



Downtown Apopka Vision Plan

Prepared for

The City of Apopka,
Florida

Prepared by

The University of Central Florida
MSURP Capstone Class 2022-23



Acknowledgements

Many thanks to the following people who helped the 2023 UCF MSURP Capstone Team develop this project:

Dr. Luis Santiago, Ph.D., Associate Professor, University of Central Florida

Pam Richmond, Transportation Coordinator, City of Apopka

Emily Hanna, Executive Director, Bike/Walk Central Florida

Mayor Bryan Nelson

Commissioner Alexander Smith

Commissioner Diane Velazquez

Commissioner Kyle Becker

Commissioner Nick Nesta

Prepared by the University of Central Florida Master of Urban and Regional Planning Capstone Class 2022-23:

Maya Athanas

Marah Barakat

Patrick Dehoyos

Sean Elordi

Laura Eng

Carter Gresham

Aaron Hull

Logan Lamphere

Michael Lopez

Ashley Morisette

Mohammad Obeidat

Adejare Ojo

Luis Santiago

Marian Shehata

Dwayne Thornton

Nadia Wanna

Yumi Wolfgang

Executive Summary

The University of Central Florida's Master of Urban and Regional Planning 2022/2023 Capstone students were invited to participate in a multi-faceted capstone project to create a vision plan for Downtown Apopka, Florida. Apopka is a suburb of Orlando and has a population of about 56,000. It is located about 15 miles northwest of Orlando on U.S. Highway 441. The purpose of the vision plan is to identify opportunities to create a desirable town center for residents to live, work, and play. This includes activating the public realm, diversifying transportation and mobility options, showcasing the downtown business community, encouraging multiple housing types, and designing a slower, safer Main Street (U.S. 441).

The first section of the report provides a detailed background and initial analysis of Downtown Apopka, including land use, demographics, infrastructure, market analysis, and urban form. Key findings from each of these components, as well as ten guiding principles for

creating useful proposals, constituted the basis for the development of five projects that could transform Downtown Apopka into an activated town center.

The second section of the report contains five project proposals designed by Capstone students with the guidance and assistance of the City of Apopka, local public agencies and private organizations, public input, and University of Central Florida faculty. Short-term and long-term projects include a marketing and branding plan for downtown Apopka, a redesign of U.S. 441, the application of Complete Streets principles on the other downtown Apopka streets, the introduction of a pocket park system, the conversion of Martin's Pond into an active city park, and the creation of a housing development toolkit. The Downtown Apopka Vision Plan provides a road map to pursue both short- and long-term projects that will help the city create a safer, more active downtown district that enhances the livability for all residents and visitors.

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Introduction

This document is the result of the University of Central Florida's Master of Urban and Regional Planning capstone project, which spanned two semesters from fall of 2022 through the spring of 2023. During the first semester, students conducted an analysis of the existing conditions of Apopka's downtown area. The study area focused on East Main Street (U.S. 441) in downtown Apopka, from Hawthorne Avenue to Sheeler Avenue, and from 1st Street to 6th Street (see below). During the second semester, students used the information collected to form a series of five proposals to help improve the quality of life for residents and visitors to

downtown Apopka, with a focus on pedestrian safety along Main Street.

Main Street is the historic heart of Apopka but has been a primary thoroughfare for over 100 years between Orlando and cities such as Mount Dora, Eustis, and Tavares. The Downtown is characterized by numerous vacant properties (both public and private), many fast-food and auto-centric businesses on U.S. 441, relatively few parks, few housing options, but several new local businesses including a popular brewery. The old train station is on the west side and the new City Center project bookends the east side of Downtown.





Land Use



Land Use

The appropriate use of land within a community is vital to its efficiency, safety, and desirability. Because there is a supply of underutilized and vacant land within the downtown Apopka area, it is even more important for the city to accurately determine the best uses for the available land so that the city can create a vibrant downtown district. By analyzing the current land uses within the study area and comparing them with the future land use designations, it will be possible to make recommendations to achieve this goal.

Existing Zoning

The study area falls within the Mixed-Use Downtown (MU-D) special use district. This district encourages an activated downtown atmosphere and strong economic growth. General uses that are allowed in the special use district include offices, retail services, personal services, recreation and entertainment establishments, education, healthcare, dining establishments, and multi-family and townhome dwellings. The MU-D district includes



development standards to achieve the goals of the district. The standards include the encouragement of vertical use mixing. Required standards include multimodal connectivity between sites, clear crosswalks and pedestrian circulation, building form standards, street facing façades and pedestrian entrances, and bicycle parking. Additionally, new development of parking areas is required to be on the rear or side of the principal building, or in parking garages.

The zoning of parcels within a mile radius outside of the MU-D district include office (O), Residential Two-Family (RTF), Light Industrial (I-L), Residential Single-Family Large Lot (RSF-1B), and Mobile Home Park (MHP). The O and RTF zoning are compatible with the MU-D district and its goals, while the other districts are less compatible.

Existing Uses

Downtown Apopka has a variety of goods and services, including hotels in different price ranges, quick service restaurants, banks, churches, and schools. There are also parks for the community to enjoy, such as Edward's Park and Kit Land Nelson Park. There is a high concentration of chain fast food establishments.

A portion of the study area's boundary is within South Apopka, which was designated as a Community Development Block Grant Target Area by Orange County. South Apopka includes platted parcels from the 19th Century and is home to a large population of minorities. The Comprehensive Plan indicates redevelopment of this area should be neighborhood-oriented.

Future Land Use

The future land use designations in the northern portion of Apopka include mixed use, conservation, and recreation. This is generally consistent with the current zoning designations in the area. The western portion of Apopka includes primarily industrial and lower density residential future land uses. The industrial future land uses are consistent with the current zoning districts.

The study area primarily consists of a commercial (COMM) future land use (FLU) designation, with a few parcels designated as office (OFF), (RM), and (RL).

Key improvements needed:

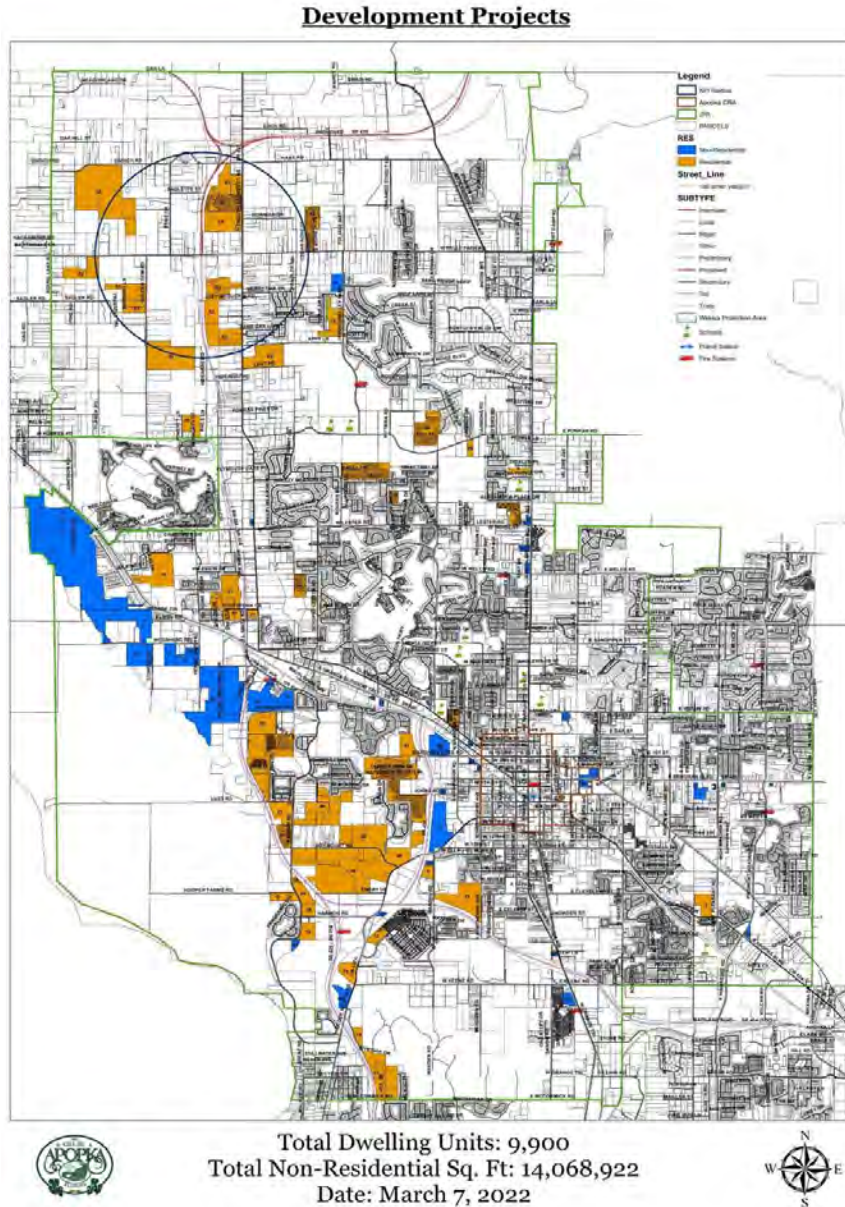
1. Enhanced walkability and bike facilities along the corridor
2. Transit supportive infrastructure (shelters, crossings, etc.).
3. Universal Design principles (age friendly, ADA, inclusive)
4. Promote mix of uses along the corridor
5. Reduce emphasis on auto centric development patterns
6. Safety for all road users

Comprehensive Plan

The City of Apopka's comprehensive plan is designed to guide the distribution of growth in Apopka to ensure that future patterns of land use are tailored to:

- Meet the requirements of the Florida Statutes
- Reduce sprawl
- Improve efficiency by guiding development to existing growth areas where infrastructure systems are in place
- Protect natural resources by guiding development away from wetlands and other natural resources
- Enhance community character by reinforcing existing development patterns and addressing compatibility issues

The comprehensive plan outlines a growth strategy that incorporates infill and redevelopment of existing sites to increase density and intensity in the appropriate areas. The study area falls within the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), the Central Business District (CBD), the U.S. 441 corridor, and includes a



portion of South Apopka. Each of these areas have been identified within the comprehensive plan as essential for redevelopment to meet the goals of the comprehensive plan, and align perfectly within the boundary of this vision plan. Below are important mechanisms outlined within the Comprehensive Plan that can be used to achieve the goals for Downtown Apopka:

- Projects within the CRA can be funded with the Community Redevelopment Trust Fund using Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts
- Apopka is eligible to apply for the Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)
- The portion of South Apopka within city limits which was designated as a Community Development Block Grant Target Area is eligible for Small City CDBG funding programs



Strategy 1.1 Attract High-Quality Local Businesses

Creating a more diverse retail and commercial environment in downtown Apopka aims to achieve a true downtown atmosphere which this vision plan embodies. Providing a more attractive variety of retail services invites residents to explore more of their own community while also attracting visitors to the city's unique offerings.



Strategy 1.2 Create “The Foliage District”

This strategy will use architectural design standards that create a unique and special feeling to Apopka's Main Street. Standards include building height and setbacks proportional to street and sidewalk width.



Strategy 1.3 Align Surrounding Area Zoning to Goals

The zoning designations on parcels surrounding the study area are not compatible. Therefore, the city must implement an administrative rezoning of these parcels to zoning districts that are more compatible with downtown Apopka and the proposed Foliage District. Property owners of affected parcels will receive vested rights that will expire upon sale of the property.



Land Use Summary

The MU-D district provides the foundation for the goals of this vision plan. The Apopka land development code also provides great examples to communicate the desires of the district.

The Apopka comprehensive plan establishes goals that are consistent with the goals of this vision plan and works as a foundational piece to the continued growth of the city as a whole, as well as the downtown Apopka district. However, the comprehensive plan highlights the importance of the reclamation of East Main Street (U.S. 441) as a local commercial street.

Strategy 1.4 Activate a Safer Walking Environment

For parcels on corners of intersections or adjacent to drive access aisles: Any new development, redevelopment, change of use, or any site improvements triggering a site plan review are required to provide crosswalk striping across access drive aisles. If trip generation exceeds more than 20 peak hour trips, a flashing crosswalk is required. All new development on applicable parcels must provide a trip generation report and traffic analysis report.

The existing zoning, future land use designations, comprehensive plan, and previous *Grow Apopka Vision 2025* plan are all key pieces in the foundation for this Downtown Apopka Vision Plan. Each of these pieces work together as a call to action for a flourishing and inspiration downtown center.

Much of the non-residential development has been in the western part of the city in either industrial or planned development zoning with industrial future land uses designations. Another concentration of development has been towards the south of the study area, south of U.S. 441. These trends are important to



keep in mind as they indicate high levels of vehicular traffic may continue to rise as the industrial industry continues to grow in Apopka, while U.S. 441 will continue to act as a barrier within downtown. With an increase in industrial uses in the west of the city, the lower density future land uses may be more compatible in the north,

where conservation and recreation areas are projected to be. These trends result in leaving the heart of the city as a downtown area with medium to high density residential.

The next step is to focus on implementation and incentivizing compatible development with more direct focus on safety. This may be done through staff support and rezoning surrounding properties to more compatible zoning with the commercial and office future land uses.



Demographics



Demographic Data

The City of Apopka's demographics were analyzed through tangible and grounded questions with the intention to present a general understanding of the demographic makeup of the city. This vision plan also endeavors to exhibit a more specialized and targeted view of the community that will have the greatest impacts on the study area. The analysis focuses on numerous aspects of the composition of Apopka, including population trends, business growth, crime, and land development densities.

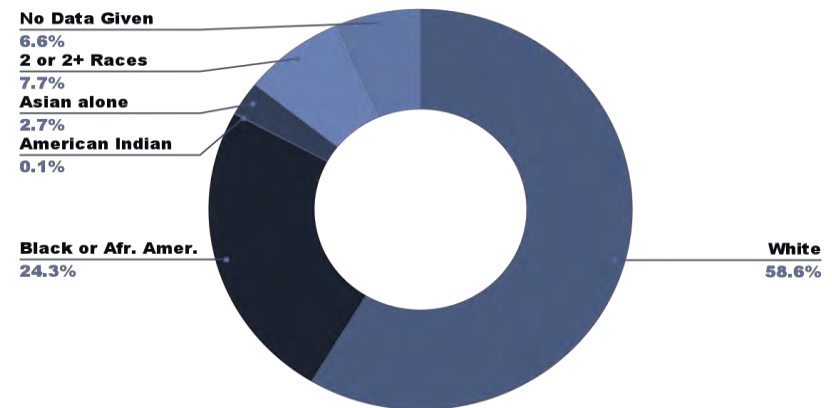
Apopka's Population Composition

As of 2020, Apopka has a population of approximately 55,496 residents, with female residents surpassing male residents, 50.3% to 49.7%, respectively (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Apopka is also a diverse community. Approximately 58.6% of residents self-identify as white, 24.3% identify as Black or African American, and 7.7% of respondents identified as having two or more races (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Regarding ethnicity, approximately 29.4% of Apopkans

self-identified as Hispanic or Latino (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). The Hispanic population has grown approximately 4% since the last Census in 2010 (Florida Legislative Office of Economic and Demographic Research, 2011).

While these data points present a diverse community,

Approximate Racial Composition

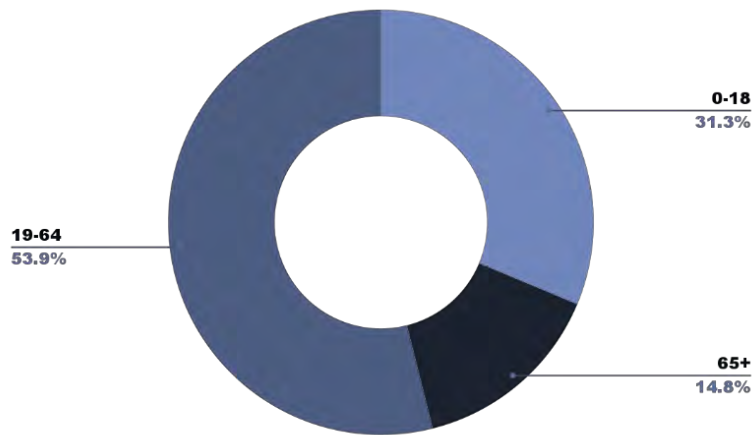


these numbers should be evaluated with the understanding that the Census asks respondents to self-identify. Note that the diversity of cultures present in the community should be reflected in the approach to public and community engagement. Approximately 27% of Apopkans speak a first language other than English (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Marketing and

mailers should take this into account in a community of many different cultures and languages.

Finally, the population of Apopka is middle-aged community, with approximately 53.9% of the population aged between 19 and 64 years of age (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021).

Age Composition



Population Growth and Densities

Apopka’s population has increased over the last decade. In 2021, Apopka had a population of 55,496, which is approximately a 32% jump from its 2010 population. This rapid growth, however, appears to have slowed, with the city’s population only growing roughly 1% between 2020 and 2021 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021).

Additionally, the current preliminary data from 2021 presents a slight decline in Apopka’s population; however, this data point should not be analyzed until further confirmation is achieved (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021).

Population	
Population Estimates, July 1 2021, (V2021)	55,496
Population estimates base, April 1, 2020, (V2021)	54,897
Population, percent change - April 1, 2020 (estimates base) to July 1, 2021, (V2021)	1.1%
Population, Census, April 1, 2020	54,873
Population, Census, April 1, 2010	41,542

The growth from 2010 to 2020 is not well reflected in the built densities of Apopka. From 2010 to 2020, Apopka's population density only rose approximately two hundred additional residents per square mile accompanied by an expansion in land mass of roughly three square miles (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021).

However, when compared to other communities, such as Sanford or Ocoee, Apopka is an incredibly sprawling community (see Figure 1). While Apopka matches the existing population density of Orange County, nearby communities are building more dense urban infrastructure.

The location of high-density areas in Apopka is very decentralized (see data from the 2020 Census on next page). The core downtown area is the least heavily populated area.

Figure 1, 2020 Census data for Apopka and vicinity

All Topics	Seminole County, Florida	Ocoee city, Florida	DeLand city, Florida	Sanford city, Florida	Apopka city, Florida	Orange County, Florida
Population Estimates, July 1 2021, (V2021)	470,093	47,452	38,764	60,681	55,496	1,422,746
Nonveteran-owned employer firms, reference year 2017	9,220	679	677	1,078	823	24,942
GEOGRAPHY						
Geography						
Population per square mile, 2020	1,521.9	3,032.3	1,963.5	2,589.2	1,587.9	1,585.2
Population per square mile, 2010	1,367.0	2,418.5	1,536.1	2,333.4	1,329.6	1,268.5
Land area in square miles, 2020	309.38	15.60	19.02	23.58	34.56	902.02
Land area in square miles, 2010	309.22	14.71	17.60	22.96	31.24	903.43

Economy

Median household income was \$69,343 in 2020 and increased approximately 14% in a decade (\$59,668 in 2010). It was also above the national average of \$67,521. Households with incomes of \$125,000 or more seem to have doubled in the past ten years, while households making \$100,000 to \$299,999 decreased by more than 40%. 5,820 people (7.94%) were in poverty status in 2020, presenting a 3% decrease from 2010 (11.08%) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). See Figure 2 for additional information.

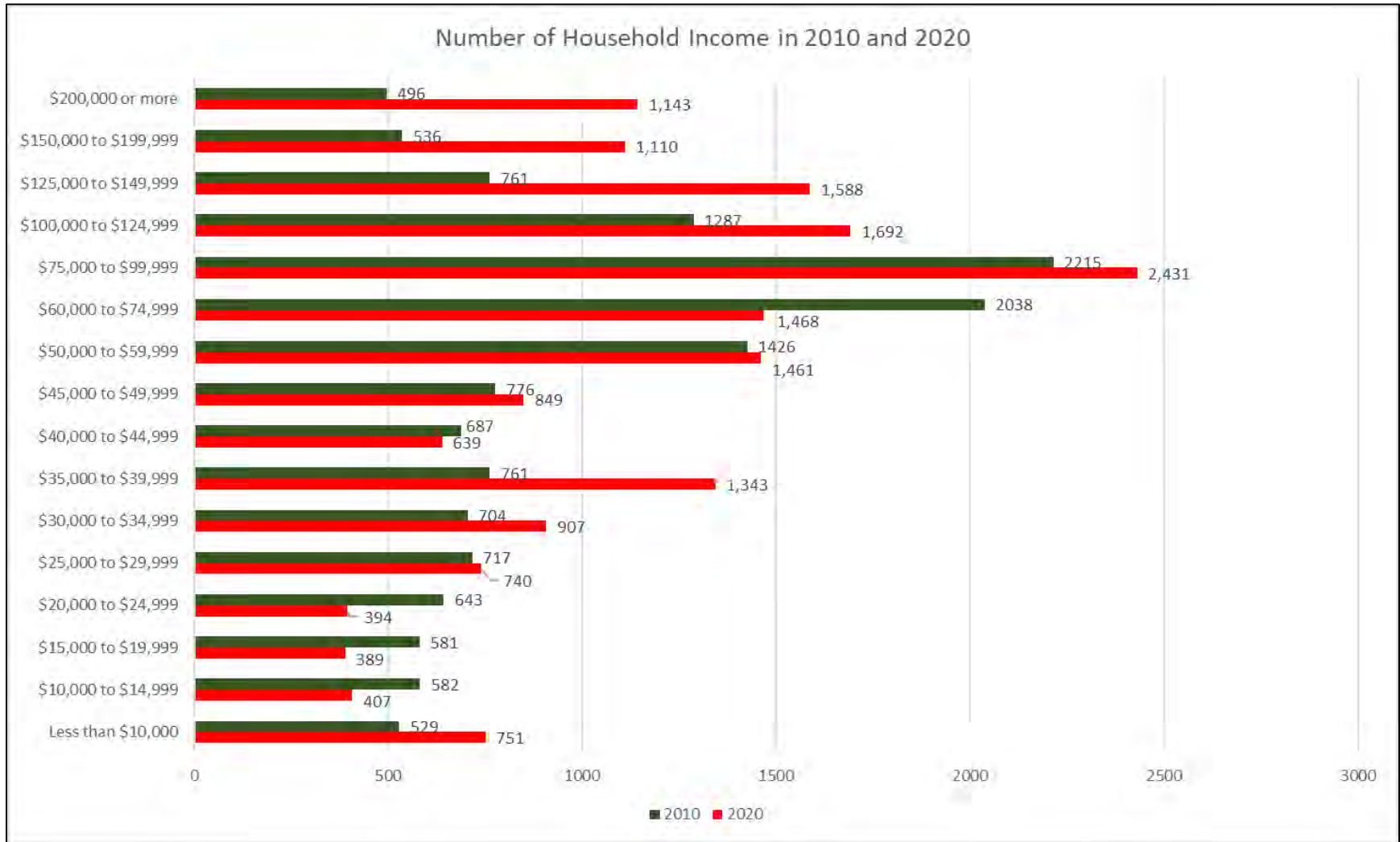
According to Redfin, the median home price was \$401,275 which was a 14.6% increase from 2021 (Redfin, 2022). Average rent price was \$1,902 and the

average apartment size was 959 square feet in 2022. These rates and sizes are comparable to other Central Florida cities (RentCafe, 2022). 74.72% of houses were owner-occupied (12,894) and 25.52% of houses were renter-occupied (4,418). A 7.34% increase in owner-occupied houses and a 36.74% increase in renter-occupied houses occurred between 2010 and 2020 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

64.12% of Apopkans were in the labor force (27,853 people) and 4.98% of Apopkans were unemployed (1,387 people) in 2020. Compared to 2011, the labor force increased almost 20% and the unemployment rate decreased more than a quarter (26.32%).

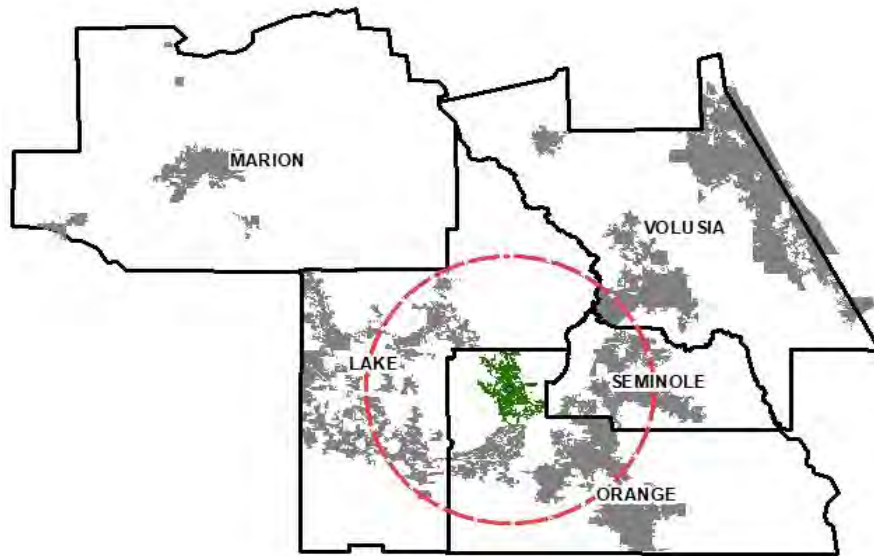
Population and job opportunities have grown over the past decade (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

Figure 2, Number of Household Income in 2010 - 2020



Commute

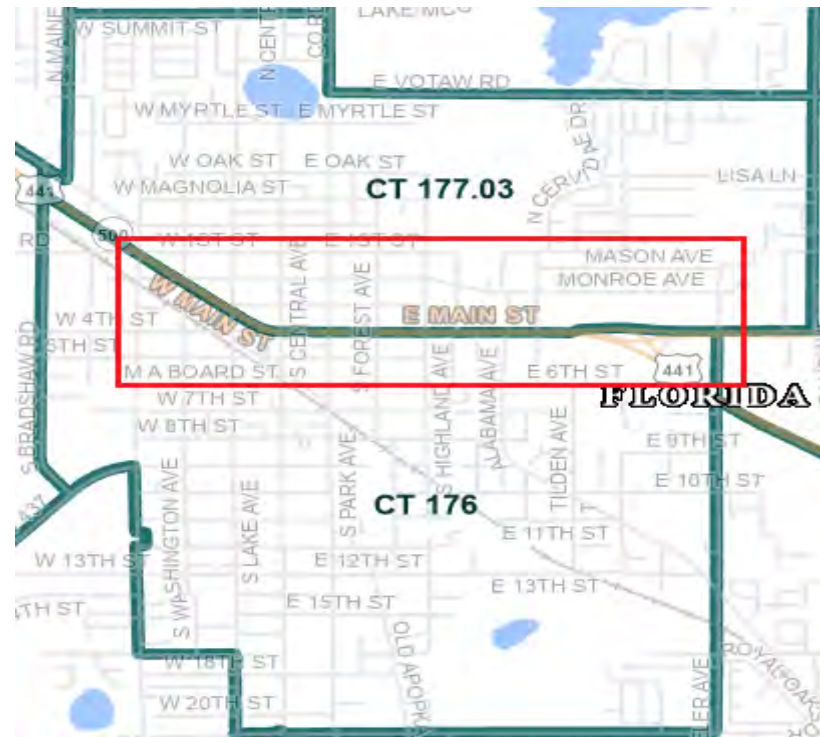
The evaluation of Apopka also revealed a bedroom community of individuals enjoying some of the small attractions the city has to offer, but often leaving the community for work. The average commute time of a citizen of Apopka, approximately thirty-one minutes, implies a population commuting out of the city towards other major employment centers (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021).



Census Tracts Bordering Study Area

The vision plan study area is bordered by two census tracts, CT 177.03 (Adjacent North of U.S. 441) and CT 176 (Adjacent South of U.S. 441). These tracts are in immediate vicinity of one another, yet have much different demography and trends since 2010. All data is provided by the *American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates: DP05*.

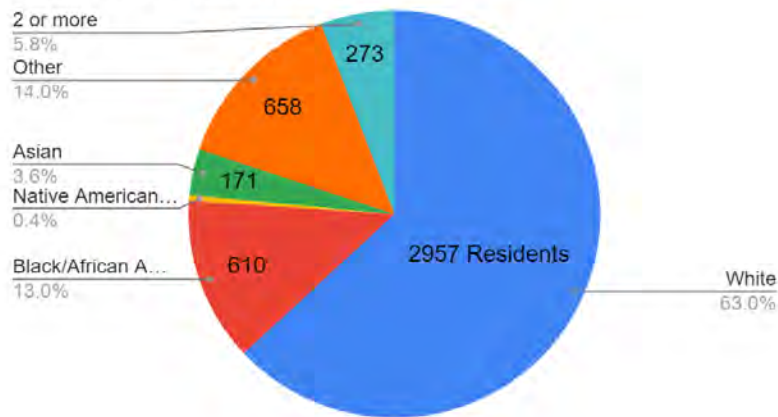
CT 177.03 (Northern Tract)



CT 177.03 has seen a slow growing, aging population from 2010 to 2020, where the median age has gone up by 1.9 years, and the total population went up from 4,105 to 4,690 people.

The population density for CT 177.03 comprises 3,086 people per square mile (1.52 total square miles), an increase of 385 in 10 years, yet total housing units for the tract fell by 35 units in that timeframe.

CT 177.03 Race (2020)

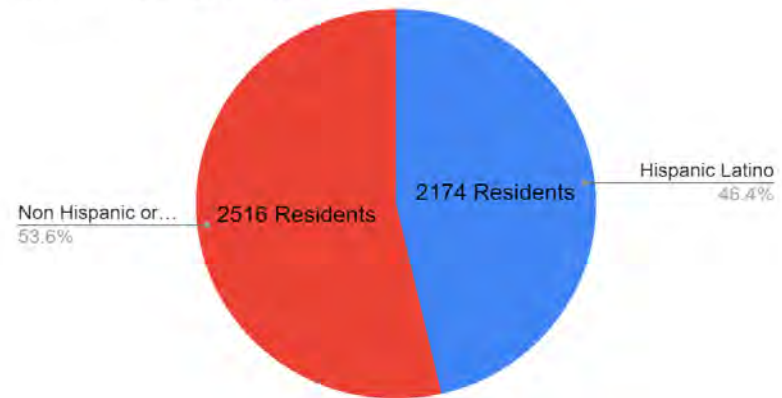


From 2010-2020, CT 177.03 saw a near stagnant white population losing about twenty-nine white residents (2986 to 2957), an increase of about 380 Black or African American residents (230 to 610), an increase of

about 79 Asian residents (92 to 171), and a loss of about 55 mixed-race residents (328 to 273). Native American residents were non-existent in this tract in 2010, and by 2020 there were twenty-one Native American/Alaskan residents present.

The Hispanic or Latino population saw an increase of 522 residents (1652 to 2174), while the non-Hispanic or Latino population only increased by 63 residents (2453 to 2516). These large influxes of minority residents are still dwarfed by the majority White population, who made up 72.7% of the tract's population in 2010, and 63.2% in 2020.

CT 177.03 Ethnicities (2020)

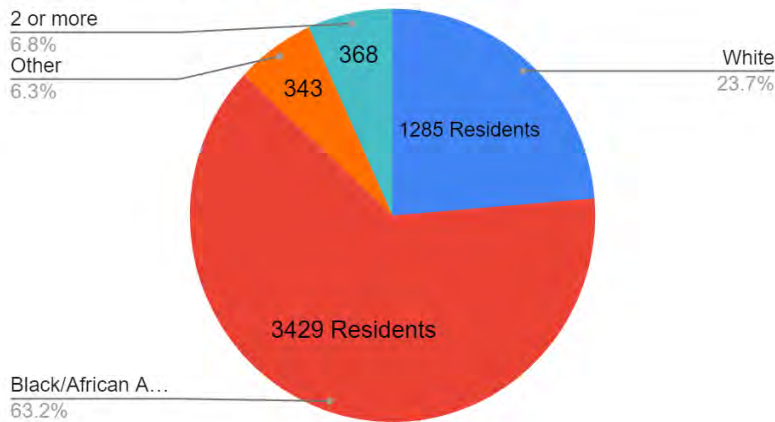


CT 176 saw a much faster growing population that is getting younger, where the median age decreased by 1.2 years, and the total population went from 3858 to 5425 people.

The population density for CT 176 is 2595 people per square mile (2.09 total square miles), an increase of 750 in 10 years. Total housing units, unlike the northern tract, increased by 85 units in that timeframe.

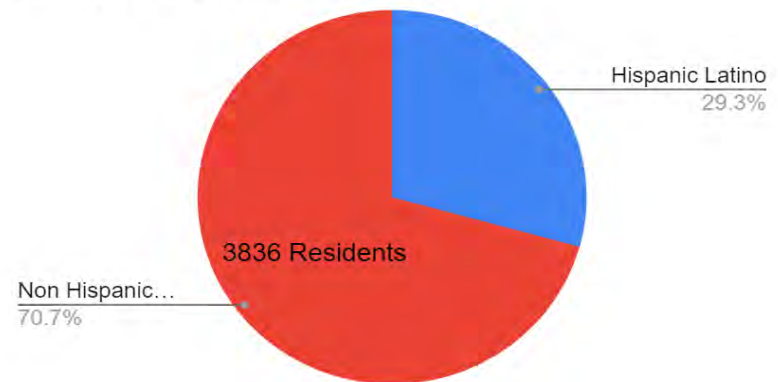
CT 176 (Southern Tract)

CT 176 Race (2020)



From 2010-2020, CT 176 saw an extra 126 White residents (1159 to 1285), an increase of 1,254 Black or African American residents (2175 to 3429), an over 7x increase of the mixed-race population (52 to 368), an increase of 732 Hispanic or Latino residents (857 to 1589), and a 735 person increase of the non-Hispanic or Latino population (3001 to 3836). The Asian population remained 0, and the Native American/Alaskan population dropped from 45 to 0. The majority Black or African American population increased from being 56.4% of the tract's total in 2010, to 63.2% in 2020.

CT 176 Ethnicities (2020)

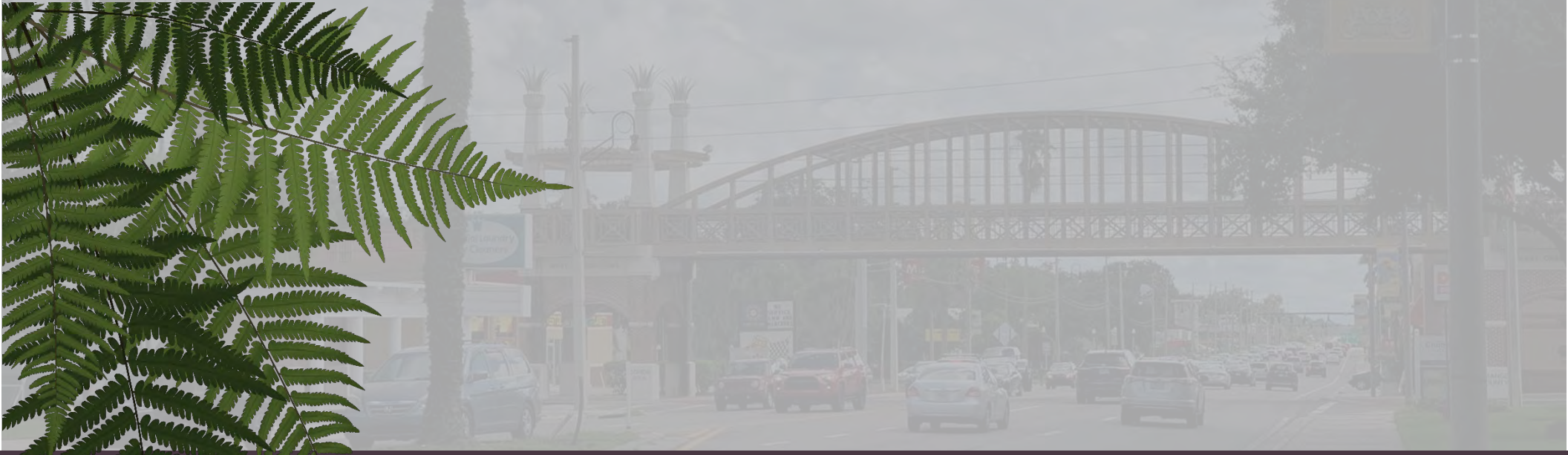


Demographic Data Summary

In summary, the demographics of Apopka present a community in flux. While a diverse community, large populations leave the city every day commuting to the

surrounding area. The diverse community is incredibly spread out with little of a discernible center.

Celebrating diversity and better defining a developed core should be major goals within the Visioning Plan.



Infrastructure Analysis

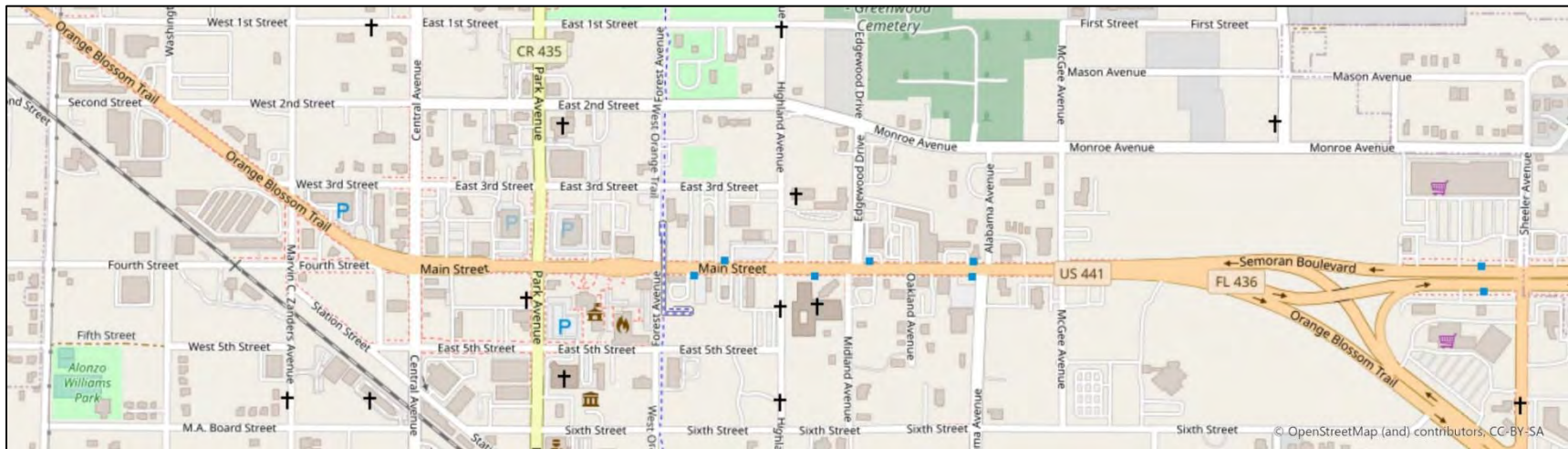


Infrastructure Analysis

This section specifically analyzes the existing transportation, power, and water infrastructure in the study area from Hawthorne Avenue to Sheller Avenue and from 1st Street to 6th Street. This study area encompasses a section of U.S. 441 that has seen a high number (23) of pedestrian fatalities from 2017 to 2021. The objective of this analysis is to inform the Vision Plan

so that recommendations can be made to help protect the lives of all road users, while also generating momentum to revitalize the downtown area and bring activity and culture back to the main street corridor.

Figure 3: Study Area Map



Transportation Overview

Apopka has a comprehensive network of transportation options running through the study area. While automobiles remain the primary method of transportation, there are also opportunities for connections to bus, multi-modal trail, and train infrastructure. Our study area is framed by two important transit facilities, the Lynx Bus Super Station to the southwest at Station Street and 6th Street, and the West Orange Trail that runs north/south along Forest Avenue.

The city of Apopka is currently responsible for 193 miles of road within its boundaries and sees a high volume of traffic between Park Avenue and Midland Avenue on U.S. 441. The only F-rated intersection in the entire city of Apopka is in the study area at U.S. 441 and Park Avenue. The stretch of U.S. 441 that is included in the study area also has the highest number of pedestrian fatalities within the city. To understand

what may be contributing to this crisis, the current state of existing pedestrian infrastructure was analyzed.

Pedestrian Infrastructure

Most of the streets within the study area are flanked by sidewalks. Sidewalk widths vary as well as their distance from the curb. There are many places throughout the study area where sidewalks are cracked or uneven, and there is a mix of marked and unmarked crosswalks. Some crosswalks have pedestrian call buttons, while some do not have them, even at lighted intersections. Streetlights, signage, and other permanent objects are also embedded in the sidewalks in several places.

Initial findings from site visits and analysis also revealed discrepancies between the pedestrian infrastructure and bus stations along the 436N line, which can be seen by comparing Figures 4 and 5. There are only five marked pedestrian crossings that occur along U.S. 441, and the distances between them make it difficult to access them quickly and safely.

Figure 4, Marked Crossings on U.S. 441 (source: Open Street Maps, 2022)

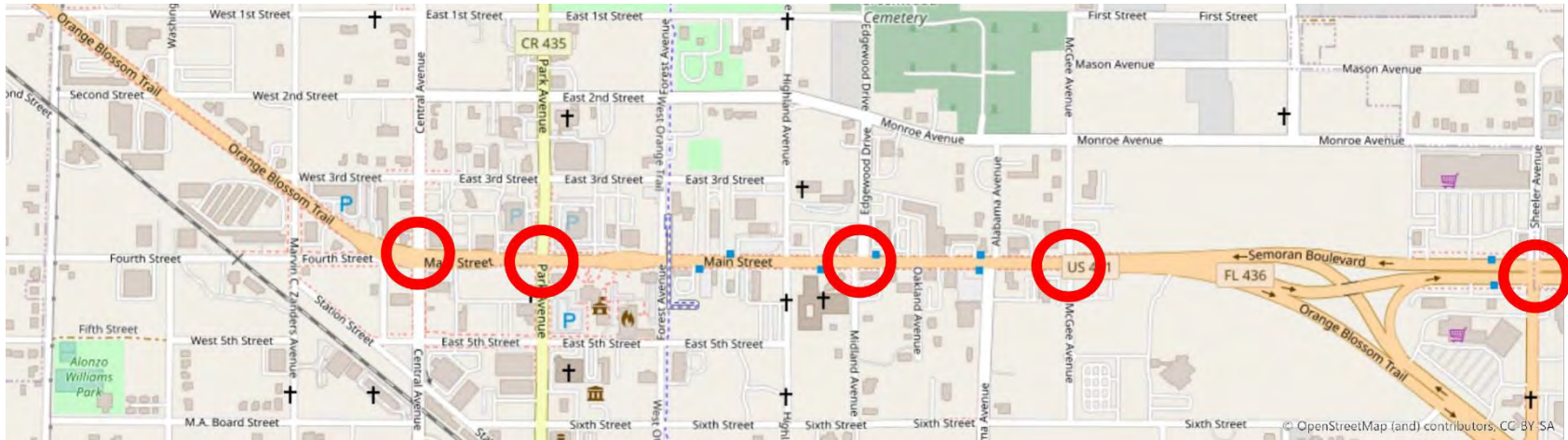
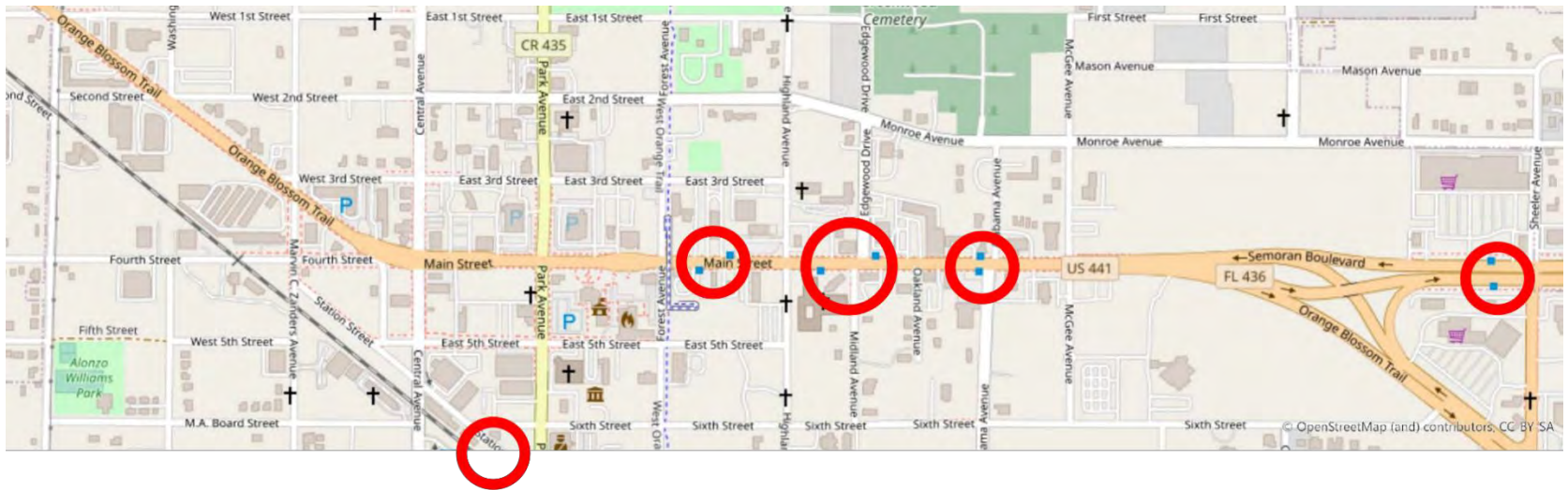


Figure 5, Lynx Bus Stations on U.S. 441 (Source: Open Street Maps, 2022)



Bus Service

Lynx public bus transportation runs service through our study area along the 436N westbound and eastbound routes. These routes terminate at the Apopka and Fern Park Super Stops with the total time between the two stops taking an estimated 54 minutes to complete the trip during the week and 45 minutes during the weekend. Saturdays and Sundays run distinct schedules from the weekday schedule, and do not offer service to the Sun Rail Station in Altamonte Springs. The Apopka Super Stop connects the 436N route to the 44 north and southbound, the 405 Northside and Southside, the 105 in and outbound, and the 653 Neighborhood link.

Figure 6, Apopka Superstop Map (source: Lynx)



Rail Opportunity

While commuter rail transit infrastructure is not currently available along the Florida Central Railroad, Apopka is uniquely situated along the rail line such that Metroplan Orlando had included it in a 2015 study of transit alternatives for the U.S. 441 corridor. The findings of the study expressed that the Sunrail

expansion was not financially feasible at the time; however, as Apopka and the surrounding areas continue to grow in population, this transit option could be revisited. The area around the old train station and the Lynx Super Stop could be developed as “transit-ready development.”

Figure 7, Rail Infrastructure through study area



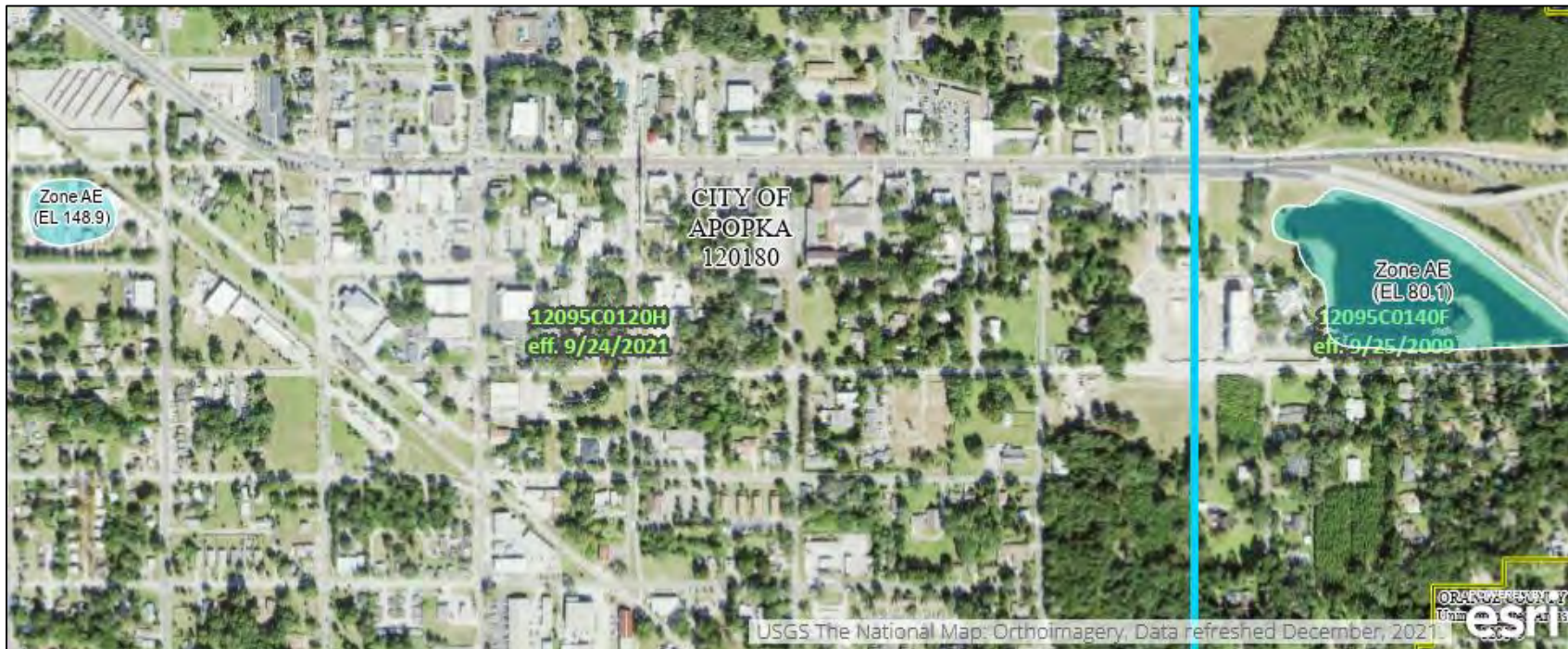
Storm Water

According to the FEMA flood insurance maps, the area of study between Hawthorne Avenue and Sheeler Avenue is at low risk of flooding. There are two small lakes on the edges of the study area as shown in Figure 8.

Utilities

The City of Apopka provides potable water and sewer, garbage, and recycling services to residents. There is also a stormwater system maintained by the city throughout the study area with inlets, outlets, and underground pipes connecting them. Electricity, communications, and natural gas are all provided by private companies.

Figure 8, Flood zones in downtown (source: esri)



Infrastructure Summary

The infrastructure in the study area is appropriate for most current and future uses. The grid layout of the street system provides great opportunities for wayfinding and facilitates an increase in the value per acre of the city. The city also has strong transit and tourist opportunities for future consideration as the

Florida Coast-to-Coast Trail is completed and new SunRail lines are added. The city could help improve its pedestrian infrastructure by properly maintaining sidewalks, raising intersections, and adding more marked crosswalks, and implementing street calming designs in the study area.



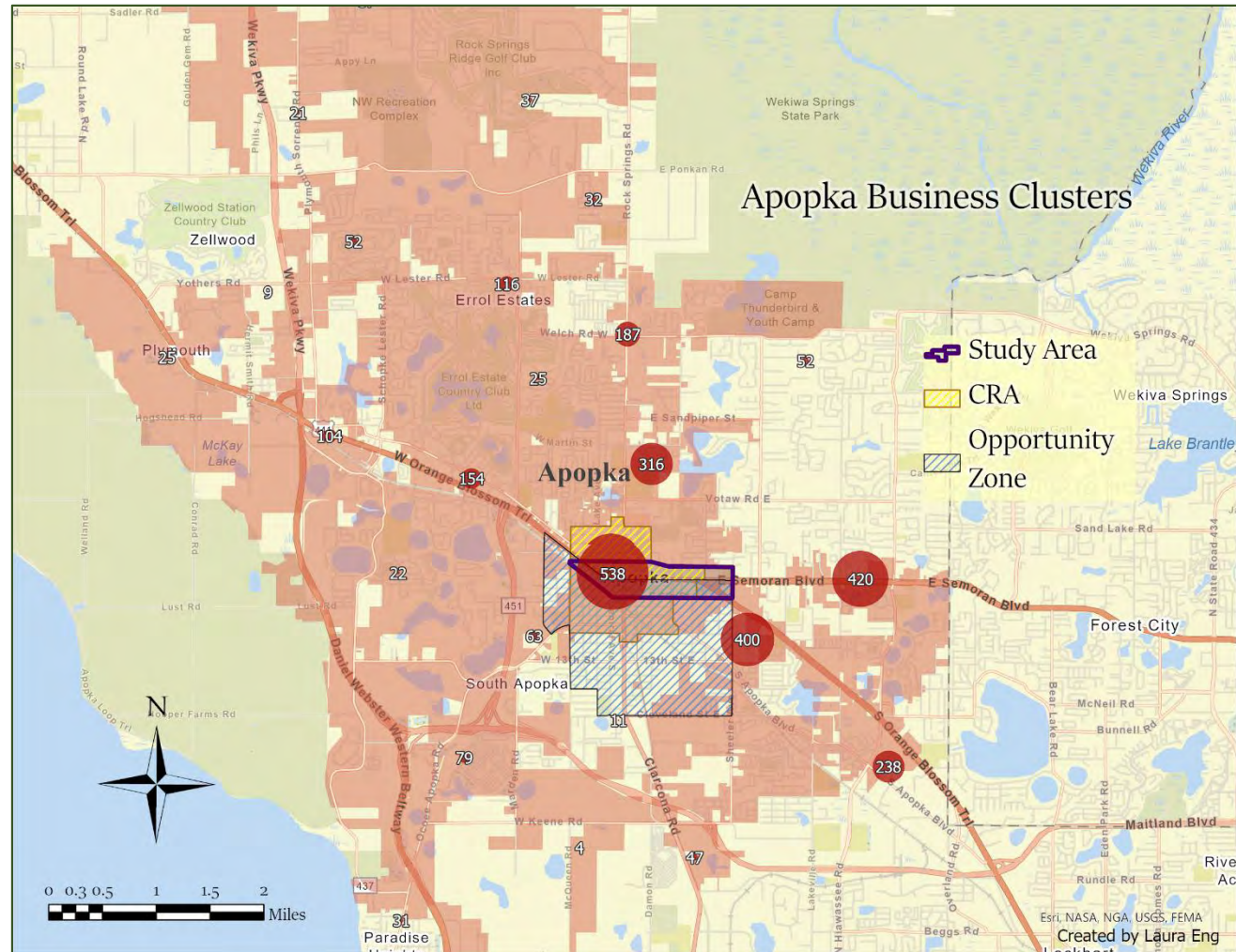
Market Analysis



Market Conditions

The overall market in the City of Apopka is in a position to become more competitive in Central Florida. The city has a prime location near the City of Orlando, the Orlando-Apopka general aviation airport, and busy roadways, bringing many people to and through this area. In 2021, according to the Apopka Growth Alliance, there were 2,583 businesses in the city employing 16,224 people. Most of these businesses have only one to four employees. The top industries in the city include retail, healthcare and social services, construction, and accommodation and food

Figure 9, Business Clusters (source: Orange County GIS)



services, and the top job types include sales and office and administrative support. Businesses are located

across the city, but the biggest clusters of businesses are in the southern portion of Apopka, including a very large cluster in and around the study area.

Study area Market Conditions

The study area slightly reflects the market dynamics of the overall city. The industry with the highest number of organizations and businesses is a catchall group that includes different types of services, such as repair and personal care. This industry is followed by healthcare and social services, and then accommodation and food services. Wholesalers and banking, finance, and insurance have the highest annual revenues, and public administration and accommodation and

food services have the most employees. Looking more in-depth at the different industries, full-service restaurants, which fall under accommodation and food services, is the leading category below industry. There are 27 of these restaurants in the study area.

Figure 10, Top 10 Sub-Industry Categories (source: Apopka Growth Alliance, 2022)

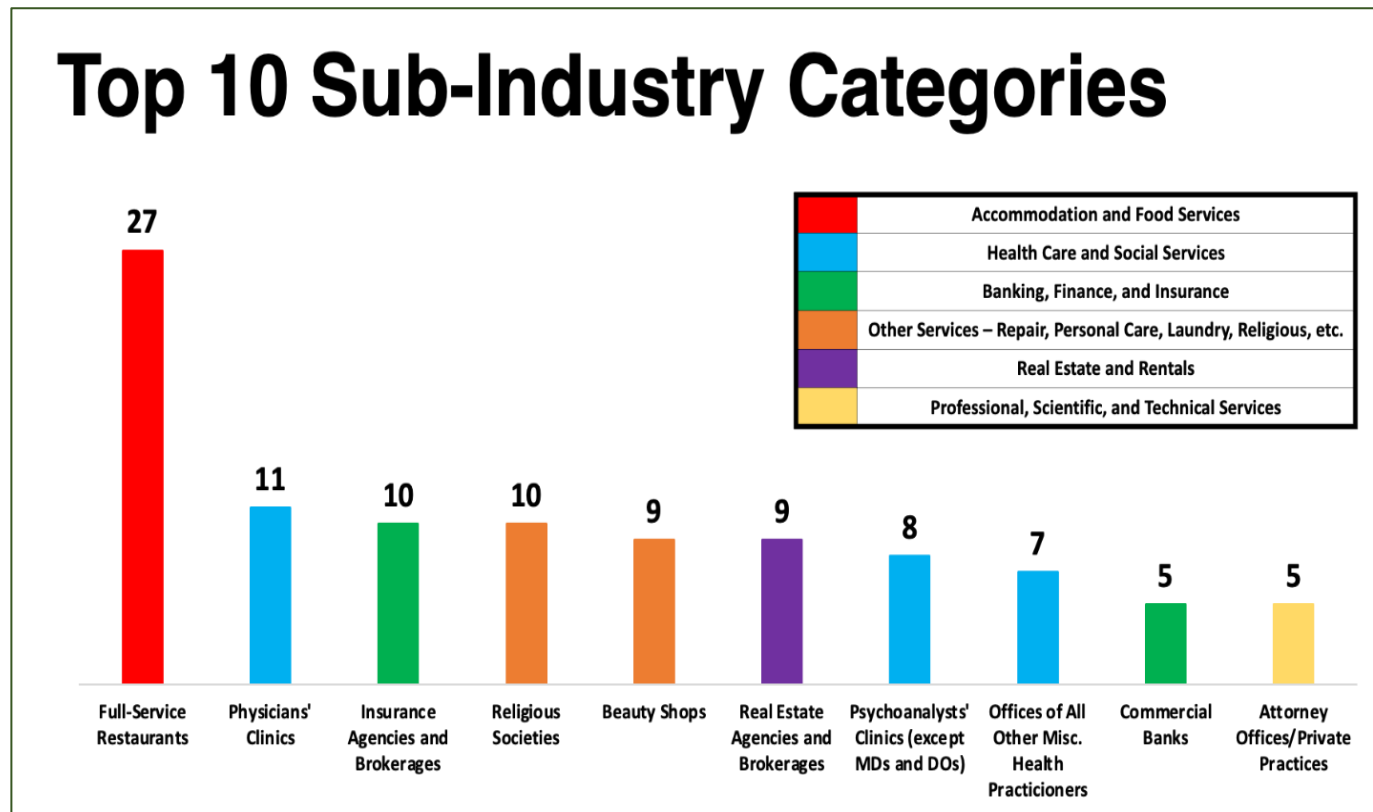
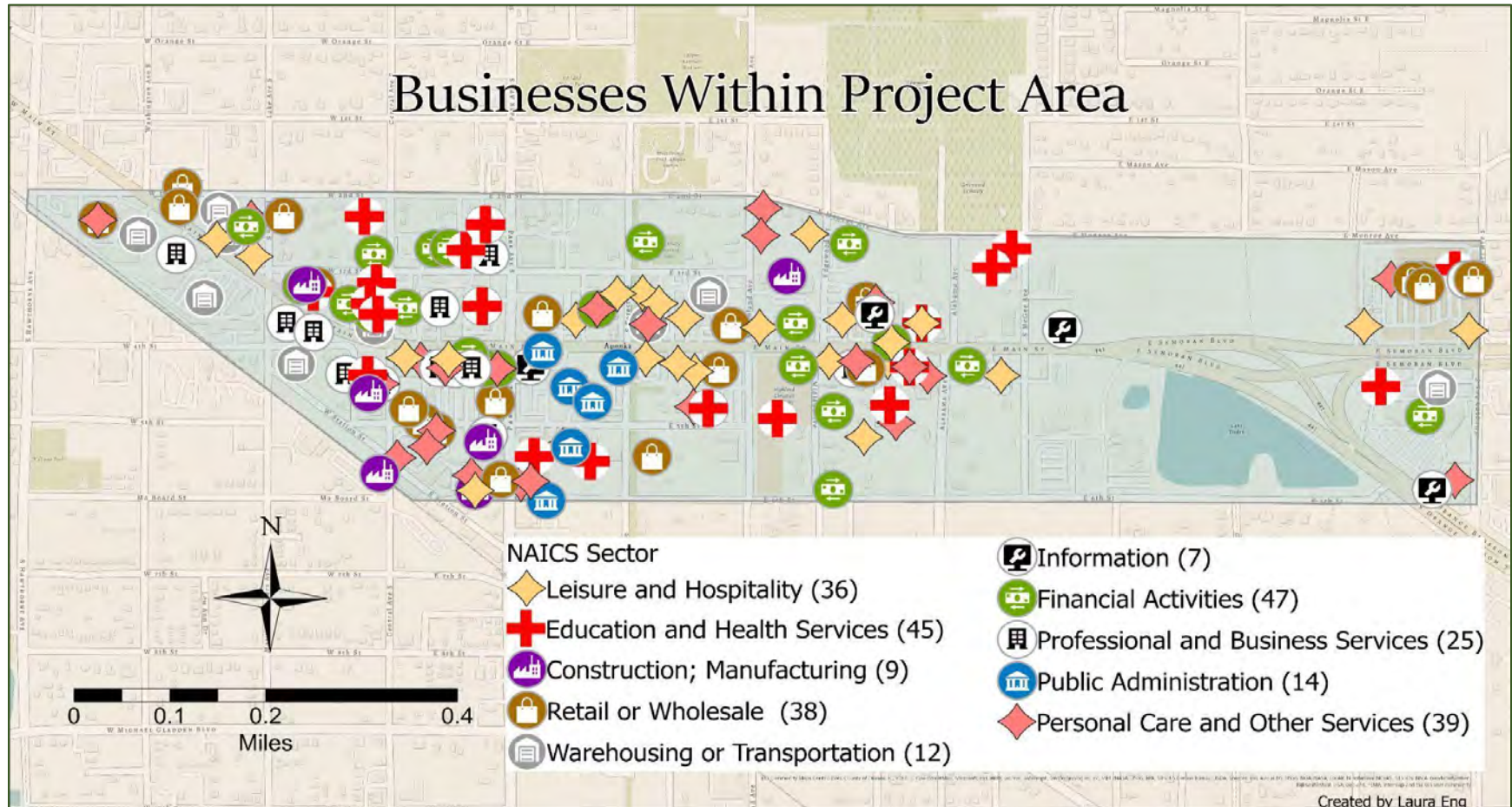


Figure 11, Businesses within project area (source: Orange County GIS, 2022)



Current Development Projects in the Area

There are currently three non-residential development projects that are active in the study area.

The first one, titled South Lake Office Retail, which is on the western side of the study area, will be an office building. The second and third are titled Winn-Dixie

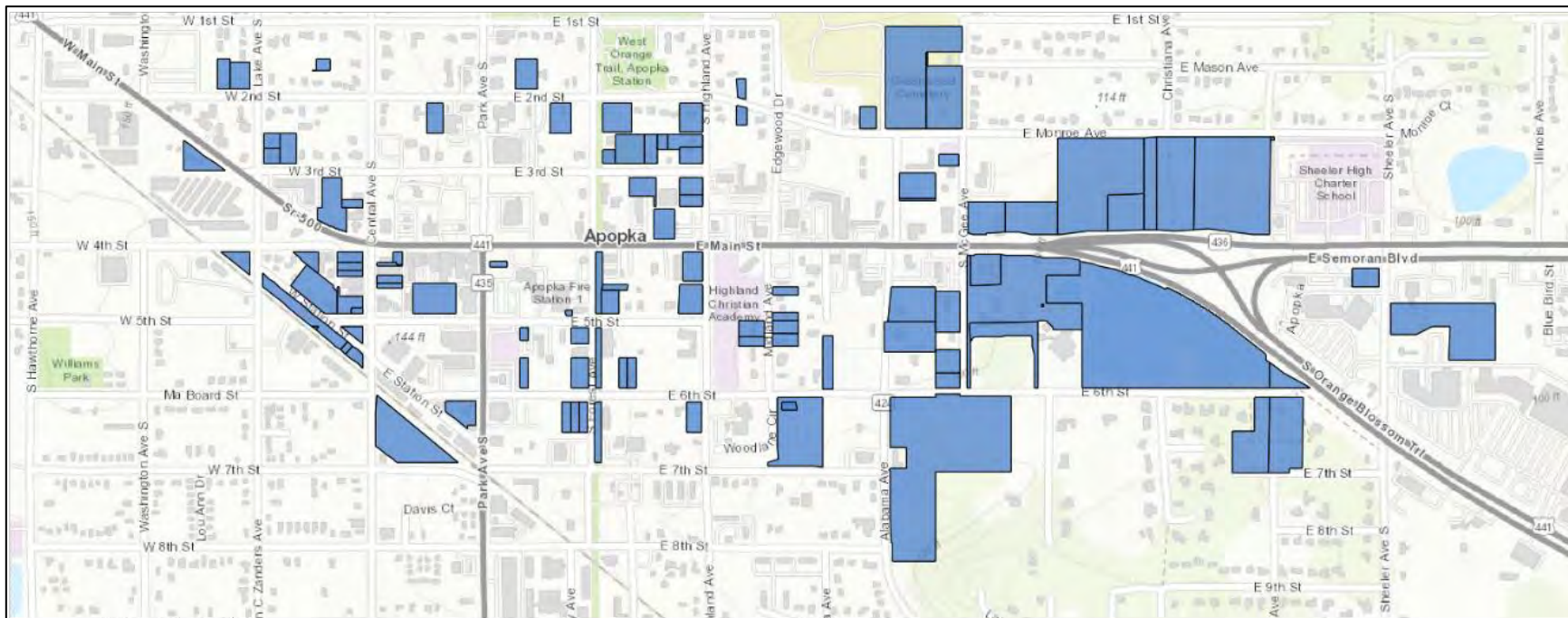
and Apopka City Center South, respectively, but will both be a part of the Apopka City Center development in the eastern part of the study area. This development will be located north and south of U.S. 441 and will span several acres. Winn-Dixie will serve as the anchor store, while the other tenants will include Starbucks, Oak Dental (dental practice), Brew Theory Marketplace (food hall), AT&T, Hand & Stone (massage parlor), and more. This location also already includes a Hilton Garden Inn and the Highland Manor, both in the

southern portion of this development. Construction has already begun in the northern portion of the Apopka City Center, primarily where the Winn-Dixie will be located.

Vacant Land in Study area

There are 105 parcels of vacant land throughout the study area, and they range greatly in size from several

Figure 12, Vacant land in downtown Apopka (source: Orange County Property Appraiser, 2022)



acres to less than a tenth of an acre. Many are located in the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) area, which could help prospective parcel developers gain access to the benefits this program offers.

Resources for Businesses

Community Redevelopment Agency	
Program	Reimbursement of...
Building Code Assistance Program (BCAP)	"Up to \$5,000 per business storefront or building for Florida Building Code updates or repairs."
Façade Renovation Assistance Program (FRAP)	"Up to \$5,000 per business storefront or building."
Building Permit Refund Assistance Program (BPRAP)	"Up to 50% with a maximum \$5,000 refund upon Certificate of Occupancy for targeted businesses in the CRA."
Business Impact Fee Assistance Program (BIFAP)	"Impact Fees for new, expanding or change of use for businesses up to 50% and a maximum of \$5,000. Includes, water, sewer, Police and Fire fees."

There are several resources available for businesses and organizations located in the study area. The CRA, mentioned above, covers a majority of the study area. It offers several non-residential business assistance programs, mainly to reimburse applicants for building improvements, permit fees, and impact fees. The Orange County Opportunity Zone can also assist businesses and organizations in the study area. One of Orange County's 24 Opportunity Zones is located in Apopka, covering everything in the study area south of

U.S. 441. It provides tax benefits to private investors who choose to invest in Opportunity Funds, such as tax deferrals, tax reductions, and tax exclusions. The study area is also completely included in a Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUBZone). Businesses that become HUBZone-certified enjoy numerous benefits, such as preferential access to federal contracts.

Orange County Opportunity Zone	
Incentive	Description
Tax Deferral	"Taxes on the rollover capital gains are deferred until the earlier of the date on which the Opportunity Fund investment is disposed of, or December 31, 2026."
Tax Reduction	"If the investor holds the Opportunity Fund investment for 5 years, the taxable capital gain amount is reduced by 10 percent. If the investor holds the Opportunity Fund investment for 7 years, the taxable capital gain amount is reduced by 15 percent."
Tax Exclusion	"Any capital gains the Opportunity Fund investment generates is not taxed, as long as the investor holds it for 10 years or more."

Market Challenges

From the site visit, four key issues were found. First, there were safety issues. These included a lack of lighting in certain areas, long distances between crosswalks on U.S. 441, and limited ADA-accessible crossings. The sidewalks were narrow and provided little buffer from vehicular traffic. All along U.S. 441, cars were going at high speeds, and there was also a lack of protected bike lanes.

Second, there were accessibility issues. Certain locations, such as City Hall and Lake Apopka, only had limited accessibility, and this tied to the lack of crosswalks. The study area was lacking in on-street parking. Additionally, there was not enough signage, whether it was for speed limit, nearby parks, or wayfinding for businesses and markets.

Third, there were issues with community beautification. There was inadequate landscape, hardscape, and shade throughout the study area. Sheeler High School was located near a liquor store, which had its dumpster next to the school. Many of the restaurants did not have outdoor seating areas, as several were drive-through only.

Fourth, there were functional issues. Some of the business facades could be designed better to reflect the creativity of the area. Many of the shops were not inviting, and improved frontage might be able to help. The city is also lacking in the number of events it hosts, which limits community and social engagement. For example, there is a family park, preschools, and arts and crafts businesses that could be good places for these events.

Unique Businesses

The City of Apopka is home to a wide range of businesses. A few of them might be considered unique or distinctive since they have a connection to the community. These include important public, cultural locations.

The *Apopka Voice* is an online news site with a mission to tell the story of life in Apopka, and it was launched in 2015. The *Apopka Voice* has expanded over the years to add more stories that can impact the lives of residents.

The Apopka Museum, which was built in 1968, is dedicated to showing the history of the city as well as educating and promoting pride in local heritage. The museum is trying to expand and grow to be able to show more of the city's rich history.

The Highland Manor is a historical mansion built in 1903 and is known as one of the landmarks of Apopka. Currently, it is used as a venue to host events and weddings. It is surrounded by ancient live oaks and steeped in 110 years of history.

The Museum of the Apopkans is dedicated to Apopka, displaying artifacts and exhibits documenting the city's history and is home to the Apopka Historical Society.

The Apopka Community Center is a multi-use space that can be rented out for parties and events. It is located at 519 South Central Avenue.

There are several creative and educational outlets throughout the study area. Insight To Learning was founded in 1997 and is a business in the education industry that helps children with learning challenges and disabilities. It is located on South Highland Avenue.

The Creative Hub of Apopka, established in 2021, is a space for creatives to share their skills with others. It encourages individual and community creativity. It is located off East 2nd Street. Papa's Rock and Roll Parlor is a conservatory of music that opened in 2019. It is a place that sells rock/metal records, books, and apparel that are all music related. Kindermusik is a music box store that teaches music to children and was established in 2007. It is located on South Highland Avenue.

Some of Apopka's most popular destinations for food and drink are located in the study area. Three Odd

Guys Brewing, established in 2017, is a locally owned place by three guys who started brewing beer in their garage until it became their business. They decided to share their beer with the whole community of Apopka. Canon Coffee, which opened in 2019, is a historic little house that is used as a coffee shop today. The idea behind its initiation was to create a small gathering space for the community. It is located at 74 West 2nd Street. The Nauti Lobstah is a friend- and family-owned business established in 2020. This restaurant was voted as the third best seafood restaurant in metro Orlando. It is located at 311 South Forest Avenue.

There are also some unique auto-centric businesses in the study area. A.O.K. Tire Mart is a neighborhood family-owned tire center that opened in 1988. It expanded throughout the years and now has two locations in the City of Apopka. Dart Auto Repair is another local community-supported business that is owned by a family that lives in Apopka. It is an auto store that deals with all auto repair issues. The owner changed the exterior of the building to match the new use.

Maintaining the Consistent Architectural Character of the Community

Communities are better able to retain their character and personality when the built environment's visual consistency is preserved. To enhance the economy, new businesses can be added to the area, but with the same, existing architectural appearance. For example,

CVS and Walgreens along U.S. 441 are both companies that usually have a typical layout and architectural style regardless of the location. However, the ones along U.S. 441 followed the same architectural style of the city and today they fit with the overall image of the downtown area.



Urban Form



Urban Form

The Pillars of a Great Street

In order to observe and analyze the streetscape of Apopka, it is important to understand the corridor through the eyes of not only a driver, but a pedestrian and cyclist. Depending on mode of transportation, the priorities of a traveler can change. Drivers have been accounted for in the U.S. 441 corridor, but pedestrians and cyclists share a special concern for the following:

Safety	Streets should be safe to travel through, no matter the method of travel. This can include safety from crime, but also from hazards such as moving vehicles.
Comfort	Streets should be comfortable for people to travel through. A street that lacks shade, enough sidewalk space, or has an uneven surface is not comfortable for non-vehicular travelers.

Purpose

A street should have a purpose for people to come and stay around the street. A street without purpose is only a place to be driven through. Purpose can come in a variety of forms from public amenities to private businesses and more. This is the filter through which the current status of the U.S. 441 corridor will be observed and analyzed.

Vehicular Fatalities in Apopka

The elephant in the room is the deaths that have occurred along the corridor. See Figure 13 showing traffic related fatalities within the corridor. The intersections in which vehicular fatalities are most common will be further examined as intersections of interest.

Figure 13, Vehicle Related Fatalities (source: Open Data Hub, 2022)



Intersections of Interest

Intersections of interest include intersections with vehicular fatalities, traffic lights, or both. It is no surprise that pedestrians are being struck when crossing roads that have no traffic lights. However, it is also important to note that the intersections with lights are not the most hospitable to people outside of cars as well.

There are design features that can ameliorate this condition that will be examined later.

High Fatality Intersections

- Forest
- Highland
- Bradshaw

Intersections with Traffic Lights

- McGee
- Edgewood
- Park
- Central

Sidewalks

For the most part, sidewalks do exist along the corridor. However, they lack the comfort of shading and space. Given the nature of U.S. 441, despite the fact that there are painted bike lanes, many cyclists likely do not feel safe riding on them. Therefore, many may opt to ride on the sidewalk. However, there is not enough space on these narrow sidewalks to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists.

Bike Paths

As mentioned in the previous section, U.S. 441 does have a painted bike lane along the side of the road. However, given the driving speeds that the corridor implicitly incentivizes, it is not the safest place for cyclists. The road is high speed and there is no protection for bicyclists.

The Pedestrian Bridge

There is a pedestrian bridge that crosses U.S. 441 along Park Ave. It is associated with the West Orange Trail. While built with good intention, there are a few aspects to this pedestrian bridge that must be observed in order for it to fulfill its purpose. First and foremost, it must discourage ground level crossing. Crossing U.S.

441 on foot or bike is already a dangerous endeavor, but doing so under the darkness of the bridge increases risk. The area under the bridge does not actively discourage ground level crossing in form or signage.

The Character of U.S. 441's Streetscape

Ultimately, U.S. 441 is a “stroad;” neither a street nor a road (Strong Towns, 2021). Streets are at their best when they pick a lane, no pun intended. The safest streets are either high speed with the full intention of moving vehicles through it, or they are slow speed with the intention of accommodating non-vehicular movement, with vehicles first to change their behavior to the benefit of non-drivers. What we have is a stroad—a street that the city wants to accommodate for non-drivers with all of the implicit and explicit incentives of a high-speed road. A modification of U.S. 441's streetscape could alter these incentives; it just comes down to what tools in the planner's toolbox that the city wants to employ.

Assessment of Natural Infrastructure

Green spaces, in general, have excellent maintenance in the study area, as well as public green spaces along roadways, with a few exceptions as noted, concerning a

major corridor of interest between the public transit station to the intersection of highways U.S. 441 and SR 436, along 6th Street. A few oak trees need trimming to allow sidewalk traffic to flow, as well as some dead trees threatening power lines.

Parks seem to have decent amenities apart from Edwards Field, which is somewhat neglected with no infrastructure and poorly maintained grass. Some addition or extra attention would be welcome.

The parcel at the corner of highways U.S. 441 and SR 436 is a prime candidate for a public park. Its small lake is essential for flood control in the new Apopka City Center development, and its centrality next to the Highland Manor can draw visitors. Some consideration should be given to traffic calming or a crossing over U.S. 441 at this location. The parcel boasts several large cathedral oak trees, a strength to preserve. A pedestrian/biking path around the lake could be constructed, along with benches and other amenities.



Guiding Principles for Proposed Projects



Guiding Principles for Proposed Downtown Apopka Plan

This section presents principles that will guide the proposal of projects for the short- and long-term development of downtown Apopka, Florida. As a document that aspires to create a more livable environment for all, interventions in the downtown Apopka study area will be framed in solid sustainable practices. Sustainability seeks to protect the long-term welfare of all residents by establishing a balance among three key components: economic development, environmental protection, and social equity.

These guiding principles will be used to evaluate and weigh alternatives in a consistent and critical manner. Proposed projects will be evaluated according to each of the following principles or criteria and assigned a value that will allow the proposed alternatives to be ranked, assessing their feasibility and implementation potential.

1. Promotes Safety in Downtown Apopka

First and foremost, any proposed projects for the downtown Apopka study area should consider safety as

the top priority. A project should answer the questions: How will this promote pedestrian safety? How will this promote bicyclist safety? How will this promote vehicular traffic safety? How will this diminish property damage? How does this improve visitor safety? How does this improve perceived safety?

2. Improves Mobility

Supporting the expansion and improvement of public transportation, bicycle networks, and other forms of micro-mobility means ensuring that infrastructure is widely available, safe, and comfortable to use. In other words, enhanced mobility should be a key goal. This includes providing:

- Safe roadway crossings
- Aligning bus stops with roadway crossings and popular destinations
- CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) concepts for well-lit and secure mobility hubs and thoroughfares

- Dedicated bus lanes or queue jumps, to help relieve traffic congestion and reduce delays in roadway traffic
- Physically separated bike facilities and a clear understanding for all roadway users
- Interconnectivity of trails or shared-use paths to extend the pedestrian network for all ages and abilities, especially between the City Center and Station Streets developments
- Accessibility for all, including consideration of equitable improvements

3. Enhances the Pedestrian Experience

Currently, U.S. Highway 441 is automobile-centric and provides only the minimum pedestrian infrastructure. Sidewalks run parallel to the roadway on both the east and west sides and crosswalks are missing at most intersections. The lack of shade provides an uncomfortable environment for walking. Enhancing the pedestrian experience would require increased connectivity, accessibility, and safety to influence more people to walk rather than drive short trips.

Interventions that enhance the pedestrian experience may include:

- Addressing the distance between crosswalks and highlighting them with treatments
- Implementing traffic calming measures at intersections such as bollards and pedestrian hybrid beacons
- Adding street trees to provide a natural buffer and shade for those walking, biking or rolling

4. Ensures Accessibility to the Broader Community and Encourages Social Activity

Evaluating the implementation of improvements requires verifying that those affected can fully participate in the intended benefits. The American Planning Association requires that practicing planners acknowledge the right of citizens to participate in the planning process, make non-confidential information public, and ensure the “choice and opportunity for all persons”. These ethical underpinnings point to a multi-faceted approach when defining and measuring access. One aspect to especially consider is the access to public engagement activities that inform participants, gather

input, and incorporate suggestions into the planning process. Without thorough or accurate information, the results of public engagement activities may produce flawed or unnecessarily biased data. This includes ensuring the information and the engagement session activities use inclusive language that is generated at an easy-to-understand level and is in alternative formats. Moreover, the results of public engagement, alternatives, and decisions made should be readily available to all levels of stakeholders throughout the planning process.

A community benefits from citizens that are socially engaged in various endeavors. While formal education primarily takes place within institutions or structured substitutes, social and emotional education are strongly derived from interactions between people. After a certain age, many of the necessary interactions must take place with others outside of the household and, perhaps, outside of one's niche social microcosm. To promote a sense of community that encourages social engagement in public spaces and activity centers, the Plan should have a human-scale wherein areas have clear sight lines, are walkable, and provide communal

spaces. Connecting the community to the created space is pivotal.

5. Harmonizes Relationships Between Buildings, Streets, and Open Spaces

This concept revolves around mixing green and grey infrastructure to design a sustainable area. Interventions should focus on balancing necessary infrastructure improvements, paying heed to open space/landscape requirements and desires. The reverse should also hold true. Landscape/common space requirements and needs should balance with necessary architectural upgrades/additions to the specified intervention site.

The goal of achieving an enhanced living environment for downtown Apopka in the 21st Century will increase the quality of life for both residents and visitors, and must have an optimal balance between sustainable economic development and residential living. Proposed projects should include:

- Promoting dense development, appropriate connections to a multimodal transportation network, landscaping that could provide shade for walking, and the addition of more public art

- Incorporating way-finding signage and various safety measures along the corridor to encourage more pedestrian use, calm traffic, and promote the area as a safe and enjoyable location for all
- Creating pocket parks and adding amenities to small spaces and slivers of easements throughout the city to promote placemaking

6. Respects Natural Systems and Features

Any proposed intervention should take place with the goal of supporting natural systems and features. Green areas provide various critical ecosystem services to the population, including oxygen production and carbon sequestration, temperature regulation, recreational and aesthetic benefits, among others. Natural features, such as parks, should be highlighted in the proposed intervention as a benefit to the study area. The goal should be to not only avoid damage/loss of the natural systems and features, but to enhance the existing system. For example, many trail projects incorporate sustainable stormwater treatments and often do a better job at filtering the water than before the project. Overall, natural systems and features should be looked

at through a lens of “how does my intervention incorporate the natural areas?”.

7. Promotes Infill on Underutilized Land

Site availability, or vacant land, contributes to the feasibility of any sort of proposed implementation, as it directly impacts development. Preliminary research indicates that there are many suitable sites potentially available for development in downtown Apopka, which positively impacts the market of the study area as a whole by allowing for a variety of types of re-development. Special focus should be in and around the City Center development and the proposed Station Street development.

8. Creates a Sense of Place

Project proposals should help create a distinctive identity for downtown Apopka, creating a sense of place for downtown as whole, in addition to actual place-making in specific areas within downtown. Place-making should be visible and help create a sense of pride, belonging, and ownership to downtown Apopka. Key areas include Highway 441 (Main Street), 6th Street, and the two nodes at either end of 6th Street: Station Street/transit hub and City Center/Cathedral Oak Park.



Project Recommendations



Public Outreach

To ensure community and stakeholder input, we conducted a public outreach survey, including a public workshop. Students in the capstone class attended five events in the City of Apopka to engage with members of the community and invite them to take part in an online survey. The events included Saturday Sounds concerts at the Apopka Amphitheater and a plant swap at the Propagate Social House downtown.

The online survey, developed by the students with advice and guidance from UCF partners, was created using Qualtrics and distributed via link and QR code (see Appendix 1). The 11-question survey was open for data collection from February 13 to March 29, 2023, and had a total of 327 respondents participating. The full results of the survey can be found in the Appendix section of this report. Additionally, the capstone class led a community workshop on the evening of Wednesday, March 8, 2023, at the Apopka Community Center. Project proposals were displayed, allowing more than 40 attendees to vote on different concepts and provide feedback.

Figure 14, An example poster at the community workshop

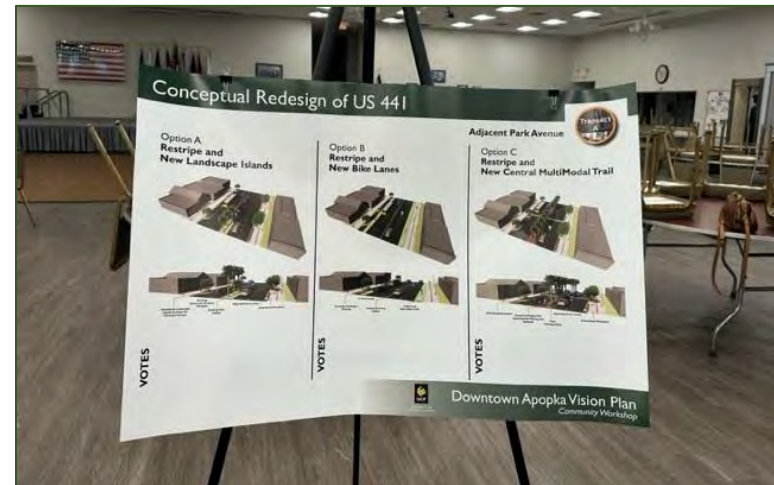
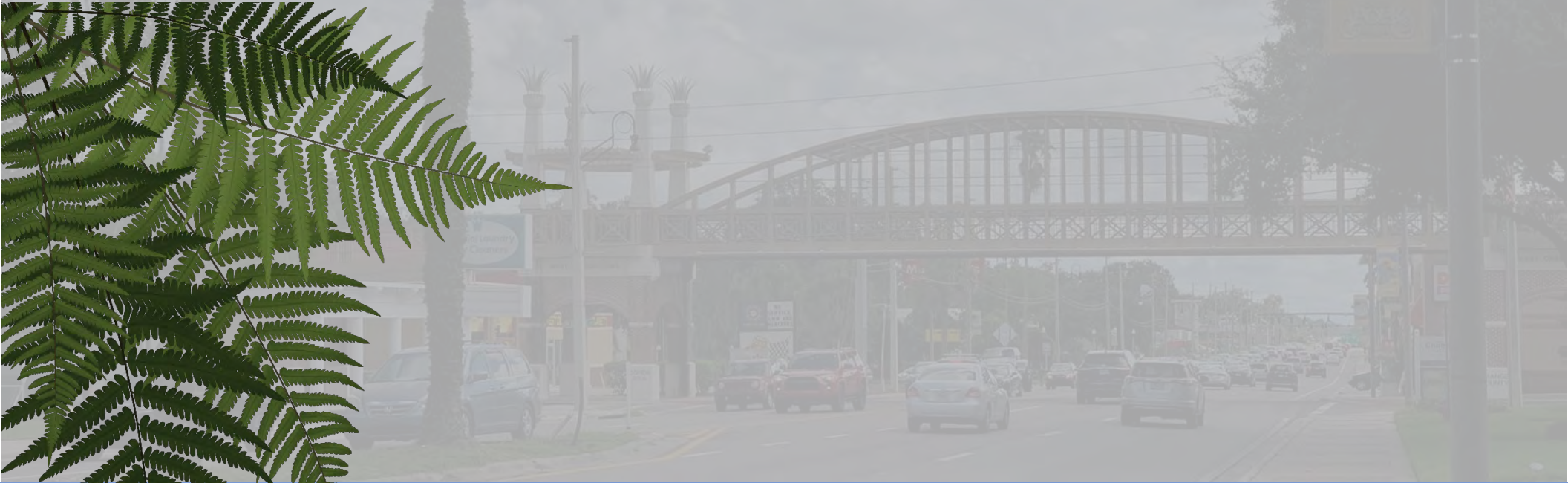


Figure 15, Participants at the community workshop





Marketing and Joining the Main Street Program



Marketing and Joining the Main Street Program

Introduction

We recommend that the City of Apopka implement a marketing and branding plan. Main Street America is a national program that “has helped over 2,000 communities across the country bring economic vitality back downtown, while celebrating their historic character, and bringing communities together” (Main Street America, 2022). By joining this network, the City of Apopka will obtain access to readily available marketing materials and a program structure that have already served 14 other districts in Orange County successfully. We also propose a marketing campaign that aims to give the downtown area a distinct identity to entice local talent to live, work, and play in downtown Apopka.

Justification

Apopka is one of the fastest growing cities in Orange County. With the sudden growth in the city’s population of both residents and tourists, it is important for Apopka to define the future of the city’s downtown through marketing and branding that sets the tone for

interested developers and local entrepreneurs. The downtown district of a city can serve as an anchor in defining the overall character of the city; however, without a concerted effort to brand the downtown area with the community’s interests in mind, incoming developers or business owners are left without context for how they can enrich the community in a way that honors its culture and history. With respect to the characteristics in which the community takes pride, Apopka can establish a strong marketing campaign for its downtown.

Main Street Program

It is also recommended that the city approaches marketing of the study area by joining the Main Street America program. Main Street America is a technical assistance program for municipalities that seek to revitalize their historic downtowns and encourage economic development within the context of historic preservation (Florida Main Street). The Main Street program uses a 4-point approach as seen in Figure 16. The program is administered by the Division of

Historical Resources under the Florida Department of State and is affiliated with the National Main Street program. By joining the Florida Main Street program, the city will have access to a network of other Main Street affiliates (14 of which are within Orange County), readily available toolkits, training sessions, and consultant assistance throughout the revitalization process.

Figure 16, Main Street “Four Point Approach” (source: Main Street America)



Downtown Winter Garden and Downtown Sanford were both local examples mentioned by our survey

respondents as having desirable downtowns. Apopka's downtown study area would be a strong candidate to establish as a Main Street, similar to both of the previously mentioned districts, due to its active community of stakeholders, diverse businesses, existing historic downtown buildings, and availability of city-owned lots that could be transformed into enriching public spaces for community events and recreation. In addition to hiring a full time Main Street Program

Manager, a board of directors is formed and would be composed of downtown business owners, residents, churches, non-profit organizations, and other interested stakeholders. The board would act like a mini chamber of commerce just for the downtown Apopka community.

Perhaps the strongest evidence to support joining the Main Street program comes from the results that its members have already seen. Based on data for every Main Street

community across the country from 1980 to 2021, the total dollars that have been reinvested is \$95.33 billion. The Main Street program has also contributed to

rehabilitating 314,431 buildings (“Main Street Impact”, 2021). Furthermore, the net gain in jobs in these communities is 717,723, and the net gain in businesses is 161,036. Focusing on 2021 alone, Main Streets retained 1,198 programs across the county, reinvested \$5.76 billion, and rehabilitated 10,595 buildings (“Main Street Impact,” 2021). Additionally, the reinvestment ratio as of 2021 is \$19.34 to 1, which means that “for every dollar a participating community spends to support the operation of its Main Street program,” the community receives nearly \$20 in new investments (“Main Street Impact,” Figure 17).

Creating a new website for the downtown area could also help spotlight local businesses and gathering places such as shops, restaurants, and parks. To help encourage people to visit downtown, parking lots can be included in this directory so that visitors coming by automobile can pre-determine where to look for parking spots. The website would also include a calendar of events occurring in the downtown area. These can include a wide range of events celebrating the city’s local artists, live music, holidays, and local food.

Figure 17, Main Street Impact

2021 Reinvestment Statistics		2020 Reinvestment Statistics	
Dollars Reinvested*:	\$5.76 billion	Dollars Reinvested*:	\$4.14 billion
Buildings Rehabilitated:	10,595	Buildings Rehabilitated:	8,488
Net Gain in Jobs:	30,402	Net Gain in Jobs:	14,988
Net Gain in Businesses:	6,601	Net Gain in Businesses:	4,356
Reinvestment Ratio**:	\$19.34:1	Reinvestment Ratio**:	\$18.90:1

Proposal Description (with illustrations, graphs, maps, etc.)

Marketing the study area should find its basis in what Apopka's community takes pride in, or already values about the area. When asked, "What do you like about Downtown Apopka?" the top 4 survey responses were:

1. Small town feel
2. West Orange Bike Trail
3. Friendly Community
4. History

A custom logo can be designed for downtown Apopka to help identify the area. Figure 18 shows a logo design that could be used for the downtown area streets. This helps in distinguishing the downtown area and giving it a sense of identity. A logo can also be used as a guide or wayfinding tool to help people navigate the area.

The logo shown in Figure 18 was designed with the intention of highlighting the important features of Apopka. The historical building is an abstract of the Orange Masonic Lodge or the Highland Manor, which represent the rich historical buildings of the City of

Apopka. The fern symbol serves as a tribute to Apopka's historic slogan "The Indoor Foliage Capital of the World." Additionally, the historic symbols in Figure 18's logo and the symbol of the bicyclist on a trail in Figure 19 build on the themes that the residents of Apopka chose as survey responses about what makes them proud of downtown Apopka. It is essential to utilize imagery that celebrates the unique characteristics of downtown Apopka that the community takes pride in. In doing so, the logos can provide a quick association of the character or activities that make the area attractive to those travelling past banners displaying this imagery. Finally, displaying a designated logo throughout downtown Apopka creates a sense of branding for the study area, not only for residents, but also for visitors who might be unfamiliar with where downtown Apopka is.

The logos' color palette was sourced from the City of Apopka's main logo. By referencing the city logo's color palette, a new logo for downtown Apopka still maintains a visual relationship with the greater City of Apopka. Based on the residents' public outreach

workshop votes for the proposed logos, the majority showed preference to the logo in Figure 18.

Figure 18, Winning Logo

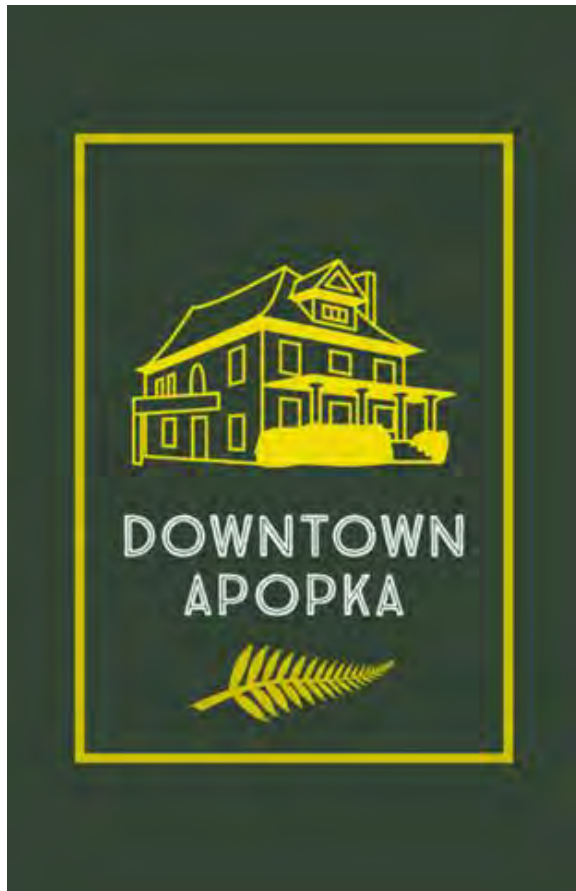


Figure 19, Other proposed Logos



The selected logo can be added on banners throughout the downtown streets, where they can be attached to

light poles. Attaching banners with the downtown's logo to existing poles minimizes expenses associated with

adding new fixtures to display the logo. Figure 20 presents an example of how the banner design can be added to a light pole, to help create a unique identity that distinguishes Downtown Apopka from other areas within the city.

Figure 20, Proposed banners with logos on light poles



These banners have multiple benefits for downtown as it will help in guiding people and should improve the aesthetic appearance of the light poles and the overall city. Additionally, a variety of themed logos can be designed for the street light banners to market any events that may take place downtown, such as the farmers' market and music festivals.

Figure 21, Proposed monument column design



Figure 22, Proposed landmark signage design



Monument columns and landmark signage, like the proposed designs shown in Figures 21 and 22, can be added at the entries of downtown Apopka. In addition, these monuments can be used in any location that needs wayfinding signage or at intersections to facilitate movement. They could also be added in front of public buildings to further distinguish them. Lighting fixtures can be added to the landmarks, which can help enhance safety. Figure 23 represents the proposed designs for the monument columns with some lighting fixtures. Most importantly, to ensure a cohesive design in all elements throughout downtown, the color combination

would match the logo color schemes and ferns could be used as well.

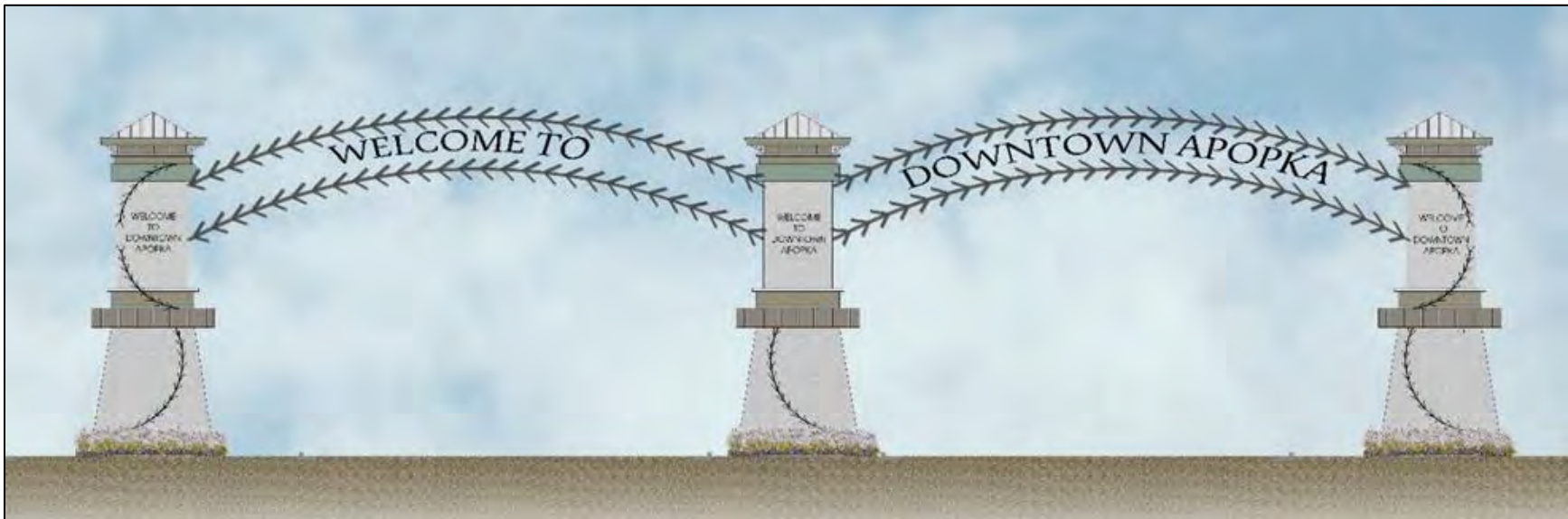
Figure 23, Proposed Monument column design with lighting



Figure 24 presents a proposed gateway design that reads “Welcome to Downtown Apopka,” upon entry to the downtown area on U.S. 441. This gateway sign has multiple benefits. First, it welcomes residents and visitors into the city and downtown area. Second, it can be identified as a city landmark which determines the entrance, or edge, of the downtown area. Third, having a well-designed gateway can enhance the aesthetic appeal of downtown and make it more attractive for

residents and visitors. Finally, the gateway can be used for wayfinding as visitors use it as a destination in wayfinding apps. The architectural style of the gateway can be customized to include symbols that capture the essence and history of the city that match with the overall design aesthetic of Apopka. In Figure 24, the proposed design includes fern-like features to create the gateway’s arches.

Figure 24, Proposed gateway design



Implementation and Costs

The cost of carrying out marketing recommendations could be addressed by dedicating an annual budget for the Main Street program. Although there is a \$375 annual membership fee to join the Main Street program, the majority of the budget associated with the Main Street would be for staffing a full-time economic or community development professional to serve as the Program Manager. The Florida Main Street guide recommends the following:

“At a minimum, dedicated public and private funding and in-kind resources for a one-year operating budget sufficient to cover the cost of:

- Program Manager salary and fringe benefits
- Rent and general office expenses
- Travel for participation in Florida Main Street Quarterly Meetings and Annual Conference
- Program Manager professional development
- Activities and programs conducted by Local Program committees,” (Florida Main Street).

The Main Street program manager is expected to become self-funded, with the allocation from the City diminishing the second and third year until the program is self-sufficient.

Grants

Additionally, membership with the Main Street program would make the study area eligible for Main Street grants. Finally, it is recommended that the City allocate sufficient funds for the salary of a full-time program manager, signage and landscaping to maintain the public domain within the Downtown Apopka area in the case that grants are not

Grants:

The following grants could be used to fund downtown Apopka’s Main Street district:

FDOT Beautification Grant

Keep America Beautiful Grant Program

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) “Our Town” Grant Program

U.S. Department of Transportation’s “Safe Streets for All” Grant Program

The National Parks Service “Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization” Grant Program

Orange County’s Neighborhood Beautification Grants

acquired to assist with funding for the first few years.

For the design-focused portion of the study area's marketing, the main tasks will be to design, print, and hang banners around the downtown area, as well as the creation of a website. The city and any stakeholders, including residents, businesses, and the Apopka Area Chamber of Commerce, should be involved in this effort. Our team created mock-up designs that the City can use to discuss the concept with the community. In this effort, the city should seek an outside consultant to help identify branding colors, the final logo, and design elements to help achieve the branding for the downtown area.

Pricing for the banners could vary. Using Vistaprint, our team determined that 55 double-sided outdoor banners at a size of two feet by four feet would cost around \$12,000. This is a very rough estimate of the final price tag but helps to shed some light on the amount that will need to be dedicated. Pricing will also depend on the type of materials used. This final cost does not include installation and maintenance, which will increase the overall expenses. However, a simply designed banner, with the downtown area's new logo that can withstand

outdoor temperatures and weather events should be enough to help create branding for Downtown Apopka.

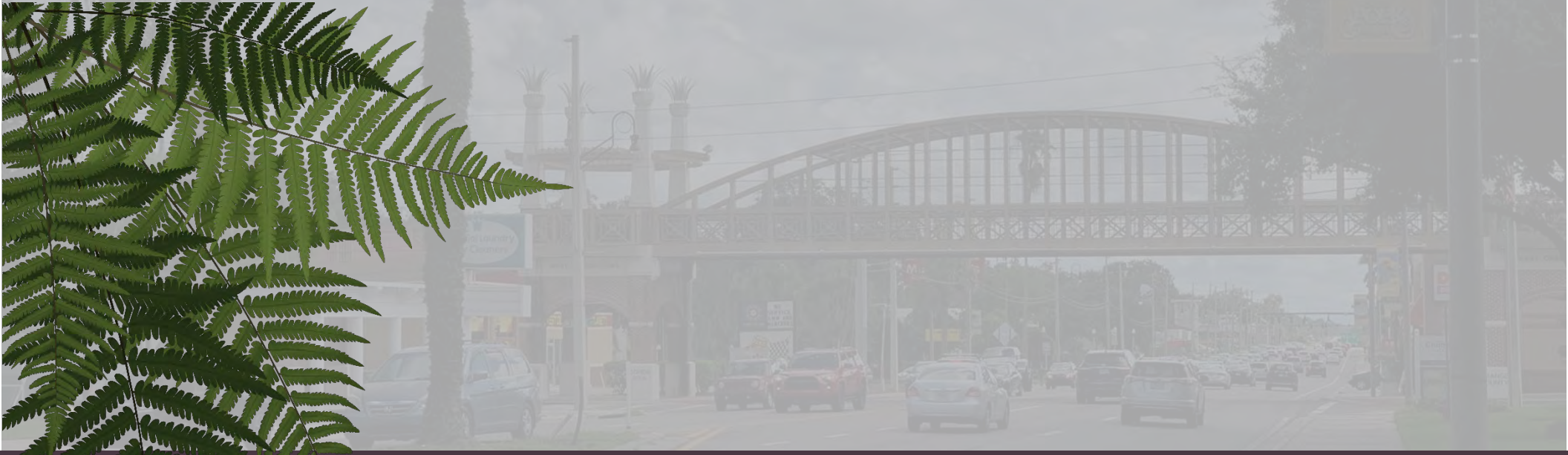
For the website, estimates for its pricing vary. One of the factors in website costs is the number of webpages that will be included. For a website with up to 16 pages, the cost for the website design can range from \$2,000 to \$9,000 ("How much does a website cost?" 2023). Additionally, the maintenance costs would also have to be included, which could be up to \$1,200 annually ("How much does a website cost?" 2023). In total, the upfront cost would be between \$3,200 and \$10,200, with an annual recurring cost of up to \$1,200. This price could be lowered depending on the City staff's experience with website design and maintenance.

Summary

The Main Street America program can go a long way in helping the City of Apopka redefine its downtown. Joining the program creates a concerted board of member stakeholders with an annual budget to maintain public/private engagement and upkeep for the heart of the city. Federal, state, and county grants can help contribute to the budget for the Main Street

program. Marketing and branding are essential in visually showcasing Downtown Apopka as an area that

celebrates the city's history, unique establishments, and opportunities for growth.



Redesign of U.S. 441



Redesign of U.S. 441

The realization of a Downtown Apopka is grounded in establishing a thriving, comfortable, and safe corridor. While U.S. 441 may not immediately transform from a heavily trafficked arterial road into a slower, more traditional small-town thoroughfare, specific adjustments can be made to U.S. 441 to help spur economic growth, increase pedestrian and cyclist safety, and create a sense of place in downtown Apopka. Once a thriving Main Street, U.S. 441 has evolved into a busy yet unsafe shipping and trucking corridor; however, additional trucking routes have recently emerged. The construction of SR 414, known as the Apopka Bypass, provides a route for trucks and pass-through traffic to bypass U.S. 441, thus allowing the City of Apopka to re-envision a more local primary street experience along the corridor.

Justification

Existing Conditions

The current state of Main Street in Apopka is characterized by challenges that limit its usability, safety, and attractiveness to community members. Specifically,

the streetscape presents various obstacles to pedestrians and cyclists, making it challenging to navigate the area. Additionally, the high speeds and heavy vehicle traffic pose safety risks to individuals traveling along the street, further emphasizing the need for a redesign.

There are existing bike lanes along much of 441; however, most cyclists opt to ride on the sidewalks, likely due to the high speed of vehicular traffic. While the sidewalks along 441 are wide, about 7.5 feet, additional width is needed to safely accommodate pedestrians and cyclists. Currently, pedestrians and cyclists must share the limited space, which can be particularly dangerous given the differing speeds between cyclists and pedestrians. Furthermore, the crosswalks are infrequent, averaging one quarter mile in between marked crosswalks. Limited shade creates additional barriers for individuals attempting to travel by foot or bike. The infrequent crosswalks cause many pedestrians to cross wherever they desire instead of on correctly marked crosswalks, which leads to numerous opportunities for pedestrian-vehicle crashes. Some of

the intersections where pedestrians have the legal right-of-way to cross are not marked at all.

The current land use of Main Street primarily consists of strip malls, fast-food restaurants, and parking lots. While these developments serve specific purposes, they also contribute to a car-centric environment, further reinforcing the lack of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. Car-centric development also leads to a saturation of curb cuts, incessantly disrupting the pedestrian and cyclist experience and requiring pedestrians and drivers to always be alert when patronizing Main Street businesses. These curb cuts also lead to large expanses of striped pavement and bulb-outs, rendering roadways unusable for large portions of the day. Additionally, these commercial developments offer little in the way of community spaces or gathering areas, which reduces the sense of community and social capital in the area.

Ultimately, the existing conditions of Main Street in Apopka present significant challenges that limit the street's usability, safety, and attractiveness. The proposed redesign of U.S. 441 aims to address these issues by creating an environment more conducive to

alternative modes of transportation, pedestrian comfort, and community interaction.

Survey Results

The community survey results indicated a clear preference for alternative transportation options. Only 8% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the existing transportation connectivity, while 39% preferred the usage of the West Orange Trail. This highlights a need for the redesign to prioritize infrastructure that supports alternative modes of transportation, such as bike paths, safe and convenient bus stops, and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes. A need for shade within these improved pedestrian streetscapes was also prevalent, with 51% of respondents indicating a desire for more shade. This suggests that the redesign of the thoroughfare should prioritize creating a comfortable environment for pedestrians and cyclists, with infrastructure that supports additional modes of transportation and creates an inviting atmosphere.

The survey results indicated a disconnect between the desire for lushly landscaped medians and slower speeds.

While 67% of respondents wanted landscaped medians, only 22% preferred slower speeds. Our proposal suggests incorporating numerous landscaped medians without changing the speed limit, yet the introduction of landscaped elements would serve as traffic calming measures, slowing the speed of motorists on the roadway without decreasing the posted speed. The proposed redesign shall endeavor to satisfy the needs of motorists moving through the corridor while subconsciously slowing drivers' speed by enhancing the roadway experience.

Respondents also strongly preferred walking and biking, with people expressing a desire for more infrastructure to support these modes of transportation; however, the survey also indicated a general mistrust of public transportation. This disconnect could be due to transit's perceived reliability and safety concerns. The redesign of U.S. 441 seeks to balance these modes of transport, enhancing the cycle and pedestrian experience while incorporating additional infrastructure for visitors and residents walking to and from transit stops, thus ingraining public transit into the overall experience on Main Street.

Lastly, and most importantly, the survey results indicated that most respondents feel unsafe in Downtown Apopka, with 71% expressing some discomfort. This highlights a need for redesigning to prioritize safety improvements, including measures that improve pedestrian protection from moving vehicles and reduce crime. The redesign should also address the perception of safety concerns through improved lighting and other measures that make people feel more comfortable in the area.

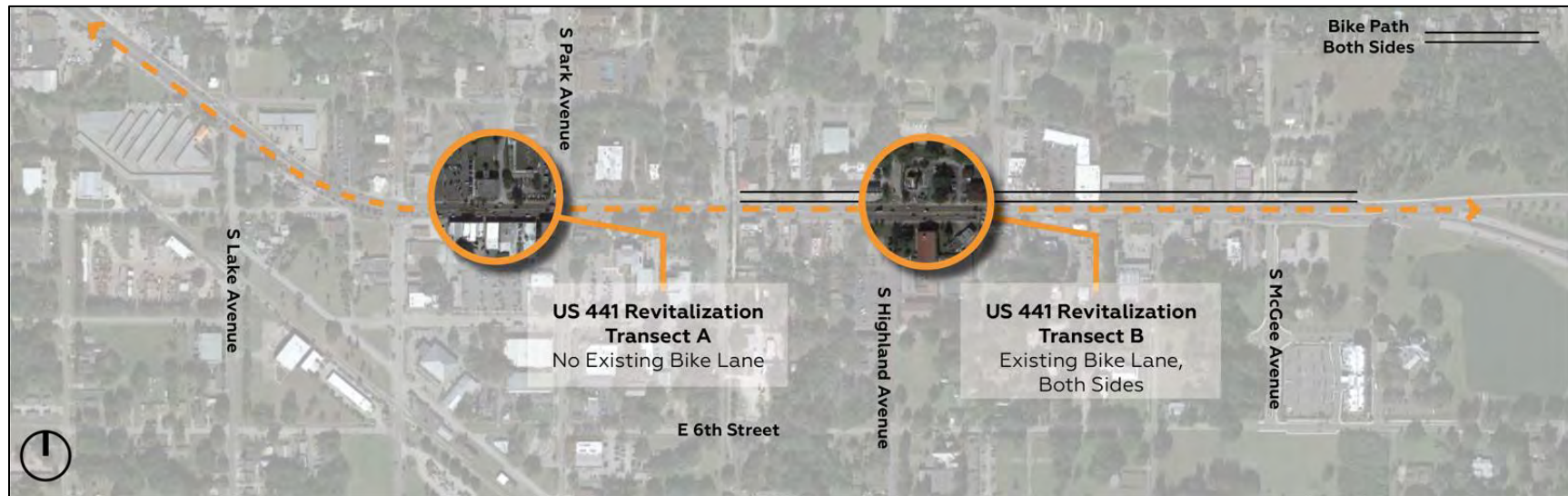
Community Workshop

An iterative process of design and selection culminated in the March 2023 Community Workshop in downtown Apopka. Approximately forty-five citizens, business owners, and leaders shared their opinion by voting on the concepts they felt best suited the location and would lead to a safer, more inviting U.S. 441 Streetscape. We arrived at our final proposal for a revitalized downtown corridor from those concepts and extensive community engagement.

The opinions expressed during the community workshop were consistent with our survey results and

direct conversations with residents. In Downtown Apopka, two transects along U.S. 441 were presented, each with multiple options for reconfiguration. Transect A is adjacent to Park Avenue, while Transect B is near Highland Avenue (see Figure 25).

Figures 25, U.S. 441 divided into Transects A & B



The community workshop confirmed the survey results, with 38% of participants preferring Option 1 (Restripe and New Landscape Islands) and 57% voting for Option 3 (Restripe and New Central Multimodal Trail). For Transect B, 96% of participants preferred Option 2

(Painted Bike Path and a Landscaped Median with Midblock Crossings).

It is clear from these findings that the redesign of Main Street must incorporate multimodality and pedestrian connectivity, increased shade, and enhanced landscaped medians. While there is some hesitation regarding

slower speeds, community education efforts can address these concerns and promote the benefits of traffic calming measures. Overall, the community is eager for a redesign that prioritizes the safety and comfort of pedestrians and cyclists and creates a more inviting and vibrant atmosphere in downtown Apopka.

Proposal Description

Grounded in our expanded understanding of the limitations and opportunities afforded by the current condition of U.S. 441, our team created several concepts for two segments along 441. The two segments are located in the areas near the intersection with Park Avenue and U.S. 441 (Segment A), and the intersection of S. Highland Avenue (Segment B).

Concept A: Restripe and New Landscape Islands

Concept A, receiving just under half of the total votes, emerged from a restriping and condensing the existing travel lanes to 10' or 11' in width. This road width change created a few feet of right-of-way on either side of the street, allowing for added amenities such as raised planters or seating. In addition, those areas that had been striped for bulb-outs to partially protect and designate parking areas were transformed into raised landscape islands. These standalone islands would continue to allow stormwater drainage to function as it does today, while adding space for understory trees and

Figures 26, Concept A: Restripe and New Landscape Islands

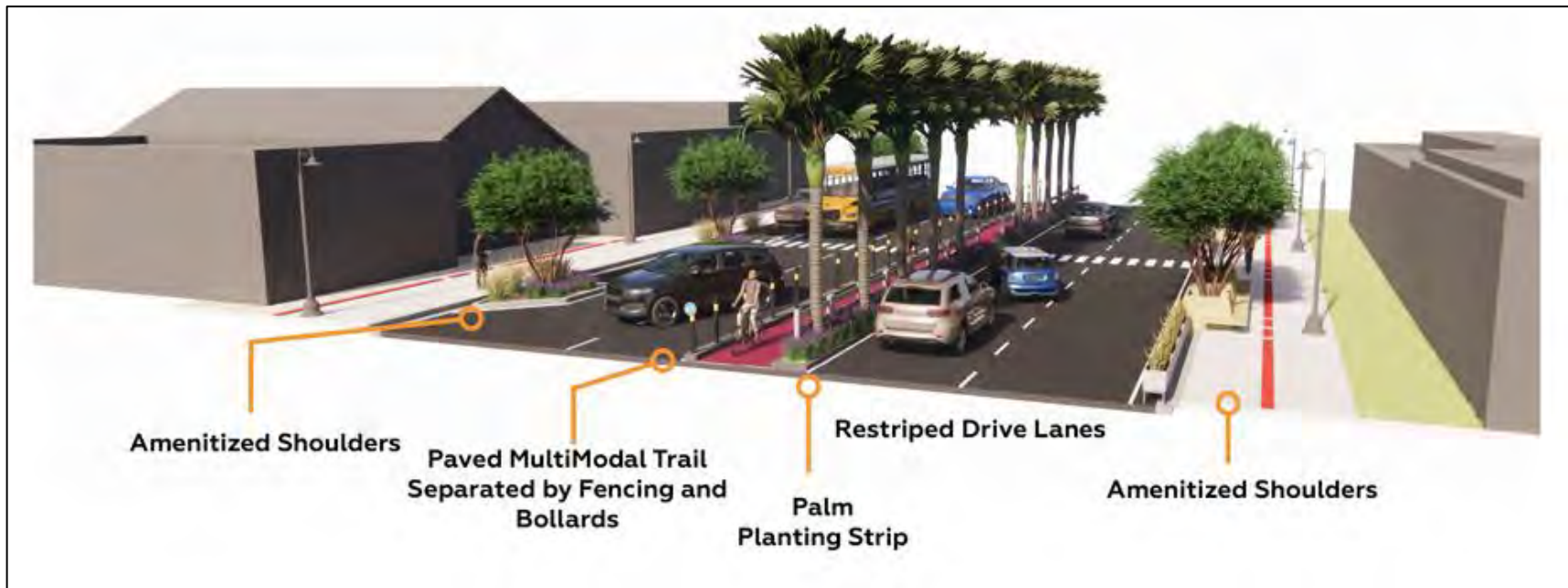


native plantings, enhancing the tree canopy and overall experience of pedestrians. We consider this concept to be the most economical, with the fewest roadway modifications yielding the most significant impact.

Concept C: Restripe and New Central Multi-Modal Trail

Figure 27, Concept C: Restripe and New Central Multi-Modal Trail

Concept C focuses on a bolder vision for U.S. 441. Additional space is created by removing the center turn lane, allowing for a central multimodal trail, security bollards, and palm planters. This concept would require diagonal crossings at lower-traffic intersections for cyclists and scooter users to access the central island. In addition, midblock crossings are proposed to highlight pedestrian crossing opportunities while reducing unsafe, unprotected crossings on U.S. 441. Additionally, the restriped lanes proposed in Concept A would also be utilized, allowing for the introduction of raised



landscape islands for added canopy and increased pedestrian comfort.

Final Proposal for Segment A

Promenade Improvements

The Final Proposal for Segment A seeks to combine aspects of both chosen concepts (A and C). Pedestrian safety is paramount within the concept. The proposal aims to increase pedestrian comfort with the introduction of raised planters filled with native plantings and understory trees and palms large enough to provide some degree of shade without significant conflicts with overhead utilities or existing roadway constraints. The standalone islands also do not restrict existing drainage along U.S. 441, mitigating many adverse effects on stormwater retention or channeling. In addition, the planter islands could be phased throughout the transect to reflect the project budget per each fiscal year. This phasing of improvements also helps to highlight catalytic design and add momentum to the project as business owners, visitors, and residents begin to enjoy portions of the project already completed, celebrating the proof of concept early in the project implementation.

Due to the new, existing cycle infrastructure east of the West Orange Trail crossing, Segment B's roadway composition will not be revised. It will instead incorporate similar raised planter beds to replace existing striped areas.

Connectivity and Crossing Safety

After extensive dialogue and conversation with the community, our re-envisioning of U.S. 441 does not seek to establish a central multimodal path. This was removed for numerous reasons. First, multimodal infrastructure already exists east of the pedestrian bridge; therefore, an abrupt change to existing, relatively new infrastructure could slow the momentum of the existing cycle projects throughout the downtown area. Second, as aforementioned, on-street bike trails end at the pedestrian bridge. By ensuring they are not extended to the Park Avenue area, we route cyclists toward the side roads, which additional proposals seek to transform into an extensive, safe, and inviting multimodal connectivity system (see page 82).

Safe pedestrian crossings are also addressed through the introduction of signalized mid-block crossings. Mid-

block crossings shall be prioritized in locations adjacent to transit stops. They will be punctuated with Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs), which can be triggered by pedestrians only when needed. After implementing a limited number of mid-block crossings, additional crossings can be proposed and constructed. Pedestrian refuge islands will dot the U.S. 441 corridor to provide shaded, comfortable areas for pedestrians to wait before traversing to the opposite side of the street. These refuge islands will replace the existing striped medians and will be home to native plants, palms, or other shade-giving trees. These plantings will also provide side friction to help slow motor vehicle drivers.

Segment B, located east of the pedestrian bridge, will also feature planted pedestrian refuges with adjoining mid-block crossings, creating a unified pedestrian, cyclist, and motorist connectivity system while working within the current cycle infrastructure.

Implementation

Main Tasks

Implementing the proposed plans for adjusting Transects A and B by adding RRFBs at mid-block

crossings, planted pedestrian refuges, and creating a unified multi-modal connectivity system that works with the current multi-modal infrastructure allows for U.S. 441 to become a more pedestrian-friendly roadway and allow for the return of the “Main Street” feel to the corridor. We propose implementing these changes in a cost-effective, timely, and efficient rollout. The proposed tasks needed to create a friendlier and more comfortable U.S. 441 for all users are outlined below.

The main tasks required for project implementation would be:

- Restriping of U.S. 441 lanes to decrease their size and add striped bulb-outs on the edges to the west of the West Orange Trail bridge crossing
- Completing the existing multi-modal infrastructure on U.S. 441 by extending the bike lanes and increasing their width by restriping
- Introducing raised planters filled with native plantings and understory trees or palms in the median and on both sides of the street
- Installing Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons at mid-block crossings with planter refuge islands at high-crossing locations

During the implementation of the main tasks, other issues or problems may arise that may need addressing, so we propose a phased approach to help ensure stakeholder participation and cost-efficiency. Any added knowledge or technologies that may arise during the implementation period can then be reflected in future phases. This phased approach will also help spread capital expenditure demands and allow the city to celebrate the proof of concept early in the project implementation. In addition, this proof of concept should increase momentum and buy-in at the community level, spurring future pedestrian and roadway enhancements.

Proposed Outline of Implementation

The proposed outline for a phased approach to the project follows a plan that starts with the initial project phases of research and funding and then goes into the proposed build-out phases. The initial plan is to start with restriping, which is the least costly. Funding for resurfacing projects exists with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), which affords additional space for future phases of the proposal. The next phase would include the raised, standalone planters located on

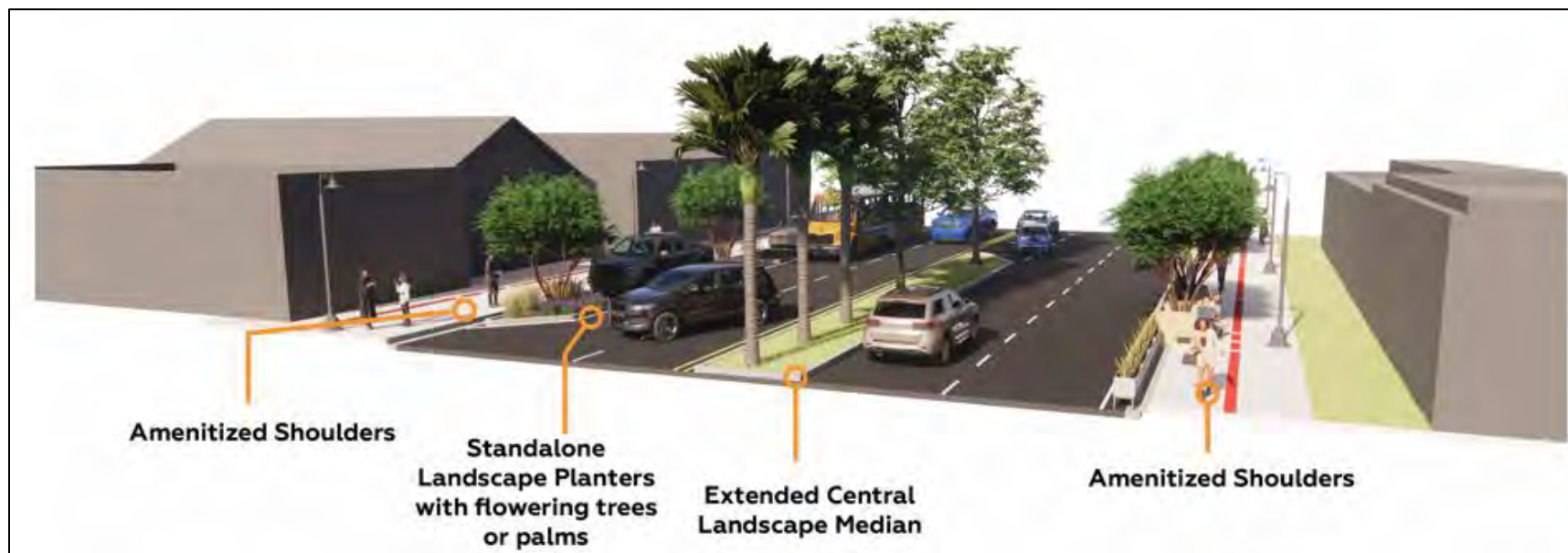
the sides and within the street's median to help with initial traffic calming and set up the infrastructure needed for the proposed mid-block crossings and pedestrian refuge islands. The final phase following the installation of the planters would be the creation of mid-block crossings and the introduction of RRFBs to highlight crossings better and increase pedestrian safety.

The project could be implemented in phases or simultaneously, depending on cost. Time estimates for the phased approach are detailed below. Even though the phases have estimated implementation durations, there is always the risk that the estimated times could change due to material or labor cost increases, natural disasters, political changes, and other outside factors.

Phase 1: The Initial Project Phase - one to two years

- Conduct a complete traffic study of the area to justify the proposed plan to the city council and get approval to begin.

Figure 28, Phase 1 - Landscape Islands and Extension of Central Median

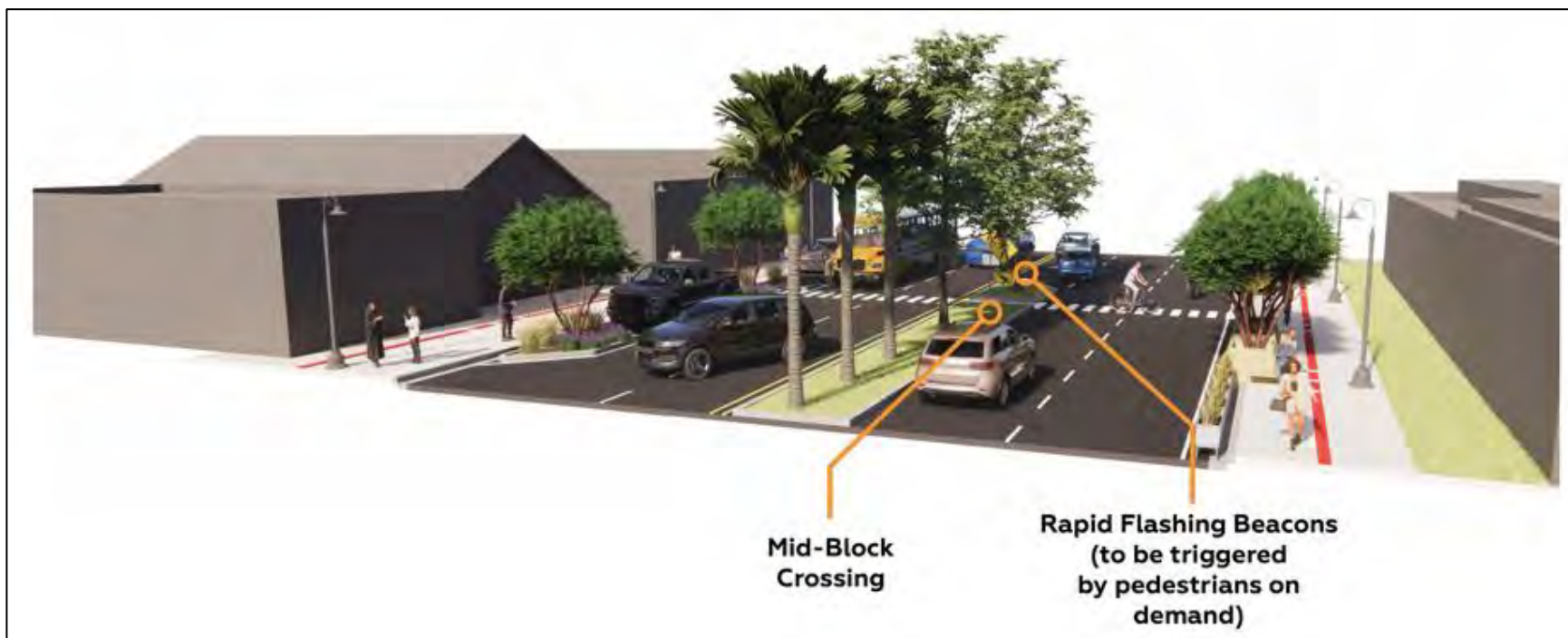


- Research and apply for grant money or contact FDOT for funding resources.
- Work with corresponding agencies and departments to finalize the proposed project plan.
- Send out a Request for Quote (RFQ) for the project to hire the contractors.

Phase 2: The Restriping Phase - one to three years

- Restripe and condense existing travel lanes to 10' in width within the study zone on U.S. 441.
 - This road width change will produce a few feet of right-of-way on either side of the street, allowing for the other added amenities in the proposal, such as raised planters or seating.

Figure 29, Phase 2 – Mid Block Crossings and Rapid Flashing Beacons



- Restripe areas for bulb-outs to protect and designate parking areas for the implementation of landscaped islands.
 - Restriping for the bulb-outs during the restriping of the road for more room in the right-of-way allows more space during the rest of the implementation process.

- Restripe the road to extend existing multi-modal infrastructure through the rest of the study area.
 - It helps connect the road with the rest of the existing multi-modal infrastructure.

Phase 3: The Planter Phase - two to four years

- Construct raised planters in the bulb-outs previously created from the restriping.

- Allows for the creation of safer on-street parking and is a road-calming technique to help slow traffic in the corridor.
- Construct raised planter refuges in the medians to allow for future installation of mid-block crossings and RRFBs.
 - Allows for traffic calming in the middle of the road and provides the necessary infrastructure for mid-block crossings and RRFBs.

Phase 4: The RRFBs and Mid-Block Crossing phase - two to three years

- Installation of mid-block crossings at designated locations between intersections at previously created raised median planter refuges.
 - Mid-block crossings help create safe crossing locations for pedestrians and non-vehicle users to cross the road at areas outside of intersections.
- Installation of RRFBs at the mid-block crossings to allow pedestrians to cross safely.
 - The RRFBs can be triggered by pedestrians as needed.

Organizations Involved

Implementing the proposed project on U.S. 441, which is an FDOT-owned and maintained facility, means that the implementation of any changes will have to be done with the state. Most funding, unless coming from the City of Apopka or from grants, will be from the state. Outside of working with FDOT, other organizations and departments within the city will be involved with the project to ensure the plan is efficient and follows all codes and ordinances. The different departments within the City of Apopka that will need to work together to help with the separate phases of the plan would include Fire, Police, Finance, Public Services, Community Development, Administration, and the City Council.

Outside of the city, there could be other organizations in addition to FDOT that would need to be involved in the implementation of the proposed project, which could include contractors hired to do the work, Orange County, St. Johns River Water Management District, LYNX bus system, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, East Central Florida Regional Planning District, Orange County Public Schools, Florida Division of Emergency Management, Florida

Department of Economic Opportunity, and the Apopka Area Chamber of Commerce. These different agencies are stakeholders in this project as they will be affected by any changes to U.S. 441. It would be best practice to collaborate with them to ensure that any changes are appropriate.

Estimated Budget

Estimated Cost	
Category	Price/Costs
Traffic Study	\$30,000
Restriping of Roadway Lanes	\$100,000
Restriping of bulb-outs	\$25,000
Restriping of continued multi-modal infrastructure	\$25,000

Restriping to allow for mid-block crossing	\$15,000
Build out of raised planters in bulb-outs	\$40,000
Build out of raised planter medians	\$100,000
Installation of RRFBs	\$70,000 (\$35k each, so how many?)
Native Plants and Trees for planters	\$50,000 (A crepe Myrtle costs \$1500 each) Oaks are \$3k each
New Seating for bulb-outs and medians	\$10,000
Total Estimated Costs: \$350,000 - \$750,000	

Potential Sources of Funding

The proposed project has an estimated cost of \$350,000 to \$750,000. However, these costs are just estimates, and as time passes, changing materials and labor costs may alter the overall estimated cost. The costs of restriping, resurfacing, creating mid-block crossings, and landscaping with planter refuges can be written as maintenance expenditures with FDOT to help fund these phases without seeking outside funding (*Maintenance cost handbook - Florida Department of Transportation*). However, when installing the RRFBs, the city will need to find outside funding as this is not considered maintenance and would not be able to be funded through maintenance costs by FDOT.

A potential source of funding for the RRFBs and any other tools to help prevent roadway deaths could be the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Implementation Grant Program, which is an infrastructure program run by the U.S. Department of Transportation to fund \$5 billion in five years of regional, local, and tribal initiatives that help with preventing roadway deaths and severe injuries (*Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant program*). The

program can help fund local projects that are helping to reduce roadway crashes, and using RRFBs is considered a tool to help reduce crashes (*Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant program*). The grant program could help fund other issues not covered by FDOT maintenance.

Summary

The proposed redesign of U.S. 441 has two core justifications: safety and economic development. By implementing traffic calming measures, we can reduce pedestrian injuries and fatalities along U.S. 441, creating a safer environment for walking and biking. This, in turn, encourages more people to choose sustainable transportation options and reduces reliance on personal automobiles.

Our proposed redesign will improve safety and create opportunities for economic development. Currently, the area is dominated by parking lots and fast-food chains, catering to the needs of drivers passing through. However, since our proposal introduces improved safety and walkability measures, it encourages economic growth by increasing access to businesses via multiple modes of transportation. By restriping the streets to have smaller lanes, we will gain space on the right-of-

way to be able to better improve the corridor through landscaped medians and bulb-outs that allow for safer street parking and the installation of traffic calming measures. With the inclusion of landscaped medians and bulb-outs, the city will be able to expand the multi-modal connectivity in the city and add mid-block crossings with RRFBs to help allow for better accessibility and connectivity on U.S. 441.

By transforming the corridor, we can break the cycle of a car-centric "Main Street" downtown and pave the way

for more diverse and economically efficient land uses served by large groups of pedestrians, visitors, and residents. As a street named "Main Street," this corridor should be the crown jewel of Apopka. Our redesign will elevate it to match this title and position Apopka as a vibrant and forward-thinking community. This transformation will benefit Apopka's residents and create a positive impression on visitors and Central Floridians.



Complete Streets



Complete Streets

Our proposal includes providing multi-modal pathways for 3rd, 5th, and 6th Streets in downtown Apopka.

Justification

We propose applying the principle of “complete streets” to the downtown Apopka area. Complete streets in downtown Apopka could enhance the grid system that includes pedestrian and bicycle traffic, not just automobiles. A survey was conducted to better understand accessibility and mobility needs in the area. The following survey results were used as input to develop our proposal:

- 34% said they would like more bike paths
- 37% said they think improved bike lanes would help mitigate traffic
- 71% said they would walk downtown if it was safer
- 56% said they would bike downtown if it was safer

- Many respondents said they are proud of the trails and the parks

3rd, 5th, and 6th Streets were in our study area, and we used the survey and workshop responses to further inform our choice of suggestions and recommendations.

Given these responses, we chose these streets due to their relevance to the downtown Apopka study area. 3rd and 5th Streets are also directly north and south of Main Street (U.S. 441). They both provide back door access to the businesses lining Main Street, as well as front door access to the businesses lining 3rd and 5th Streets.

6th Street was chosen due to its connection of the new Apopka City Center development on the east end of downtown by the Highland Manor, and the Lynx Super Stop on the west end of downtown. Other destinations we consider important for 6th Street include Station Street, the Apopka Police Department, the Museum of the Apopkans, multiple churches, and many businesses.

Figure 30, Downtown side streets for Complete Streets application



We recognize the City of Apopka's current efforts to create a multi-modal pathway on 6th Street in our study area. We agree with this project and believe it aligns with the rest of our proposal.

This Apopka Downtown Trail System is being designed as a 10-foot to 12-foot-wide recreational trail for walking, bicycling, and rollerblading (no motor-driven vehicles). It is about two miles long and will link to the West Orange Trail at the intersection of E. 6th Street. This trail will link the west side of downtown from

Alonzo Williams Park on W. 5th Street to Marvin Zanders Avenue, and then to the central downtown shopping area at E.5th Street and S. Central Avenue down Station Street to E. 6th Street. Other portions of the trail will include S. Hawthorne Avenue from W. 5th

Street at Alonzo Williams Park south to Michael Gladden Boulevard, and then along Michael Gladden Boulevard east to Park Avenue.

Figure 31, Apopka Downtown Trail System (source: apopka.gov/680/Downtown-Apopka-Trail)



Apopka plans (“Downtown Trail Master Plan System”) to bring multi-modal pathways to 6th Street, Michael Gladden Blvd, S Hawthorn Ave, and E 5th Street. These pathways are an attempt to connect the West Orange Trail to Alonzo Williams Park, the batting cages and the land surrounding them, and the Hope Community Center.

We propose an extension or a “Phase II” of this project that includes a proposal to further piece together downtown Apopka’s transportation connections. Increasing accessibility and mobility along the Downtown Trail System requires additional connections to bike trails and multi-modal pathways. Our Phase II proposal will further connect the multi-modal grid in Apopka, connecting pedestrians and bicyclists to more parks, businesses, and amenities.

Proposal Description

We propose providing a shared-use path for 3rd, 5th, and 6th Streets in downtown Apopka. Considering Apopka’s vision for 6th Street and its consistency with our own 6th Street vision, we will focus on 3rd and 5th Streets.

Connecting 3rd and 5th Streets to the existing West Orange Trail on S. Forest Avenue would integrate even more pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure into the downtown area. Our proposal would connect more parks and businesses to the West Orange Trail, which is consistent with the city of Apopka’s Downtown Trail System.

During the Apopka community workshop, we presented two options for our proposal.

Figure 32, Option 1 for 3rd, 5th and 6th Streets

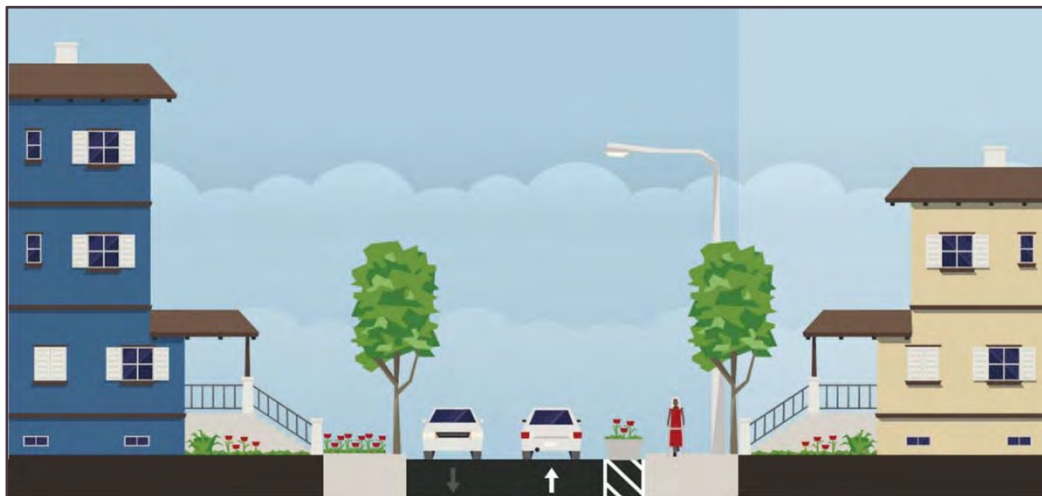


Option #1 included a ~3-5ft sidewalk with a temporary barrier, such as large planter boxes, to act as a buffer between pedestrians and cars.

Option #2 is a larger, paved trail, ~14ft, that would have permanent landscaping to act as a buffer between pedestrians/bicyclists and cars.

The workshop allowed the public to vote on which option they preferred. Although votes remained close throughout the night, by the end of the workshop Option #2 won with 15 votes to 12.

Figure 33, Option 2 for 3rd, 5th and 6th Streets



Cost Analysis

Provided below is FDOT’s Long-Range Estimating System Table from 2022:

FDOT Long Range Estimating System - Production				
R4: Project Details Composite Report				
By Version				
Project: SHRUSE-O-01-BB			Letting Date: 01/2099	
Description: Two Directional, 12' Shared Use Path				
District: 09	County: 99 DISTRICT/STATE WIDE			
Project Manager: Cost-Per-Mile Model				
Version 16-P Project Grand Total				\$410,482.63
Description: October 2022 Update				

Here are cost estimates using the FDOT estimating system: Two Directional, 12' Shared Use Path: \$410,482.63 per mile.

The 5th Street project, from S. Highland Avenue to W. Station Street, measures 0.5 miles (rounded up to the nearest tenth of a mile) and would be estimated to cost about \$205,241. The 3rd Street project, from S. Highland Avenue to S. Lake Avenue, measures 0.6 miles (rounded up to the nearest tenth of a mile) and would be estimated to cost about \$246,289.

The total cost of our Phase II of Apopka’s Downtown Trail System would be estimated

to cost about \$451,500. These figures are based on 2022 estimates and could increase in the future due to inflation.

Summary

In summary, Apopka's current goals and proposed development for the downtown area have guided our

efforts to present a proposal that would increase accessibility and mobility in the area. The Phase II we have proposed would strengthen and build upon the Apopka Downtown Trail System already proposed by the city (FDOT Estimations 2022).



Parks and Green Space



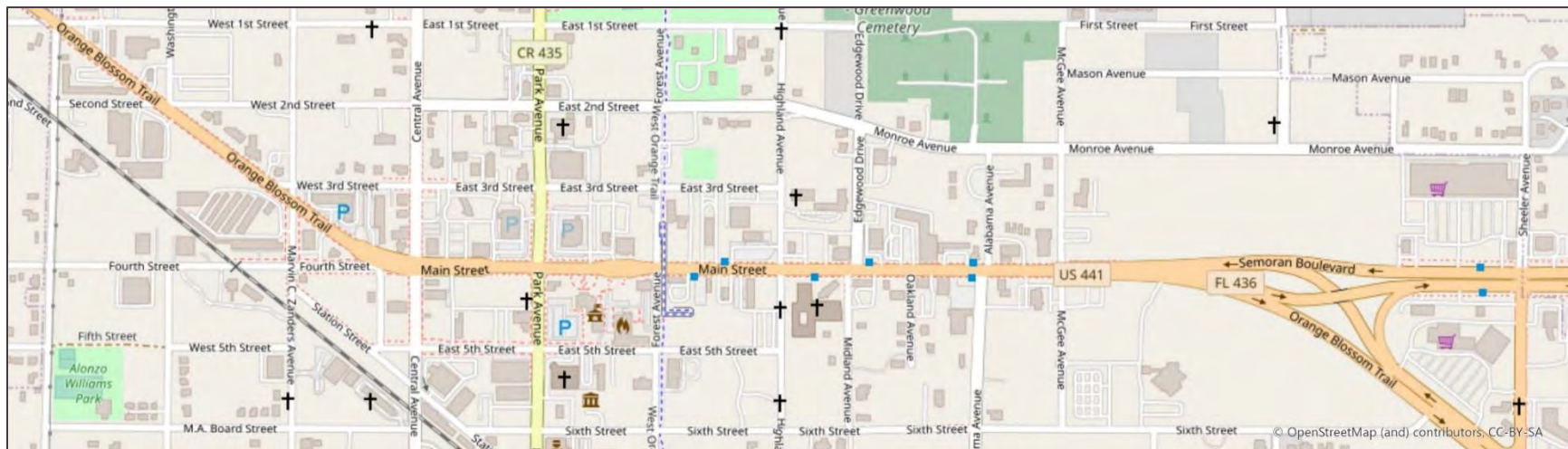
Parks and Green Space

As part of the initial site conditions survey, an inventory of existing parks and greenspaces was compiled to better understand how these facilities were serving the community. The study area was determined to have only two large-scale park areas accessible to the public and suitable for recreational or leisurely activities. Therefore, to promote physical activity, health, and the wellbeing of the residents and visitors of the downtown area, a pocket park system is being proposed to add

more smaller-scale greenspaces. This pocket park system, as a partnership between the city and other public and private entities, will help to revitalize underutilized spaces that exist throughout the downtown area, and provide places for landscaping and gardens, seating, shade, bicycle parking, as well as opportunities to display artwork, sculptures, and murals.

Study Area Map

Figure 34, Study area- lime green parcels are existing parks (source: OpenStreetMap)



What is a Pocket Park?

Pocket parks, also known as vest pocket parks, are parks that are small in size (usually a quarter of an acre or less), accessible, comfortable, and promote a sense of place. Pocket parks can come in many different forms and can have a variety of amenities. There are many different types of parks available for cities to implement that are both beneficial for creating a sense of place and bring functionality to otherwise underused or vacant sites. For Apopka specifically, native-plant gardens, sensory parks and sitting areas would be ideal for the downtown area. Below are examples of each of these parks and suggestions for how to use them to make the most impact on the downtown area.

Native Plant Gardens

Besides being easier to maintain, the selective creation of networks of native plant gardens has been shown to help increase native pollinator populations across large areas. These gardens should include a diversity of native plant species and can also be used around seating and waste receptacles to create a more enjoyable experience for people walking along trails or sidewalks. These facilities are best maintained by the parks and

recreation departments who already serve other similar locations around the city.

Sitting Areas

Depending on where they are implemented, pocket parks with benches or picnic tables provide opportunities for people to eat, rest, or meet up with each other. When located near a restaurant or café, the extra seating area or bicycle parking that a pocket park provides can benefit the local business. This in turn makes it advantageous for a business to help the city by keeping the area clean, tidy, and ready for customers to enjoy.

Sensory/Tactile Parks

Sensory parks can be part of native plant gardens, but they can also be implemented independently, with other low-maintenance vegetation or landscaping. These parks are excellent for children, who wholly benefit from interacting with the urban landscape. These parks can range from playgrounds with structures and play equipment, to areas with a range of ground covers and articulated landscape designs that encourage movement and curiosity.

Low maintenance options of sensory pocket parks include using large rocks, tree stumps, or other natural features that do not require the same maintenance as traditional plastic and steel play structures. Some examples of sensory parks that would be ideal for downtown Apopka are shown in the images here.

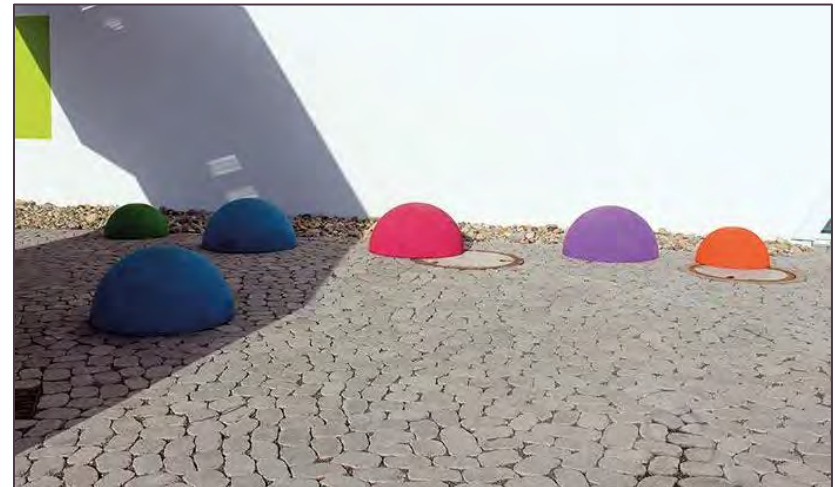
Figure 35, Kingsway College playground, (Bienenstock Natural Playgrounds)



Figure 36, The Folds Designer: Atelier Scale



Figure 37, Euroflex Balls and Half Balls.



Public Outreach Survey

To ensure that any new park facilities accurately meet the needs of the downtown Apopka community, a public outreach survey was conducted via the online survey as well as at the in-person community workshop event. During the two-month survey period, over

three-hundred residents and visitors to the downtown Apopka area were asked to select any of four options applicable for a pocket-park concept using the photograph examples below, including a “none of the above” option:

Seating Area



Sensory Playground



Community Garden



Sources: mtairybid.com, norwexmovement.com, texanbynature.org

The survey results favored a seating area pocket park concept, with 66% of respondents selecting it, while Sensory Playground and Community Garden were

close behind at 48% and 42% respectively. Only 9% of respondents selected the “None of the above” option.

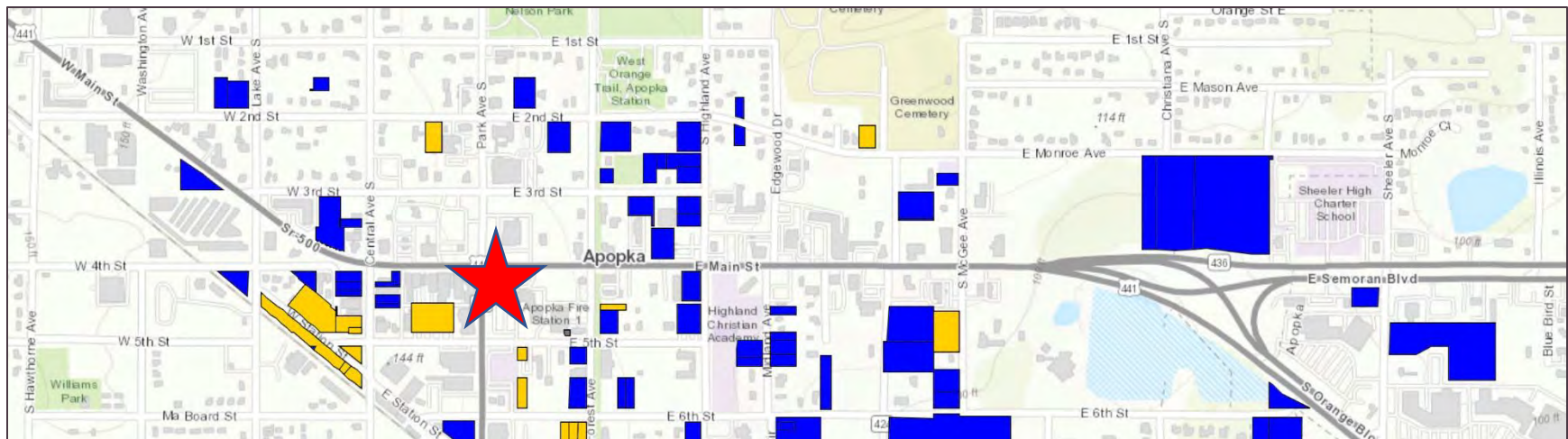
Pocket Park System

In consideration of the responses from the public outreach survey, this proposal identifies the area at 441 S. Park Avenue along the side of the historic Carroll Building as a place to implement a pocket park with a seating area. This pocket park would be the first in a series that could be implemented with a focus along the city's activity corridor along 5th Street, as well as on properties adjacent to the West Orange Trail along

Forest Avenue. Together, these corridors of pocket parks would form a comprehensive Pocket Park Plan to create a sense of place in the downtown Apopka area.

The location of the Carroll building is highlighted by a red star on the map below, along with privately owned vacant parcels highlighted in blue, and yellow highlighted vacant parcels owned by the City of Apopka.

Figure 38, Public & Private Vacant Parcels (source: Esri ArcGIS, Orange County Property Appraiser)



Carroll Patio Pocket Park

For the Carroll Patio Pocket Park, adding seating or picnic tables, outdoor string lighting, bicycle parking, and a waste receptacle would be enhanced by Florida-Friendly landscaping plants like lirioppe and blue daze, and a mural by local artists. This patio park area would fill

the need for an outdoor space for bike parking, sitting, and eating, as well as hosting visitors who are attending city sponsored food truck or farmers' market events at city hall. Maintenance of this park would include waste collection, pressure washing, lightbulb replacement, landscape maintenance, and mural maintenance.

Figure 39, Carroll Patio Existing Site Condition



Figure 40, Proposed Carroll Patio Pocket Park



Cost Estimate

The rough estimated cost for this pocket park (minus electricity and landscape irrigation) is broken down in Figure 41.

Figure 41, Pocket Park Cost Estimates

Description	2023 Cost	Labor	2023 Shipping	2023 Total
Landscaping				
Liriope (x50)	\$10/Gal	City Provided		\$500
Blue Daze (x25)	\$10/Gal	City Provided		\$250
Mural	\$1,500	Partnership		\$1,500
Seating Tables (x3)	\$3,000	Labor Provided	\$500/ea	\$10,000
Waste Receptacle (x1)	\$1,200		\$500	\$1,500
Bike Rack	\$1,000		\$200	\$1,200
Pavers	\$250	City Provided		\$250
Outdoor Lighting (Option 1)	\$250			\$250
Shade Structure (Option 2)	\$5,000	City Provided		
Electricity				
Irrigation				
Maintenance		City provided		
TOTAL:				\$15,450

Summary

One way to help create a sense of place within a city that can also enhance underutilized or vacant properties is to implement a Pocket Park Plan. Pocket parks can be simple, easy to implement greenspaces, seating areas, or sensory playgrounds. Promoting community

involvement in the creation of these spaces will help ensure that the spaces become successful, and implementing them throughout the city will be a step toward revitalizing the downtown Apopka area and creating a sense of place

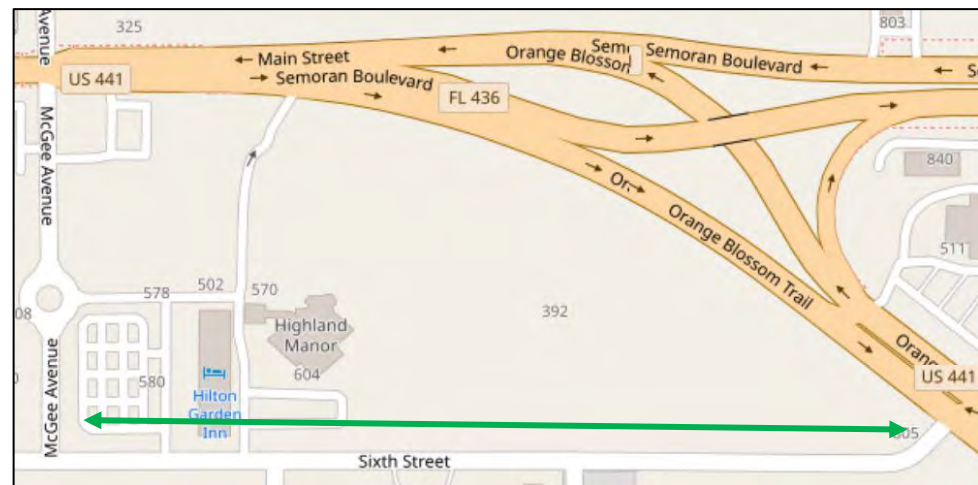
Retention Pond Upgraded to a Park

Parks are an important part of cities where people work, live, and play, but are limited in number in the study zone. Rezoning and redeveloping other properties could be very expensive, with one exception. The property at the intersection of highways 441 and 436 in downtown Apopka falls within the study zone, is arguably underutilized, already owned by the city, and in a prominent location near the Highland Manor, Hilton Hotel, and across the street from a new shopping center being built. The property is valuable as a riparian parcel that catches and drains city storm water, as witnessed after Hurricane Ian in 2022. Keeping the pond's primary function, plus the addition of a few outlined amenities here, has the potential to transform the space into a vibrant park that could be the crown jewel of a new downtown revival.

The property currently has green infrastructure value in the very large, old oak trees along 6th Street and out on a tiny peninsula. The tree on the peninsula provides a large, shaded area and has spread out far enough that its branches touch

the ground. Locals know the tree as a “cathedral” oak, and it appears that the pond was dug around it, presumably to preserve it. The parcel has a history older than the Highland Manor, which sits overlooking the pond to the east. Locals refer to it as Martin’s Pond, after the owners who maintained a dairy farm there for many years. The distance from east to west is about 1,600 feet, just over a quarter of a mile, and is a comfortable five-minute walk.

Figure 42, Street map; Parcel 392 contains the pond near the heart of downtown (Google Maps, 2023).



There have already been some upgrades to the property, which shows an intent to improve it, in the form of a fountain and some oak saplings planted along its northern shoreline, which runs along 441/Main St.

Figure 43, Aerial photography; note the massive oak tree on the peninsula, and fountain just to the west (ArcMap, 2023).



Precedents

Inspiration comes from the conversion of Cheonggyecheon Stream, in Seoul, South Korea, into a park which transformed the second largest urban area in the world. This is a stream brought back to life from its tenure as an elevated superhighway from the 1970s

until 2003. Its controversial conversion is heralded around the world, as it brought property values up, drove increased business and tourism, cut air and noise pollution from the 160,000 vehicles traversing it daily, brought back plants and wildlife, and prevented massive damage after a 100-year flood event that inundated the city in August of 2022.

Figure 44, Seoul, South Korea circa 1990s, before the Cheonggyecheon Stream restoration (Seoul Municipal Government, 2022).



Figure 45, Seoul, circa 2003, after Cheonggyecheon project (Seoul Municipal Government, 2022).



Local comparisons, specifically of functional retention ponds transformed into parks are Victory Pointe Park in Clermont, Florida, and Fourth Ward Park in Atlanta, Georgia. Both projects won awards for being “green” in that they added wetland vegetation to improve habitat and water filtration while maintaining a clean, modern look.

Figure 46, Victory Pointe Park, Clermont, FL, from above; winner of AIA Florida Best Small Project 2019 and ASLA Florida Award of Honor 2019 (Olerich Construction, 2022).



Figure 47, Victory Pointe Park on boardwalk, civil engineering done by GAI Consultants, structural engineering done by TLC Engineering (Olerich Construction, 2022).



Figure 48, Fourth Ward Park, Atlanta GA. A retention Pond designed by HDR Engineering winning over a dozen awards in sustainability and design (HDR Engineering, 2022).



Further inspiration came from studying efforts of companies installing floating island planters, which can move up and down with the changing water levels without drowning out the landscaping. These are not employed in very many examples yet, but Apopka's property seems to be a great candidate, since a large

proportion of the property is water. These islands attract more birds and wildlife for sightseeing yet are inaccessible by foot, remaining undisturbed by the public. Furthermore, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection encourages as much wetland planting as possible to reduce nitrates. Floating islands are a strategy that can garner a 10% rebate from the state for any projects which cover at least 5% of water surface area.

Figure 49, Floating Islands enhance habitat and water quality (Biomatrix, 2022).



Proposal

A boardwalk along the northern shore could be built to join with a path around the south and east sides, since

the embankment is steep and adjacent to the road. Eventually the planted oaks already there will shade the boardwalk, and other amenities like benches could be placed around the path, with the goal being to create a small water fountain-imbued oasis with birds and creative landscapes to view from comfortable, shaded seating.

During the community meeting on March 8, 2023, 100% of the public voted for more trees, a path, a boardwalk, floating islands, benches, a public restroom, a pavilion, and pet waste stations. Additionally, 15% wanted exercise/playground equipment, and 5% voted for an observation tower. Names for the park were floated during the meeting, with “Highland Park” receiving 46%, “Martin’s Pond” at 38.5%, “Mead’s Bottom Park” at 15%, and “John H. Land Park” at 1%. Other suggestions, “Cathedral Oak Park” and “Uptown Park” received no votes.

Implementation

Small levels of buy-in can include taking down the fence along 6th Street and between Highland Manor, pressure washing the concrete infrastructure along 441, planting more trees, and dispersing relatively cheap

infrastructure like trash and pet waste receptacles and benches. All improvement options could be implemented at once or could be incrementally installed over time. This flexible approach allows for funds to be approved when deemed appropriate due to usage or changing priorities. This proposal in no way hinders the original purpose of flood mitigation. Options to consider in the construction are the use of high-quality recyclable materials like composite sawdust/plastic boardwalk planks and bottom ash, a clean white sand substitute in concrete compositions that has been used for many years including in green parkways. The use of “fake” wood planks have the advantage of not warping, splintering, or rotting, leading to longer life. Various iterations of this product are used almost exclusively and successfully throughout parks in Florida, due to the humid and sunny climate, with the disadvantage being underlying supports must be closer together due to it being more flexible than real wood. The upfront cost is greater, but over time the repair and maintenance costs are much lower. Cost estimates for commercial quality boardwalks range in price from \$40 to \$120 per square foot. Return on investment is even better for bottom

ash, as it is a product Duke Energy must pay to dispose of. It is inert, safe, and decreases material costs.

Parks do not have to be planned from their inception, and in some cases, they may be returned from other uses. Cities can be compared to living organisms, wherein the heartbeat of downtown controls the

pulsing traffic along its roadway arteries and veins. The parks in this scenario are comparatively the lungs, allowing the city to breathe after heavy rainfall, to clean polluted air with carbon-capturing trees, and provide recreational space for its people. In this way, such infrastructure is vital to the life and good health of the city.



Housing Development Toolkit

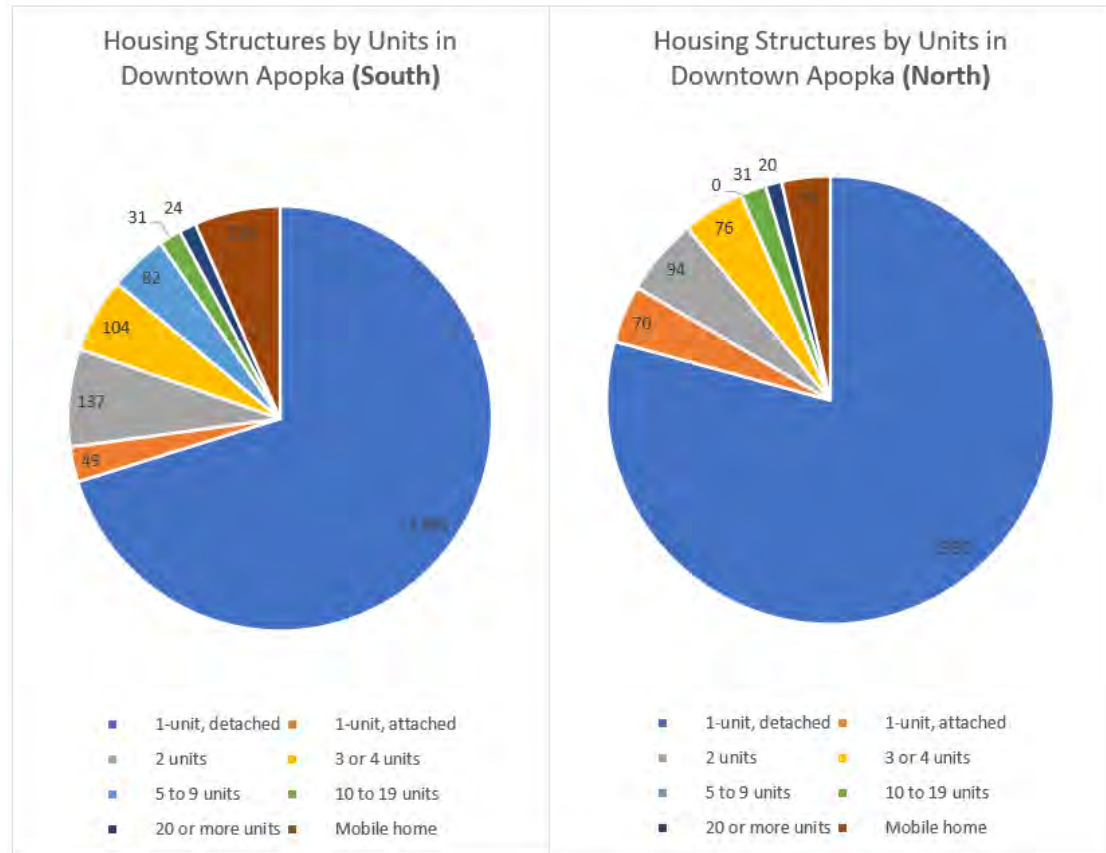


Housing Development Toolkit

Existing Conditions

Apopka has a strong foundation for single-family housing development. Apopka’s Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) has implemented two residential assistance programs, both of which are eligible for single-family homes. Over 50% of housing in Apopka in 2021 had three bedrooms, while less than 10% were one bedroom. Out of 3,521 units on the U.S. Census’ ACS housing data in 2021, 2,743 were single-family units. Multi-family housing appears to be lacking. Over 70% of housing units in the study area are single family structures.

Figure 48, Housing structures by unit type in North and South Downtown Apopka (source: American Community Survey 2021)

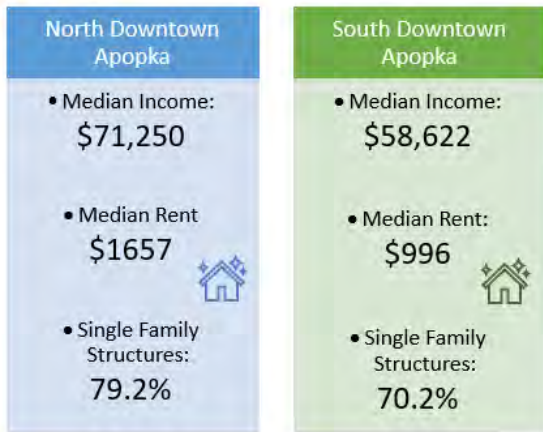


downtown Apopka does not have a variety of housing choices, which are necessary to activate a downtown district. The existing housing is located away from the Main Street (U.S. 441) corridor and is not necessarily

within walking distance of Main Street.

Affordability

Houses in the City of Apopka sold for an average of \$300,000 in



2022 and have appreciated by 130.6% in the last 10 years. Renters make up 20.9% of the Apopka population. Approximately 1% of the houses and apartments in Apopka are available to rent (Affordable Housing Online 2002-2023). The low number of homes available for rent indicates that housing may be limited.

A Stage Set for Mixed-Use The MU-D zoning throughout downtown Apopka intends to promote a mix of commercial and residential uses. There are

development standards within the zoning district that complement mixed-use developments with housing options. Ideally, this zoning should pave the way for future desired housing development. However, the most abundant future land use designation throughout the area is commercial, which only allows residential developments as planned developments with a maximum of 15 dwelling units per acre. This conflict hinders potential residential development in the study area, as it creates an additional challenge.

Figure 49, Race Composition in North and South Downtown (source: Census Data 09021)

Housing and Social Relationship

It must be recognized that housing is an essential part of life and is connected to many aspects for individuals and

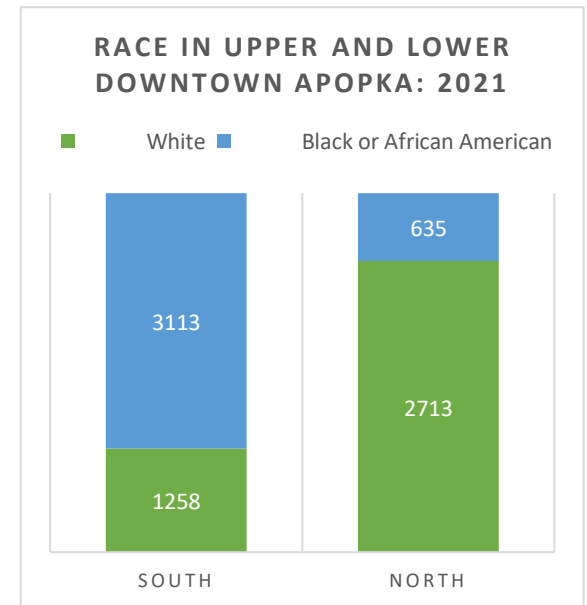
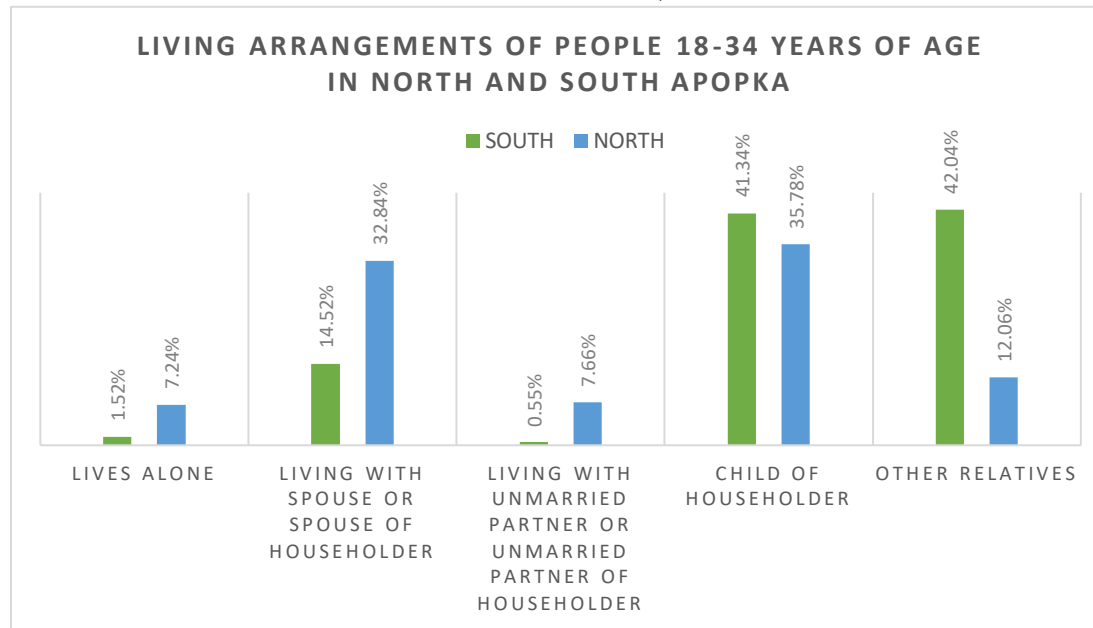


Figure 50, Living Arrangements of Adults 18 Years and Over by Age (source: Census Data 09021)



the overall community. The living arrangements of an individual can be an indicator of the housing stability in the area, when compared to population counts and housing unit counts. The demographic data of the two halves of the study area, segmented by U.S. 441, indicates high numbers of White individuals living in the north, and higher concentrations of Black individuals south of U.S. 441 (Census DP05, 2021). An analysis on the living arrangements of individuals between the ages

of 18 and 34 indicates that south downtown has a much lower percentage of people living alone than in the north half. 42% of the people in this age range in south downtown still live with other relatives that are not their parents, spouse, or unmarried partner, while 41% live with their parents. Thus, over 80% of people in this age range live with relatives, while only 48% do so in the northern half. This information is key to understanding the housing composition of Apopka, as it may indicate a need for affordable housing in south

downtown.

Based on data relating to racial composition and living arrangements, there may be a great number of Black families living together that extend past spouse and children/parent relations in south downtown. Through community collaboration, the city must determine if this is because of economic reasons relating to limited housing availability, or because of cultural practices. Understanding the determinants behind the data will

guide policy making and development in this area. The cultural practices of the residents in this area may inform policies that provide incentives for more single-family housing, or multi-family with large units to provide cohabitation. Alternatively, if the living arrangements in south downtown are mainly driven by economic factors, more affordable housing should be encouraged.

Areas for Improvement and Strategies

“Downtowns” are seldom successful without residents, as downtowns are areas that combine work, life, and play. Creating more residential uses in the study area is key to achieving many of the goals within this vision plan. Below are elements that should be improved upon to further incentivize and influence housing in the area.

Programs Based on the aims of the program, the Apopka Community Redevelopment Agency (the "CRA"), under Part III Community Redevelopment Act, Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, is to provide assistance to new single-family residential homeowners of property located within the CRA that may require impact fee payments. Thus, multi-family housing which is mostly built to rent is not covered by the act. New programs should be implemented city-wide to attract multi-family housing development.

Staff Support The challenges associated with developing in the MU-D district may be mitigated through staff support for Future Land Use Amendments when the proposed project meets the city’s goals for housing.

A Targeted Approach to housing should be implemented based on the character and historical

- Orange County Schools
- Transportation
- Recreation
- Police
- Potable Water

Impact fees Waiving or discounting certain impact fees for multi-family residential development may be beneficial in influencing its development. This strategy may be targeted, applying only to certain areas or certain density. The fees shown to the left are the fees currently waived under the single-family housing program. The proposed strategy would waive these same fees for projects that meet the required criteria.

aspects of each area within downtown Apopka. Development must be appropriate for its location and neighborhood. In areas where families cohabitate for cultural reasons, larger homes should be provided. In

Resiliency

Resiliency of housing structures with Florida's rapidly changing environment and severity of natural disasters is an important consideration. The following 4Rs can be used to determine the resiliency of a community or structure (National Institute of Building Sciences, 2023).

- Robustness
- Resourcefulness
- Recovery
- Redundancy

areas where housing is limited, a range of housing options should be provided.

Potential Housing Solutions by Type

Luxury Apartments

The construction of luxury apartments can have both positive and negative impacts on a community. On the

positive side, luxury housing projects can create jobs and stimulate economic growth, increasing tax revenue and urban renewal. Additionally, the addition of new high-end housing can raise property values in the surrounding area, benefiting existing homeowners and landlords. However, there are also conflicts associated with luxury apartments. These include the displacement of low-income residents due to gentrification, strained infrastructure, increased competition for housing, and potential changes to a neighborhood's character.

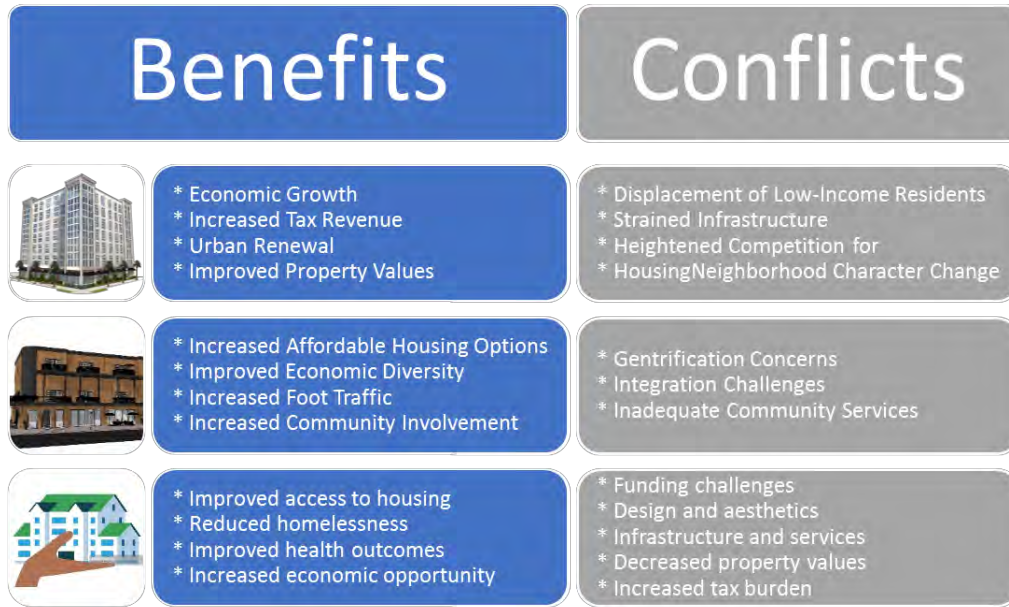
Mixed-Income Residential

Mixed-income housing can provide much-needed affordable housing options for low- and moderate-income residents in a downtown area, addressing the affordable housing crisis. Additionally, mixed-income housing can help create a more economically and age diverse community, promote social and economic integration, and increase foot traffic, contributing to a vibrant community atmosphere. Moreover, the development of mixed-income housing can encourage greater community involvement and a sense of belonging among residents. However, there are also conflicts associated with mixed-income residential

developments, including gentrification concerns, integration challenges, and inadequate community services.

housing can increase economic opportunity by allowing people to save money on housing costs and invest in education or job training. However, there are also challenges associated with affordable housing, including funding challenges, design and aesthetic concerns, and the potential strain on local infrastructure and services.

Figure 51, Benefits and Conflicts of Housing in Downtown Apopka



In summary, all types of residential developments have their benefits and challenges.

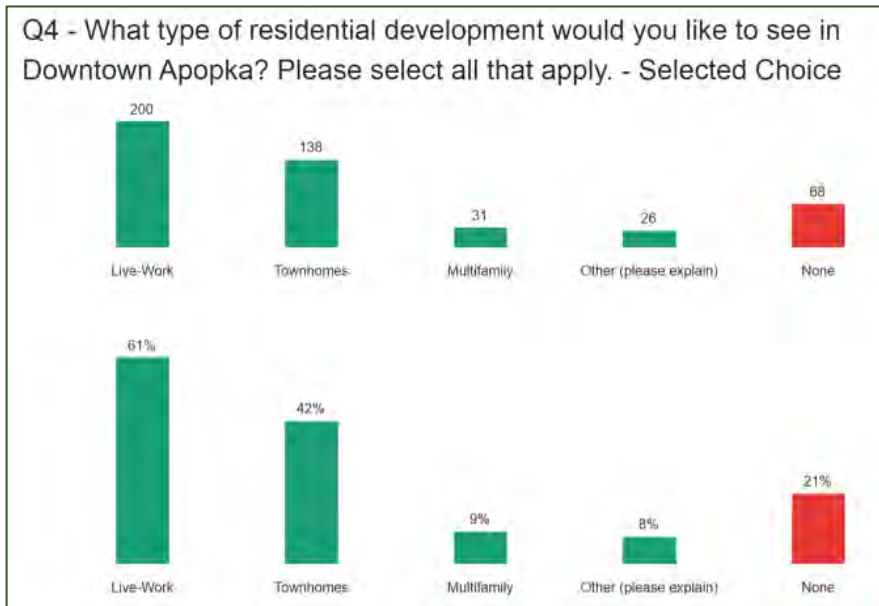
Stakeholder Feedback

As part of our public outreach process to gather stakeholder feedback on future housing developments in Downtown Apopka, we conducted a survey to understand residents' preferences for the type of residential development they would

Affordable Housing The development of affordable housing can have significant benefits for a community. Affordable housing can provide more people, including low- and moderate-income families, with access to safe and decent housing, reducing homelessness, and improving health outcomes. Additionally, affordable

like to see in the area. The survey asked respondents to choose from a range of options including Live-Work, Townhomes, Multifamily, and None. We also provided an 'Other' option for respondents to leave comments and suggestions for future housing developments in the area. The survey aimed to gather insights from a diverse

Figure 52, Results from survey conducted for this report



group of stakeholders including residents, business owners, and community leaders, and should help inform future housing development plans in Downtown Apopka.

The survey asked people about the type of residential development they would like to see in downtown Apopka. A total of 200 people answered 'Live-Work', representing 61% of the responses, while 138 people chose 'Townhomes', accounting for 42% of the

responses. 'Multifamily' was selected by 31 people, representing 9% of the responses, and 68 people chose 'None', accounting for 21% of the responses. Additionally, 26 people chose 'Other' and provided comments, with suggestions ranging from affordable single-family homes to transit-oriented design, a mix of businesses and condos, and a focus on preserving what's already in the area.

Some respondents expressed concern about the pace of development and its potential impact on traffic and the community. Others called for a selective approach

Figure 53, Example of potential townhomes in Downtown Apopka (Source: UCF Capstone Group 2023)



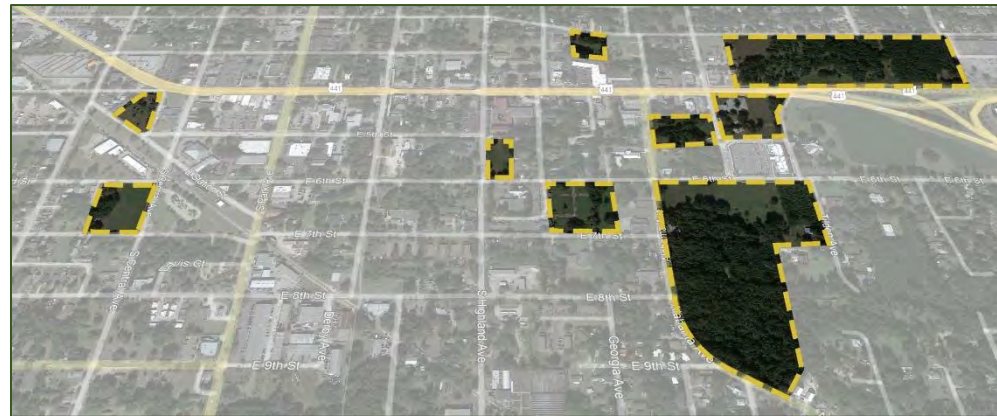
to new construction, advocating for more upscale options and limiting low-income housing. Affordable housing was a recurring theme, with several respondents calling for more options for seniors and families. A few respondents were also interested in seeing a mix of residential and commercial development, such as shops, bars, and restaurants, to support the downtown area.

Overall, the survey results suggest a range of preferences and concerns regarding residential development in downtown Apopka. While there is interest in Live-Work and Townhomes, the responses also highlight a need for affordable housing and a careful approach to new construction to ensure it does not negatively impact traffic, crime, or the community as a whole.

Project Proposal: Housing Toolkit

There has been interest in building affordable housing units, as well as luxury multi-family housing in the downtown area in the past and there are ongoing projects under review for apartment and mixed-use developments outside of the study area. This is a

Figure 54, Example of a potential parcel inventory for the housing toolkit proposal



desirable trend for the city; however, the heart of downtown still lacks housing diversity.

Creating a housing toolkit aims to eliminate barriers associated with housing development in downtown Apopka. The housing toolkit could include a map of parcels for sale in the target area that is updated regularly, funding resources including local banks, City incentives, impact fee examples, common applications, typical application review durations, and a checklist for developing housing in downtown Apopka.

Implementation

Implementing this project should be low cost, since it can be done by allocating time from existing city staff to compile the content necessary for the toolkit. Ideally, a planner who has background in housing planning should be hired to manage this project in a long-term environment. The toolkit can be designed as a flexible mechanism that can be adjusted as the city's goals for housing change.

Elements of the Housing Toolkit

- Grading scale: Criteria relating to housing development may be listed with associated points. For example, a criterion may be the size

Figure 55, Example of mixed-use housing (source: UCF Capstone Group 2023)



of the potential site. If the site is more than the minimum size, it would earn a point. Other criteria may be compatible zoning, Future Land Use, transportation connection, and so on. The grading scale may be used to help developers determine if the site is conducive to housing development.

- Funding mechanisms: Funding resources should be updated frequently and as available to assist development. Funding resources may include, but are not limited to, city programs, city incentives, and grants, along with local banks willing to help develop downtown Apopka.
- Target areas identified in the Apopka comprehensive plan
- Example communities (plans and/or images)

Successful City Toolkits for Housing

The City of Sacramento was facing an affordable housing crisis, and one of the strategies that was identified to address the issue was the conversion of vacant and underutilized properties into housing. In

response to this need, the City of Sacramento developed a Housing Development Toolkit in 2018. The goal of the toolkit was to provide resources and support to developers, property owners, and city staff regarding the process of developing housing on vacant or underutilized properties.

The Housing Development Toolkit is a one-stop resource that provides guidance and information on incentives, processes, and procedures for developing housing. The toolkit is designed to be accessible to the public, developers, property owners, and city staff, and serves as a comprehensive resource for the development process. The toolkit includes information on financing options, zoning regulations, building codes, and other important factors that impact the development of housing.

The Housing Development Toolkit has been successful in increasing the production of affordable housing units in the City of Sacramento. Since its release in 2018, the toolkit has already had a positive impact on affordable housing development in the city. In 2020, the City of Sacramento approved the development of over 1,000 new affordable housing units, which represents a

significant increase from previous years. The toolkit has streamlined the affordable housing development process in Sacramento, reducing the time and cost

Figure 56, Example from the City of Sacramento's Housing Toolkit (source: City of Sacramento, 2023)



Figure 57, Example from the City of Sacramento's Housing Toolkit (source: City of Sacramento, 2023)



associated with developing these projects. It has also fostered collaboration between stakeholders in the affordable housing sector, bringing together the City of Sacramento, community organizations, and housing developers to identify new opportunities for development and to address ongoing challenges.

In summary, the Housing Development Toolkit is an essential resource that has helped to address the

affordable housing crisis in Sacramento by providing guidance and resources on developing housing on vacant and underutilized properties. By streamlining the development process and fostering collaboration, the toolkit has increased the production of affordable housing units in the city and improved access to affordable housing for Sacramento residents.

Potential developers

Understanding the needs of your stakeholders is a tool in community growth that helps guide the process and decision making. Key stakeholders in housing development are the developers themselves. The following development companies have previously created projects in the city of Apopka or in its surrounding areas: DR Horton, Toll Bros, Ryan Homes, Mattamy Homes, Pulte Homes, Bengel Development, Taurus Investment Holdings, BlueScope Properties Group, Summit Real Estate Group, Cadence Partnership, and Rock Harbor Investments.

Summary

The Downtown Apopka Vision Plan has identified a need for a variety of housing choices to support a

successful downtown. Currently, the area is dominated by single-family housing, with limited availability of affordable rental options, luxury housing, or multi-family units.

To address these issues, we propose implementing new programs city-wide to encourage multi-family housing development. This could include waiving or discounting certain impact fees for qualifying projects and providing staff support for Future Land Use Amendments that align with the city's goals for housing. To ensure the development is appropriate for each neighborhood, a targeted approach should be taken based on the character and historical aspects of each area. In areas where families cohabitate for cultural reasons, larger homes should be provided. In areas where housing is

limited, a range of housing options should be made available.

Potential solutions could include the construction of luxury apartments, which can create jobs and stimulate economic growth, but also raise concerns about gentrification and strained infrastructure. It is important to carefully consider the potential impacts and ensure that any new developments are inclusive and accessible to a broad range of members within the community. Ultimately, by implementing these proposals, we believe we can increase the availability of affordable and diverse housing options in downtown Apopka, supporting the community's vision for a vibrant and successful downtown area.



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Appendix 1: Survey and Survey Results

Apopka Outreach Survey

Start of Block: Survey

Thank you for participating in this survey, which is being conducted by the University of Central Florida's Urban and Regional Planning Capstone Program. The goal of this research is to better understand how to improve the City of Apopka's downtown area.

For the purposes of this research, Downtown Apopka extends from W 1st Street down to E 6th Street, and from Hawthorne Avenue to Sheeler Avenue (see map below).

Page Break



Q1 What do you like about Downtown Apopka? Please select all that apply.

- Diversity of businesses
 - Small town feel
 - Friendly community
 - Transportation connectivity
 - West Orange Bike Trail
 - Its history
 - Other (please explain)
-

None of the above

Page Break

Q2 Is there anything about Apopka that makes you proud? Please explain in the text box below. If nothing about Apopka makes you proud, please type "NA."

Page Break



Q3 What do you think would help make Downtown Apopka better? Please select all that apply.

- More green space/landscaping
 - More shade/canopy
 - Benches
 - Outdoor dining
 - Parks
 - Bike paths
 - Public art
 - More restaurants
 - More businesses
 - Places to live
 - Better roads
 - Other (please explain)
-

None of the above



Q4 What type of residential development would you like to see in Downtown Apopka? Please select all that apply.

- Townhomes
 - Multifamily
 - Live-Work
 - Other (please explain)
-

None

Page Break



Q5 Based on the images below, which types of community spaces would you prefer to see in Downtown Apopka? Please select all that apply.

Community garden

Sensory playground

Seating area

None of the above

Page Break



Q6 How do you think vehicle traffic could be improved in Downtown Apopka? Please select all that apply.

- Improved bike lanes
 - Slower speeds
 - Speed tables
 - Safety campaigns
 - Narrow lanes
 - Landscaped medians
 - Repaired curbs
 - Street art
 - Other (please explain)
-

None of the above

Page Break



Q7 Which transportation options would you use if they were safe, convenient, and accessible?
Please select all that apply.

- Bicycling
 - Walking
 - Taking the bus
 - Riding electric scooters/electric bikes
 - Another form of transportation (please explain)
-
- None of the above

Page Break



Q8 How safe or unsafe do you currently feel in Downtown Apopka? If you do feel unsafe, please explain why.

- Very safe
- Somewhat safe
- Somewhat unsafe (please explain)
- Very unsafe (please explain)

Page Break

Q9 Would signs like this encourage you to use active transportation or visit Downtown Apopka more often?

- Yes, definitely
- Yes, probably
- No, probably not
- No, definitely not

Page Break



Q10 What types of businesses/amenities are missing from Downtown Apopka?

Page Break

Q11 Do you have any ideas or concerns you would like to share about the City of Apopka and its downtown area?

End of Block: Survey

Survey Results

Q1. What do you like about Downtown Apopka? Please select all that apply.

Response	#	%
Small town feel	162	50%
West Orange Bike Trail	128	39%
Friendly community	88	27%
Its history	85	26%
Diversity of businesses	42	13%
Transportation connectivity	26	8%
Other (please explain)	29	9%
None of the above	67	20%

Q2. Is there anything about Apopka that makes you proud? Please explain in the text box below. If nothing about Apopka makes you proud, please type "NA."

Response

Community that takes care of each other. I also like how we take care of nature, there are many beautiful trails in apopka

The Apopka Chamber makes me proud.

The people

NA

NA

Small town atmosphere

Police and helping the needy with food , clothes and etc.

Rich history, diversity

The music and activities out on Jason Dwelley and the Amphitheater, Kitland Park, the new streetlights and the walkover, the courthouse and Odd Guys/Propagate

Amphitheater and our kit,and park downtown

Na

Small town feel

Na

Na

The history including the Wekiva State Park & the train turnaround

Canon / social propagate house, future food hall

Still having a semblance of small town feel

Natural beauty (springs, lake), rural feel

Future of Apopka

NA

Community

Na

Amphitheater and Northwest Recreation Centet

N/a

It's history and what it used to be

NN

It's history, community events, service clubs, newspaper, friendly people.

NA

Keeping some of the history of the town

The fact that we all pull together to help when something happens to our community or to a member in the community

Trees

Diversity

NA

I love my home and neighborhood in RSR. The people are great, and there is beautiful scenery and a more nature oriented feel to the area. That said, it is seriously lacking options for nicer dining, activities, and shopping. It is like the City is trying to hold itself back and only cater to low-income residents by flooding the area with fast food places, gas stations, and dollar stores.

used to be before all the development

It's diversity

NA

Small town feel and events at Kit Land Nelson Park

Kelly park

Growing and expanding

NEW SHOPS

It's nature open to the public

NA

Wekiva High School

Access to wekiva state park

NA

The people! This town has heart!

Na

Talented sport players and famous musicians, historical landmarks, small town values

Jason Dwelley Park, Legends Field and the amphitheater

Na

NA

Historic buildings and lawns, park, and older looking designs with 2 story max building.

I love the family events in Apopka

NA

NA

n/a

Our farming communities

History

NA

The ability to be a small town with a lot of shopping and dining opportunities.

Some small businesses are doing great things

Kelly Park School and Apopka High

The natural beauty

Na

Ethnic diversity

NA

Community

Close knit community. Small town vibes.

NA

Blue Darters

NA

NA

NA

NA

Na

Community feel, but it's getting to become cliquish

NA

The amphitheater, and the quality of Acts

NA it's embarrassing

Our commitment to family and moral values. The friendliness of our people.

History

Community

Na

NA

Focus on recreation for the community

Na

The ampitheatre

N/A

Small town where people care about others

Na

Na

NA

Community events

NA

The citizens

Would not call it Apopka proud. We live near Kelly park and enjoy the amount of nature and animals.

People

Love the mix of subdivisions and rural areas. Love the small town feel at Saturday Sounds.

NA

N/a

Small town support

Family:Community Oriented

Kyle Becker. Diane Valasquez. Various business owners.

Location

NA

Na

N/A

N/a

Homey

I love the diversity and friendliness among the residents

Quiet.

Rural character

NA

NA

na

na

NA

The history of the town, the diversity.

Na

history

I see community groups working to make the city better

It's a very pleasant place to live. People aren't as rude and nasty as they are in Orlando.

Closeness of things

NA

Springs and trails

NA

Na

Community

NA

Amphitheater. New business brought in by business owners.

West Orange trail bridge

NA

Its diversity

Good people that care and want change for a better community

Yea, the local police and all they do to help the community

5th street

Nothing anymore.

Community

Close knit community

Apopka is a close, small town family oriented community

We are Apopka Proud because of our rich History.

NA

NA

**Q3. What do you think would help make Downtown Apopka better?
Please select all that apply.**

Response	#	%
More restaurants	261	80%
Outdoor dining	251	77%
More green space/landscaping	186	57%
Public art	170	52%
More shade/canopy	168	51%

Parks	155	47%
Bike paths	110	34%
Benches	90	28%
More businesses	0	0%
Places to live	0	0%
Better roads	0	0%
Other (please explain)	71	22%
None of the above	2	1%

Q4. What type of residential development would you like to see in Downtown Apopka? Please select all that apply.

Response	#	%
Live-Work	200	61%
Townhomes	138	42%
Multifamily	31	9%
Other (please explain)	26	8%
None	68	21%

Q5. Based on the images below, which types of community spaces would you prefer to see in Downtown Apopka? Please select all that apply.

Response	#	%
Seating area	217	66%
Sensory playground	157	48%
Community garden	136	42%
None of the above	28	9%

Q6. How do you think vehicle traffic could be improved in Downtown Apopka? Please select all that apply.

Response	#	%
Landscaped medians	218	67%
Improved bike lanes	120	37%
Repaired curbs	109	33%
Speed tables	89	27%
Slower speeds	71	22%
Street art	69	21%
Safety campaigns	59	18%
Narrow lanes	19	6%
Other (please explain)	56	17%
None of the above	19	6%

Q7. Which transportation options would you use if they were safe, convenient, and accessible? Please select all that apply.

Response	#	%
Walking	231	71%
Bicycling	182	56%
Riding electric scooters/electric bikes	114	35%
Taking the bus	56	17%
Another form of transportation (please explain)	20	6%
None of the above	34	10%

Q8. How safe or unsafe do you currently feel in Downtown Apopka? If you do feel unsafe, please explain why. - Selected Choice

Response	#	%
Very safe	37	11%
Somewhat safe	109	33%
Somewhat unsafe (please explain)	125	38%
Very unsafe (please explain)	56	17%

Q8. Somewhat unsafe (please explain)

Response

Shootings and crime

There are lots of transients in the downtown area, some with mental health difficulties

We are new to the area so haven't had a lot of experiences downtown.

There are not a lot of businesses that drive shopping or leisure, so there are few travelers out on foot for just wandering and enjoying the day

Overly wide and fast vehicle lanes. Very little safe, secure space for walking and biking.

Traffic. I've also seen homeless people smoking illegal substances and fighting, which makes me nervous.

The amount of business fronts that look old and in disrepair. Homeless on every street corner it seems as well.

Homeless, low income amenities

Just uncomfortable without public areas

Large amounts of homeless people everywhere, feels unsafe when walking my dog and

The foot traffic is driven mostly by necessity, rather than people that want to be in the area

After dark, deserted sidewalks

crime, traffic

I don't feel safe after dark due to the large number of people that appear to be drug users that frequent the park and local businesses

Growing homeless population, not very businesses open at night, close to high crime area

Dangerous traffic, looks run down like some place I'd get mugged, plus there's nothing to do unless I want an oil change or fast food

Large amount of homeless

Vagrants

Too many homeless congregating under the bridge by Dunkin!!

MANY HOMELESS PEOPLE. TRAFFIC IS TOO BAD TO WALK THE AREA

Too much traffic in too much crime nearby

homeless everywhere asking for handouts

I'm a woman, I would not walk alone in downtown Apopka after 6pm.

I saw two vagrants fighting in the middle of the road; Not very well lit at night. South Downtown has high crime rates

Safe during the day, unsafe at night

There is a large homeless population and while that can't be helped it sometimes makes downtown feel unsafe with lots of clear signs of poverty

Lots of accidents are happening

The homeless

Constantly have to look out on your surroundings. Homeless people are everywhere. A place for them to go. Help them.

Just look at the people who walk the streets!!

Abundant vagrant population

A lot of run down/unkept areas, dark areas

Certain areas of Apopka don't give me the impression that it's a safe place to walk through.

Downtown traffic is too busy and hectic, especially along US 441. Drivers don't change driving habits on side streets.

South Apopka is known for crime and is close to downtown. I think South Apopka needs attention, development, education, and empowering programs (not handouts but handups. Also, we have a decent amount of a homeless population (someone who just wants to milk the system) - I think we need to address that situation with both care and wisdom. I also think jaywalking is possibly a problem, especially for Main Street and Park Avenue.

Traffic, crime

With homelessness downtown, along with rundown business and pawn shops I feel the current local business doesn't necessarily align with the same type of clientele, there is going to need to be a huge overhaul in business

Crime in area seems to be on the rise

Lots of homeless and lots of fast traffic

Always unsafe where cars are

There are several areas where homeless people hang out or camp

Too many people hanging around with no purpose.

Vagrants, crime

Roads too busy, area needs to be cleaned up.

Unfamiliarity with area

Dim/non-existent lighting, few family-friendly restaurants, notable homeless/panhandling issue

It's too close to gang territory.

Cannot be there alone. Lighting. Homeless. Alert systems in place

Rundown, High traffic, high speed area

Dark

Too much car traffic

A lot of homeless people

high traffic volumes, homeless people

Crime and homelessness are common. Very low income, education level comprising most of the downtown residential district. Businesses and policies are geared towards maintaining status quo, nothing changes for the better.

The local government does nothing to try to help or solve the homeless population downtown

Way to many aggressive homeless people ! Just inforce the law. It's very easy

Too much panhandling

Lots of homeless people. So close to south Apopka makes me feel uncomfortable unfortunately. Need to get rid of the Burger King and couple other sketchy places downtown

Homeless situation, vagrants, increase in crime

too dark and many homeless people

There seems to be a constant number of homeless people milling about. We need a program to help them become independent or provide any mental health care for mental stability.

Homeless people are all over and lots of shootings

A lot of rundown businesses. Sidewalks too close to traffic.

homelessness, dingy stores and restaurants

Too much violence in Apopka all around

High transient presence

Fast food, motels, and laundromats plaguing 441.

The homeless in the local parks

There has been lots of shootings recently in Apopka. Including the fair.

After dark specially. Apopka needs to do something about empty places, and homeless traffic that does not follow safe driving habits

Homeless population and beggars on the corners, very busy traffic

Please define downtown Apopka. If it is 441 by City Hall, somewhat safe

a lot of riffraff can be seen everywhere. i see drug deals, and disrespectful hoodlums

Not very clean or welcoming

A lot of homeless are wandering around. There is also no where to walk to (i.e. restaurants/bars) Would not walk in this area at night. I am a female and am uncomfortable even parking in the downtown area and walking into a business or city hall.

Run down, and old looking

The area feels old and somewhat outdated. There are lots of homeless people around as well. Many shops in the area look rundown.

I wouldn't feel comfortable walking further than from my car to a business at night

Homeless hangouts are problematic

Unsafe at night. Lots of warehouses and problems with homelessness near Trail

Unsafe at night, safe near 3 odd guys/propagate.

Large homeless population

Not a good reputation

Homeless hanging out, camping and sleeping, trash-pee-poop

i feel most unsafe when in close proximity to lots of fast car traffic. Any sidewalk in town usually fits that bill.

Gun shots almost every night.

Nearby proximity of high crime area, poor lighting, no dedicated patrol officers to area

Shady characters walking around. I'm sure they're fine but it's still unsettling as a woman

Too many accidents and homeless people

Just not someplace you want to be after dark

Too many shootings lately

Traffic makes it unsafe for pedestrians

drugs

too many homeless

Homelessness and gun violence is high downtown Apopka.

Pedestrians are being hit by cars, very close to south apopka a poor and high crime area, a lot of homeless people

A selection of homeless people, a lot of traffic

Everything is far apart and it's not walkable - since there aren't many others walking from place to place, I don't feel comfortable

traffic is bad, and the homeless population there needs shelters. I've been harassed on the WOT

overpass in downtown APK and would not bring my daughter through that area
Too many homeless people

Drug addicts and homeless around. Lots of trash, run down businesses

I'm a women I will never feel fully safe

Doesn't feel designed for pedestrians; needs central and busy area where others are also walking around or spending time

I'm new to Apopka so I don't know the area well yet.

I live in north apopka and feel safe but I grew up going to apopka HS and I know the number streets especially heading toward sheeler is not the safest place to be after dark.

There are quite a few homeless people that walk the streets. Lots of fast food so walking is unsafe from all the cars coming and going to all the restaurants along 441. I wouldn't feel comfortable walking around the City Hall area to go to the existing businesses. A walkable area to socialize would be welcome.

Some areas are run down or vacant.

Low lights, no businesses, no people around

Lots of homeless people

the surrounding area really isn't the best

Peoples driving is what scares me the most and the crime in the S Apopka area that spills into the main area of Apopka

Too many homeless people roam the streets at night

I live on Monroe avenue sometimes to make ends meet I do Uber and Lyft driving some passengers who I'm sure were drug addicts told me they get some of their drugs from blue jeans bar bartender. Had my car broken into twice somebody trying to get in on the side of the house . My neighbor saw him through the side of the window and him and his two sons came out and asked him what he was doing he was trying to get in my window. and people in the other side of the cemetery in the middle of the night scary .

Q8. Very unsafe (please explain)

Response

Too many homeless people and not enough police in the area. People also speed a lot, I wouldn't feel safe walking in the sidewalk

Have you seen the people who walk the sidewalks??

Lots of homeless. Poor business's

Ghetto with too many homeless, drug addicts and beggars present.

A lot of crime (south apopka) and homeless, drug users

See previous written answers and take a survey of downtown business owners

Tons of traffic, regular accidents, lots of homeless, not pedestrian friendly

Crime and the homeless

Downtown Apopka is designed for cars, not humans

Too many homeless/some drug use. Have been followed by a homeless man thru Walgreens. Manager had to have him leave.

gangs/drugs

There are unhoused persons and vagabonds around even the park. There is no security guard around.

Homeless and the numbered streets

homeless, drugs and illegals are everywhere

High crime rate, lots of unreported shootings

Over the last couple years the increase of homeless and mentally unstable beings wandering the streets. Vagrants panhandling or sleeping in parks, around buildings, etc.

Sketchy area, too many accidents

The street lighting is very poor in all areas. We need brighter lights that are placed closetogether

High crime rate and poor lighting and police presence.

Homeless people living in the park and on the streets. Nauti Lobstah restaurant has homeless people using their hose outside to bath. There is human feces on the sidewalk. The whole downtown needs a facelift. Too many Dollar Stores, Tire Stores, Fast Food restaurants! I have lived here for 13 years. The downtown is gross. We need a planner to re-design the whole area. South Apopka is a nightmare. Killings happening all the time!

Homeless. Crime.

South Apopka is scary

There are homeless people and drug users walking down every other street.

Homeless and uncaring politicians.

Traffic is crazy. No bike lanes. Sidewalks are right against the road

We need to fix the homeless problem and figure out a way to get all the idiots that jaywalk across Main Street to stop. There is a bridge, but it's not used.

The homeless population has exploded. Robberies and theft is through the roof.

There are a lot of homeless people and pedestrians crossing the main road. The south side of Apopka is unsafe.

I had my car stolen and the person shoots at me when he sees me because I got it back without

Tons of homeless/drug addicts. There are low quality fast food and smoke shops and low class motels that attract very sketchy people. I'm scared to even go to CVS or Walgreens during the day. I do not ever go at night - I am a 29 year old woman by the way.

the police

Homeless population..aggressive drivers

many homeless, run down businesses and we'll as buildings...it's just not inviting and crime is high It's dirty, looks like the walking dead with all the homeless and people on drugs

There isn't anything to be afraid of.

Shootings, homelessness, no police presence

Homeless, alcoholics, vagrants, crime in the area

Many homeless crazies

South Apopka has a high crime rate, and is only a few blocks from Downtown Apopka

Too many homeless

To many bad incidents downtown

Downtown Apopka is dirty with way too many seedy places. Way too many homeless people with nowhere to go.

Many homeless

Homeless population and criminals as well as criminals driving

You constantly get harassed walking, or almost hit by cars

Traffic is terrible and no one who goes there stays for long, it's not a destination. Not entirely related but seriously, how is Burger King still open?

many homeless and lots of crime

large homeless population, lots of crime

Crime and homeless

Homeless population is out of control

Q9. Would signs like this encourage you to use active transportation or visit Downtown Apopka more often?

Response	#	%
Yes, definitely	69	21%
Yes, probably	144	44%
No, probably not	86	26%
No, definitely not	28	9%

Q10. What types of businesses/amenities are missing from Downtown Apopka?

Response

Dining

Coffee shop, winery, beauty stores like Sephora and restaurants like Cheesecake Factory

Small restaurants with outside seating.

Nice restaurants and bars, music and dance venues, meeting spaces, outdoor markets, gathering spaces v

Unique Dining, bakeries, jewelers, attractive store fronts, Art works, green space, and landscaped parks ickuding a focus on young children

NA

Family and fine dining

shade

Target

Restaurants, shopping

Shops, diverse restaurants, pubs/bars

Small businesses that draw in the community and visitors to walk the area, more restaurants (VARIETIES), pedestrian right of way flashing light lanes, breweries/venues/galleries, walking paths, record store, antiques

Small business that makes people feel like stopping and walking around. Cafes, green space a cohesive feel to the buildings

Restaurants with live music

Walkable urban businesses. Small, diverse restaurants. Daily services.

Fine dining restaurants, shade

Higher end retail and restaurants. Family friendly areas and or spaces as well.

Restaurants

Nothing

Shopping. Outdoor dining. Smaller events.

Everything

Lacking nutritious food options, small locally owned businesses. Activities (running, playground area has too many homeless people it feels unsafe).

More communal spaces

Dining, independent/unique shops, places to hang out/things to do, family friendly options

Dining options. Parks. Bike trails/pathways

Clothing stores

Nice shopping and nice restaurants no more gas stations or fast food

Cleanliness and safety

More Nice restaurants,, safe, well lit and maintained off street parking, boutique shopping off street.park

Shopping, dining, entertainment. Plenty of opportunity.

I don't know.

Local boutique food & shopping

Many

Off street Parking

Restaurants. Specialty retailers. Night-time entertainment

Casual dining open on weekend and weekend nights. Shopping of small gift shops.

Sit down dining- NOT fast food, shopping

Clothing, crafts, home decor, family oriented, restaurant

Good restaurants- something other than fast food, fried food and bar food, activities/activity center (axe throwing, painting, Keg Social type of thing), shopping (can be independently owned or larger retail - just SOMETHING OTHER THAN DOLLAR STORES!!), landscaping & clean storefronts (everything looks run down and falling apart - but the main thing is restaurants! We have to drive at least 20-25 minutes to get something other than fast food, fried food, or bar food unless we go to Backroom. Backroom is great and always full - why aren't we putting in more places like that? Maybe not necessarily as expensive - Seasons 52, Millers, Bahama Breeze. We need nicer bars other than just biker bars that only serve fried food. What about a wine bar with tapas? And please, please, please can we get a Starbucks? Closest one to RSR is 25 minutes away. That is over an hour to get there, get your order, and get back home. Don't want to bring in big retail and name brands? Cool - don't - go for the quaint village with independently owned shops and restaurants vibe. Look up Peddler's Village in Lahaska, PA. It's in the middle of nowhere, surrounded by fields and farms, but it's always packed in Peddler's Village, drawing in crowds to browse its unique shops and restaurants without disturbing the quaint country feel of the surrounding area. They hold festivals, such as the Halloween scarecrow contest, Christmas gingerbread display, and strawberry festival that brings the community together to be creative and have fun. Just because we don't want to disturb the sprawled out, rolling hills, and natural vibe of Apopka doesn't mean we have to associate Apopka with poverty and only fill it with budget friendly shops and eateries aimed towards low-income individuals. Apopka is growing and bringing in a different crowd. Please try to feed some of their needs and desires.

higher class not dollar stores!

Restaurants, not chain places, ice cream shop "scoops" shops, coffee shops etc

Restaurants, Bars

Can't think of any at the moment

Upscale anything

Upscale restaurants, small shops, walk in bakery, waterfront dining, Trader Joes.

upscale restaurants

More small restaurants, sushi, healthy foods. Another park area, seating. Lounge with outside

seating and music.

NA

Everything but taco bell, dollar stores and auto part shops

Nice restaurants, record stores, diverse shopping

small local businesses

Restaurants and boutiques!

Restaurants

Bike parking

clothing, shoes, tag agency/dmv

Food Hall

Restaurants, nice bars

restaurants & retail

Variety of small shops and businesses. Mainly offices and government.

Diverse restaurants and boutique shopping

Good restaurants and boutiques

Small family shops/shopping area with shops in walkable distances

Shops

outdoor cafe's

More places to eat, local places to shop, a TARGET!

Ok

Business similar to those in downtown Mt. Dora.

Small dining and shopping opportunities similar to Winter Garden, keeping it local in Apopka.

Yoga or Pilates studio, ice cream parlor, restaurants that are NOT a fast food chain

fresh ingredient restaurants

More diversity on the type of stores.

Bowling

Dining and entertainment

Well you'll already messed up by putting in too many fast foods places...no more of that. That's one way to keep people unhealthy...feed them fast food. No more Winn Dixies. 2 in 4 miles are too many. It doesnt matter what people want, the city does what it wants.

Somewhere to listen to music and dance, shops and restaurant that are appesling

Sit down restaurants but this is generally driven by having a more stable lunch work force and not just night time traffic.

Restaurants, Craft Beer Bars, and upscale shopping

boutiques, specialty food markets, outdoor dining

Night time business (activities)

Outdoor dining with monthly or weekly events

Dining options and entertainment.

Arts and Civic event venues

Full service, sit down restaurants. There is way too much fast food.

Live entertainment, cafés, bookstores, mom and Pop venues

Neighborhood services, mom and pop restaurants

Mid class sit down restaurants

High end restaurant, outdoor dining, nicer retail

Clothing stores, nice sit down restaurants, family friendly entertainment, agriculture, technical / vocational learning, retail, pro sports, hobby shops, etc

Boutique stores

Dining, after-hours entertainment,

Sit down reputable restaurants

Good quality restaurants with nightlife and outdoor seating, places to feel safe and enjoy bringing your family, live music, cute boutique shoppes, youth interactive community type things like a local music shoppe with classes, ice cream shoppes

Small owner/creator stores (like Winter Garden)

Na

Restaurants

Nice restaurants and boutique shops

Non-chain retail & non-chain restaurants.

High end dining and cute little shops like Mt dora

Dont know

Family owned small restaurants, healthy eating options, any of quality beside a fast-food row

A nice clean restaurant that isn't fast food. Within a mile we have Wendy's, Popeyes, McDonalds, Dunkin Donuts, KFC, Burger King, Whaffle House...the help at the places is terrible and they are dirty inside and have no curb appeal. Apopka is a drive through city. I have lived here for 13 years. Still no City Center...they have been talking about it the whole time I have been here. We live Winter Harden, Sanford, Cranes Roost...wi

Shoping and food

Non-chain restaurants, farmers market

Craft cocktail bars, nice beer and wine shops , nice restaurants, cute boutiques

Good sized family restaurant

A walking area with little shops. We enjoy going to downtown Mount Dora or Winter Garden.

Restaurants, bars, shopping, theater, SHADE

Small shops. Local dining options.

NA

Outdoor dining, retail, dog park, wine bar,

Gift shops, bars

Unique shopping

Quality restaurants and walkable areas

Arcades, book stores, billiards for kids

Resurants

Family and local businesses.

Cafes, mom & pop boutiques, various shops

Family friendly

Food Hall

Shops boutiques

Restaurants / bars / breweries / local farmers market feel stores

Unsure

Modern Restaurants

Diverse restaurants

Non Chain Restaurants and restaurants in general

services

Upscale restaurants and bars

Sandwich shops, coffee shop, vintage clothes, music, art, anything cultural or educational.

Restaurants coffee shops boutiques

starbucks / chick fil a

Sit-down restaurants in well-lit areas, family-friendly restaurants/businesses. Downtown Winter Garden is a good example of what I would like to see

I think we have mostly everything we need to not have to go to Orlando.

More up to date food entities. A variety is needed. Hopefully one day we can have an Apopka Village similar to Winter Garden or Winter Park village

Types of businesses that are not crammed into the already tight downtown area. Businesses which have masses of cars queued up to get coffee and blocking traffic are a prime example.

Outdoor scenic and family friendly spots

Shops, spaces to hold street fairs. Restaurants

Starbucks

Restaurant bars

Food, nightlife, gathering spots

Restaurants, ice cream shop, gift shops

Walking district. Too much traffic to enjoy. And new city center was lumped right in one of the worst parts.

bike racks, public restrooms

Fine dining, eateries, any non fast food restaurant, boutiques, fountains, community spaces

Restaurants and original shops

Unique restaurants, groomed landscapes, outdoor seating

Quality family restaurant (fast food does not count)

Bars

Large scale dining. Convenient walkable shopping. Less dollar stores, taco bells and auto parts stores.

Newer restaurants. Get rid of the crappy fast food places. Downtown needs a face lift. New shops/ boutiques.

Family owned Shops

Families spots, casual restaurants, natural parks, nice shopping stores, clothes stores, libraries ke downtown Winter Garden

More shopping .Less small restaurant

Just use downtown Winter Garden as a blueprint. We need more restaurants, cute little boutique shops. Not a Karate building or sketchy smoke shop. We need more things like Propagate Social House.

Bistros

Retail shops, restaurants and bars

Mom & Pop shops, cafes, live music venues

Higher end restaurants, clothing and home boutiques, children's museum, art museum, art gallery,things/places to stop and look and shop, regular festivals or a reason to go there

0

Spruce it up to a beautiful happy life

The old furniture store, feed store, greyhound bus stop

outdoor dining

Nice restaurants, pool with swim lessons

Sit down restaurant

Small shops and restaurants. Refer to Plant Street in Winter Garden.

Friendly restaurants, small shops, benches, green space

There isn't anything inviting..it is trashy, homeless everywhere. It needs to be cleaned up, updated with a clean modern feel. Woodstock GA is a great example .. they have made great strides and continue with aggressive improvements.

Butcher, Small grocery, shops like in Mt. Dora

Restaurant, shops, nightlife in general that is centrally located. Everything is spread out, nothing in walking distance

TARGET, ETC ANYTHING BUT FAMILY DOLLAR

Entertainment

Newer restaurants, kid friendly activities

Office space

Mid to upscale retail/restaurants/service. It's all fast food or run down establishments

Shops/restaurants

Nice Restaurants

more restaurants

Specialty retail shops, artisan boutiques, leisure places (escape rooms, etc).

Restaurants/shops

Day spas, paintingwith a twist, Olive Garden, target, outside mall, old navy

Unsure

Lounges, bars kids recreational space

Small restaurants and music

Local restaurants, boutiques, healthier options (not more chains or fast food, no more dollar stores)

Restaurants. NOT FAST FOOD OR CHAINS □□□□

unique retail stores and restaurants as well as sufficient parking

outside dining

More family amenities kid friendly

none

Mom and pop stores

Jewelry repair shop

Restaurant options

Parking, local and/or upscale coffee shops and restaurants, ice cream choices, bike paths, shade, maintained landscaping, benches in shade,

Not sure

Murals

Chick Fil A, Restaurants

Sitting down Restaurant

Cafes, local restaurants, boutique shops

boutique shopping, restaurants with outdoor seating, block parties

Center where people that are unemployed or homeless could receive and learn adequate skills and resources to better help them provide and regain normal living is instability not remaining in crisis

Restaurants, pubs, shops of a wide variety

Community feeling, gift shops, cafes

Meeting facilities

community vibe is missing altogether. is mostly fast food and riffraff

We need something like a smaller version of the Winter Garden Village here that has shopping and restaurants and more

bars/restaurants/outdoor dining

entertainment

Nicer restaurants, boutique clothing shops, breakfast diner, wine store

Good Restaurants

Small shops that are walkable, ice cream shop with area to gather with friends, walkable restaurants with outdoor games while you wait (like the upstairs at the Whole Enchilada), wine bar with nice selection and comfortable gathering places.

Sit down restaurants and diverse businesses

Local restaurants, easy parking, clean facilities

Restaurants; mom and pop shops, area for live music scene

Restaurants!!!!

food

Quality, locally owned businesses.

Teen center

Restaurants, coffee shops, retail businesses, ice cream shops, cleanliness, esthetically pleasing visuals, entertainment

Higher end restaurants and shops

Good restaurants, shopping

Night life

Locally owned modern city businesses

Walkable shops and dining.

Diversity of dining out

More seating and shade

Attractive storefronts well maintained and inviting

Restaurants sports bar coffee houses and businesses that support the trail

Restaurants, sports bar

cultural center, marketplace for smaller businesses to sell

Restaurants, black owned businesses, retail

Retail, boutiques, restaurants, family friendly activities

Restaurants, spa, hotel

Local art

art stores, lunch spots

Entertainment

Na

Good places to eat, unattractive poorly maintained storefronts

Gift shop

More locally owned restaurants

Retail clothing, Knick knacks etc

I don't know

electric bikes, zero waste home goods, art galleries, makerspaces, walkability, shade

Dining, entertainment, theater for plays, shops

Everything. Coffee shops, boutiques, entertainment, things that would create an experience.

Honestly I don't go out enough to have an opinion on this LOL

Quaint shops, bistros

Restaurants, more stores to shop at like target, Bath and Bodyworks, like in downtown Winter Garden.

restaurants

Outdoor dining

Q11. Do you have any ideas or concerns you would like to share about the City of Apopka and its downtown area?

Response

Hopefully we can get a downtown area like Winter garden, Winter park and Oviedo. More police enforcing speed limits. people speed way too much on 441.

I am for improvements however still want to keep the charm of an old town if possible with the improvements.

The downtown area is Main Street/441. Buildings are run down and unattractive, as is lighting. No presence of law enforcement. When I go downtown mount Dora, College Park, Sanford, Winter Park, that is where I wish I could live. Restore Apopka on the side streets and make a gathering community people friendly, like the area where 3 Odd Guys and Propogate are. Kudos to them for taking over Halls and having live entertainment. We need more built up in that place

Develop a branding and vision for the city around its plant/nursery history along with new focus on environment and lake Apopka. City center needs to be the focal point of this effort and extended throughout the entire municipality

Downtown Apopka looks like it needs help

Until the city gets control of the homeless and chronic vagrants, all of the cosmetic improvements will be unsuccessful.

Address numbers that are BIG and VISIBLE while driving and trying to locate a business.

Traffic concerns. That is already jammed up

I feel redundant in saying so, but NO MORE LARGE FRANCHISES. We have so many dollar stores, grocery stores and fast food restaurants. I love Apopka and bought here because I grew up here, but I go to Winter Garden, Winter Park, Mount Dora and Sanford for any leisure or fun. The atmosphere, the varied businesses, the environment as a whole feels like a community because you go to these places for their unique bars, shops, galleries and events. Chain restaurants will only seal the deal that Apopka's downtown is just fast food row you can get gas and keep driving down 441 to somewhere with more personality.

Don't go downtown or walk the trail without being armed.

Thank you for conducting this study. We'd like to see compact, urban development that is walkable and bikeable. Mount Dora, Clermont and Winter Garden have set a high bar. We can do even better n Apopka 😊

I think we have missed the boat on large city centers. We should focus on natural beauty of trees, parks and our springs to make Apopka desirable and unique, so that we attract excellent people who want to live here.

The amount of homeless taking up home in wooded areas. The drive into down town apopka is not appealing ie Key Foods plaza, the plaza where Pizza Hut is, as well as the Big Lots plaza are barren spaces with low income shopping for the most part but not unkept or updated or appealing. Spending on side streets and increased traffic in these areas with no plans to mitigate it with the increased development.

Make more like downtown Winter Garden with various restaurants and social shops for families.

More upscale, close all the trashy businesses

Too much fast food places this impact our daily life's. Apopka does not prompt a healthy lifestyle. We could increase dog friendly places and make it enjoyable to walk through. More lights in highland Avenue and near the Christian academy.

I think what is being done with the small area containing Three Odd Guys, The Axe Hole, and Propagate is a big step on the right direction. More businesses of this ilk would be another big step.

Would love a place where adults like to hang out with GREAT food, good craft (local) beer and wine and still be able to allow the kids to play (winter Garden has great examples of this).

Would be great if more of Apopka was golf cart friendly.

No more fast food, dollar stores or gas stations. Revitalize old buildings bringing back small businesses to the area. Find a place for homeless to go

See previous answers regarding transients defecating and urinating and just trashing downtown Apopka. It is out of hand and no downtown area will be successful until something is done about it.

Why has the old railroad depot and that entire area been ignored. So many empty storefronts, new tenants should be sought for them.

It's time to catch up to Winter Garden and Altamonte

It looks trashy, run down, & unsafe. But part of that problem is the community not doing their part to take pride in their own surroundings. I love the small town feel of Apopka, but there is entirely too much new development of housing that the infrastructure cannot support. I don't want Apopka to be a busy city.

Police bike patrol more in areas you want people to walk, shop, eat and enjoy.

Take advantage of what Apopka already has to offer:

- 1) With the City Center on the east and the "Station Street District" on the west, use 6th Street to connect them with a well-lit pedestrian trail that will: A) Attract users; B) Attract investors to vacant parcels and C) Serve as site for hosting festivals and City events
- 2) Use Edwards Field and Kit Land Nelson Park as the site of a master recreational complex with a City pool, skate park and maybe a new ballpark
- 3) Find a spot for a new library in downtown Apopka, maybe near the bus station so that South Apopka students would have easy access
- 4) Use the CRA to fund an additional police officer who would be solely focused on:
 - A) Establishing a secure environment that makes families feel safe in downtown Apopka and B) establishes relationships with business owners and local residents that connects people to their home town.

Concern is homeless hangouts. Idea is to try and bring casual walking and dining downtown, where you can wind down after a long week or day of work.

Something more needs to be done to help our homeless people. The numbers have exploded in recent years and they tend to loiter downtown.

Some things should be left alone. No more building or roadwork. Preserve the history. No more alcohol establishments. Improve based on infrastructure that already exist with renovations. Create structured motivational programs and areas for locals and youth to gather and utilize parks and areas that already exist.

Too many fast food restaurants and empty lots

Kit Land park needs more trees, incentives for varieties of businesses, more restaurants not fast food(too many already),live music specially on weekends

I think I covered this with my last response:

1. Looks run down and gives off a crime saturated impoverished vibe
2. Only options for food are fast food, bar food, and fried food (aside from Backroom and the new Cielito Lindo). We NEED nicer restaurant options without having to drive 25 minutes away.
3. Only shopping is dollar stores, oil change garages, and a vape shop in a 25 minute radius. Please give us something to do and things to see.

Seriously, look into New Hope, PA or Peddlers Village in Lahaska, PA. You can keep the smalltown feel, keep out big corporations and retail while still creating jobs, attracting visitors, and enhancing the area by finding a unique way to give Apopka Center its own vibe, but if you can't or are unwilling, then bring us some of the easy big names to give us something decent to eat, things that are fun to do,

Can we please stop the development in the area???!!!!

conveniently located, and safe to hang out in and around.

Too much traffic. A overpass needs to be created for cars traveling east on 441 but can avoid downtown. Needs to be where the 451 ends at the intersection of 441 and 451 by Vick road, make an overpass for traffic that wants to avoid downtown apopka.

Would love more development of restaurants and bars. Businesses that give me a reason to not travel out of Apopka.

Not at this time

We need real stores to shop in. We currently have zero sort from grocery stores, Home Depot, Lowes, hardware and auto stores and Tractor Supply. No place to shop in city limits so we go out of town. We need to improve the visual aspects of the City and stop bringing in dollar stores and fast food. Higher quality restaurants need to be encouraged to come to town. Make it look and feel like someplace safe and appealing to spend time and money. Otherwise people will continue to leave to do those things in Winter Garden, Altamonte Springs and Lake Mary.

There is a strip of the city between the bridge and burger king that is very sketchy. I hate even driving that area. It's getting a little better but still not homey enough to

take a stroll

Homeless people. Traffic is terrible through the 2 main lights.

Downtown area looks run-down and unsafe. Needs rejuvenating by repairing and painting buildings. Also needs more businesses rather than all the closed businesses that look abandoned. It needs bike paths, healthy food restaurants, another park area, outside seating and congregating areas, and music.

NA

Get a new mayor who is not part of the good ole boy network and improves the city. Or maybe have a plan and stick with it. Stop building things people are not asking for, like the hotel and Winn Dixie. Clean up the homeless situation and give us something to do besides drive on by. There are so many areas left vacant where something could be build or the area could be cleaned up, but nope sits empty for years. I grew up in Apopka and now own my home in Apopka and it has not changed much from when I was a kid.

There's way too much development going on building houses and businesses with no development to fix the roads and improve the roads. No additional stoplights are being added. There is no police presence on Rocksprings Road to prevent drag racing. There are way too many accidents at Rocksprings and Welch with nothing being done about it.

Looks dirty

Too much growth at one time when the roads will not handle it is not good. There is not enough schools for the new subdivisions going up and traffic is a nightmare. Water quality is below standards. Drainage holes on Myrtle Street needs to be fixed before someone falls in and gets hurt. The drains around the lake need to be cleaned up so water can drain and not wash out the ground. City owned properties

More lighting/public safety measures

need to stay cleaned up and maintained properly.

Apopka should be more like downtown winter garden. It still has a small town feel but with restaurants, bars, and shops.

NA

Keep the old feel. Don't modernize the buildings.

Keep the style. Keep it the level. Just like old days, first floor business second residences.

Don't tear out the old houses along the back roads, use them as businesses or housing. They have character. Or use their design and expand them in size for larger buildings. Don't waste their character.

Copy Winter Garden

Better bus transportation to other areas in the downtown area.

The mayor and fire department are corrupt, city officials money laundering and disregarding citizens wants and needs, bums everywhere including messy and violent ones, corrupt police

I would love it to be like downtown Winter Garden

n/a

Na

Need to level the entire area and start over.

Too many fast food restaurants and dollar stores near downtown. It doesn't give us the opportunity to encourage smaller restaurants and shops, similar to downtown Winter Garden, to be in Apopka for locals. We need to drive almost to Altamonte Springs for these opportunities.

Area has potential and good things are happening already (Propagate Social House, 3 OddGuys etc) but with the current traffic load and fast food chains sadly I don't see a lot of potential for Main Street.

See previous answers. Did it ever dawn on you'll that many people hate that town center and it's not even built yet. I never shop or eat in Apopka because the driving through is ridiculous. I go to Seminole or Lake county to do my shopping. What really do you offer? Walmart? A local weekly farmer's market would be nice. When you start listening to residents, then maybe you'll know what people don't want. This survey is nice though. How many people actually go online to see they can take it? City of Apopka cater to the rich and forget the poor.

The downtown area has zero charm. Total facelift needed. I would rather see the area to be developed over by the train station, where Three Odd Guys brewery and Propagate Social house now are, off of the main highway. Plenty of areas to build up, similar to what Sanford, Winter Garden, and other towns have

Reduce the sign clutter. Make signs smaller. With most of the Public having access to GPS phones, etc. large signs are no longer needed.

successfully completed and now thrive

The downtown has to be a destination rather than a place to pass through on the way to Mt. Dora. Boutiques, specialty food markets, hair salons, nail salons should all be welcomed.

I hope that they take into consideration the need for green space, public gardens and the negative effect creating heat islands can have on an area. A multilevel parking garage is better than paving a giant parking lot.

Wish there were more reasons to visit downtown. There's currently no "draw".

The traffic flow is terrible here most of the time - not just rush hour.

Glad to hear we are finally getting an economic development Director, it is mishmash as is.

Cleanup is needed, buildings need redone, safety is a concern. Very happy to see the area near Apopka community center building up with Propagate, Three Odd Guys, that's the placeto focus on and to be

We are extremely behind in our downtown area compared to nearby cities. It's embarrassing, unsafe, and my family and friends always choose to support other towns

I'm sure the city already has a beautification committee but I'd like to see individual business work together to create a more cohesive look (modern paint colors, landscaping, architecture, etc). Suggestions from the City of Apopka could be given to local businesses in a brochure format. Contractors could offer renovation specials through the Apopka Chamber to our downtown area. Also I'd like to see the strip malls do better with paint and adding landscaping as well as nice lighting throughout their parking lots (so they don't look like a concrete

wasteland). More wedding venues would be nice. A walkway over a lake (like cranes roost) would be great. Apopka needs unity, vision, and investors. If we can get the right businesses here, we can spend our own money here and others coming by can spend their money here too.

Apopka has nothing to offer compared to the surrounding cities. I have lived here my entire life, and choose to shop and dine in the surrounding cities. It is time for change. The area around Fifth Avenue is prime for development and needs to be a diverse gathering area. We do not need any additional churches, banks, Taco Bell's, dollar stores or auto parts stores. If Apopka really wanted to make a statement and draw some attention, they should consider something like a minor-league baseball team.

Downtown suffers from vehicle traffic overload. Successful local downtowns have separate "main streets" and "primary roadways". Apopka's Main Street is also its primary roadways.

Discourage cheap businesses like pawn shops, karate clubs, repetitive fast food restaurants, \$stores

I mentioned this in a previous answer however the current downtown business need a huge overhaul...pawn shoppes and mechanic shoppes and dollar stores (don't get me wrong I love a good Dollar Tree lol) but to have it feel safe like Park Ave or Baldwin Park or Plant Street in Winter Garden the businesses should align in some way with the vision of a vibrant, walkable, SAFE area. Homelessness in the area is also a concern.

How can this Town Center feel safe at night as well?

That said I would love to see the overhaul thrive and take over the area as the community is wonderful. Great location to many wonderful surrounding communities and the 429 make it easy to get almost anywhere in Central FL. We have a lot of potential!!

We LOVE Propagate and I am beyond excited for their new food hall coming to the area! Three Odd Guys is also awesome. Building that area up and slowly

Downtown is ugly. It seems to have become a jungle of mismatched architecture and no real "heart" or center. I love Winter Garden for its thoughtful planning, small scale stores and general ambiance created by the landscaping and layout. I know Apopka can't be torn down and replanned but some kind of unifying theme/color/??? Would help. A lot of great cultural events are happening but the town "look" doesn't match the energy of all of that.

expanding out could be so fun and I look forward to seeing how our little town can grow!

Like the concept of plant street winter garden and park Ave winter park

How bout a round about at central

And 441. With a fountain in the middle. And some fancy little shops on station street. Maybe a bridal boutique, All the cute shop like down Mt Dora. With some tea shops. Ice cream shops etc.

More bike trails and bike lanes

Don't overthink it. Downtown winter garden and Mount Dora have given you the blueprint on how you can keep a small town feel while bringing in quality businesses and consumers to the area. Follow their blueprint and build on that. Stop focusing on chain restaurants, the current fast-food row, and dollar stores.

Create an atmosphere like Waterford lakes with lots of food and shopping option and perhaps activities like pop shoot putt putt golf to bring people in and keep residence here to spend their money

I appreciate having the West Orange trail but there are areas that I feel unsafe such as South Apopka. It prevents me from using the trail for access to other areas.

We literally have nothing here. The crime is very bad . We always leave Apopka if we want to hang out somewhere . I would love to stay in my own town and spend

Large trucks should be rerouted also panhandling should have designated areas.

money here

Has moving the downtown ever been considered? 441 is such a busy road and many established businesses like the coin laundry, pawn shop and run down drug motel that I do not see moving out, as well as the closeness to the crime of South Apopka. I always thought the area with the old hospital to Kitland Nelson park would have been a great location.

Apopka politics needs to be removed from decision making; otherwise, we will never move forward — ever

Downtown has a great opportunity to be a destination visit. Buildings with history should be rehabbed to their former glory and repurposed if appropriate. Run down buildings and lots need to be fixed up or removed. Use Winter Park, Mt Dora, etc as examples for planning. Be sure to include parking to allow folks to

Way too many fast food, used car lots, dollar stores, chains, no planning. No retail shopping. No reason to go there.

spend time in town shopping, dining, etc.

It's not clean enough. The last 10 years it has looked too trashy. Businesses not maintained.

Focus on restoring existing buildings and build an attractive, safe and fun corridor that preserves our historic charm. Clean up the crime and homelessness.

Attract visitors coming from I4 and 429 with parks and rec events and public events like concerts, venter swap meets, art festivals. There is not much of a shopping scene compared to Oviedo or Winter Garden.

Fix the homeless population. Focus on real commercial development and fix the morale among the staff. Quit giving out perfect scores to leadership when they are not doing their job.

Have a ratio of chains to small businesses. Give more incentives to small businesses while still allowing large chains to exist but they will have to pay more to be in the area to prevent small businesses from being pushed out.

We have needed an improvement for the past 30 yrs. (there was slight improvement a few years back, but it stopped. The no-tell motels need to be removed; pawn shops, laundry mat, tacky store fronts and Liquor stores need to be removed. The removal of all chickens, roosters and peacocks from downtown, should go. Just to name a few. I think it's sad Apopkans have to go to other cities to spend their hard earned dollars at nice restaurants, cafes, shops, etc.

Spending in cities like Winter Park, College Park, Winter Garden, Maitland, Sandford and Ivanhoe Row they have passed Apopka by. Even Mt. Dora and Taveres has passed us by. Don't we deserve to have a downtown we're not

No more housing until the infrastructure of shops and restaurants has been prioritized.

ashamed of.

We need new shops that are bright and easy to walk, making it enjoyable to

customers

Ideas, we need to create a nightlife (restaurants, bar) area for the new young parents in Apopka.

We need a Publix and target.

There are a lot of homeless people walking about who are sometimes yelling or aggressive. That might deter people from enjoying downtown.

Downtown should meet pedestrian friendly walking areas green areas and seating and such as park benches

no

It definitely has a general feeling of being unsafe. We visit Three Odd Guys several times a month, but if there is not parking available right outside, I won't stop. Even the parking lot across the street is too dark to provide a sense of comfort. I would like to see an avenue like downtown Winter Garden with restaurants, ice cream shops, and other retailers to attract foot traffic and a sense of being able to stroll around and enjoy the day/evening. A parking structure would relieve concerns about parking availability. With no offense to the owners, a tired furniture shop and a bail bondsman is not the vibe that attracts people to

No residences. Downtown doesn't have room for them. What would help most is if they could widen Main St., but they can't.

spend time in the area.

Overdevelopment and overcrowded streets with only high density growth being planned. Stopping high density communities and sardine can apartment units are not the way to keeping a 'small town feel' in Apopka.

Think we need to focus on our outdoors. Our springs. Our natural beauty. How do we highlight that?

Downtown Apopka is rundown and dirty. There is little reason to attract foot traffic or tourism (unless you're looking for a dollar store). The high transient population discourages a safe or family friendly environment.

Too many fast in and out places. Fast food, gas stations, drug stores and banks. Nothing to do downtown and everything closes by 9pm

Just frustrated that Apopka has grown with people but not with businesses. I have to leave Apopka for most of my shopping, dining and entertainment.

Make the main strip go down 5th street or something a block or two off main. Going down somewhere near Kitland Nelson park would be a great addition and incorporate a park that is downtown and has a lot of land next to it that could be developed.

Oh, just thought more as I'm writing. Start at Kitland Nelson Park/Edwards Field. Re-purpose playground and land across the road. Get rid of apartment building going toward the cities bridge over 441. Then continue growth at the other side of the bridge continue south and growing around the corner where several new businesses have already started changing thing, Axe Hole/Three Odd Guys/Propogate/Tea Room/Hall's on 5th coming. Continue past todagonal road and empty land.

Rant over

It basically is a strip of fast food, cheap hotels and convenience stores. As i drive through I'm only motivated to keep going, not stop.

How to create a safe "downtown" with the volume of traffic on the 441.

The mayor has no clue how to run a city of the size that Apopka is quickly becoming. The downtown area is not improving and it looks horrible. Even the government building have had damage/debris for months without being cleaned up. He needs to be held accountable by the city commissioners and the people of Apopka.

Need to remove the homeless population and make a safe place to walk on the Bike Path

There needs to be more adult amenities downtown.

The downtown area of Apopka is beyond repair. The only people walking this area are the homeless. This area is also heavily travelled and not safe.

Certain parts are starting to improve. However the amount of homeless people is sort of overwhelming. As it deters from wanting to go downtown

The bike trail through South Apopka is unsafe. Needs lighting and safety cameras, maybe and feeling unsafe.

To much traffic to feel save walking on small sidewalks .

Even if you make the sidewalks safer, people will not come to visit the trashy businesses on the downtown strip. Please look at Winter Garden and use them as an example. There is no Popeyes or other low class businesses that attract sketchy people. There is enough people living in Apopka that if you make downtime nice similar to Winter Garden people will start coming. There are soooo many housing developments in the works. We just need to really be intentional about the businesses in the downtown area. Thank you all for helping Apopka be better!

Move Apopka's downtown off of 441

It does not attract its residents. We all spend our money in other charming and welcoming towns.

I wouldn't walk along the sidewalk on 441 because the cars speed and pass too dangerously.

Traffic enforcement is nil. Vagrants asking for money on a daily basis. Homeless haveno shelter. Buildings look shabby and unkempt. There is nothing positive in the downtown 441 area. 441 should noyt be the focus, though. Loving historic downtown Sanford and Winter Garden areas for their off-main-highway businesses/activities.

Always avoid downtown, 429 (Apopka s Audubon) is excellent to enjoy amenities elsewhere

.....

The City of Apopka is decades behind times, I wish you guys a successful outcome in being downtown Apopka to the 21st century lifestyle of beautification.

The police are way to intimidating they pull people over all the time for nothing. If your a whitegirl in the hood they automatically assume your a drug addict or prostitute. They pulled me over for sitting at a stop sign to long???? Tf is that? And wanted to search my car for that??? They are way too much and people don't even want to drive down there anymore. You can't enjoy the park or anything really. Apopka needs to ease up on our citizens. I don't know why Nelson is putting our town through this!! We're very angry

Walkable shops similar to downtown Mt. Dora with outside seating and entertainment would be nice.

I cringe driving through downtown Apopka. It's seedy and unwelcoming. Wish we could update with restaurants with outdoor seating, small businesses, pretty

We moved here, almost 7 years ago, with a promise of an updated city to come... The only thing we have seen is more and more crime and more housing without the businesses to accommodate it. The only thing we truly appreciate is it's central location to the wonderful little towns in the surrounding areas,

landscaping, etc.

That area would benefit by police on foot.

We moved here ten years ago and haven't seen much change. We have a family of 5 and don't really have a place to go for something close by. Look at Sanford, Mt Dora, Winter Garden, that is what we are missing.

Safety, as some of those areas are home to run down apartments and a school for delinquents.

The property in question has the following Orange County use code:

"8097- MuniTrails/access". The owner of the property is knowingly allowing the property to be utilized as a residence and therefore is in violation of the use code restriction.

Additionally, the owner of the property is in violation of Florida Statute 856.021 for knowingly allowing a person to loiter or prowl, at a time or in a manner not usual for law-abiding individuals...

Parcel Id: 09-21-28-0196-00-003

Property name: West Orange Trail

Owner of record: City of Apopka

The homeless people in the park

It's needs a major makeover. From updating building to bringing in new modern dining, retail and young families. As well as providing updated pedestrian and bike paths, traffic lights.

Recall Bryan Nelson

Downtown Apopka needs place of comfort to get out and enjoy. For example, Winter Garden has a beautiful place for citizens to get out enjoy.

No

It should look like Winter Park, Winter Garden, Winter Springs, Sanford, and Mt. Dora

-I would like to see a better solution for homelessness in Apopka (a shelter or food kitchen or something similar)

-I would like to see more areas that encourage walking and congregating

-I would like to see less fast food chains in the downtown area

Please plan ahead. Look into the past, present and try to see what the future might look like. You actually have the power and most importantly, the responsibility

Enforce the posted signage related to turns and speed.

Don't have a major road (441) running thru the middle of it

Make something like downtown Winter Garden village or winter park where you can walk a strip and it has things for kids and adults to enjoy

no

I would like the idea of some trade schools for young kids and teen adults so they can stay out of trouble

Restore the train depot with restaurants and coffee shops- food, parking, bring in shops, spice shop, nuts and candy like Nifty Nut shop in Wichita, Kansas, a small bakery with good bread and baked goods, a quality meat shop, -

concerns: too many dollar stores!!!, too many fast food junk food places- get rid of the trashy stores and bring in local merchants and quality shops

I love the future of it. There are many ideas and we as a community are ready.

It's not as clean as it should be.

Concern is if the city is actually going to do any improvement the say!!

I been in Apopka all my life, and I have a business in the downtown apopka for 15 years & thecity NEVER as shown interest In our area, I didn't even know about

Pipe dream would have 441 rerouted!

this survey

Host a few events at Kitland Nelson Park. Venue chosen due to its proximity to downtown

Apopka, and the large capacity of guests it can hold. Inviting the public as well as city officialsand or city servants. Meet and greet, interact through games say tug of war. During these events there could definitely be a Q & A's session, questions would be received via internet

link, on the events page. A friendly debate, would be most interesting, on an agreed topic, voted upon the internet as well. Say three topics,one with most votes, is then debated. As to not not deviate from the purpose of the event, which the theme is along the lines of teamwork makes the dream work, how each side expresses the interest of the City of Apopka. The publicand city workers could defend and rebut their stance on said issue. Many more normal activities could have an local government twist to them. Food vendors could come sell merchandise, perhaps a few residential small business owners, unknown, could let the community better of their products and/or services. This just a thought that I felt

Please define - a Winn Dixie & Hilton or City Hall area are not a downtown like Mt. Dora, Winter Garden or Sanford where there is almost anything you can imagine & I would like to go

could appeal to all person's of Apopka

Right now it's just part of 441 taking people thru town. Not easy to park and stay/visitbusinesses.

Build it and we will home.

I rarely go or visit downtown Apopka. It is a community lacking the fundimantal "feel good" vibe. It is more often one of those places where you do not go at night,

It doesn't seem like much of a downtown area. It's really old and rundown in most areas. It seems like you're just driving through the intersection not a downtown area.

especially alone, and you certainly wouldn't walk around to frequent any establishments. There is no shade, only 441 running through a barren slumlike atmosphere.

It has potential to be a beautiful area. I really believe if it was reformed and businesses were given money to renovate it could really improve the area. It is very run down at the moment. We would love to see this turn into a downtown winter garden. There are also a lot of abandoned businesses that homeless people camp outside of.

too much traffic not enough visible parking

I believe that Apopka has the same potential as Mount Dora. My family loves Kits Landing

Park and we try to make all the events out there. I still think that there is an opportunity for the downtown blocks to be walkable so that you can get ice cream, have a nice dinner, buy some dog treats, buy some art, and take a walk with a glass of wine in your hand. That would be the dream. Places like Three Odd Guys Brewery and Propagate Social House are exactly what we need downtown.

Dirty. Businesses are run down looking. Type of business need to change - furniture rental, bail bonds, pawn shops, etc. do not belong in a downtown area that hopes to attract locals and tourists. Making the buildings more visually appealing, landscaping, much better lighting needed, attractive signage would all help. People who need a laundry mat or bail bondsman will find them on a side street. It should not be the center of the community.

City Council should promote beautifying and inviting businesses and encourage public refrain from bad decorum during public hearings.

Would love to see something like Downtown Winter Garden or Mount Dora

The overall area needs a facelift at a minimum, it doesn't feel like a small town just old.

As long as 441 remains the primary conduit from Orlando to Lake County, traffic will always be a mess.

The most important concern is safety and esthetics.

Downtown needs to be the center for restaurants, shopping, not where the proposed city center is . That's too far removed from where people want to be. If the city center actually becomes a reality , downtown Apopka will die!

Some expediency in getting these projects under way. Some real resources put into the downtown functionality.

Have more events in the downtown area

Too much traffic

Build what was promised in 2016

Martins Pond boardwalk should be built and maintained

Maintain sidewalks and low hanging branches trimmed

Trash on streets cleaned up...

Safety is important. Keeping the trail safe and well lit. Bring in a better selection of businesses for everyone to enjoy. Bringing in businesses and events that support people cycling or walking the trail. Hold a farmers market at least one weekend a month

Ensure safe, well lit, clean. Address homeless issues. Smart traffic engineering and pedestrian routes. Bike lanes. Ample parking.

At the moment I don't think the downtown area is a safe place to walk around. Especially as a young female. Also, I'm not knowledgeable on the subject but I feel that the city needs to provide some kind of support to the large homeless community that I see in the downtown area.

Reputation

More community

dog park

Need to attract more diversity, now it is considered good ole boy territory.

Na

Need better maintenance of trees over sidewalks, build boardwalk around Martin's Pond that was promised in 2016, finish the trail connector and connect existing dog park to it. Make downtown safe and walkable as was promised in 2016. Quit wasting time and money and keep what was already promised!

I believe All ideas that were questioned are great suggestions to improve the current downtown area.

Currently Main thoroughfare is VERY unattractive and the unappealing: too many gas stations and fast food. Can this be "undone"?

absolutely. the downtown area has little in the way of good transit connectivity to the surrounding residential areas — traveling there from Apopka Blvd in anything but a car is stressful, loud, dirty, and dangerous (all due to the cars mostly)

There is a plan that this administration has failed to implement due to political pettiness. Building on or evolving that plan would best benefit all Apopkans.

Improving downtown is great, but south Apopka would also need a glow up to help Downtown as a whole. At least the part that's directly south of 441

Stifled due to "good ole boy" mentality

Downtown needs to be upgraded so people have more opportunities to go out in the city for restaurants to sit down and eat at, more places to shop.

Having 441 run through downtown is an issue. Need a city center with amenities located a few blocks away.

It needs to look cleaner. There are some older buildings that could be refurbished to give a quaint small town feel. I like the Mount Dora vibe. It would be nice to have Apopka get an overhaul to make it appear upscale in the appearance.

Would like to see some more restaurants. Not fast food, but casual sit down and fine dining restaurants. My family would like to see more of a police presence in order to feel safe downtown. Yes, the police station is there, but get out and get some boots on the ground and perhaps even bicycles.

Walking area-no housing

There's not enough parking, too much traffic

When I was fairly new to Apopka, I didn't know there was a downtown area so highlighting it more would be good.

The lack of organized progress and development.

We need a downtown like Winter Garden with more safe well light free parking, independently owned businesses, restaurants, and farmers markets. A safe walkable, bike friendly, pet friendly downtown with activities, events, and community involvement. Money invested in

Downtown Apopka to bring it up to the standard set by Mt. Dora, Winter Park, and Winter Garden. Invest in our Police and Fire Departments, in public works, invest in Apopka. Winter Garden has given you a blue print for a beautiful,

Homeless people need resources. More small private businesses needed such as Propagate to spur public gatherings.

successful, and safe downtown.

It's not a safe place to walk as you get accosted by the homeless. Plus the problems with their public streets restroom use.

It needs to be off 441 and on the back streets. It would have been nice to do a lake area with food around and the bike trail and we have the land lake Apopka

Needs more restaurants. I'm tired of driving to Sanford and Winter Garden for a good meal. There are no family friendly places downtown either. It's not safe to walk due to traffic, homeless, and people committing crimes. Needs a big revamp. Would be nice to have a park and restaurants and shopping.

Wider roads

Upgrade traffic lights to improve traffic flow.

Upscale restaurants

Upscale shops/stores

Whatever you do, do it quickly. I've been a resident for over 13 years and Downtown Apopka has been almost the same the whole time.

Faster progress to a place where we can work and play. Frustrating to have to drive to other cities to eat and shop

It needs a major revamp and needs to bring in more people for it's feel. We are one of the only relates locally that are uninverting. Think winter garden, winter park, Clermont, Sanford, etc. these areas bring people and house values go up because people want to live near there.

Any resources need to be leveraged to create an enjoyable and local space. Chain restaurants, plazas and dollar stores will do nothing to bring people to the area.

A lot traffic. That is a concern with adding more foot traffic. Parking is a concern as well. If you add more, are we adding a parking garage (ie Winter Garden)?

I feel let down after the Winn Dixie and the newly announced Millers Ale House. These are stores and restaurants I'd expect to see in any town and aren't reason enough to make the drive to Apopka. I think we need more economic development and more effort to more unique offerings like in Mount Dora or Winter Garden. I'd also like to see healthier dining options - especially quick service like a Fresh kitchen or Cava.

The infrastructure must be improved prior to attracting new businesses. A policy with regard to the homeless must be developed and adopted into city code. Much more attention must be given to upgrading existing structures.

Apopka has too many industrial businesses popping up. I would like to see a Publix around the downtown area instead of another Winn Dixie.

We need the buildings that are not opened either demolished or some type of building code that will require business to have more of an appealing look like winter garden downtown area.

Our downtown needs to look more appealing but it seems that it would be hard to accomplish because of the existing buildings that are there that don't make the area look good. Too many liquor stores and dollar stores.

We have been living here for years and it is frustrating to see that most development other than residential has been storage, car washes, and warehouses. It saddens me to have to go to towns like Winter Garden and Mt Dora to spend money. I would much rather do it here and support the local community and economy. Im concerned about the place turning into rows and rows of subdivisions of people who have to go elsewhere for both business and pleasure. Planned development is needed NOW.

Top priority would be shelters and affordable housing for our homeless population (within city limits, I'd rather 3 shelters than one more strip of \$300k+ townhomes). Second would be better landscaping/green spaces especially in medians. Third would be a dedicated bus lane through downtown that runs from Sheeler to Wekiwa Springs Rd, could help reduce traffic through that area

Where do we start. No one wants to be around there because ghetto. Tired of the traffic that backs up so bad every single day. Nasty fast restaurants. And nasty people are all around down there as well as homeless population which is growing

N/A

I would love to have a community pool and pickelball courts.

The city doesnt seem to listen to the residents about what we want. We don't want a winndixie or a starbucks... we want local places we can visit to eat, hang out with friends. We are tired of driving to altamonte or winter garden or mt dora to find this

Please start bringing in higher end restaurants and stores. Not everyone in Apopka needs to shop at a dollar store or eat from the wawa. Trader Joe's is needed. Please no more car washes dollar stores or auto part store. I go to MT dora because Apopka has no real food establishments

Currently feels unsafe to bring my family. Drug addicts walking around and cursing at KitNelson Park. People driving recklessly downtown. Wish there was more restaurants and shopping options, community outreach, art classes

It feels rundown

ect. More upscale, less trashy.

Downtown Apopka has a major problem, it's 441. Without redirecting this major

road we won't see the economic or community developments we are looking for. Apopka has the opportunity to completely redesign downtown, make it into the next Winter Garden or Sanford but we are completely blocked by 441, it literally runs right through downtown. The only option is to dig.

Start from one end of downtown to the other and put the stretch underground. Imagine the architectural opportunities if you could almost start from scratch on any property that lines that road. The entire area could be made welcoming, efficient, sustainable, and fun.

Dream Big, Think Differently.

It all looks tired and dirty

Really want classier, sit down places.

- need for adequate, free parking
- need for low key community events/activities for families (farmers' markets, weekend festivals, etc.)
- would love something with the feel of Park Ave in Winter Park or Plant Street in Winter Garden
- need enough density, crowd, and security for people to want to be there in the evenings and to feel safe
- need shade and adequate green space or benches for daytime events

Traffic congestion and reduced speed need attention. Individuals from "South Apopka" need to feel their opinions and concerns are important in planning for Apopka's future.

It would be really nice if Apopka was modeled after Winter Garden or even Clermont.

I feel Apopka is at a point where we can create our own identity and start from a pretty much blank slate. I would like a city I can give back to. I find I spend more money in places that I can wander around and spend time in a location. Right now I only drive to one or two businesses and leave.

It will take leaders who are open to a new vision and a plan. What worked a few years ago, might not be the best plan moving forward. I think it will take a specialized team to take on this type of project. Then take those innovative ideas and apply them to the Kelly Park area. The use of the Amphitheater and events there is a great start of getting residents to socialize and feel part of a community. A gathering/social area in downtown will only enhance our city. Thankyou for looking

I would love to see development that would encourage walkability and bike trails to explore the area and promote patronage of the established businesses and future establishments in the area. A large retail space that could be use by small businesses to form of a cooperative similar to West Palm Beach Warehouse District, Winter Garden Plant St. Market or Tampa's Armature Works

at community feedback.

Downtown needs a major overhaul. Every building/green space appears run down. We need abypass road for cars/busses so downtown can become more pedestrian/bike friendly. Apopkahas grown so fast in population that the infrastructure has not kept up and roads are very congested.

We continue to go to neighboring communities to recreate, eat, shop and spend \$\$\$\$. WHY? We need a walkable, shady, inviting, safe downtown without dollar store after dollar store. Spend a few minutes in downtown Winter Garden. Why can't we duplicate that here??

Please don't take any more historic buildings/homes down and replace them withdevelopment.

The growth of Apopka has not adjusted to the changing demographics of this city. We will always be for the most part a bedroom community. However with the type of construction attracting a more diverse income level population, the city is stuck in the past when most residents worked and lived within the greater Apopka area. People often compare Apopka to Winter Garden Plant Street area and say why not here. What they do not acknowledge is Plant Street is a small section, and the vast majority of Winter Garden is no different than Apopka. Should the City of Apopka desire to attract the Plant St type of environment, we have the perfect area on Central Ave between Ocoee Apopka Rd and Orange Blossom Trail. This is a mostly vacant area prime for this type of development using city own land and incentive to current land owners. However with the City of Apopka reluctant to invest south of the railroad. With more true strategic planning, taking lessons learned from successful communities, politicians communicating openly and properly staffing public agencies (such as fire and police), the quality of downtown and Apopka in general could be greatly improved. Thank you for your work on the survey, I hope the mayor and others listen to your results and suggestions!

I'm a 15 year resident and downtown looks very much like it did when I first got here. Embarrassing the lack of development.

Maybe a bit more vision on creating a feel for area. The idea of having 6th street be one way and also 441 / Main street for a few blocks to break up area and build up smaller buildings , businesses.

I think the new downtown should be inclusive to all. I think the businesses located downtown should be diverse.

Clean it up, bring new business

Would just love to see the overall appearance change to a more modern well kept downtown

There are too many fast food restaurants with few dine in restaurants options. A target or a fresh market would be ideal in the old Albertsons shopping center. It would encourage staying in our local community without having to commute.

Need figure out a way to have the outskirts of Apopka look better, many of the stores are run down and with the houses run down it doesn't help.

The concerns would be pedestrian safety on the main road especially 441 going toward Zellwood. Ideas would be light up signs for pedestrian walk paths at night. More signs at KitNelson park and plans on reinvigorate the site

it needs to be cleaned up. old rundown houses

(playground, dog park, games).

More mom pop restaurants and shops

Improve walkability, similar to plant st in downtown winter garden

People speed them Monroe avenue at night I'm always finding dead cats and critters They speed down the road going past the dog parking where they play soccer. I would like to see those speed tables especially before they open Winn-Dixie.

Downtown is run down, dirty and not a destination spot. We are in our early 40s with teens and we often leave Apopka for Mt Dora, Winter Garden and Sanford.

The mayor needs to go!

N/A

Development of areas off of Main street.

Appendix 2: Local Media Coverage

A press release was created and sent to the two local Apopka newspapers. We received excellent coverage and support from Apopka's two local newspapers, The Apopka Voice and The Apopka Chief. We believe this publicity helped us obtain more survey responses and a good turnout to our community workshop. Spectrum News 13 also interviewed several of the students for a story that was to air in early May. Below are the press release and newspaper articles.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UCF team developing vision plan for Downtown Apopka as Capstone Project

The UCF MS in Urban Planning team is asking for resident feedback

Apopka, Florida — Date — In August 2022, the students from UCF's Masters of Urban and Regional Planning Department started working with the City of Apopka to formulate a vision plan for Downtown Apopka as their Capstone course project. The City worked with UCF students in 2019 on a similar type project, but this current project involves more data collection, in-depth analysis and public engagement.

Prior to the start of the 2022 fall semester, Pamela Richmond, Transportation Coordinator for the City and Emily Hannah, Executive Director of Bike/Walk Central Florida collaborated with UCF's Dr. Luis Santiago, director of the capstone course to develop a scope for the project that would give the students enrolled in the course the greatest learning and "hands-on" experience. Ms. Hannah has been working with the City for the last two years to help the City become safer for pedestrians. The City has experienced 23 traffic-related deaths on US 441 over the last five years in this study corridor.

The students spent last fall collecting and analyzing data on traffic and recent vehicle-related deaths, land use, demographics, city services and infrastructure, market conditions and urban form.

After meeting with representatives from the Community Development Department, Bike/Walk Central Florida, and the Apopka Chamber, the team began brainstorming specific short-term, implementable projects, along with long-term plans that could ultimately transform Downtown Apopka into a vibrant, walkable town center.

For purposes of the study, the team defined Downtown as everything between W. 1st Street down to E. 6th Street, and from Hawthorne Avenue to Sheeler Avenue.

“There is so much potential for the Downtown Apopka area to become an eclectic destination for its residents,” said Ashley Morisette, member of the graduating UCF team. “I know that the future of Downtown Apopka will be shaped by its rich history, established local businesses, and its connections to the Florida trail systems. It’s my hope that this Vision Plan, with input from the community, will capture these important aspects and guide the city to help make Downtown Apopka prosperous.”

The team is currently soliciting feedback and is making appearances at the Saturday Sounds series and the Propagate Social House. Residents can also fill out the [short survey](#) online through the QR code below through late March.

About UCF's MS-Urban and Regional Planning Program

The MS in Urban and Regional Planning program at UCF explores the technical and analytical skills required to develop innovative solutions that address the changing needs of communities. Coursework covers areas such as environmental planning, transportation planning, planning for healthy communities, along with examining housing and other issues related to land use. (From ucf.edu/degree/urban-and-regional-planning-ms.)

For more information, press only:

Logan Lamphere
UCF Capstone course
605-490-0732
llampher@hotmail.com

Images attached.

(UCF Survey Study Area) A team of students from UCF's Masters in Urban and Regional Planning capstone course are creating a vision plan for Downtown Apopka for their capstone project, as depicted in this map (PHOTO COURTESY UCF MSURP CAPSTONE 2023)

(UCF Survey QR Code) Scan this code to provide feedback for the UCF team's vision plan for Downtown Apopka. (PHOTO COURTESY UCF MSURP CAPSTONE 2023)

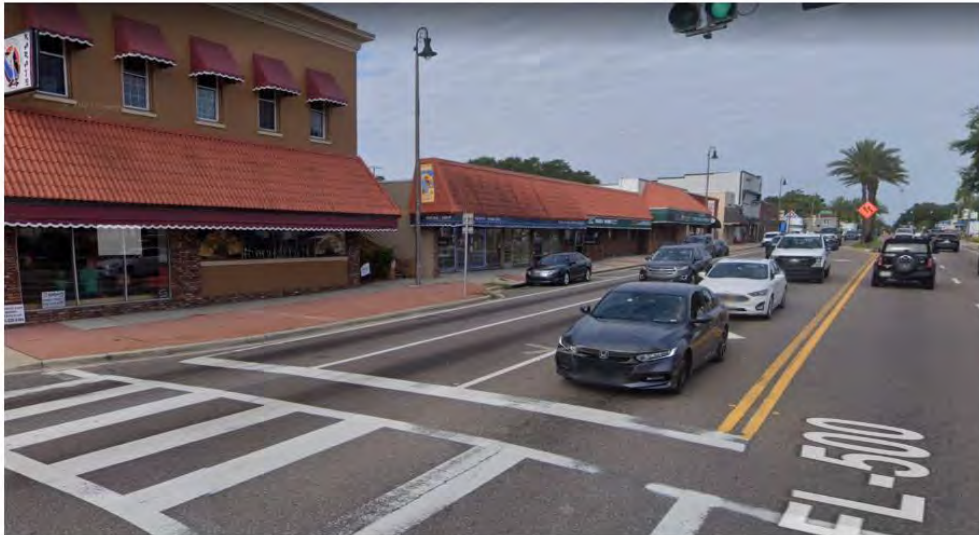
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From The Apopka Voice:

<https://theapokvoice.com/stories/ucf-team-developing-vision-plan-for-downtown-apopka-as-capstone-project,37949?>

Can a group of college students transform Downtown Apopka?

The UCF Masters in Urban Planning team is taking on the task, and asking for resident feedback



Downtown Apopka

Posted Wednesday, March 1, 2023 12:27 am

“ I know that the future of Downtown Apopka will be shaped by its rich history, established local businesses, and its connections to the Florida trail systems. It’s my hope that this Vision Plan, with input from the community, will capture these important aspects and guide the city to help make Downtown Apopka prosperous.”

ASHLEY MORISSETTE, A MEMBER OF THE GRADUATING UCF TEAM.

From the UCF Masters in Urban Planning Department and Staff Reports

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The team is currently soliciting feedback and is making appearances at the Saturday Sounds series and the Propagate Social House. Residents can also fill out the [short survey](#) online through the QR code below through late March.

There is also a public workshop on Wednesday, March 8, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Apopka Community Center to obtain additional community feedback. There will be poster boards showing the project proposals with the option to vote and leave comments.

About UCF's MS-Urban and Regional Planning Program

The MS in Urban and Regional Planning program at UCF explores the technical and analytical skills required to develop innovative solutions that address the changing needs of communities. Coursework covers areas such as environmental planning, transportation planning, and planning for healthy communities, along with examining housing and other issues related to land use. (From ucf.edu/degree/urban-and-regional-planning-ms.)

Keywords

Economic Development, University of Central Florida, UCF, Apopka, Downtown Apopka, Masters of Urban and Regional Planning

From The Apopka Chief (front page!):

The Apopka Chief

Your trusted local news source

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©2023 The Apopka Chief
Friday, March 3, 2023 / 50 cents

52 editions
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Workshop to collect public feedback on downtown Apopka

The University of Central Florida (UCF) will hold a public workshop to get feedback on Apopka's downtown vision plan, which a team of UCF students will create for the city.

The public workshop will take place on Wednesday, March 8, 6-8 p.m. at the Apopka Community Center, 519 S. Central Ave., Apopka.

For purposes of the study, the team defined downtown as everything between West First Street down to East Sixth Street, and from Hawthorne Avenue to Sheeler Avenue.

"There is so much po-

tential for the downtown Apopka area to become an eclectic destination for its residents," said Ashley Morisette, member of the graduating UCF team. "I know that the future of downtown Apopka will be shaped by its rich history, established local businesses, and its connections to the Florida trail systems. It's my hope that this Vision Plan, with input from the community, will capture these important aspects and guide the city to help make Downtown Apopka prosperous."

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A team of students from UCF's Masters in Urban and Regional Planning capstone course are creating a vision plan for downtown Apopka for their capstone project, as depicted in this map.

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2022 fall semester, Pamela Richmond, city of Apopka transportation coordinator, and Emily Hannah, executive director of Bike/Walk Central Florida, col-

laborated with UCF's Dr. Luis Santiago, director of the capstone course, to develop a scope for the proj-

See SURVEY Page 3A

The Apopka Chief, March 3, 2023, Page 3A

Survey: Scan the QR code for access to it

Continued from page 1A

ect that would give the students enrolled in the course the greatest learning and "hands-on" experience.

Hannah has been working with the city for the last two years to help the city become safer for pedestrians. The city has experienced 23 traffic-related deaths on U.S. Highway 441 over the last five years in this study corridor. The students spent last

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After meeting with representatives from the city's Community Development Department, Bike/Walk Central Florida, and the Apopka Area Chamber of Commerce, the team began brainstorming specific short-term implementable

projects, along with long-term plans that could ultimately transform downtown Apopka into a vibrant, walkable town center.

The team is currently soliciting feedback and is making appearances at the Saturday Sounds concert series and the Propagate Social House. Residents can also fill out the short survey online through the QR code through late March.



Scan this QR code to provide feedback for the UCF team's vision plan for downtown Apopka.

https://theapopkachief.com/workshop-to-collect-public-feedback-on-downtown-apopka/

TheApopkaChief.com
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Workshop to collect public feedback on downtown Apopka

By **The Apopka Chief** - March 3, 2023

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The University of Central Florida (UCF) will hold a public workshop to get feedback on Apopka’s downtown vision plan, which a team of UCF students will create for the city. Story on [page 1A](#).

Spectrum News 13

We interviewed with Spectrum News 13 traffic reporter Jerry Hume on April 26, 2023. The story was to air in early May.

Appendix 3: Community Workshop Flyer

We developed a flyer to help publicize the community workshop.

