk” example. Everyone living downtown should be able to walk to a store to “buy milk” or whatever goods/services someone needs without driving.”



Learning From Successful Cities: San Diego, California

Centre City Development Corporation is a city-owned corporation that manages downtown redevelopment and planning with four key functions:

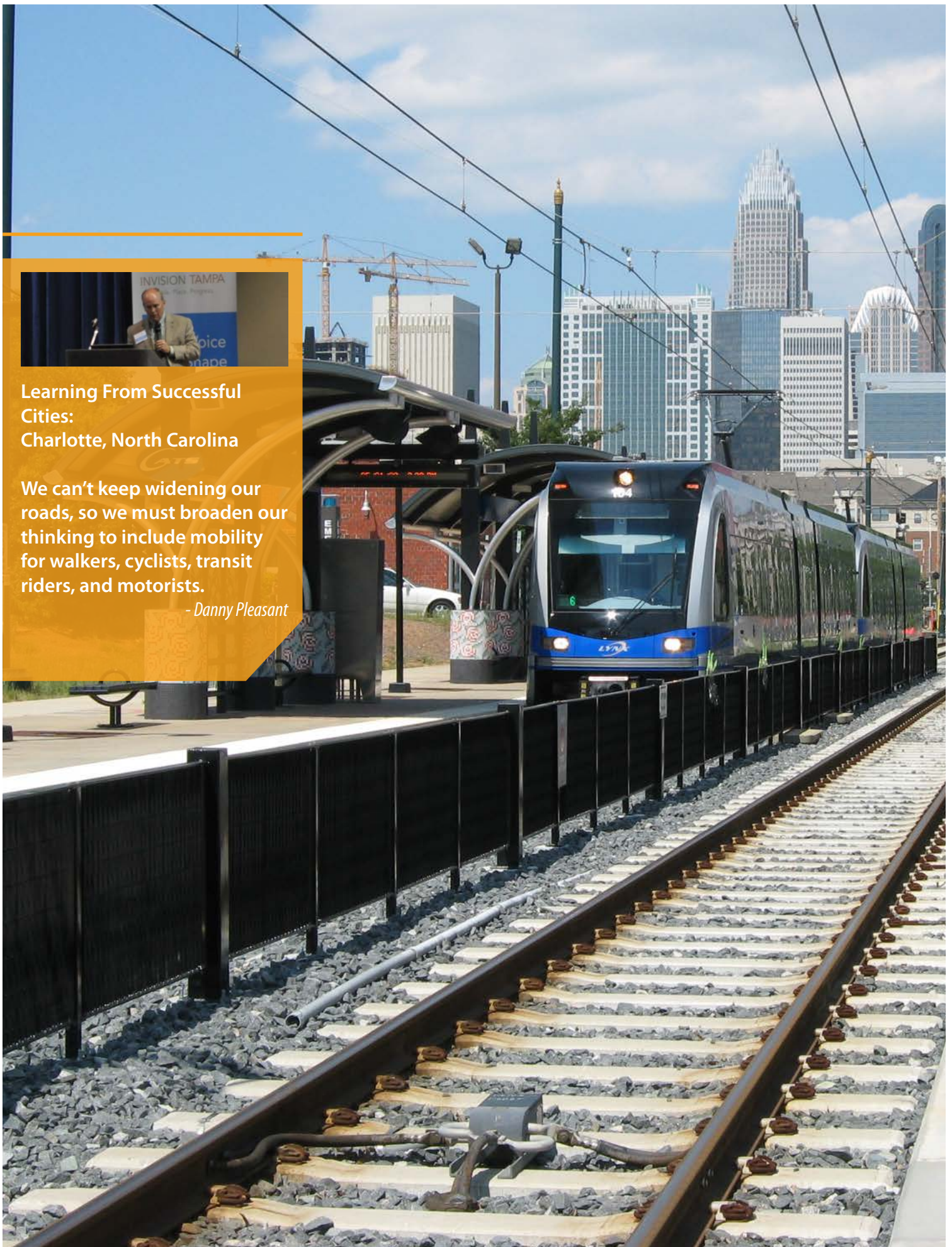
- A Community Plan, prepared with the public and the City
- A Downtown Master Environmental Impact Report
- A focused and faster design review and entitlement process
- Public investment with tax increment



Learning From Successful Cities: Charlotte, North Carolina

We can't keep widening our roads, so we must broaden our thinking to include mobility for walkers, cyclists, transit riders, and motorists.

- Danny Pleasant



Knowledge Exchange: Transportation Systems for Community Livability and Vitality

At our final Knowledge Exchange, residents and business owners lined up to hear our panel of experts talk about transportation for Tampa's future. Their main message from the experts was one of integrated thinking - transportation isn't a silver bullet solution, but a necessary pillar for planning that must balance with community safety, housing development and land use.

Attendees also heard from Danny Pleasant, the City of Charlotte director of transportation. He is responsible for the full spectrum of planning, designing, building, operating and

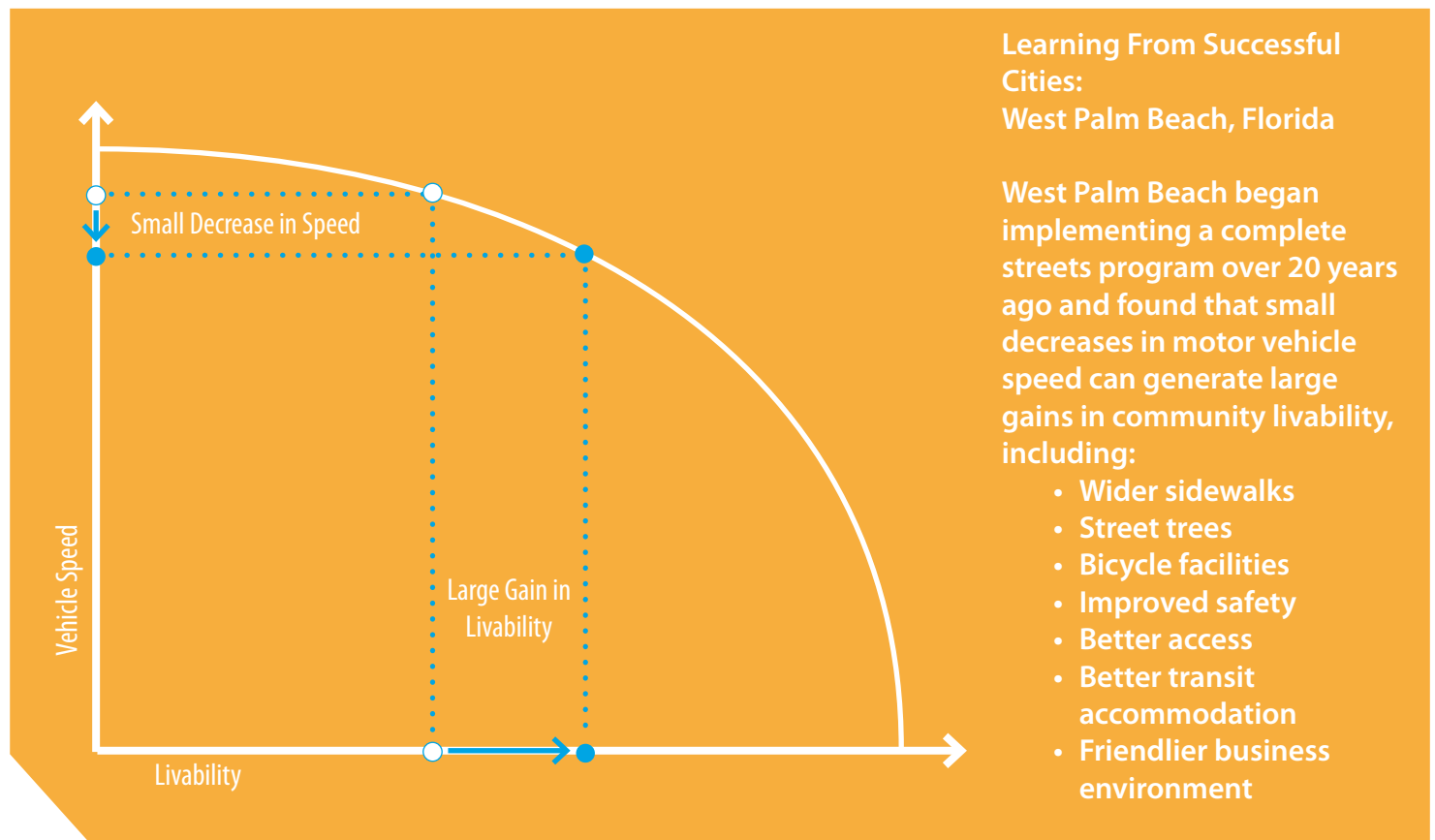
maintaining over 2,300 miles of city streets for walkers, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists. He told the story of how Charlotte invested in complete streets and integrated a light rail system into its urban core.

"We can't keep widening our roads, so we must broaden our thinking," Pleasant said.

George Walton from Parsons Brinckerhoff discussed the Tampa region's ongoing discussion about transit. He highlighted the importance of understanding the different

modes of transit and the roles and opportunities they present.

Ian Lockwood, former Transportation Planner of West Palm Beach, showed that whenever the move was made to create a more complete, livable street in downtown West Palm Beach, redevelopment and reinvestment followed. According Lockwood, streets are not just infrastructure, they are opportunities to create value (through complete streets), which in turn creates more livable communities.



The background image shows a city street scene. In the foreground, there's a grassy area and a paved sidewalk. A large palm tree stands prominently in the middle ground. In the background, a tall, modern building with many windows is visible. A curved orange structure, possibly a sculpture or part of a bridge, is also visible. The sky is clear and blue.

Camera Exercise

At the first Knowledge Exchange, 30 people volunteered to be “Citizen Photographers” to document the Center City neighborhoods. The volunteers photographed:

- **Things that they liked most or valued most about their neighborhood or Tampa’s Center City area**
- **Things that they wished were different about their neighborhood or Tampa’s Center City area**
- **Things they wished a successful master plan would accomplish**

After the photos were developed, the design team facilitated a coordinated exercise which allowed the volunteers to share their pictures with the other community photographers. Together, the group identified common themes as shown on the following pages.

Cool Old Buildings

"At Metro 510 apartments - I love that they restored this old, beautiful church and incorporated it into the modern apartments."

- Dustin Lemke



Parks

"Plant Park - Beautiful gathering place overlooking the Hillsborough River, Curtis Hixon Park, and museums."

- Renee Vaughn



Local Business

"Tampa Upcycle is just one of many community based initiatives that are constructively addressing needs and desires of the community. I would love to see more and better on-ramps for such initiative. "

- Jon Dengler



Camera Exercise: Likes and Dislikes



Clockwise from below:

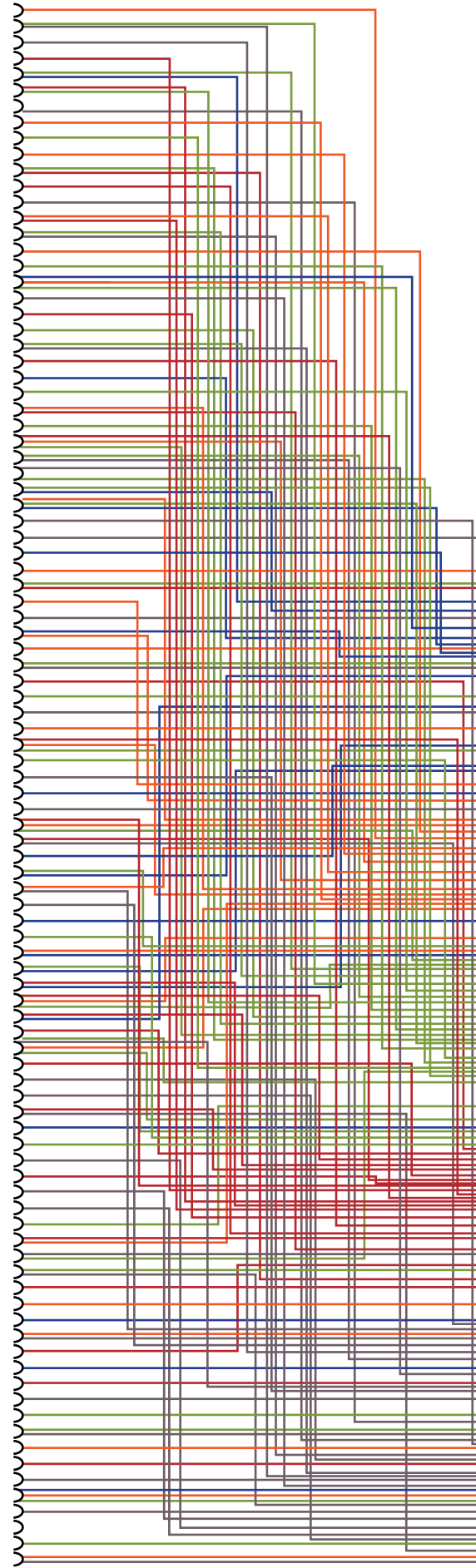
LIKES: Waterfront activity and development, local business, quality housing investment, cycling, historic buildings and pedestrian scale

DISLIKES: Concentrated public housing, divested main streets and high speed roads, and parking lots separating downtown areas





Growing number of people investing in the urban neighborhoods
 Very strong local belief that we need local transit to serve downtown core (business, cultural venues, tourism and residential)
 Reward non-auto trips, make it more attractive to take transit
 Places that are close feel far because the walk is difficult
 Need more things to do along Riverwalk (Access, Dining, Entertainment)
 Large roads and ramps isolate key properties such as Straz Center and North Franklin
 Need more places of density / activity to support transit
 Existing and emergent business districts (such as Willow Ave) have great potential for enhancement and neighborhood supportive activities
 Explore new partnerships that can create new or enhanced places (Med-Ed District? Channelside Mixed Use area?)
 Safety and security
 It's confusing to get in and out of the downtown core
 Too many inexpensive surface lots (it's still too easy to drive)
 HART annual ridership is growing (+/- \$14.5M downtown annually)
 With its urban streets and small blocks, Tampa should be the most walkable, bikeable City in Florida
 Transit systems around downtown do not meet the needs of the local populations
 The urban neighborhoods each have their own unique mixed use blend of housing, parks and local business areas
 Many surface parking lots in Downtown Core make the place feel disjointed
 Can't see the river from adjacent streets – river doesn't have much presence in the City or Neighborhoods
 Need future regional transit that gets to USF, Airport, Westshore and regionally to St Pete, Beaches, etc
 Tampa has a very well connected system of streets and blocks
 Downtown events and activities are important to the life of the community
 Marion Street Central Station needs more capacity.
 Tampa has a strong culture of bike riders
 Riverwalk is a great amenity, enhancing the Environmental and Recreational Potential of the Hillsborough River
 Transit Oriented Development, mixed use, higher density in the core
 Access to schools, parks and local shops needs improvement
 There should be better urban design at the street level and streetscapes for better walkability
 Places that are close feel far because of the harsh walking environment
 Marion Street Transitway doesn't serve emerging areas of development and current signal timing doesn't reward bus
 Need more places of density / activity to support transit
 Downtown open space: Washington Street Park, Riverwalk, Curtis Hixon Park, is a community asset
 The Hillsborough River and Riverwalk can be more integrated with current and future development
 Initiate Zip Car, bike share programs and bring back the electric jitneys
 Streetcar doesn't serve the local population
 Waterfront Events and Activities are very popular
 Pride of place and property – trash, cars in treelawns
 Pedestrian crossing or enhancements to Ashley, Kennedy, Meridian, etc. would make Downtown more walkable and accessible
 Redevelop North Boulevard Homes and Robles Park as mixed-use, mixed-income places
 Not enough local destinations on streetcar route
 Extend Riverwalk to West Bank
 Diversity of housing and people in close-in neighborhoods
 Very strong local belief that we need local transit to serve downtown core (business, cultural venues, tourism and residential)
 Highly inconsistent streetscape design leads to poor walkability
 Surface parking lots are unsightly and create a landscape of asphalt
 Balancing regional needs with local sense of place – and incorporating enhanced transit - as at the Nebraska Avenue Road diet project
 Local businesses and historic business districts
 Develop some cross-town trail systems
 New business will be attracted if Downtown is a more vibrant cultural and living place
 HART annual ridership is growing (+/- \$14.5M downtown annually)
 Rebuild Riverside Park, bring in light retail and boating
 Transit ticketing/fareboxes not user friendly (like e-pass) for locals
 Deficient utility and public realm infrastructure in some locations
 Bicycle and walking facilities, especially on 'cross-town' routes or linkages to key destinations, such as University of Tampa
 Need to develop some priorities for next investment (extend to west bank of Hillsborough River, more boating facilities, comfort amenities)
 We need better connections in and around the Straz Center and cultural facilities
 Use Metro-Rapid to better brand and serve the local population
 Revenue stream to support expanded transit construction and service
 More riverfront access and activity
 Jobs and need for employment opportunities
 Provide more comfort and shade to the pedestrian and park environment
 The Downtown Core should include the west bank of the river
 Limited places to cross the river, limited bike / ped ways
 From the neighborhoods, you are close to everything downtown
 New feature walk/bike bridges over river
 Access in and out of downtown is difficult
 Easy, reliable transit that connects key cultural and employment destinations with places of residential density
 Certain roads seem congested and hostile to peds and bikes, others seem oversized and underutilized by cars
 Better transit connections to and from my house
 Don't give up on High Speed Rail / Statewide Linkages
 Reclaim streets like Columbus and Floribaska that cross the highway or river to link neighborhoods
 Water Access for Boating, Paddleboarding, Kayaks, etc
 Healthcare, education, high tech, culture, riverfront and urban living create a downtown mix that is unusual among other southern cities
 Not much reward to ride the bus
 Need sidewalks, street trees and bike facilities on key streets
 Tampa has to balance both local circulation and regional access
 Reward non-auto trips, make it more attractive to take transit
 Tampa Park Apartments and Con-Agra create 'holes' in the downtown pattern
 Walkability in the neighborhoods
 Transit-oriented development, mixed use, higher density in the core
 Need easy, local circulator that serves the downtown core
 Convert the one-way streets
 Neighborhood clean up days
 Riverwalk is sometimes hot, not enough shade, comfort
 Use Metro-Rapid to better brand and serve the local population
 In-town trail systems for rapid bike access (including the Selmon Expressway Trail concept) should be explored
 Not many places to access the water
 Develop more projects like the Nebraska Road Diet
 Ticketing / Fareboxes not user friendly (like e-pass) for locals
 Need to improve pedestrian environment in the downtown core
 Tampa remains an important regional destination for employment and entertainment
 Light Industrial, such as at Willow Avenue, provides opportunity for new businesses, and neighborhood supporting retail
 Make large roads like Ashley, Meridian, and Kennedy easier to cross
 Need future regional transit that gets to USF, Airport, Westshore and regionally to St Pete, Beaches, etc
 Extend the presence of the river up into the city and neighborhoods
 Revenue stream to support expanded transit construction and service
 Quality residential restoration and new mixed use investment
 The Downtown Core can be viewed as many emerging neighborhoods
 Extend and expand streetcar service



Major Topics of Discussion and Opportunities

Over the course of several months, we heard from hundreds of residents, business owners, community leaders, and many others interested in the future of Center City Tampa. These community conversations took place in large gatherings, in small groups, in walks through neighborhoods, and

online through the I-town hall site. The conversations often included observations, general concerns, values, and specific ideas for change.

When we began to sort through our notes, we found that nearly all of what we heard fell into one of five topic

areas, which are shown below. Each of these community-driven topics has specific issues associated with it - building blocks that will drive the master plan that we are currently developing.



THE HILLSBOROUGH RIVER + WATERFRONT

THE CENTER CITY NEIGHBORHOODS

TAMPA'S DOWNTOWN CORE

LIVABLE STREETS + COMMUNITY LINKAGES

TRANSIT

THE HILLSBOROUGH RIVER + WATERFRONT

Observations

- ⊖ Can't see the river from adjacent streets – river doesn't have much presence in the City or Neighborhoods
- ⊖ The Hillsborough River and Riverwalk can be more integrated with current and future development

General Concerns

- ⊖ Need more things to do along Riverwalk (Access, Dining, Entertainment)
- ⊖ Riverwalk is sometimes Hot, not enough shade, comfort
- ⊖ Not many places to access the water
- ⊖ Limited places to cross the river, limited bike / ped ways

Values

- ⊖ Riverwalk is a great amenity, enhancing the Environmental and Recreational Potential of the Hillsborough River
- ⊖ Waterfront Events and Activities are very popular
- ⊖ Water Access for Boating, Paddleboarding, Kayaks, etc

Specific Ideas

- ⊖ Extend Riverwalk to West Bank
- ⊖ Provide more comfort and shade to the pedestrian and park environment
- ⊖ New feature walk/bike bridges over river
- ⊖ Extend the presence of the river up into the city and neighborhoods
- ⊖ Rebuild Riverside Park, bring in light retail and boating
- ⊖ Need to develop some priorities for next investment (extend to west bank of Hillsborough River, more boating facilities, comfort amenities)

ISSUES:

[A] The Riverwalk makes the river accessible lengthwise, but the amenity and economic value of the "river presence" does not extend upward into the adjacent community very well.

[B] The Riverwalk is seen as a positive point of connection for the community – one which more people would like to have access to.

[C] Crossing the river on foot or bike is not a pleasant experience.

[D] The Riverwalk has limited types of destinations or "things to do."

[E] The Riverwalk experience would be more comfortable for more users with additional shade, seating, and amenities.

[F] Water access for boating and recreation is not maximized.

[G] Environmental character and water quality can be enhanced, still many untreated outfalls, litter / debris spots.





Willis



Lemke

THE CENTER CITY NEIGHBORHOODS

Observations

- ⊖ Growing number of people investing in the urban neighborhoods
- ⊖ Access to schools, parks and local shops needs improvement
- ⊖ The urban neighborhoods each have their own unique mixed use blend of housing, parks and local business areas
- ⊖ Existing and emergent business districts (such as Willow Avenue) have great potential for enhancement and neighborhood supportive activities

General Concerns

- ⊖ Safety and Security
- ⊖ Pride of place and property – trash, cars in treelawns
- ⊖ Deficient utility and public realm infrastructure in some locations
- ⊖ Jobs and need for employment opportunities

Values

- ⊖ Diversity of housing and people in close-in neighborhoods
- ⊖ Local businesses and historic business districts
- ⊖ Walkability in the neighborhoods
- ⊖ Neighborhood clean up days
- ⊖ From the neighborhoods, you are close to everything downtown
- ⊖ Quality residential restoration and new mixed use investment

Specific Ideas

- ⊖ Redevelop North Boulevard Homes and Robles Park as mixed-use, mixed-income places
- ⊖ Need sidewalks, street lighting, street trees and bike facilities on key streets
- ⊖ Light Industrial, such as at Willow Avenue, provides opportunity for new businesses, and neighborhood supporting retail

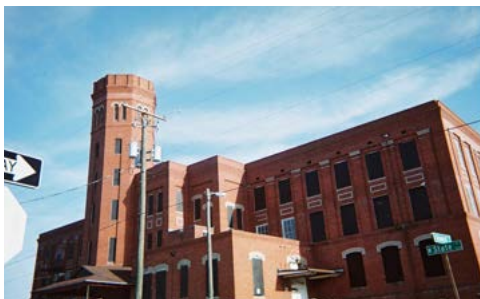
ISSUES:

[A] Parks and schools are appreciated neighborhood amenities that residents want to be better physically connected to.

[B] People want to feel safe and secure in their neighborhoods and there are specific crime, social, and infrastructure issues that are making people feel unsafe and less willing to make long-term investments.

[C] Neighborhood residents want to have daily-needs shopping, services, and restaurants close to home and easily accessible on foot or by bike.

[D] Residents appreciate new investments in neighborhoods as long as they are compatible with the historic scale and character of the neighborhood.





Callahan



Catalano

TAMPA'S DOWNTOWN CORE

Observations

- ⊖ The Downtown Core can be viewed as many emerging neighborhoods.
- ⊖ The Downtown Core should include the west bank of the river.
- ⊖ Tampa Park Apartments and Con-Agra create 'holes' in the downtown pattern.
- ⊖ Tampa remains an important regional destination for employment and entertainment.
- ⊖ New business will be attracted if Downtown is a more vibrant cultural and living place.

General Concerns

- ⊖ Places that are close feel far because the walk is difficult.
- ⊖ Access in and out of downtown is difficult.
- ⊖ Transit systems around downtown do not meet the needs of the local populations.
- ⊖ Surface parking lots are unsightly and create a landscape of asphalt.

Values

- ⊖ Tampa's urban healthcare, education, high tech, culture/entertainment, riverfront and urban living create a downtown mix that is unusual among other southern cities.
- ⊖ Downtown open space: Washington Street Park, Riverwalk, Curtis Hixon Park, is a community asset.
- ⊖ Downtown events and activities are important to the life of the community.

Specific Ideas

- ⊖ Explore new partnerships that can create new or enhanced places (Med-Ed District? Channelside Mixed Use area?)
- ⊖ We need better connections in and around the Straz Center and cultural facilities.
- ⊖ There should be better urban design at the street level and streetscapes for better walkability.
- ⊖ In-town trail systems for rapid bike access (including the Selmon Expressway Trail concept) should be explored.
- ⊖ Pedestrian crossing or enhancements to Ashley, Kennedy, Meridian, etc. would make Downtown more walkable and accessible.

ISSUES:

[A] Downtown is primarily an office location with regional cultural and entertainment facilities and a small bit of residential – should this model change to encourage a place with significantly more residents while still enhancing the other current uses?

[B] Access into and out of downtown is difficult and disorienting, particularly for visitors.

[C] Downtown's walking environment is not good in part because Downtown's streets are geared to serve peak flows of cars and are not "complete streets" that serve pedestrians, bikes, transit, and cars.

[D] A large portion of Downtown contains surface parking lots, "super blocks", and industrial uses that create "holes" in the pattern of streets and blocks.

[E] There are potential partnerships that could reshape large areas – how can this condition be nurtured?





Bj



LIVABLE STREETS + COMMUNITY LINKAGES

Observations

- ⊖ Tampa has a very well connected system of streets and blocks
- ⊖ Tampa has a strong culture of bike riders
- ⊖ Certain roads seem congested and hostile to peds and bikes, others seem oversized and underutilized by cars
- ⊖ Tampa has to balance both local circulation and regional access

General Concerns

- ⊖ Places that are close feel far because of the harsh walking environment
- ⊖ It's confusing to get in and out of the downtown core
- ⊖ Large roads and ramps isolate key properties such as Straz Center and North Franklin
- ⊖ Highly inconsistent streetscape design leads to poor walkability

Values

- ⊖ With its urban streets and small blocks, Tampa should be the most walkable, bikeable City in Florida.
- ⊖ Bicycle and Walking facilities, especially on 'cross-town' routes or linkages to key destinations, such as University of Tampa
- ⊖ Balancing regional needs with local sense of place – and incorporating enhanced transit - as at the Nebraska Avenue Road diet project

Specific Ideas

- ⊖ Make large roads like Ashley, Meridian, and Kennedy easier to cross
- ⊖ Initiate Zip Car, Bike Share programs and bring back the electric Jitney's
- ⊖ Develop some cross-town trail systems
- ⊖ Reclaim streets like Columbus and Floribaska that cross the highway or river to link neighborhoods
- ⊖ Convert the one-way streets
- ⊖ Develop more projects like the Nebraska Road Diet

ISSUES:

[A] Places that are close by feel far away because of the harsh walking environment.

[B] Large roads and freeway ramps isolate key community destinations and neighborhoods.

[C] While some streets have been addressed, getting to key neighborhood and community destinations on a bike is not safe or easy.

[D] The trail system is expanding, but connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods could allow more people to utilize non-motorized modes of travel.

[E] Trips through Center City are made easy at the expense of the surrounding neighborhoods and retail nodes.





TRANSIT

Observations

- ⊖ Very strong local belief that we need local transit to serve downtown core (business, cultural venues, tourism and residential)
- ⊖ Need more places of density / activity to support transit
- ⊖ HART annual ridership is growing (+/- \$14.5M downtown annually)

General Concerns

- ⊖ Too many inexpensive surface lots (it's still too easy to drive)
- ⊖ Marion Street Central Station needs more capacity.
- ⊖ Marion Street Transitway doesn't serve emerging areas of development and current signal timing doesn't reward bus
- ⊖ Streetcar doesn't serve the local population
- ⊖ Ticketing / Fareboxes not user friendly (like e-pass) for locals
- ⊖ Revenue stream to support expanded transit construction and service

Values

- ⊖ Easy, reliable transit that connects key cultural and employment destinations with places of residential density
- ⊖ Reward non-auto trips, make it more attractive to take transit
- ⊖ Transit Oriented Development, mixed use, higher density in the core

Specific Ideas

- ⊖ Use Metro-Rapid to better brand and serve the local population
- ⊖ Need easy, local circulator that serves the downtown core
- ⊖ Need future regional transit that gets to USF, Airport, Westshore and regionally to St. Pete, Beaches, etc
- ⊖ Don't give up on High Speed Rail / Statewide Linkages

ISSUES:

[A] Transit is not seen as a viable transportation option by "choice" riders.

[B] A broad element of the community wants transit to be an effective means of transportation, but there are not enough people or places of density and activity to support transit across the Center City.

[C] The streetcar functions more as a tourist attraction that does not effectively serve the local population.

[D] There is no perceived easy and effective local circulator getting people around the Downtown Core.

[E] There are destinations outside the Center City that people want to be connected to by means other than automobile.





May





INVISION TAMPA
People. Place. Progress.