



Growing
With Character In Mind

St. Cloud Citywide Master Plan



The St. Cloud Citywide Master Plan

Growing With Character In Mind

OCTOBER 2017

Prepared for:

City of St. Cloud

Prepared by:

**COMMUNITY
SOLUTIONS
GROUP**

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SUMMARY

ST. CLOUD WILL BE A STRONG AND LIVABLE TOWN
THAT EMBRACES ITS DOWNTOWN AND LAKEFRONT
THROUGH GROWTH THAT REINFORCES
THE POSITIVE TOWN AND COUNTRY QUALITIES
OF ITS COMMUNITY CHARACTER.

St. Cloud is working to envision a future for the City and surrounding areas of the County along a model that builds a strong town based on five building blocks for the future:

Balance Community Character and Growth

Expand Employment Opportunities

Celebrate Parks, Lakes, and Open Spaces

Improve Connectivity for All Modes of Travel

Enhance the Downtown Experience

Envision St. Cloud convened a series of community conversations to elicit observations, general concerns, broad community or individual values, and many specific ideas for change rooted in people's everyday experiences in St. Cloud. The plan born out of these conversations describes the important shared community values and describes potential projects and actions going forward. This structure will allow the City to be agile enough to meet the changing development conditions while holding true to the important tenets of the plan. The City has already been moving down the road on several initiatives rooted in the Envision St. Cloud building blocks, such as advancing the New York Avenue streetscape project, designing Centennial Park, infrastructure planning for the Medical Arts Campus, and visioning for Chisholm Park.

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Why a Plan?

Growing With Character in Mind is a master plan for creating a citywide vision for St. Cloud, representing the community's aspirations to be a strong and livable town that embraces its downtown and lakefront through growth that reinforces the positive town-and-country qualities of community character. The scope of the plan includes the entire existing city plus surrounding unincorporated lands that may be included in the city limits in the future.

The plan was developed in close coordination with city staff, residents, and business and civic leaders. The planning team walked, talked, photographed, mapped, and, most importantly, listened to the community to learn the nuances of their understanding of St. Cloud and their hopes and aspirations for the future city. Reflecting the perspectives of St. Cloud's people and places, the plan includes near and long term visions for the organization of the city and provides a clear framework of understandable ideas to guide future

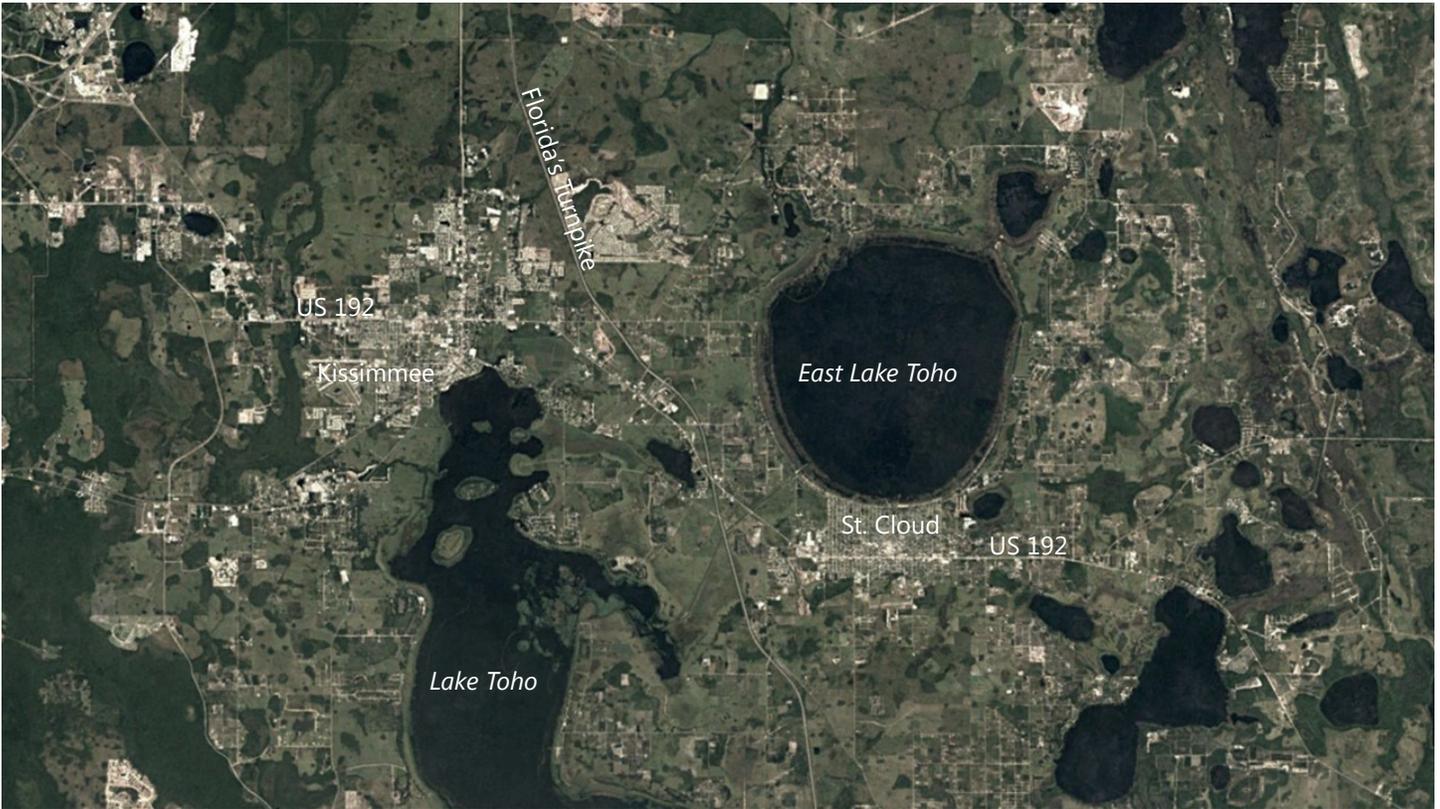
decisions regarding growth and development in St. Cloud. It covers both implementation and economics, and identifies projects with actionable implementation and funding opportunities. In addition, the plan explores the implications of growth and annexation to help the city understand effects on service delivery, fiscal outlook, policy implications, and quality of life.

“This plan is a way to maintain and enhance the community you want to have.”

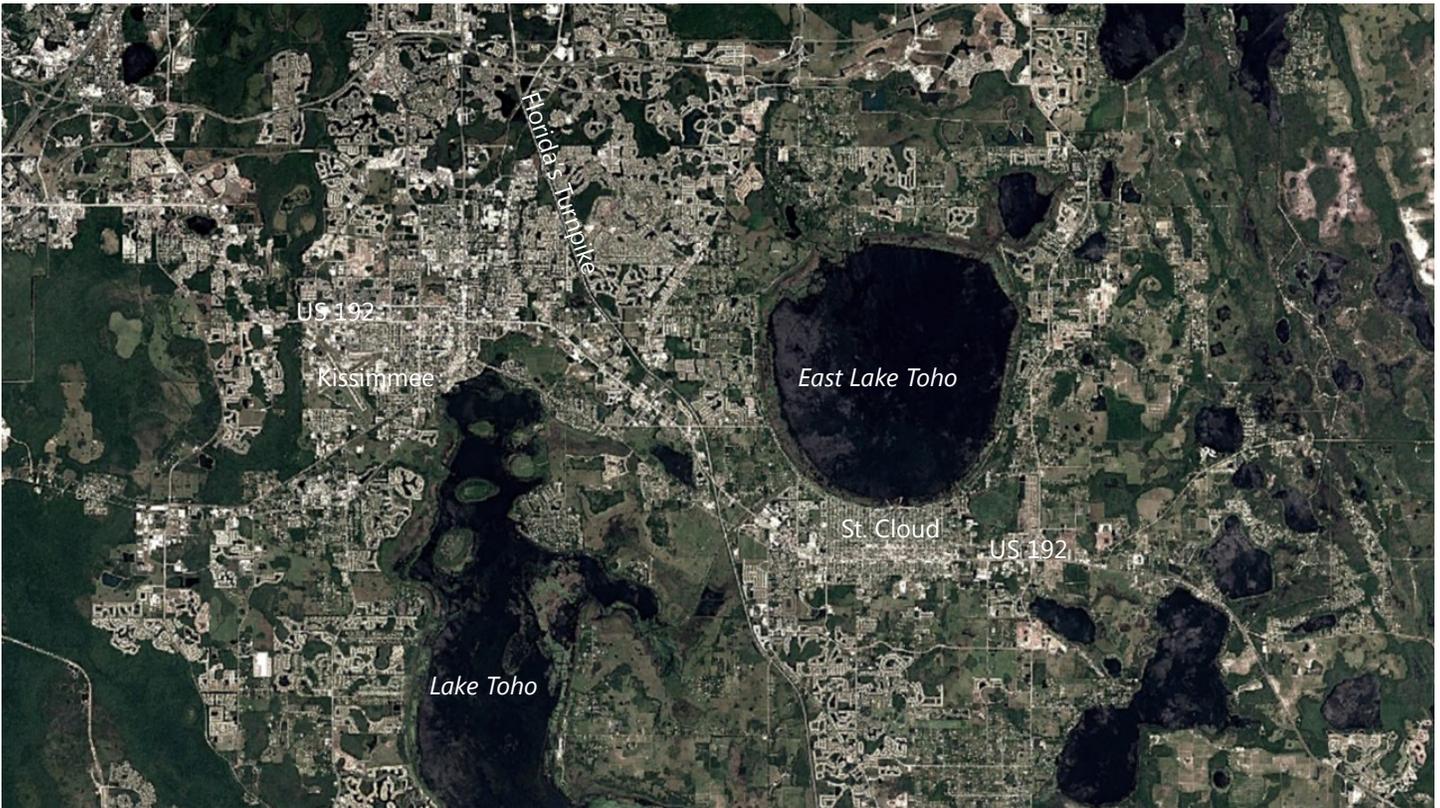
THIS PLAN . . .

- . . . presents a community-driven Vision of the future of St. Cloud, but does not change the Future Land Use or Zoning of any property**
- . . . specifies areas where the existing character should be preserved, enhanced, or transformed, but does not try to change St. Cloud into something it's not**
- . . . addresses areas outside the current City Limits, but does not annex any property**
- . . . suggests possible projects to achieve the Vision, but does not mandate or fund future projects**
- . . . shows design ideas for specific areas and properties in and around the City, but does not require properties to adhere to the designs**

St. Cloud Region: 1984



St. Cloud Region: 2016



VISION

Broad and aspirational, this sets the future course for growth and development

ST. CLOUD WILL BE A STRONG AND LIVABLE TOWN THAT EMBRACES ITS DOWNTOWN AND LAKEFRONT THROUGH GROWTH THAT REINFORCES THE POSITIVE TOWN AND COUNTRY QUALITIES OF ITS COMMUNITY CHARACTER.

BUILDING BLOCKS

Represent the values inherent in the community relative to planning, urban design, and development

**BALANCE
COMMUNITY
CHARACTER
AND GROWTH**

**EXPAND
EMPLOYMENT
OPPORTUNITIES**

**CELEBRATE
PARKS, LAKES,
AND OPEN
SPACES**

**IMPROVE
CONNECTIVITY
FOR ALL MODES
OF TRAVEL**

**ENHANCE THE
DOWNTOWN
EXPERIENCE**

COMMUNITY CHARACTER FRAMEWORKS

Represent the physical outcomes of our values

**RESPECT
THE RURAL LINE**

**PRESERVE
RURAL NEIGHBORHOODS**

**ENHANCE
LIVABLE SUBURBS**

**ACTIVATE
EMPLOYMENT NODES**

**RE-IMAGE
NEW NEIGHBORHOODS**

**REDISCOVER
THE CHARACTER TOWN**

FORWARD MOVES

Key initial actions that each represent one of potentially many applications of the Building Blocks and Frameworks

**NEW NEIGHBORHOODS AT
THE RURAL EDGE**

**INFILLING MULTI-USE
NEIGHBORHOODS**

**REPOSITIONING CORRIDOR
DEVELOPMENT**

**NEW NEIGHBORHOODS WITH
ST CLOUD CHARACTER**

**DEVELOPING AN
EMPLOYMENT CENTER**

**A NEW STREETScape FOR
NEW YORK AVENUE**

**ENABLING AN EVOLUTION OF
THE GRID**

**REPURPOSING BIKE AND
PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS**

**GROWING
LAKEFRONT PARK**

IMPLEMENTATION

Incremental steps for evolving circumstances

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
MODEL**

**STRATEGIC FISCAL
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

**PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND
PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS**

Plan Structure

Growing With Character in Mind the St. Cloud Citywide Master Plan is a roadmap for the City to use to manage change over time. It is structured to respond to a changing economic environment and the evolving demographic and market conditions in the community while ensuring that incremental moves occur within a larger framework and are aligned with a future vision of the city that was developed by the community. This framework is made up of a VISION, supported by five BUILDING BLOCKS (representing the values inherent in the community), and six COMMUNITY CHARACTER FRAMEWORKS (representing the physical outcomes of the values). These are implemented initially through nine FORWARD MOVES.

The VISION describes the city of the future. It is intended to be aspirational and broad, setting course for the future. The BUILDING BLOCKS reflect the values inherent in the community, and the COMMUNITY CHARACTER FRAMEWORKS show the physical outcomes of the values. As time goes on, these principles are intended to remain more or less constant to provide a baseline for new implementation actions to be developed. In this way, the plan can evolve to meet changing conditions. The FORWARD MOVES outline the key actions for the City to take to execute the plan. They have been created in thoughtful consultation with community stakeholders, but they each represent one of potentially many solutions consistent with the guiding principles. The plans and imagery shown with the FORWARD MOVES are intended to be indicative of the character and intent of the recommended actions. IMPLEMENTATION describes incremental steps for evolving circumstances, including a model for economic development and strategic fiscal implementation.



CITY OF ST. CLOUD



SANITARY

MADE IN USA AASHTO

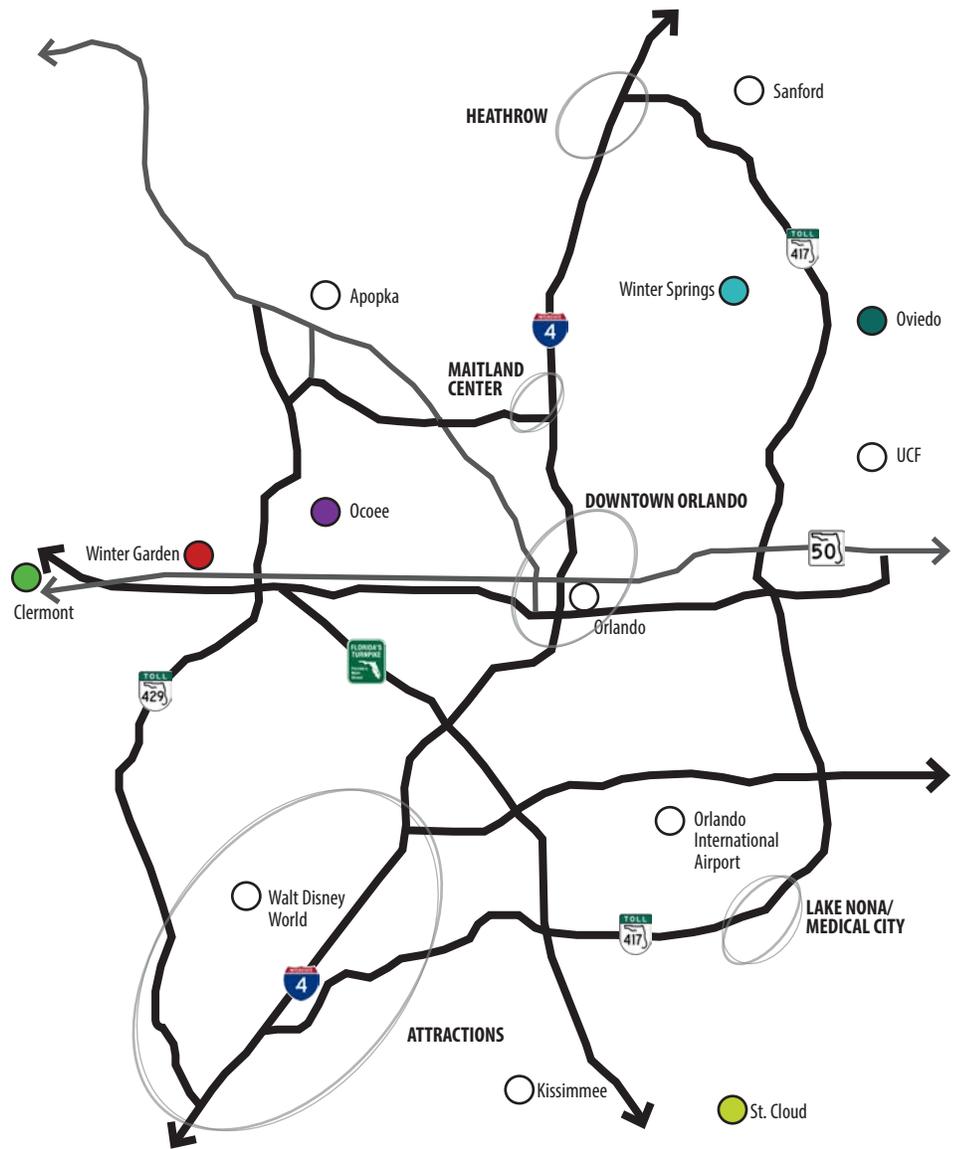
LISTENING + LEARNING

Envision St. Cloud convened a series of community conversations to elicit observations, general concerns, broad community or individual values, and many specific ideas for change rooted in people's everyday experiences in St. Cloud.

Benchmarking St. Cloud

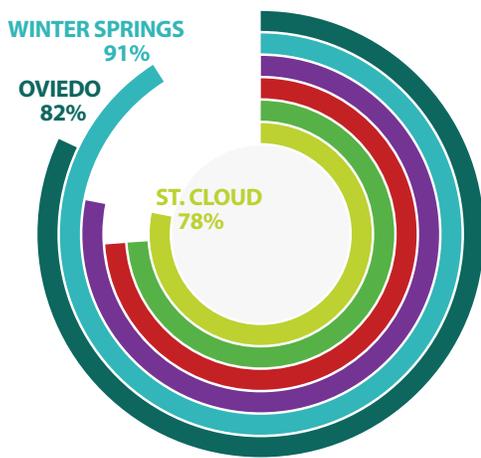
In the context of statistical analysis, making comparisons between and among groups or entities (“benchmarking”) generally allows for specific inferences or potential conclusions to be drawn from individual metrics. Benchmarking does not require that groups or entities are identical in every aspect or on every dimension, only one or two specific attributes. In fact, the many potential differences among groups or entities that share something in common is a main contributor to the process of making inferences or drawing conclusions.

St. Cloud	45,300 [2,551 pp/mi ²]
Benchmark Cities	
Clermont	32,400 [2,376 pp/mi ²]
Winter Garden	40,400 [2,619 pp/mi ²]
Ocoee	43,600 [2,964 pp/mi ²]
Winter Springs	34,800 [2,319 pp/mi ²]
Oviedo	38,600 [2,535 pp/mi ²]

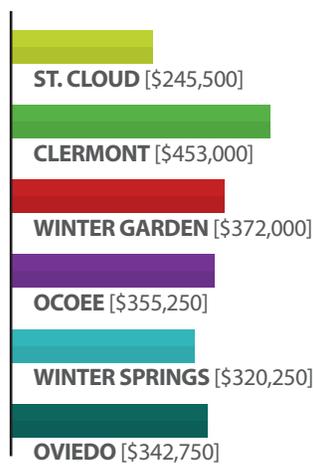


Regional Location of Benchmark Cities

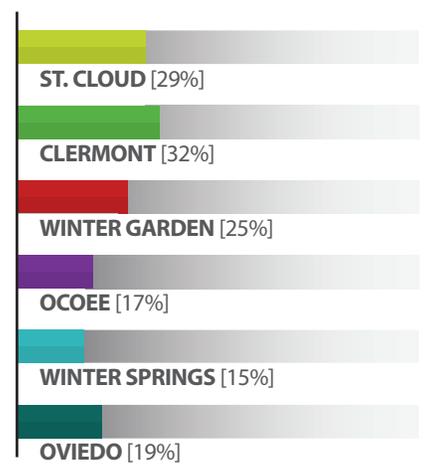
Residential Proportion of Taxable Value



Taxable Value per Developed Acre



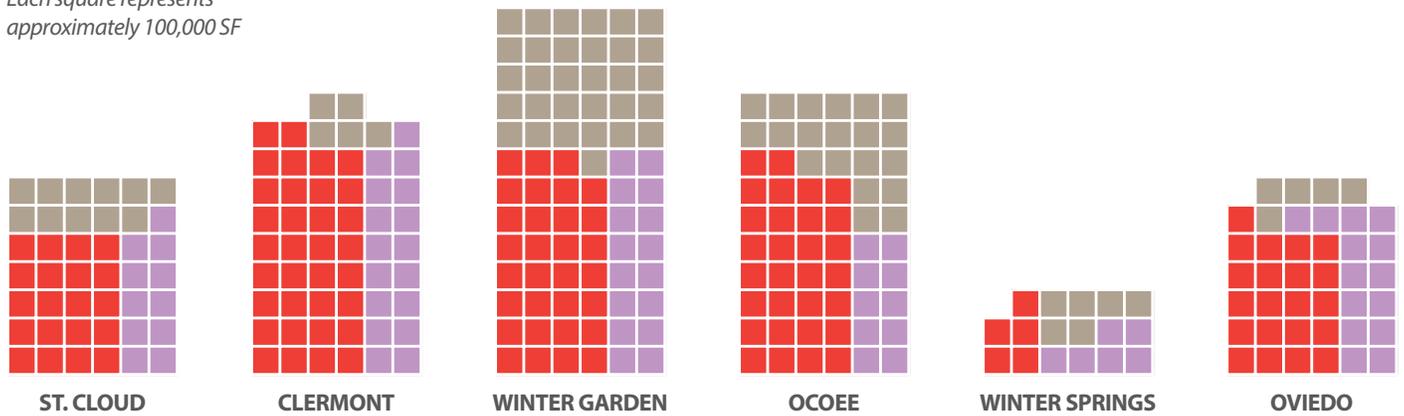
Share Working in Place They Live



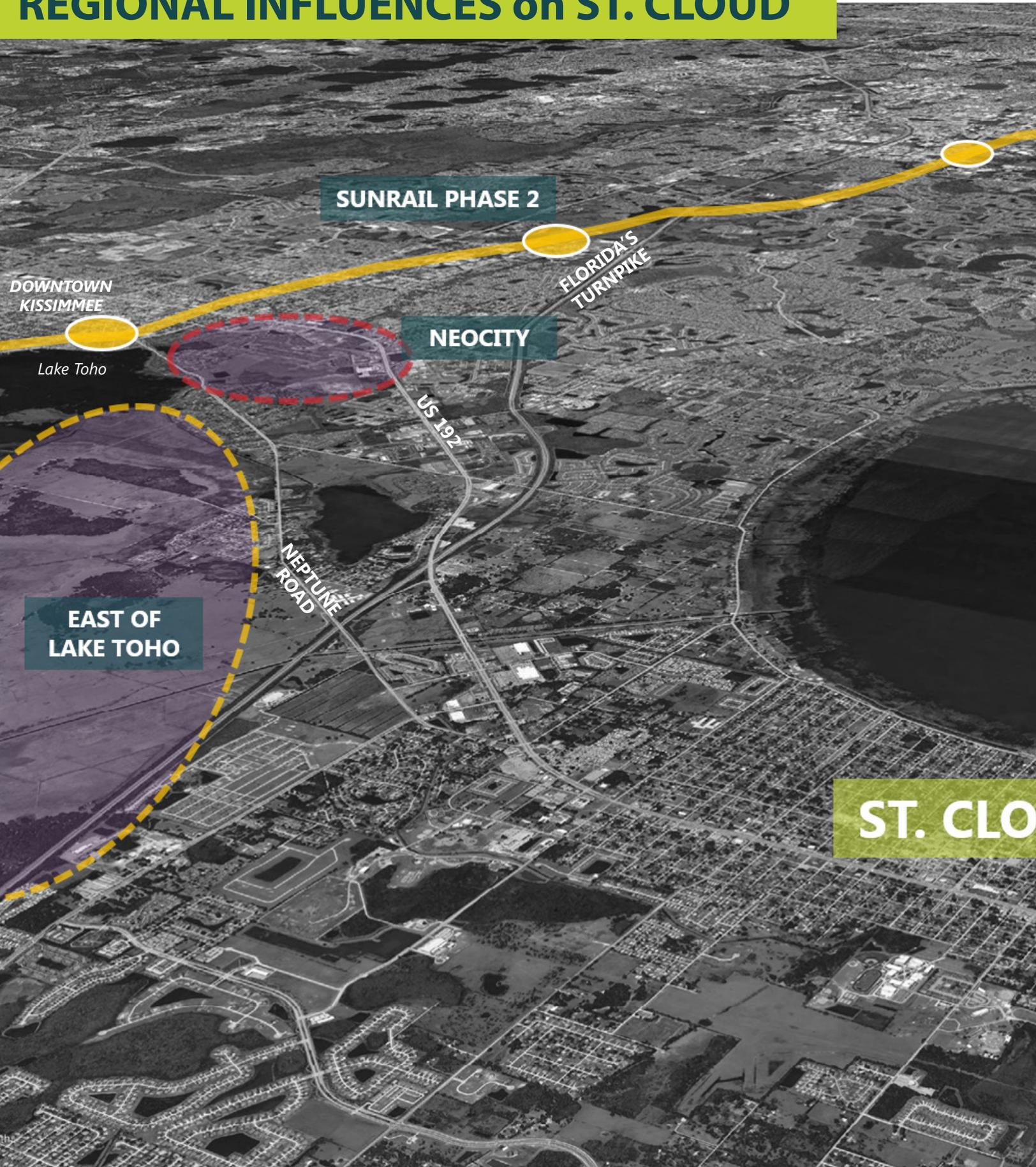
Existing Non-Residential Land Uses

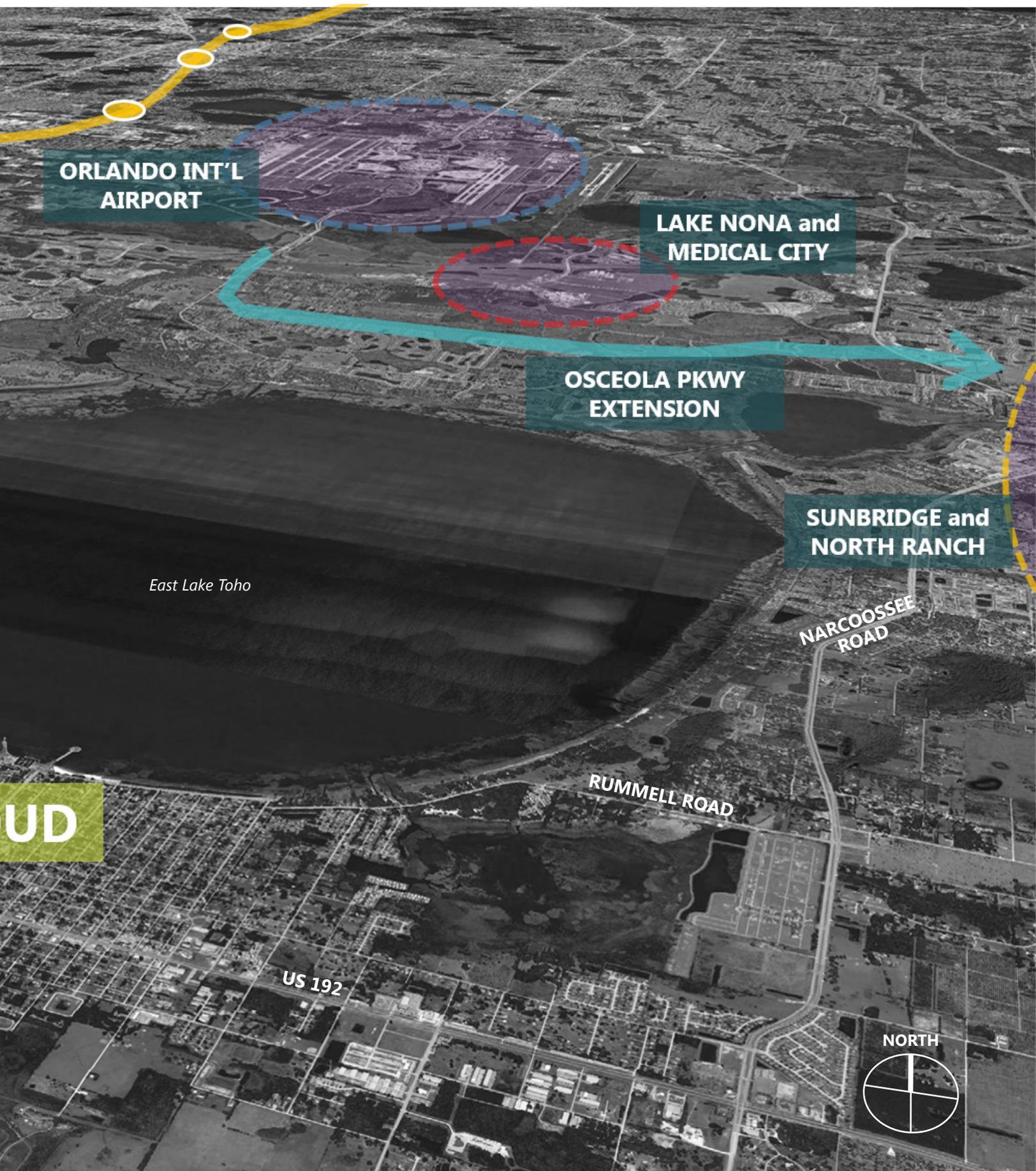
- Industrial
- Retail
- Office

Each square represents approximately 100,000 SF



REGIONAL INFLUENCES on ST. CLOUD





**ORLANDO INT'L
AIRPORT**

**LAKE NONA and
MEDICAL CITY**

**OSCEOLA PKWY
EXTENSION**

**SUNBRIDGE and
NORTH RANCH**

East Lake Toho

UD

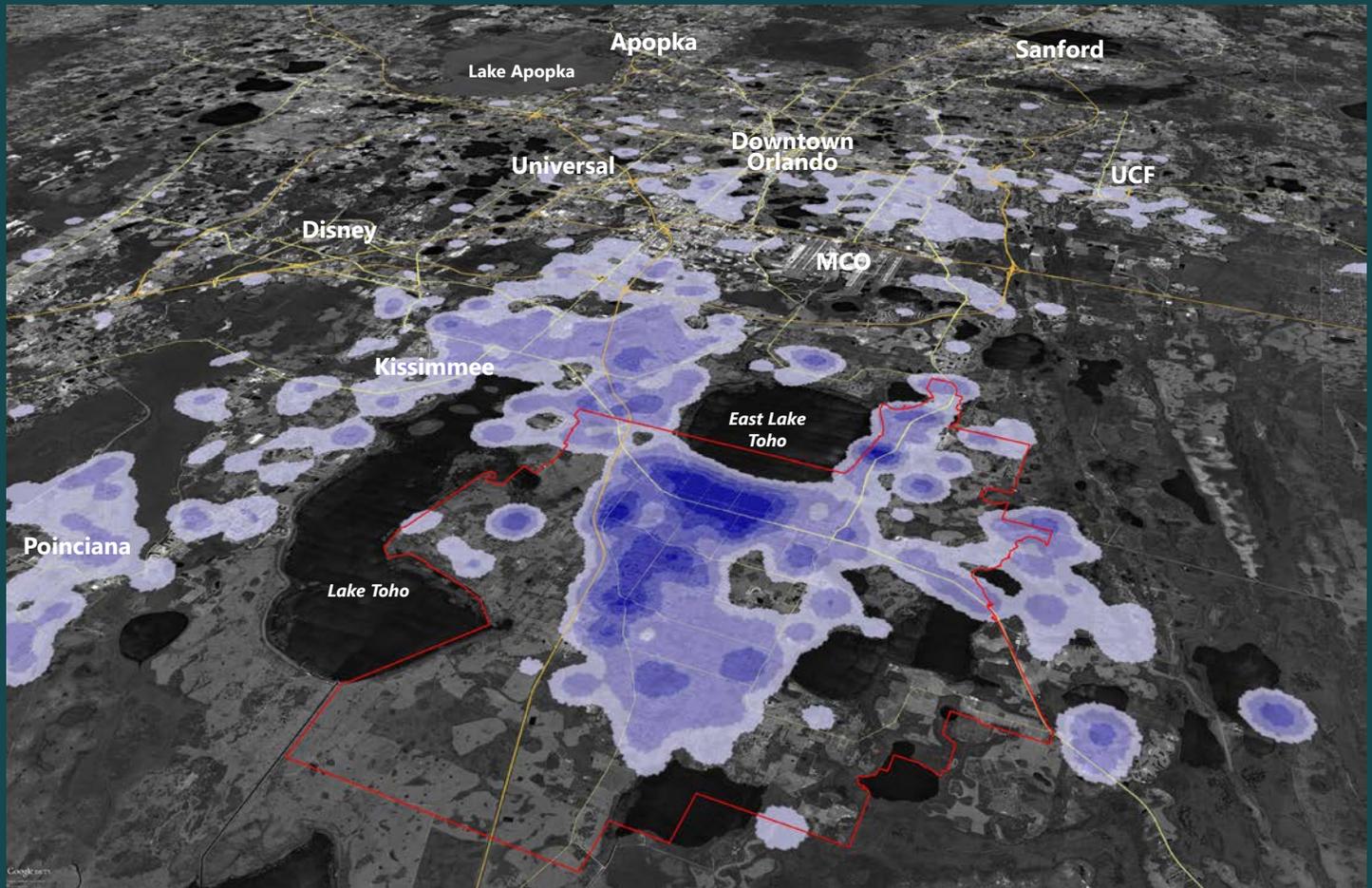
**NARCOOSSEE
ROAD**

RUMMELL ROAD

US 192



Home Locations of People Working in the Study Area

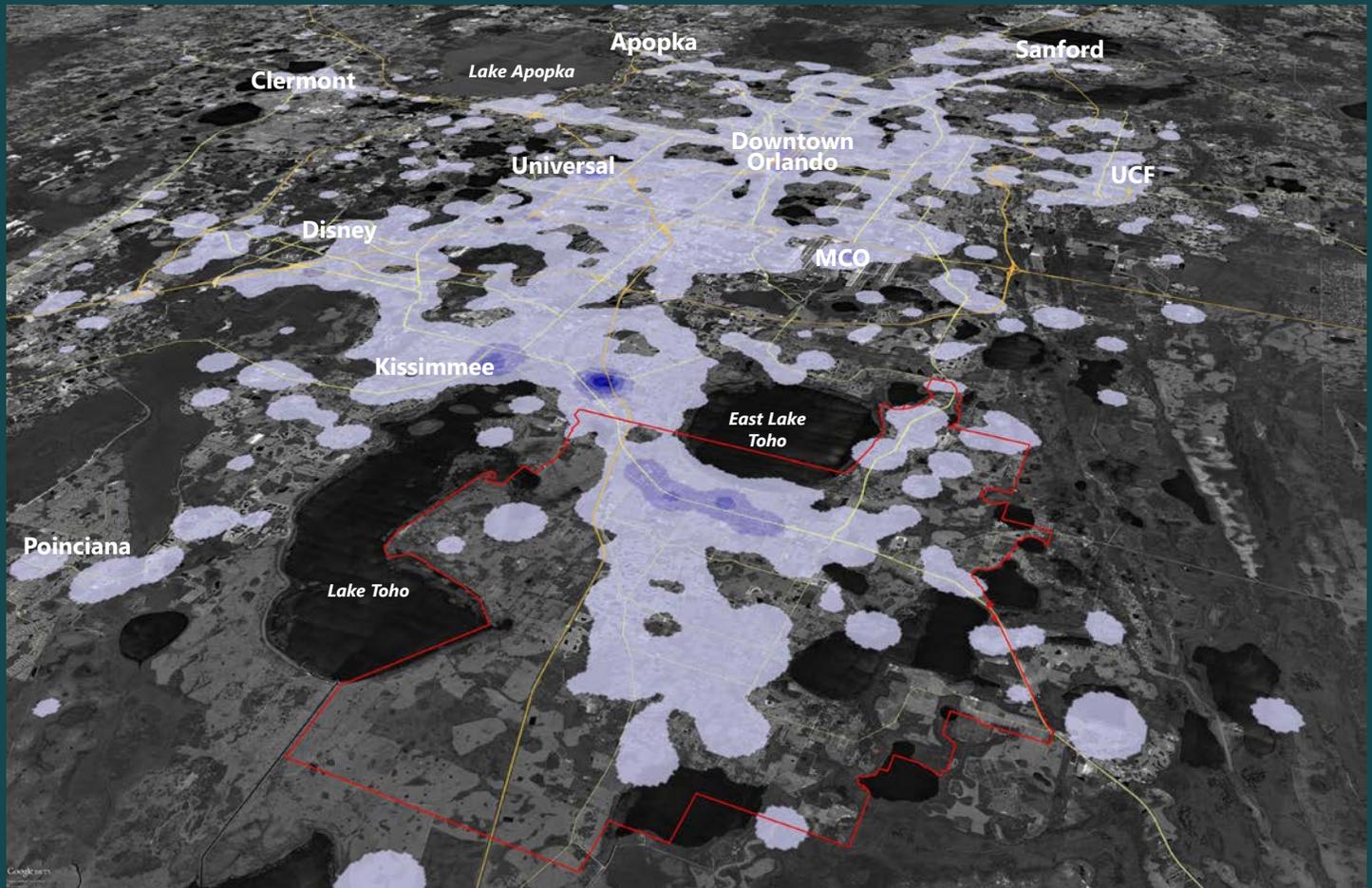


There are about 10,000 people employed at locations within our study area.

2/3 of these employees come from outside the study area.

The study area is a net importer of RETAIL employees.

Work Locations of People Living in the Study Area



There are about 31,000 people living in study area who are employed.

90% of these people work outside of the study area.

The study area is a net exporter of TRANSPORTATION AND WAREHOUSING, INFORMATION, and PROFESSIONAL SERVICES employees.

Existing Land Use

The dominant existing land use within the City Limits is single family residential, which is split into the two distinct areas: the traditional grid pattern adjacent to East Lake Toho and the suburban form south of Nolte Road.

The primary commercial corridor is 13th Street (US 192), with a major center at the intersection of Old Canoe Creek Road, and smaller nodes at major intersections along Canoe Creek Road. Downtown St. Cloud extends from 13th Street north to City Hall at 9th Street, with New York and

Pennsylvania Avenues forming dual “main streets” through the district.

To the northwest of the City, the US 192 corridor continues, surrounded by suburban residential of the City of Kissimmee and unincorporated Osceola County. To the northeast is the rapidly developing Narcoossee Road corridor with a mix of suburban and rural residential land. The Narcoossee Community, found at the edge of the study area, is a rural community struggling to keep its sense of place within

the suburban change that is occurring at its edges.

To the southeast of the city is a large-lot residential area known as The Manor. To the west, south, and east the City is surrounded by rural and agricultural lands.

Significant parks include Chisholm Park, Lakefront Park, and Peghorn Park.



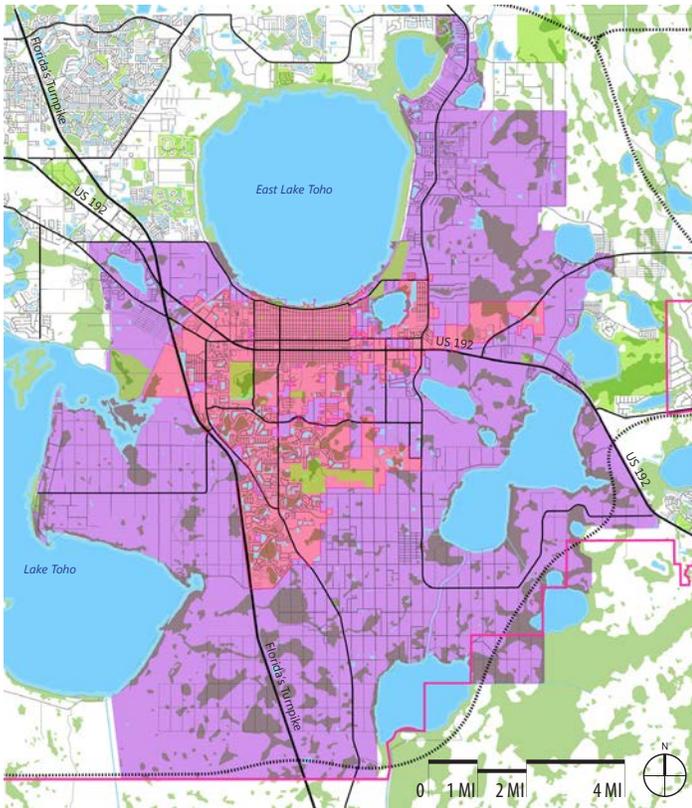
Clockwise, from top left: Traditional retail and theater Downtown, community commercial on US 192, Chisholm Park, mobile home residential, enduring architecture in the grid, and newer homes at the edge.





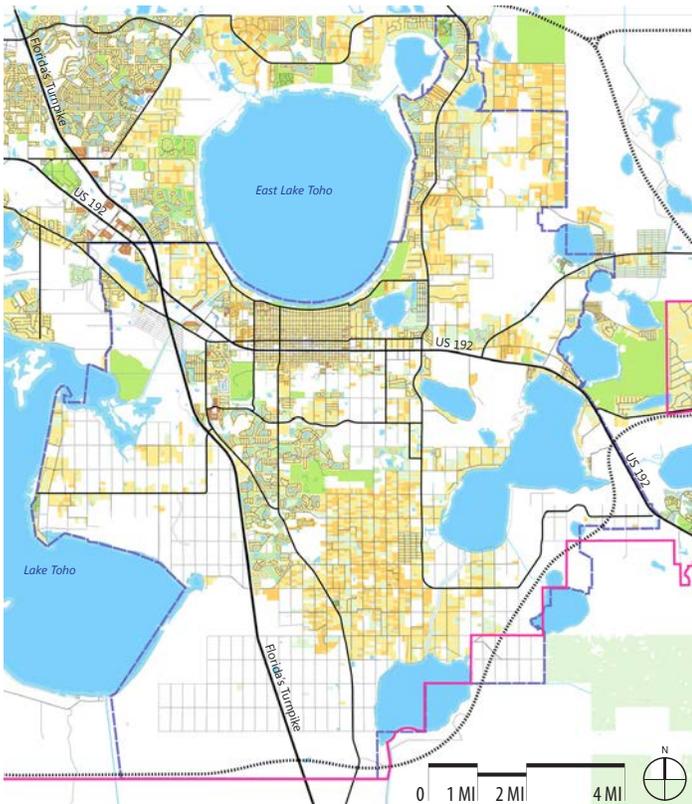
LAND USE LEGEND

[Light Green Box] Residential Vacant	[Orange Box] Senior Housing / Assisted Living	[Light Grey Box] Industrial Vacant	[Dark Blue Box] School
[Light Green Box] Residential Association (HOA, Condo.)	[Pink Box] Commercial Vacant	[Dark Grey Box] Industrial	[Green Box] Parks and Open Space
[Yellow Box] Residential Single Family	[Red Box] Commercial Retail / Services	[Brown Box] Warehousing	[Green Box] Ag Pasture/Timber/Crops/Groves
[Orange Box] Residential Mfr Home	[Red Box] Commercial Entertainment	[Dark Grey Box] Transport, Communications, and Utilities	[Light Green Box] Vacant Non-Ag
[Yellow Box] Residential Townhome	[Red Box] Commercial Auto Related	[Light Blue Box] Institutional Vacant	[Dashed Line] Study Area Boundary
[Orange Box] Residential Multi-Family	[Purple Box] Office	[Dark Blue Box] Institutional	[Pink Box] Osceola County UGB



St. Cloud City Limits and Study Area

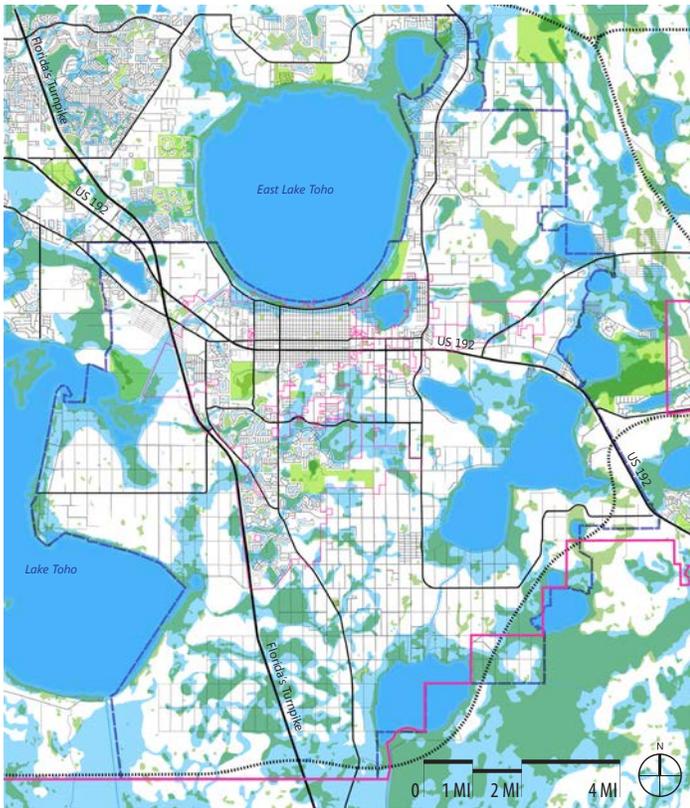
The St. Cloud City Limits is highly irregular in shape, generally extending from the south shore of East Lake Toho, around the south side of Runnymede Lake, then several miles to the south avoiding The Manor, back north along the Florida Turnpike, to the St. Cloud Canal (Canal 31), with many twists and turns along the way. There are also numerous enclaves of unincorporated Osceola County scattered throughout the City. Altogether, the City encompasses over 12,500 acres of land.



Residential Areas

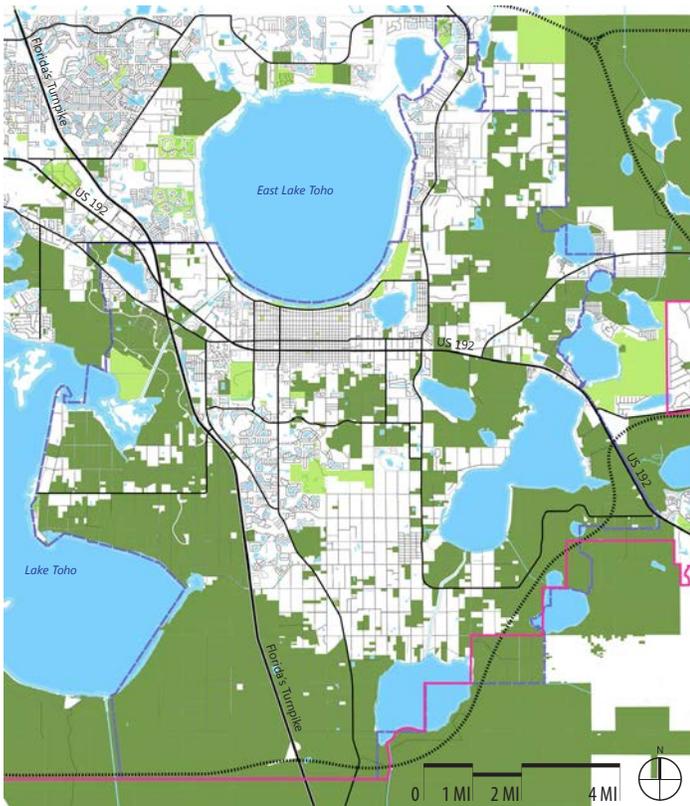
Generally speaking, residential within the City is categorized as being either inside the Grid or outside the Grid. From an urban-form standpoint the difference is clear. The gridded street pattern of the historic town organizes the neighborhood into regular blocks typically between 1.7 and 3.5 acres at an average density of about 5.5 du/acre. Outside the historic grid, the residential pattern is markedly suburban with large single-family neighborhoods feeding major roads such as Canoe Creek Road, Old Canoe Creek Road, and Hickory Tree/Narcoossee Road. These suburban neighborhoods are much newer and average about 3.5 units per acre.

Surrounding the City Limits there is a variety of residential types. Southeast of the City is the large rural community known as The Manor, featuring lots typically ranging from 2-5 acres. West of the City, to Lake Toho, the residential character is very rural and agricultural. Northeast, along Narcoossee Road, the residential character is a wide mix of suburban and rural neighborhoods.



Wetland Systems and Floodplains

St. Cloud is bordered by several lakes including Lake Toho, East Lake Toho, Alligator Lake, Lake Gentry, and numerous smaller lakes. All of these lakes are themselves surrounded by floodplain to some extent, depending on topography, and are fed by complex systems of creeks and wetlands that have interconnected floodplains of their own. Areas where these complex floodplain/wetland systems exist such as around Nolte Road and south of the City Limits can be difficult to develop due to insurance and regulatory requirements. These conditions can severely limit the actual development potential of an area.



Land in Agricultural Use

The predominant agricultural use around the City by far is pasture. Though there is some active citrus distributed throughout the area many of the old citrus groves are fallow and no longer actively farmed. There are also several plant nurseries in operation.



MEETING THE COMMUNITY

The Envision St. Cloud team employed a variety of methods to meet and learn about the community and understand their future goals for the City. Multiple interactive workshops were conducted, with the first being kicked off on May 3, 2017. At these workshops, residents and business owners were able to provide input and ask questions in a variety of ways, including through exercises, comment cards, open houses, etc. In addition to the workshops, two walking audits were held, one of the lakefront and one of downtown. At these walking audits, participants could engage the

team in very specific discussions of design and land use. At any time, residents could access the project website (www.envisionstcloud.com) to watch past presentations, browse project photo albums, and learn about upcoming events.

“Don’t abandon our small town feel.”

-Community Conversation Participant





St. Cloud Citywide Plan
Kick-off Public Meeting | Comment Card



Name (optional)	What is your vision for City? <i>Road improvement</i> <i>Keep rural feel thru out.</i> <i>More small business in</i> <i>down town.</i> <i>Improve hospital employ-</i> <i>ment, employment etc.</i> <i>Extend trail to</i> <i>Lisumme Lakes</i>
Business (optional)	
Address (optional)	



The Envision St. Cloud team used a variety of ways to meet the community throughout the process, including (clockwise from top left): Conventional presentations, written comments, notes on progress sketches, public commentary, walking workshops, and interactive exercises.



MAJOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENTS

MAY 3

MAY

JUNE



Public
Kick-off
Meeting

Walking
Audits

Planning +
Development
Workshop



AUG

OCT

OCT



Review + Refinement Workshop Council Presentation Plan Adoption

Draft Vision Plan

Final Vision Plan



Braggs, Gripes, and Areas of Change

During the Kickoff Public Meeting, participants were given sticky dots and asked to identify on a map the places in St. Cloud that represented the best of the city (their “Braggs”), places that could be improved (their “Gripes”), and places that represented opportunities for change. The results give interesting insights to the concerns of the community.

Braggs [Best of St. Cloud]

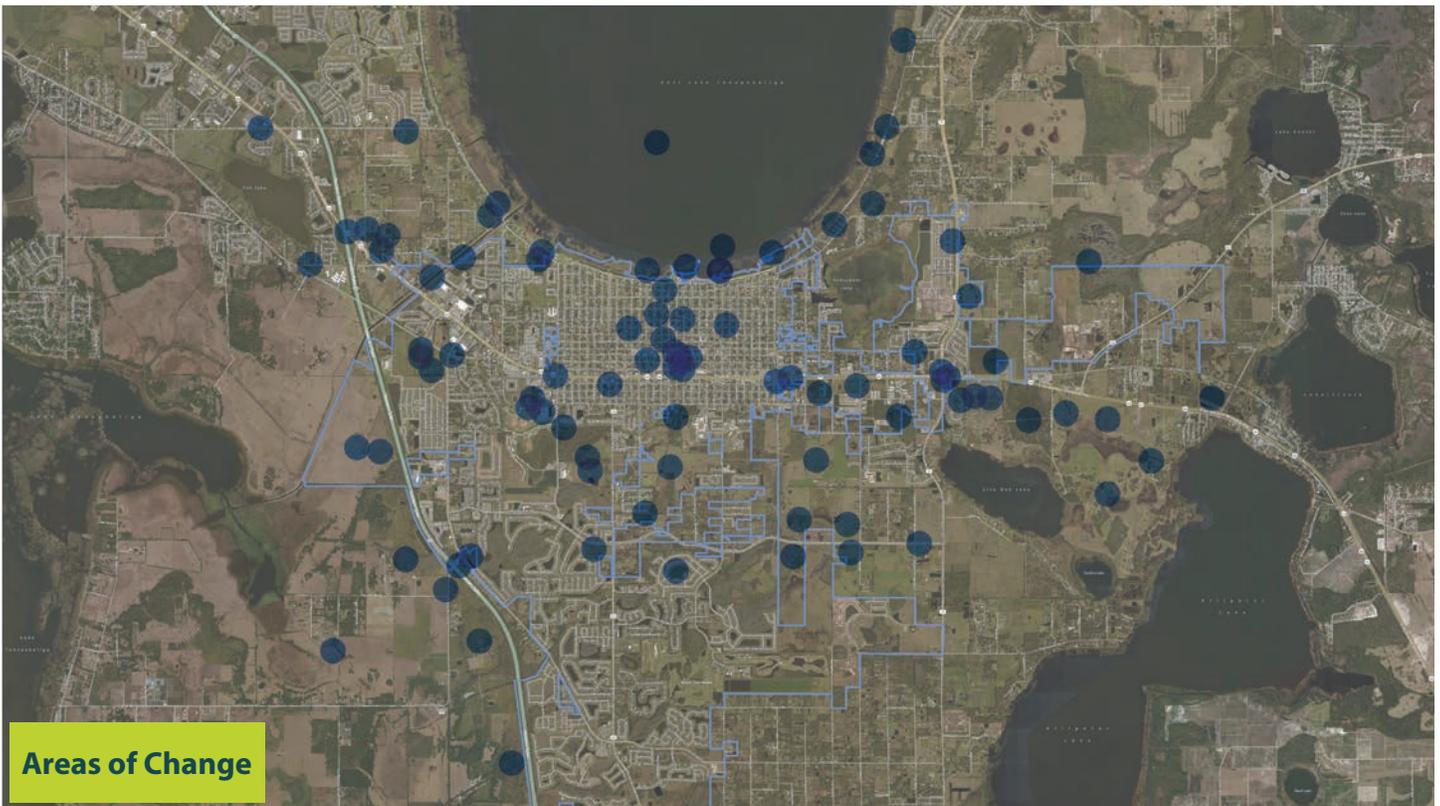
These areas fall into three clusters: [1] Lakefront Park and the East Lake Toho waterfront extending to Chisholm Park, [2] Downtown, New York Avenue, Pennsylvania Avenue, and 10th Street, including the theater, and [3] Peghorn Park.

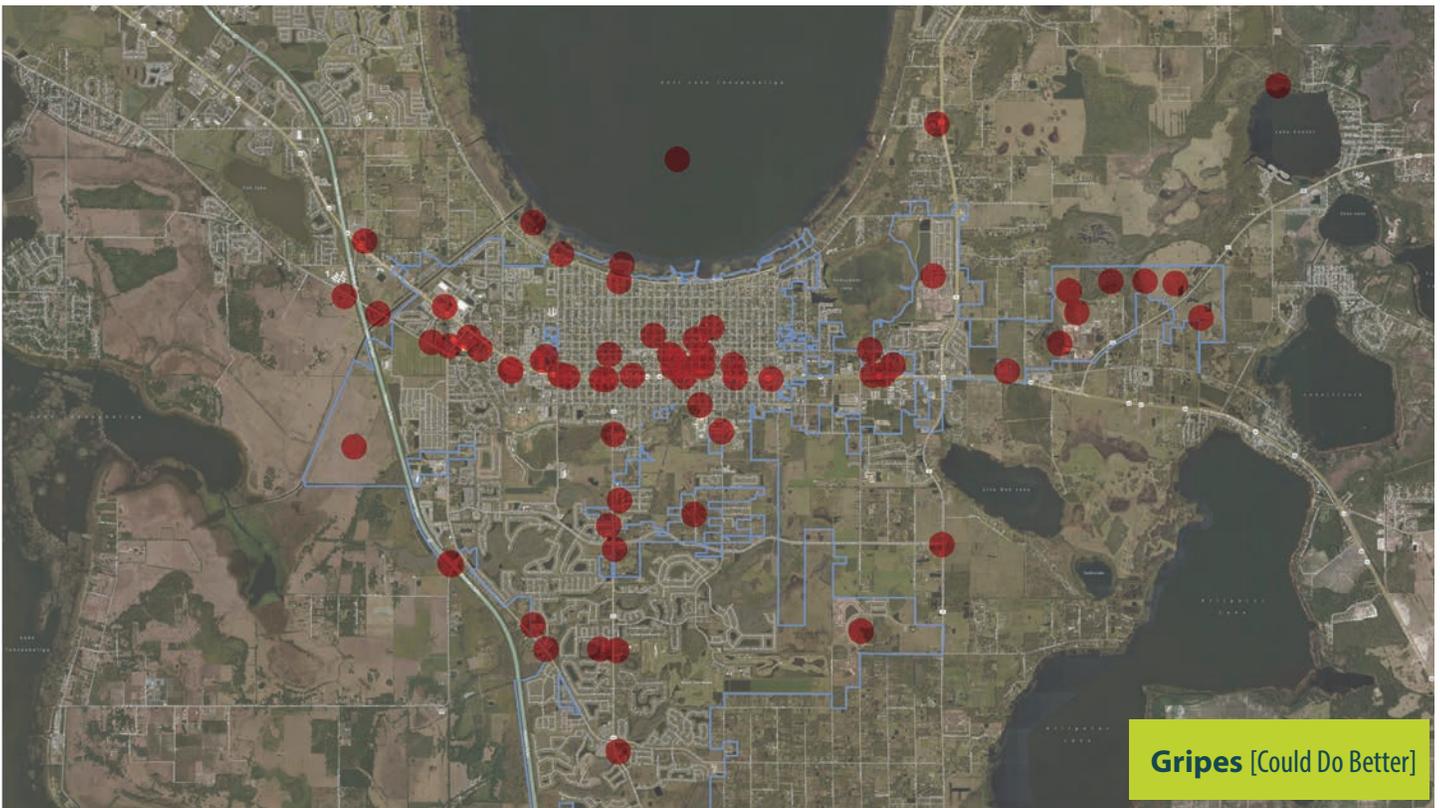
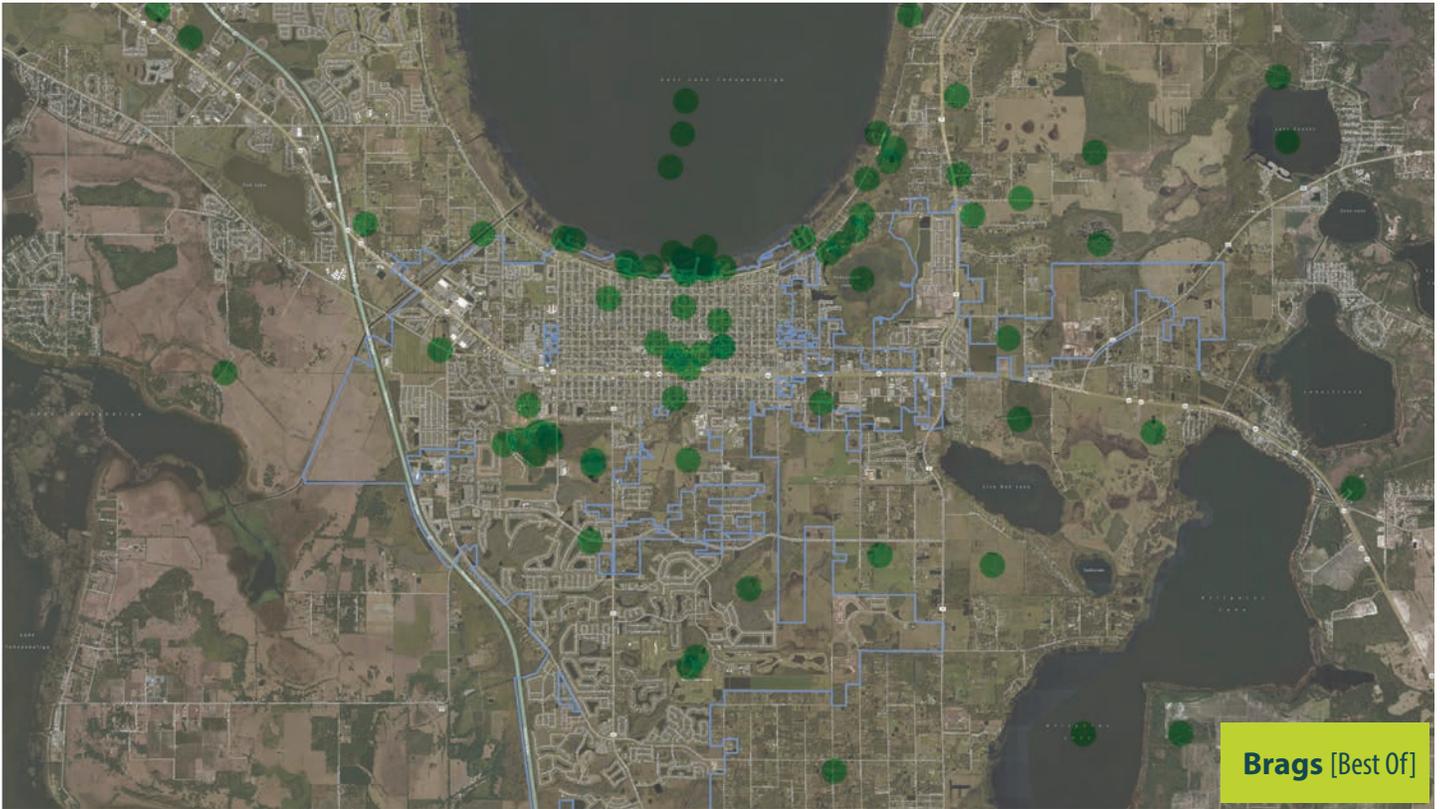
Gripes [Could Do Better]

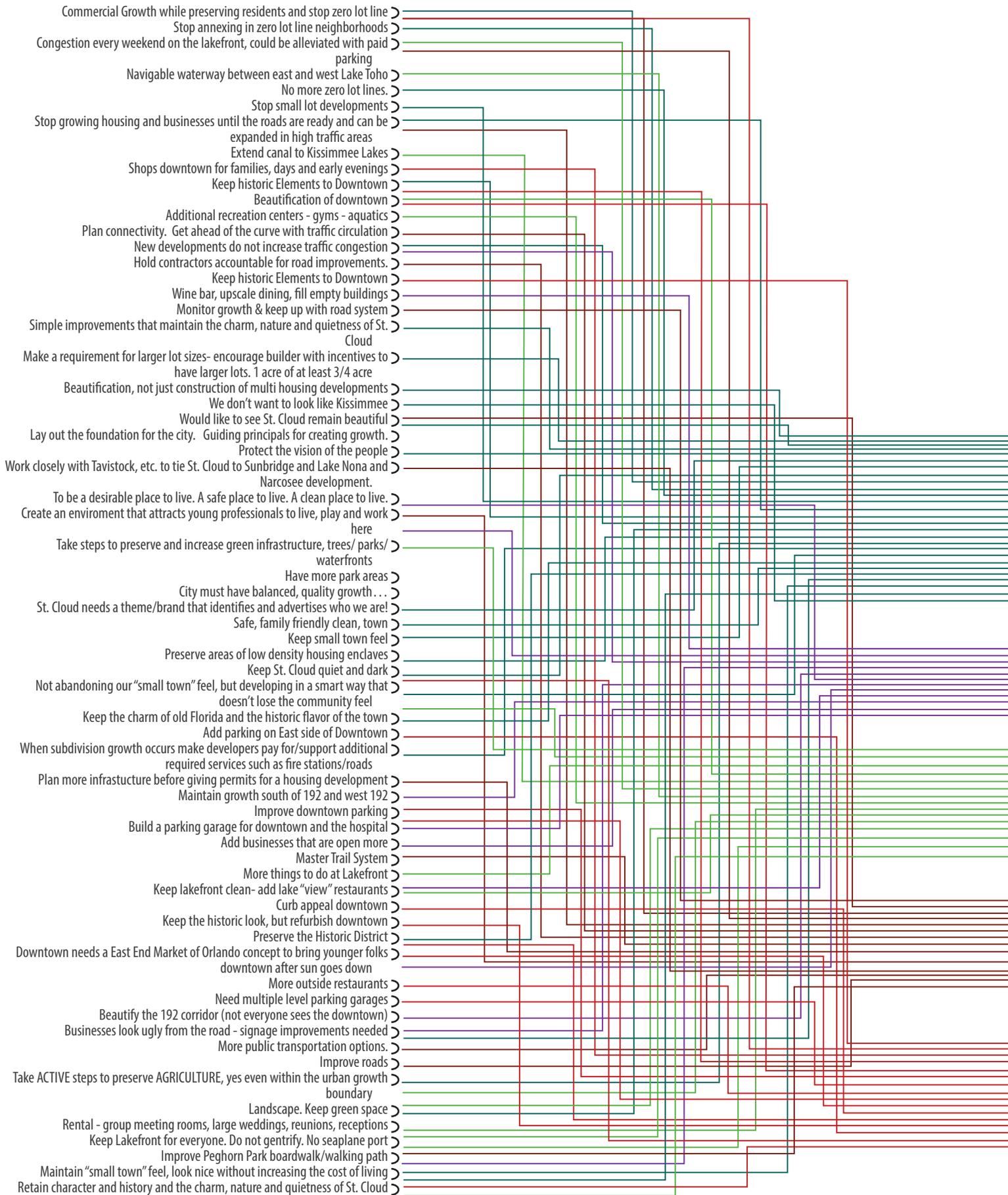
Places with a negative image included the US 192 corridor, currently rural areas that are seeing suburban-style development, and, interestingly, Downtown. Comments about Downtown focused on parking and access.

Opportunities for Change

Areas identified for change covered the city, but clustered into 3 areas: [1] Downtown, specifically the east side and the New York Avenue corridor, [2] East and West gateway ends of 192, and [3] the lakefront extending east through Chisholm Park.





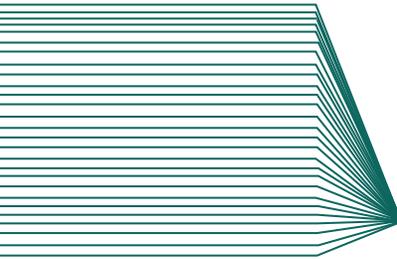


Opportunities + Issues

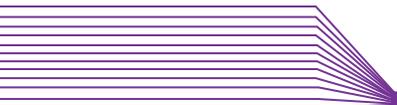
Over the course of several months, the planning team had conversations with hundreds of residents, business owners, civic leaders, and others interested in the future of St. Cloud. These community conversations took place in large gatherings, in small groups, in walks along Lakeshore Park and through Downtown,

and online. The conversations often included observations, general concerns, broad community or individual values, and many specific ideas for change rooted in people’s everyday experiences in St. Cloud. This diagram characterizes a sampling of the input from the community. Nearly all of the community

input could be categorized into one of the five topic areas, which are shown below. Each of these topics has specific issues associated with it. These issues and opportunities drive the master plan.



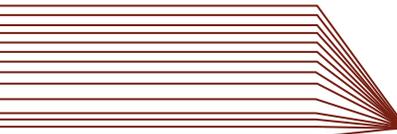
Community Character



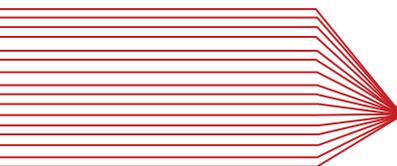
Employment and Non-Residential Uses



Green and Blue Places



Connections



The Downtown

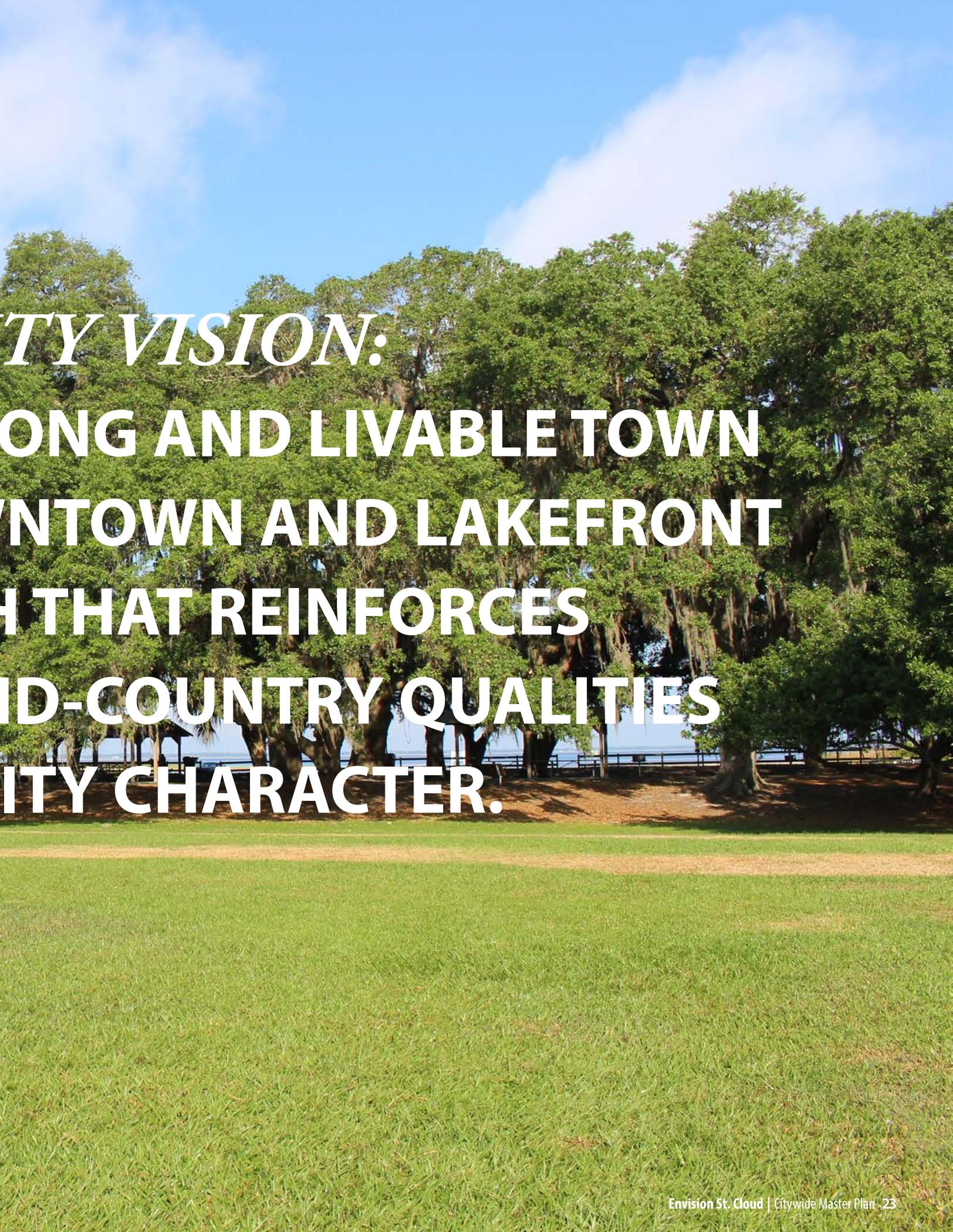


VISION + BUILDING BLOCKS

The Vision describes the city of the future. It is intended to be aspirational and broad, setting a course for the future. The Building Blocks reflect the values inherent in the community. As time goes on, they are intended to remain more or less constant to provide a baseline for new implementation actions to be developed.



COMMUNITY
ST. CLOUD WILL BE A STRONG
TOWN THAT EMBRACES ITS DIVERSITY
AND GROWS THROUGH GROWTH
AND THE POSITIVE TOWN-AND-CITY
RELATIONSHIP OF ITS COMMUNITY

A scenic view of a park with large trees and a grassy field. The trees are lush green and have thick canopies. The grass is a vibrant green. In the background, a body of water is visible under a blue sky with some clouds.

CITY VISION:
**LONG AND LIVABLE TOWN
DOWNTOWN AND LAKEFRONT
THAT REINFORCES
MID-COUNTRY QUALITIES
CITY CHARACTER.**



[1] Balance Community Character and Growth

ISSUES

The most obvious aspects of St. Cloud's community character have been well established over time by two leading factors: 1) the agricultural heritage, from sugarcane, to citrus, to pasture, and 2) the distinctive layout of the grid pattern of the traditional City. As new development has come in and displaced the agricultural land and rural areas, it has not continued the same type of grid pattern, but is much more of a suburban character. Thus, the two most distinctive characteristics of the community, which have drawn many of the residents to the area in the first place, have been eroding. Frequently, this condition causes existing residents to oppose new development.

OUTCOMES

The key to preserving and even restoring community character where it is perceived to have been lost is three-fold: better connections to transportation and parks networks, "retrofitting" the suburbs, and focusing urban services efficiently, as described below.

- Work on improving the neighborhood character of the suburban areas, not just the grid, by adding new transportation connections, incorporating more parks throughout, and encouraging more day-to-day commercial nodes.
- Reduce the separation between the grid and the rest of the City by improving existing linkages and adding new ones where possible.
- Make the streets as "complete" as possible and decrease automobile dependency by incorporating pedestrian and bike facilities into road projects.
- Find creative ways to add more trails and multi-use paths throughout the City in order to form a network.
- Preserve agricultural and rural areas where possible and focus development in areas where services already exist.
- Preserve natural areas where possible.

[2] Expand Employment Opportunity

ISSUES

A major ongoing issue for the community is the lack of local jobs for residents. Although housing remains relatively affordable, most residents must commute outside St. Cloud by car for employment opportunities. Besides the hospital, the limited number of jobs that are available in the City are in basic service sectors and there is an almost complete lack of any kind of target industry sector jobs. In addition, a review of the adopted FLU map for the City shows that the only employment-related areas designated in the City are within a very narrow band around the US 192 corridor. As is, there are very few opportunities and locations within this corridor to attract high quality employers, especially those that require larger sites.

OUTCOMES

- Focus jobs around key existing centers like downtown and the hospital to take advantage of existing infrastructure.
- Look for large “Target Sites” for major employers near transportation access and open land. Annex these sites if necessary.
- Identify target industries and establish incentives to encourage them to locate within the City.
- Work with Lynx to provide better access to transit, especially to critical employment areas and centers.
- Work on diversity of job types
- Observe housing price trends over time to make sure affordable options are always available
- Improve the “digital backbone” –internet connectivity



[3] Celebrate Parks, Lakes, and Usable Open Spaces

ISSUES

The individual parks and recreational facilities available in the City are of high quality and well used, but there are two significant issues, from a systems perspective: 1) they are not effectively distributed throughout the community, and 2) they are highly dependent on automobile access. Even within the grid, where potential access is maximized, sidewalks and bike facilities are almost non-existent.

OUTCOMES

Have a true park system at local and regional scales:

- Identify areas that are under-served by parks. Some areas will require creative places for pocket parks and some areas will warrant big moves.
- Find non-traditional opportunities for parks, amenities, and trails – such as utilizing the canal as a trail.
- Work towards a parks system by better connecting the parks with trails, including equestrian.
- Use existing and future parks as focal points for higher density residential development.
- Incorporate community centers at existing and future parks
- Use park design to tell the “agricultural story” of the City

Leverage and enhance the existing Lakefront Park:

- Build better connections between the lake and downtown through additional bike and pedestrian facilities.
- The park is already a major focal point for recreation and events, but it could be even more so if the layout was improved and some uses were expanded.
- The trails around the park need significantly more trees for shade.
- Any improvements or changes to the park must not diminish its role in maintaining the health of the lake's ecosystem.



[4] Improve Connectivity for All Modes of Travel

ISSUES

Getting around in St. Cloud can be a challenging proposition. The first challenge comes from the fact that there are few routes that connect through, either east/west or north/south. The effect of this is that east-west routes like US 192 experience major traffic congestion despite FDOT efforts to expand capacity, pushing traffic onto other streets such as Lakeshore Blvd and 10th Street. The lack of north/south routes also effectively cuts off the southern suburban area from the grid, reinforcing a major split in community character and civic identity. The second challenge to getting around in St. Cloud is that there are few alternatives to the automobile. There is only one LYNX bus route in the City, which is located in the grid, and none serve the south side. There are few trails, bike facilities, or sidewalks that connect the City in any meaningful fashion. If people are ever going to choose an alternate mode, they must first be available.

OUTCOMES

We need 'Complete Streets' and Connected Networks:

- Focus initial efforts on the north/south connectors (the ones that cross US 192) and the east/west connectors as much as possible for enhancements and extensions.
- US 192 must be bridged...especially with better crosswalks, but possibly with an actual bridge.
- Future growth must be projected and accounted for in planning for new road and transit facilities
- Must be required and planned for at the development stage
- Bike paths must connect places internal to the City and externally to destinations outside the City.
- Bike routes should be visibly highlighted with specialty paving, colors, or markings at the least.
- Work with Lynx to identify potential new transit lines and circulator options.



[5] Enhance the Downtown Experience

ISSUES

Downtown St. Cloud has a lot going for it, but there are some major issues that are keeping it from rising to its full potential. The existing grid gives the downtown good bones but it needs some major improvements to the streetscapes, sidewalks, landscaping, and parking that would make using the downtown a much more pleasant activity. In addition, the downtown is not a place of varied activities where people would want to come and stay all day to make an experience out of it. It needs more of everything – more restaurants, more housing, more activities, more events – just more options for users of all ages.

OUTCOMES

Improve the Physical Address of Downtown (Streets & Appearance):

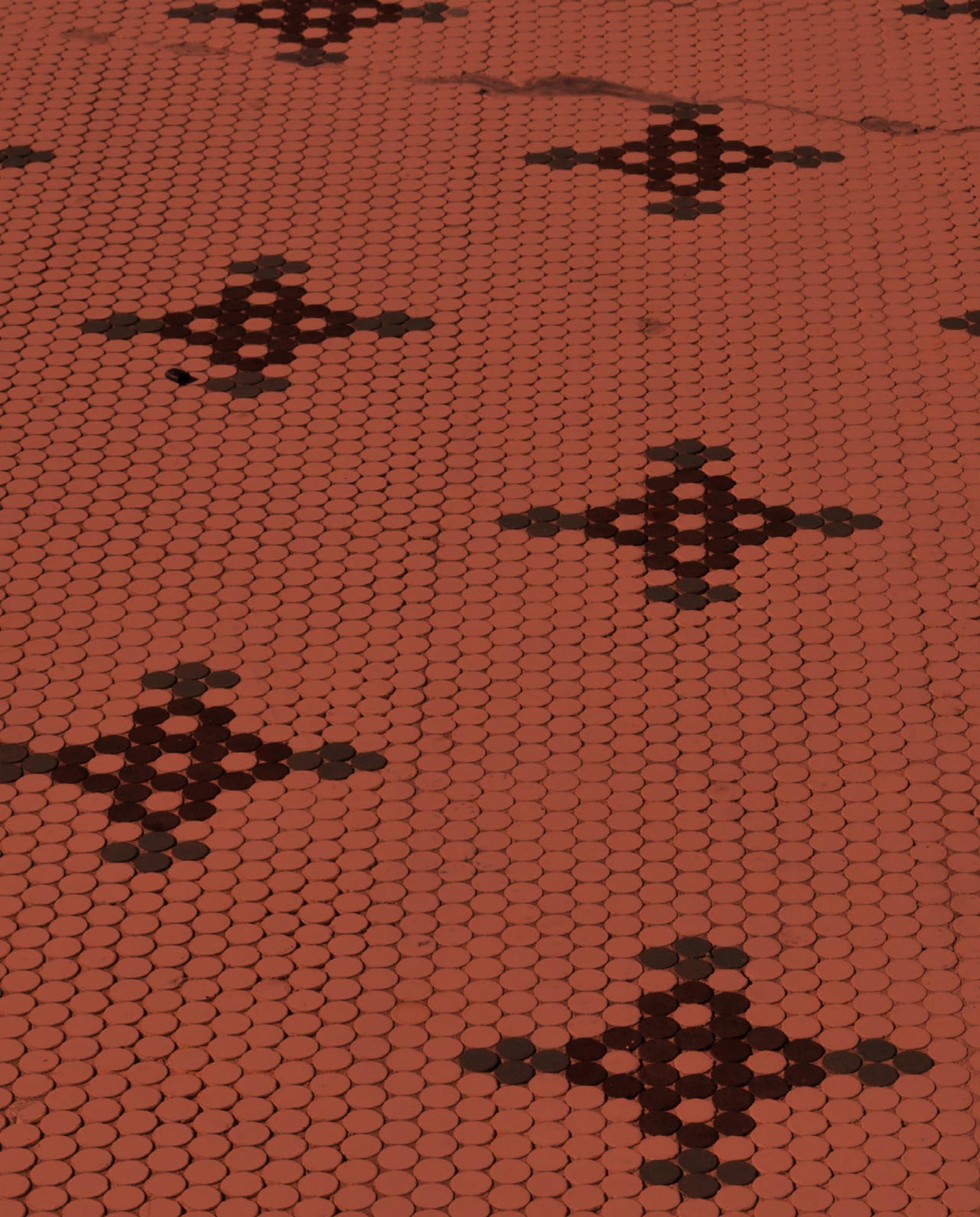
- Fix the streets, including drainage.
- Improve pedestrian comfort with wider sidewalks, better crosswalks, and more street trees.
- Install a larger, more effective wayfinding system.
- Make a significant open space move downtown to act as a focal point and to accommodate events.
- Have parking that is better distributed throughout, so you are never too far from where you need to go. This means both on-street and off-street parking options.
- Use gateways to identify downtown, especially from US 192.

- Utilize local artists for art installations.
- Concentrate incentives on storefront facades & renovation.
- Establish more effective design standards for renovations and new construction that reflect the desired character of downtown.
- Use technology as a catalyst.

Build Up the Uses & Events / Activities:

- Increase the number of big attractors that draw people to Downtown.
- Focus on attracting quality local restaurants with character.
- Focus on more events.
- Encourage shops to open after normal business hours, especially during events.
- Renovations are good, but some redevelopment will be needed to accommodate more mixed use like office and residential at a slightly higher density.
- Foster a 24/7 downtown environment with more mixed use – particularly residential.
- Bridge the generation gap –specifically Millennials.
- Capitalize on the changing retail/technology environment. Face-to-Face interactions are important and people want to have those interactions in places of character.





COMMUNITY CHARACTER FRAMEWORKS

These frameworks represent the physical outcomes of the community values. Like the Building Blocks, they are intended to provide high-level direction for future growth.

Urban Framework Plan

The Community Character Frameworks start to describe how the city may organize itself over the coming years. The frameworks address how we think about the future of certain areas within and adjacent to St. Cloud, philosophically and from a market and economic development point of view. In this way, the frameworks act as a link between the physical form of the place and an economic development idea about the position of the community within the region.

The framework is organized into six types of places, each fulfilling an important role in the definition of St. Cloud's character and economic competitiveness.

The Character Town - Downtown and the "Grid" - is driving the picture that St. Cloud has in people's mind. These areas can be enhanced through park and public space improvements and some changes in density and intensity to consider increasing activities in the heart of the town.

A key goal of the framework is to strengthen existing residential neighborhoods and position future neighborhoods to provide a positive economic impact for the city. Another key goal is to position St. Cloud as a competitive housing choice for the

workforce of surrounding developments, including Medical City and NeoCity.

Livable Suburbs - these are currently the bulk of St. Cloud. In the future, some portions of these livable suburbs will need to be retrofitted to ensure that they remain competitive in the marketplace. This can be achieved through infill development of missing land uses and housing types, and balancing streets to provide service for additional users (e.g. people, not just cars). The question for these areas is "How do you keep the value headed up rather than declining?"

New Neighborhoods - where growth needs to happen outside of infill areas in Livable Suburbs, it should not be homogenous across the landscape. New neighborhoods need to have an identifiable character built on the town-and-country qualities inherent to St. Cloud's traditional built pattern.

Employment Nodes - We have identified two areas: a core that is positioned to be a small employment center and a larger area west of the Turnpike integrated with new neighborhoods. Portions of these areas are located within the current city limits while others are not. Within the city, these are places that could grow as a center (campus opportunity). This is an

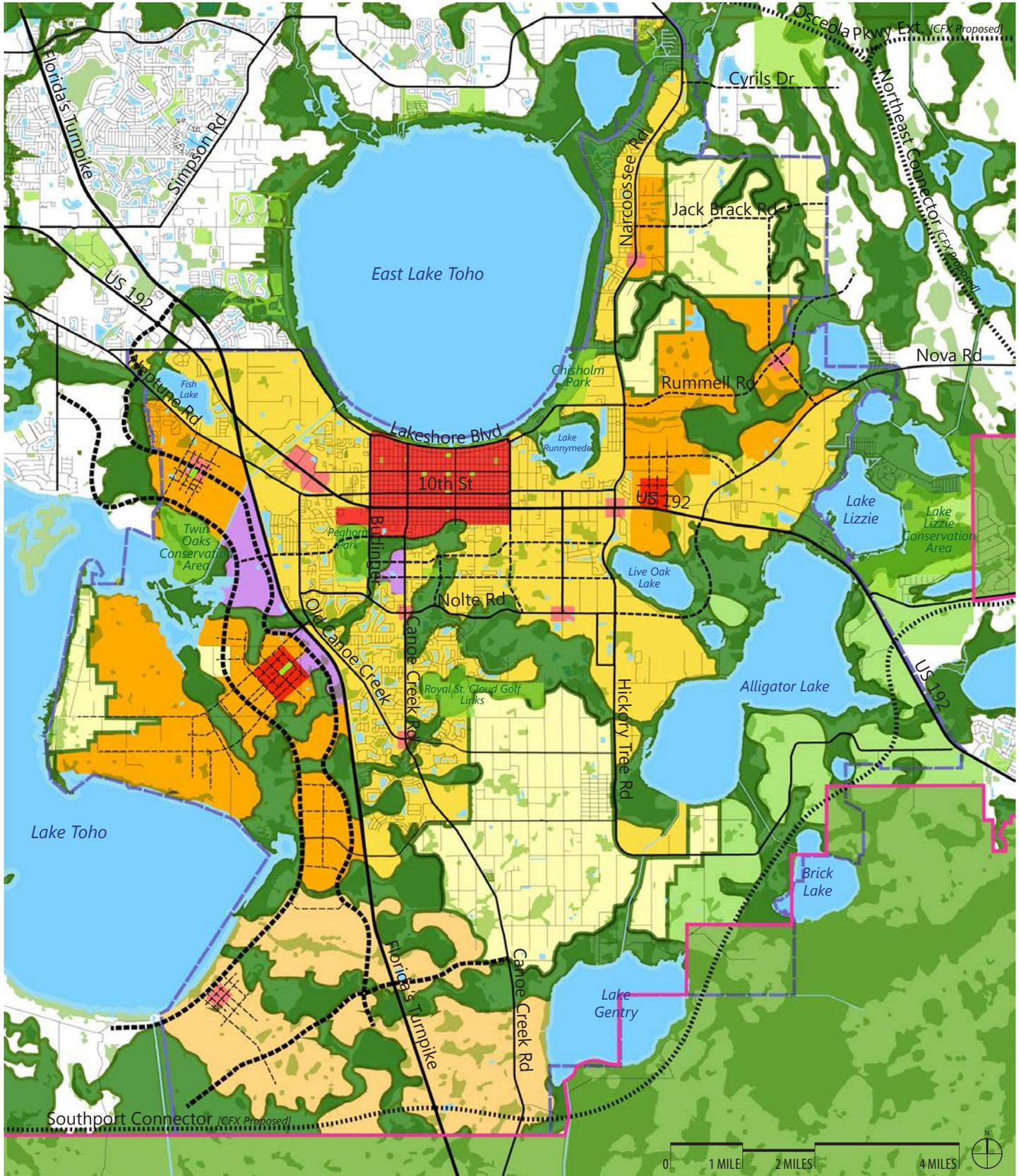
important element to fill a gap in the city's economic development positioning.

Recognize that there are different types of users who might want to come to St. Cloud. Some may be small businesses in need of smaller parcels with a good address in a character area (e.g. a microbrewery or winebar desiring a downtown location). Others may need locations suitable for corporate campus development where two-to-five acre tracts support a mix of office, distribution, and institutional uses. We want St. Cloud to have places across the city that satisfy all of those potential users.

At the edge, we believe there is an important opportunity for this area to maintain a rural quality while developing in a cluster fashion where a rural, environmental character can dominate. Development should recognize large open space systems with the opportunity to be good stewards of the land and maintain wetlands and floodplains in a functional fashion, but also to use them to improve connectivity to the regional trail system. This balancing will allow development with an environmental ethos to manage that transition from rural place to town.

**RESPECT:
PRESERVE:
ENHANCE:
ACTIVATE:
RE-IMAGE:
REDISCOVER:**

**The Rural Line
Rural Neighborhoods
Livable Suburbs
Employment Nodes
New Neighborhoods
Character Town**



COMMUNITY CHARACTER FRAMEWORK

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| [Light Green] Rural Area | [Orange] New Neighborhoods | [Solid Line] Existing Roadway |
| [Yellow-Green] Maintained Rural Neighborhoods | [Red] New Neighborhoods Centers | [Dashed Line] Future Roadway Connection |
| [Medium Green] New Rural Cluster Neighborhoods | [Light Orange] New Neighborhoods (Long-Term) | [Dotted Line] Proposed Expressway (CFX) |
| [Orange] Livable Suburbs | [Red] The Character Town | [Blue Line] Study Area Boundary |
| [Red] Livable Suburb Centers | [Green] Parks | [Pink Line] Osceola County UGB |
| [Purple] Employment Center | [Dark Green] Major Open Space Framework | |

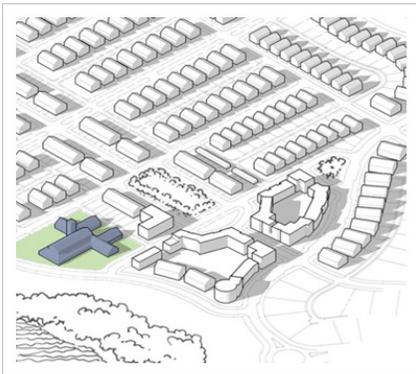
The Elements of Community

While every town has its unique character, the land uses within the town are generally consistent. Towns exist within the natural environment and are made up of neighborhoods (primarily residential uses), commercial districts (downtowns), civic buildings, parks, and the streets and infrastructure which knit them together.

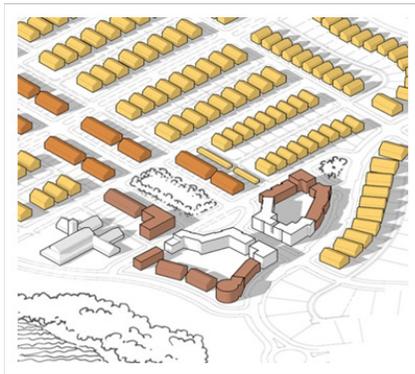
St. Cloud's Community Character Frameworks are a way of describing the ways that these elements come together to create a strong town that maximizes its relationship to natural amenities, such as parks and lakes, and remains livable as it grows. In this way, the design of these elements should be consistent with the vision for the surrounding area, as described in the frameworks.



CIVIC BUILDINGS



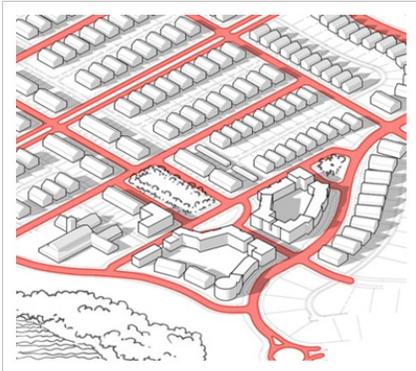
NEIGHBORHOODS



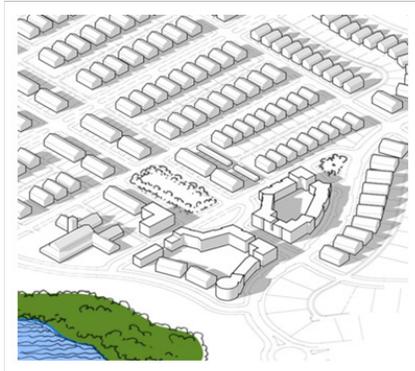
PARKS



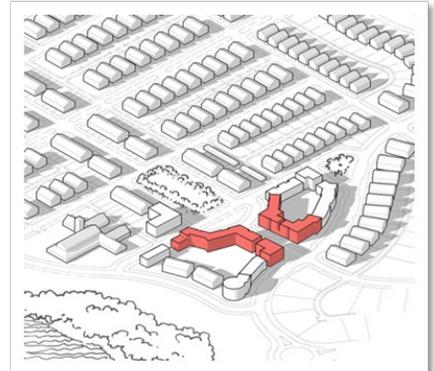
STREETS & INFRASTRUCTURE



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT



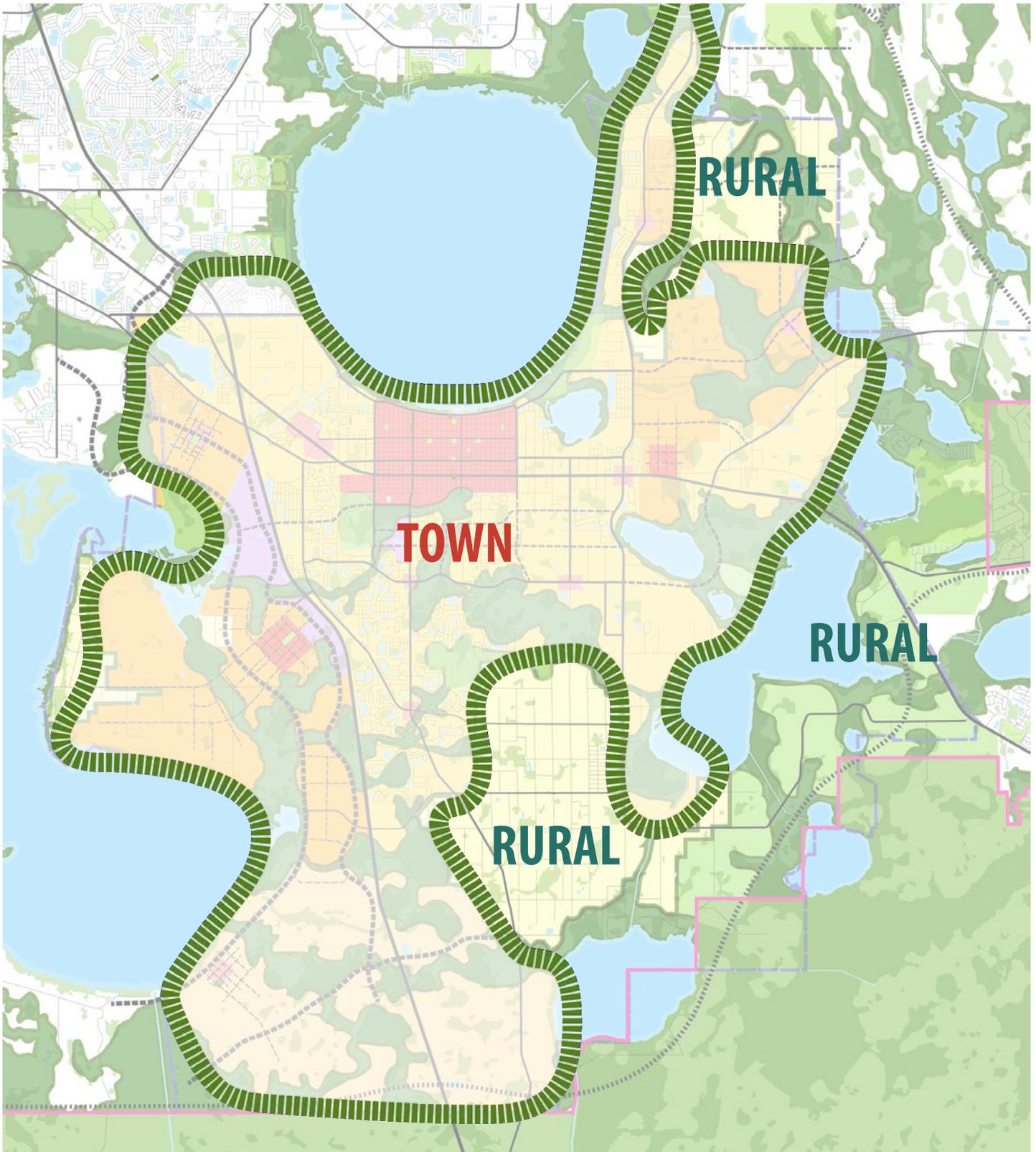
COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

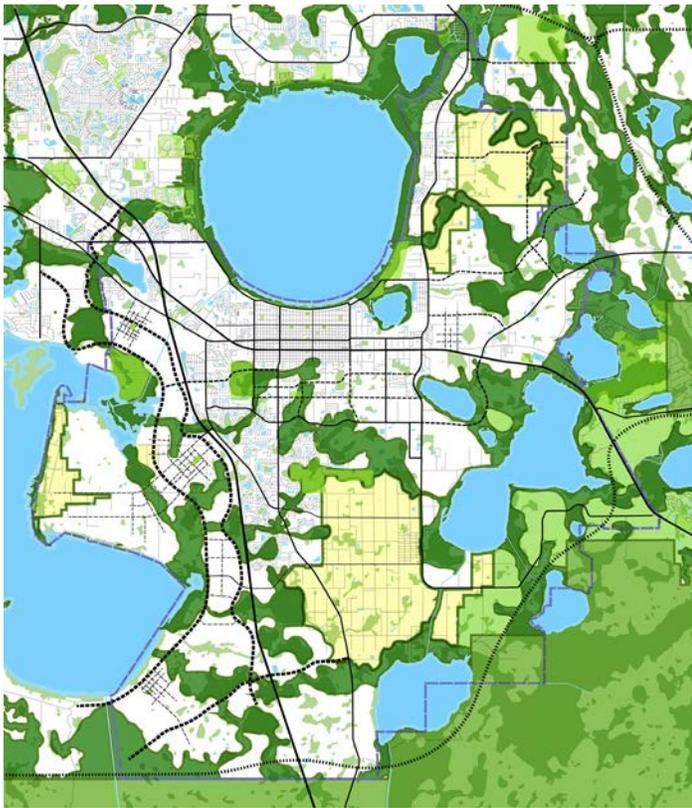


Respect the Rural Line

St. Cloud's history as a town that grew up within and served the surrounding rural area emerged as a key character element in the Envision St. Cloud process. That character, however, has been eroded over the past two decades as residential growth has sprawled into formerly rural areas, blurring the lines between "town" and "country" into a condition that is truly neither.

An important element of nurturing this character is the formation of a "Rural Line" that defines the town from the country. Areas on the town side should strive to be more urban, while rural areas should be less intense. This line can be formed through existing lakes, parks, and floodplains, and further defined through set asides in development plans near the edge.





Preserve Rural Neighborhoods

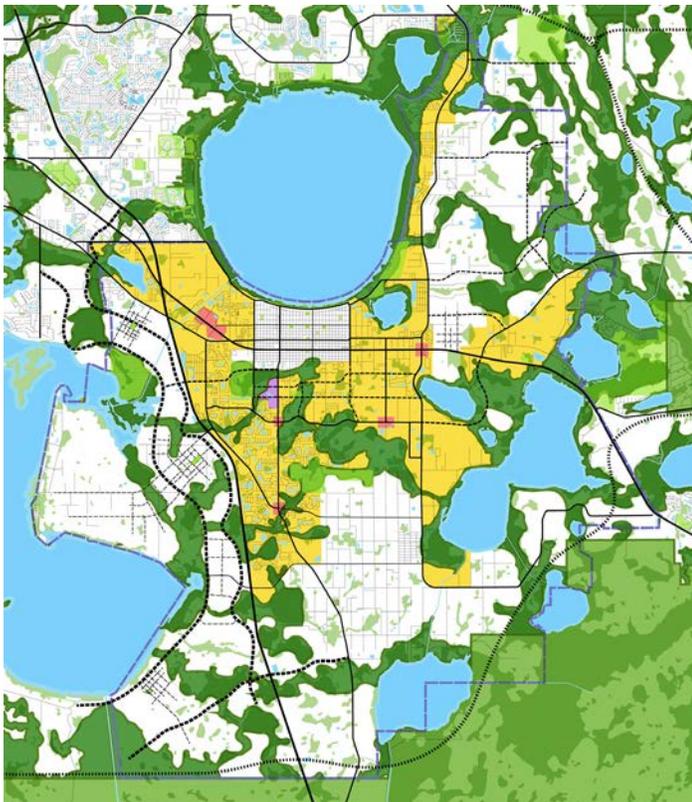
These areas make up the Rural Edge to St. Cloud and are important to maintaining the character of the town.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Mainly residential uses, some agricultural uses
- Very low density development
- Not intended to be a walkable environment
- Few or limited connections to adjacent centers, districts, and corridors
- Orientation toward private spaces in the form of large yards and acreage

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Align development standards to require character of the environment and landscape to define the Rural Edge
- Maintain very low density within existing Rural Neighborhoods
- Open up strategic locations to public along the Rural Edge
- Develop greenways and trails to link green and blue places within the town to the Rural Edge



Enhance Livable Suburbs

These areas are home to the majority of residents in the community. The framework goal is to increase the livability of these neighborhoods through better connections to parks, open spaces, and daily needs commercial uses.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Almost entirely residential uses
- Low to moderate density development
- Limited walkability
- Adjacent to suburban, high capacity, high speed roadway barriers with limited local street connectivity
- Few or limited connections from neighborhoods to Retail or office uses in adjacent centers, districts, and corridors
- Orientation toward private spaces in back yards

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Improve walkability through more paths and trails
- Develop new neighborhoods with a mix of density
- Consider retrofits to commercial centers to vary uses and improve linkages to surrounding neighborhoods
- Position land central to this area as employment node
- Retrofit bike and pedestrian connections from neighborhoods to a regional system

Activate Employment Nodes and Re-Image New Neighborhoods

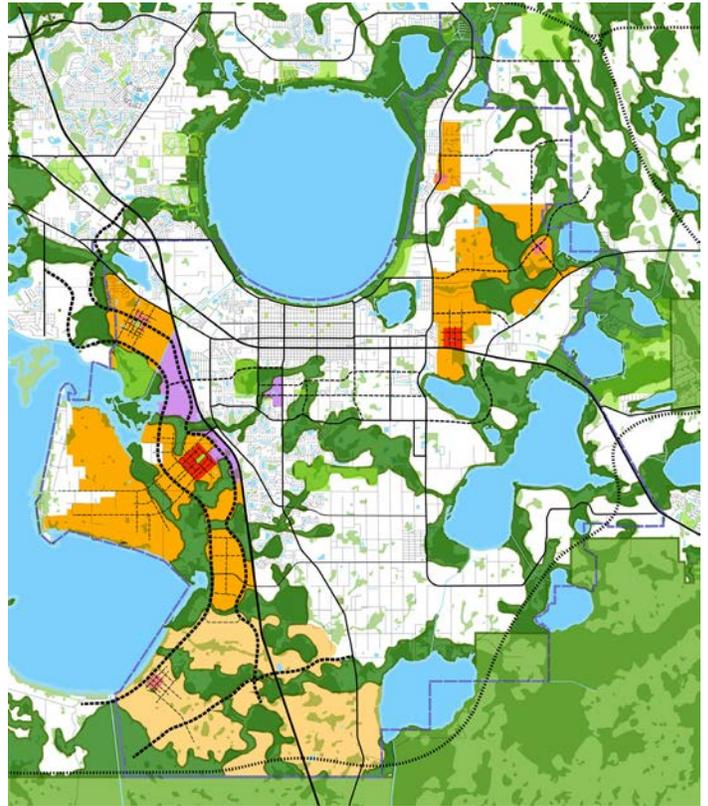
New Neighborhoods and Employment Nodes represent the opportunity to build in a more connected and urban fashion that builds on the elements of the character town and positions the community for expanded employment opportunities.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Mixed and multi-use environment
- Typically retail, office, civic, and residential uses
- Highly connected with adjacent neighborhoods, districts, and corridors
- Highly walkable environment
- Moderate to high density development
- Served by urban, high capacity, slow speed roadways
- Significant public infrastructure

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Improve access and connectivity to and across the Turnpike
- Require both mix of uses and mix of residential types through development standards
- Use open spaces to link these areas to regional trail connections
- Build network of highly connected, slow speed roadways



Rediscover the Character Town

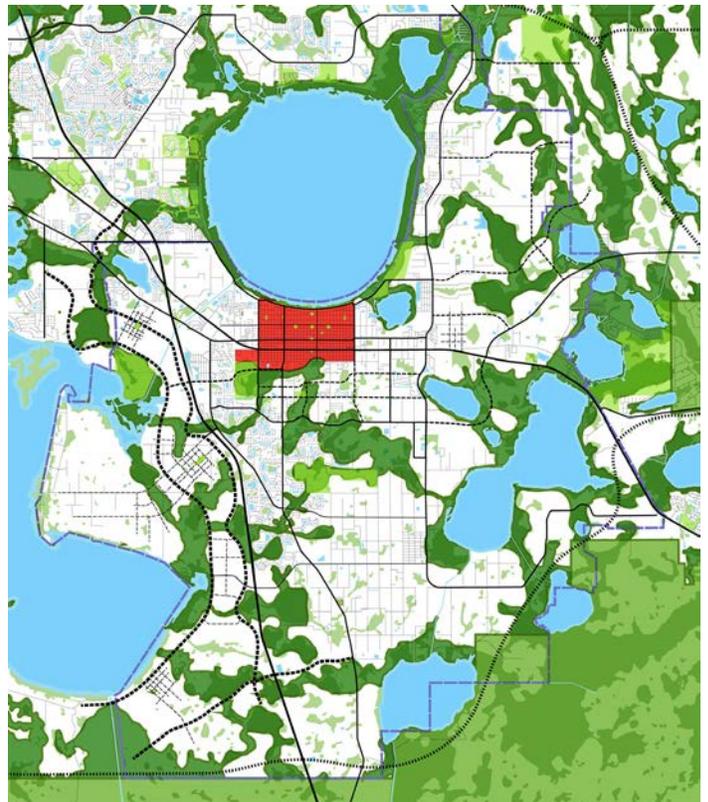
From the grid to the downtown core to the lakefront, this area should remain the driver of character for the whole community. Steps should be taken to keep it strong, with incentives for redevelopment and incremental intensification, and public realm improvements to link to the greater area.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Mixed and multi-use environment
- Highly residential, but with a downtown core containing retail, office, and civic uses
- Highly connected with adjacent neighborhoods, districts, and corridors
- Highly walkable environment
- Moderate to high density development
- Served by urban, high capacity, slow speed roadways

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Continue on-going downtown revitalization efforts through a focus on public realm (streetscape and park) improvements
- In appropriate locations, look for opportunities to increase density (e.g., around parks and open spaces)
- Focus transportation improvements on bike and pedestrian linkages that improve the comfort of non-vehicular users



Livable Corridors

St. Cloud's future success will be influenced by its transportation network. The ability of a street system to support the movement of people is a key factor in a place's ability to attract quality growth.

The community's street network should be made up of Livable Corridors with a neighborhood focus, connecting residents to jobs and amenities. The streets should be connected and calm to create a travel environment that is safe and functional for all users. The focus should be on moving people rather than merely moving cars.

This focus will allow the town to have a level of walkability and bikeability that enhances neighborhood connectivity to parks and lakes, as well as to downtown and other existing and emerging corridor destinations.

Streets should be balanced, enhancing both service and visual quality. Attractive streets support quality residential and commercial reinvestment.

To invest in these Livable Corridors, St. Cloud should target a policy of creating new and retrofitted "Complete Streets."

In this vein, street designs should begin with the target of addressing all users of the street. These include moving users like cars, buses, bicycles, and pedestrians, as well as static users - the businesses and residents that rely on the street for access and a quality address. The design of streets should also maximize the connectivity to the surrounding network to the greatest extent possible, building on the lessons of the old St. Cloud grid, where traffic is dispersed on many streets rather than concentrated on a few streets.

Potential projects leading to a more livable transportation network include:

- [1] New north-south parallel network created west of the Turnpike through new development, creating a continuous, and
- [2] slow-speed boulevard linking new neighborhoods and employment centers
- [3] Improvements at Kissimmee Park Road Turnpike interchange to support employment center location and new center west of Turnpike
- [4] New street connection across Turnpike to improve access to potential employment center land
- [5] New network linking Nolte Road corridor to the Grid and Budinger to Hickory Tree with parallel network
- [6] Extension of Nolte Road to US 192 at Nova Road
- [7] New connection from Narcoossee Road to Nova Road to support center development
- [8] County currently studying Rummell, Jack Brack, and Cyrils for upgrades
- [9] Long-term new interchange as southernmost new neighborhood develops, with connection to Canoe Creek Road
- [10] Potential system interchange at Turnpike and CFX's proposed Southport Connector will improve regional access to the community
- [11] New regional expressway connection
- [12] Potential system interchange at Turnpike and CFX's proposed Northeast Connector will improve regional access to the community
- [13] Off-street multi-use trail connection between Lakefront Park and Chisholm Park
- [14] Extension of Lakefront Park trail to Neptune Road (Bill Johnston Trail) and NeoCity/Kissimmee
- [15] Florida Avenue repurposing and multi-use trail connection from Lakefront south to Nolte Road (see page 59)
- [16] Lake to Lake trail: potential trail connection adjacent to canal
- [17] Budinger-Columbia spine multi-use trail, with gateway bridge crossing over US 192 (see page 46)
- [18] Rural edge trail - develop greenway connecting lake amenities as new development occurs



FUTURE TRANSPORTATION FRAMEWORK

- [—] Existing Roadway
- [---] Future Roadway Connection
- [.....] Proposed Expressway (CFX)
- [Orange Outline] Livable Corridors



FORWARD MOVES

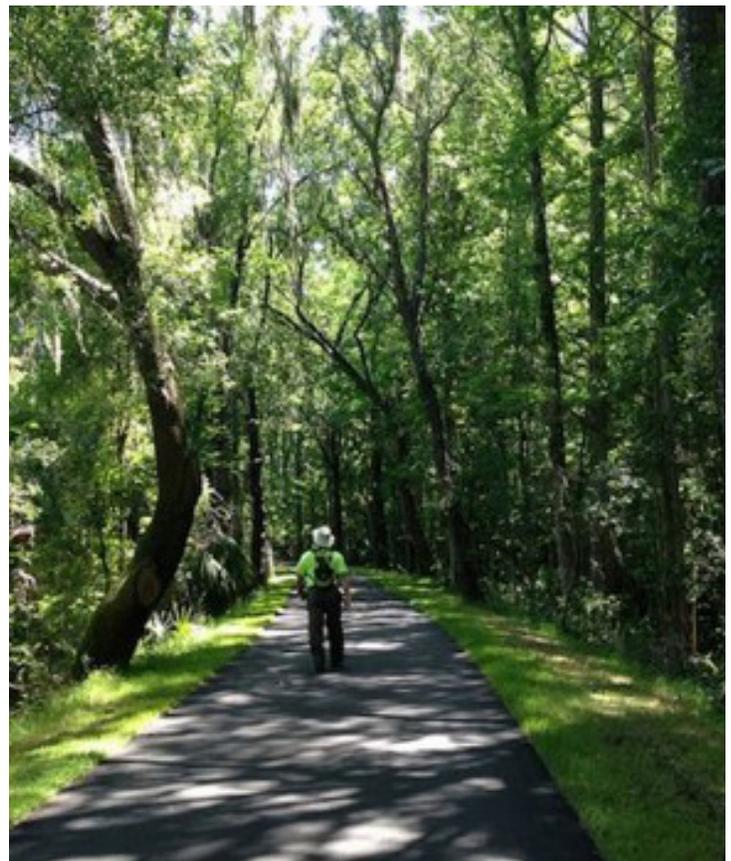
The Forward Moves are nine key initial actions that each represent one of the potentially many applications of the Building Blocks and Frameworks. They have been created in thoughtful consultation with community stakeholders, but they each represent one of potentially many solutions consistent with the guiding principles. The plans and imagery shown with each concept are intended to be indicative of the character and intent of the recommended actions.

[1] New Neighborhoods at the Rural Edge

New Neighborhoods at the rural edge serve an important function. When designed correctly, they provide for high quality residential options not available elsewhere in the City, at lower overall densities, that can function as a buffer between urban areas and rural areas. By clustering development these rural edge neighborhoods can preserve important open space linkages, provide recreation and equestrian opportunities, and hold the rural line better than traditional suburban development.

- [A] Neighborhood preserves significant amount of open space in its undeveloped form
- [B] Access to lakes and other natural areas is provided within easy bike or walk distance from homesites
- [C] Usable open space is provided in the form of passive parks, greens, or even community gardens or farms
- [D] Off-road multi-use trail is provided throughout the neighborhood and, over time, linked up with other regional trail systems
- [E] Roadway maintains rural character through landscape treatments, buffering, and generous setback to structures

Example Character of New Neighborhoods at the Rural Edge





[2] Infilling Multi-Use Neighborhoods

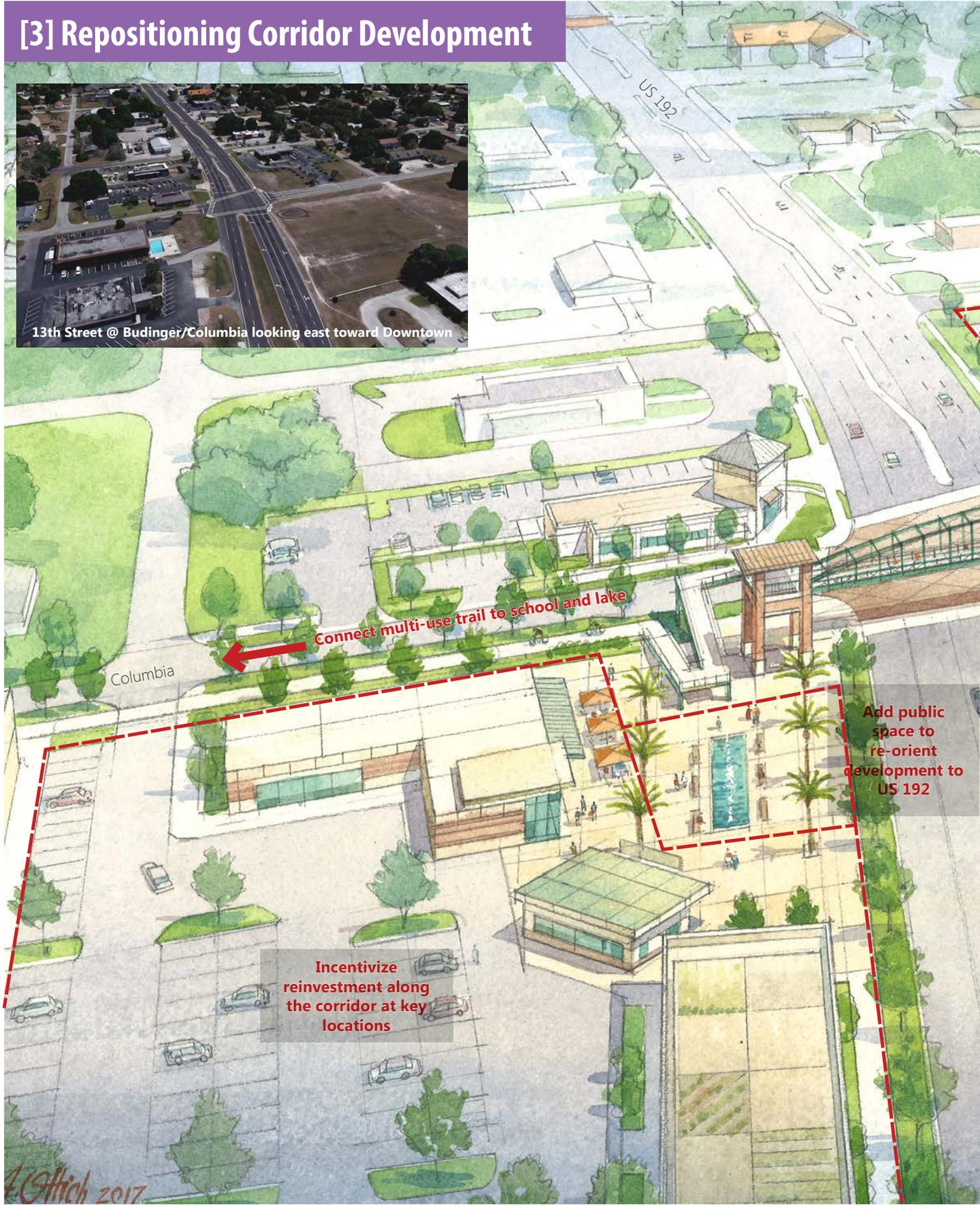


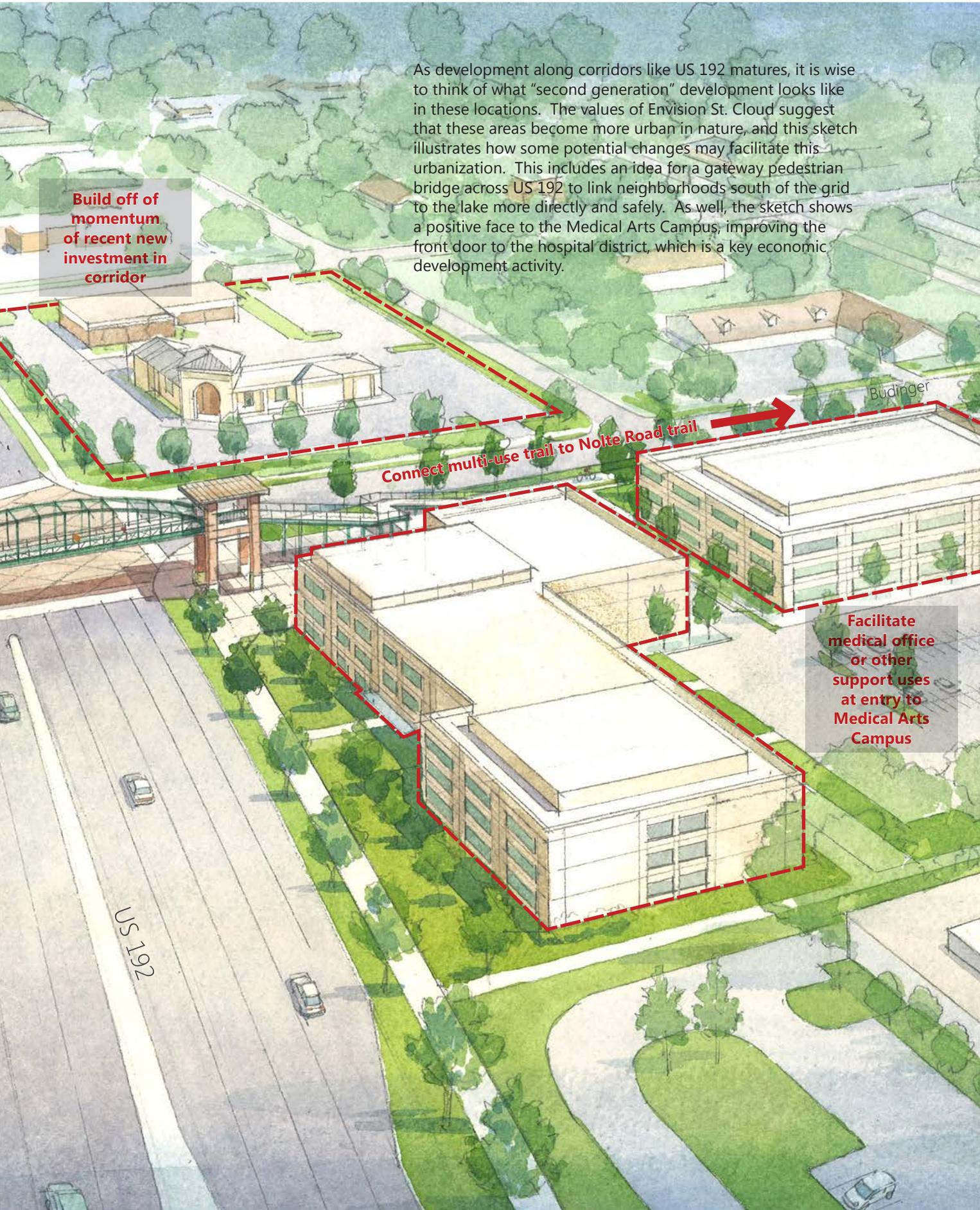


Infilling existing suburbs with multi-use neighborhoods can be an effective way to enhance the livability of these traditionally single-use areas. Multi-use neighborhoods have more interconnected streets that help fill gaps in regional connectivity. They integrate parks, trails, retail, and multi-family residential, into the existing fabric of uninterrupted suburban development, helping to create a more well-rounded community character.

- [A] Neighborhood preserves significant amount of open space to define edge of neighborhood and utilize for floodplain management - open space may accommodate passive park uses
- [B] Stormwater is positioned to be a community amenity; configured within a public linear park and sculpted and landscaped similar to natural lake edges
- [C] Off-road multi-use trail is provided throughout the neighborhood and, over time, linked up with other regional trail systems
- [D] Throughout the neighborhood, park space is significant and is used as an organizing feature
- [E] Walkable connections are included throughout the neighborhood, even adjacent to higher volume roadways that are not fronted by single-family houses
- [F] A core of non-residential uses (e.g. neighborhood-scale retail and services) are positioned at key intersection and within walkable distance of most residences in the neighborhood
- [G] The neighborhood comprises a wide variety of lot sizes and housing types
- [H] A high level of street and trail connectivity is provided throughout the neighborhood; where streets are limited by drainage or natural features, trail connections are provided

[3] Repositioning Corridor Development





As development along corridors like US 192 matures, it is wise to think of what “second generation” development looks like in these locations. The values of Envision St. Cloud suggest that these areas become more urban in nature, and this sketch illustrates how some potential changes may facilitate this urbanization. This includes an idea for a gateway pedestrian bridge across US 192 to link neighborhoods south of the grid to the lake more directly and safely. As well, the sketch shows a positive face to the Medical Arts Campus, improving the front door to the hospital district, which is a key economic development activity.

Build off of momentum of recent new investment in corridor

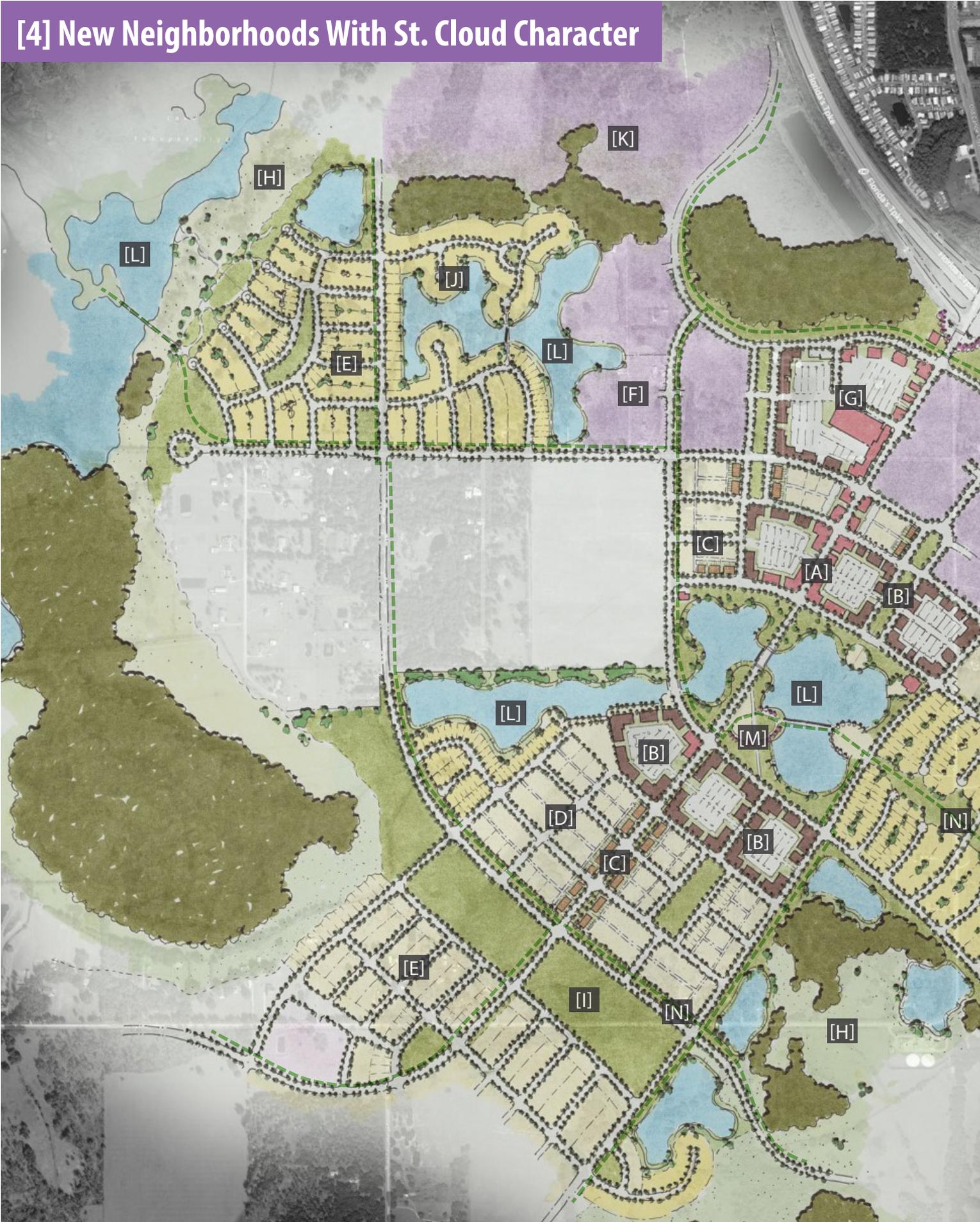
Connect multi-use trail to Nolte Road trail

Facilitate medical office or other support uses at entry to Medical Arts Campus

US 192

Budinger

[4] New Neighborhoods With St. Cloud Character

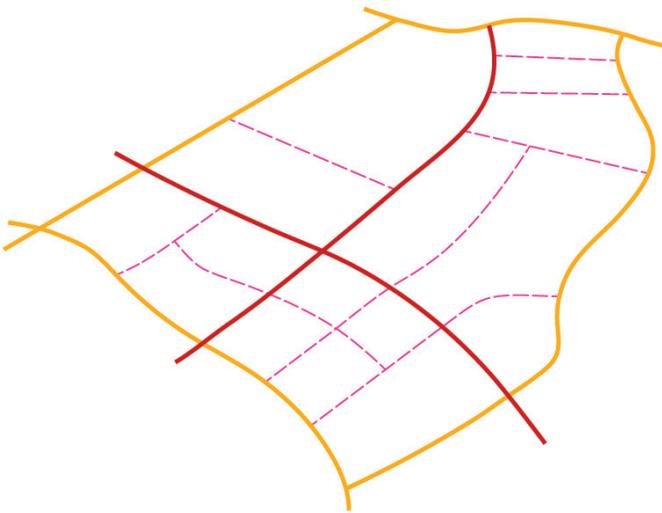




There are many undeveloped areas adjacent to St. Cloud that are planned for future growth, especially west of the Turnpike. Altogether, they encompass an area larger than the current City Limits, so their development will have a profound impact on the future of the City for generations to come. Their future character will either detract from the traditional character of the City or compliment it, so it is important to position them for success and integrate them with the existing fabric of the City as much as possible. It may be in the City's best interest to strategically annex these areas to influence their growth consistent with the developed character of the City.

- [A] Main Street commercial forms heart of new neighborhood; positioned to serve series of new and existing neighborhoods
- [B] Most intense residential located within close proximity of commercial district
- [C] Residential types such as townhomes used to create transition between higher-density uses and single-family homes
- [D] Detached residential uses make up largest portion of neighborhood
- [E] A high level of street and trail connectivity is provided throughout the neighborhood; where streets are limited by drainage or natural features, trail connections are provided
- [F] Space for employment uses is provided proximate to interchange access and commercial Main Street
- [G] A core of non-residential uses (e.g. neighborhood-scale retail and services) are positioned at key intersection and within walkable distance of most residences in the neighborhood
- [H] Neighborhood preserves significant amount of open space to define edge of neighborhood and utilize for floodplain management - open space may accommodate passive park uses
- [I] Active park space integrated with neighborhood
- [J] Conventional residential uses are positioned at edge of neighborhood, where connectivity impacts are negated
- [K] Employment center uses positioned north of neighborhood where impacts can be mitigated but connection remains strong
- [L] Stormwater is positioned to be a community amenity; configured within a public linear park and sculpted and landscaped similar to natural lake edges
- [M] Throughout the neighborhood, park space is significant and is used as an organizing feature
- [N] Off-road multi-use trail is provided throughout the neighborhood and, over time, linked up with other regional trail systems

[5] Developing an Employment Center



A connected street network is created through new development but does not sacrifice robust connections for creation of large sites.



A variety of block sizes are planned to accommodate multiple types of users



The employment center is envisioned to support a wide variety of uses in an environment that is well connected

Primary Uses:

- [A] Clean Tech Manufacturing
- [B] Transportation + Warehousing
- [C] Flex Office/Industrial
- [D] Office

Supporting Uses:

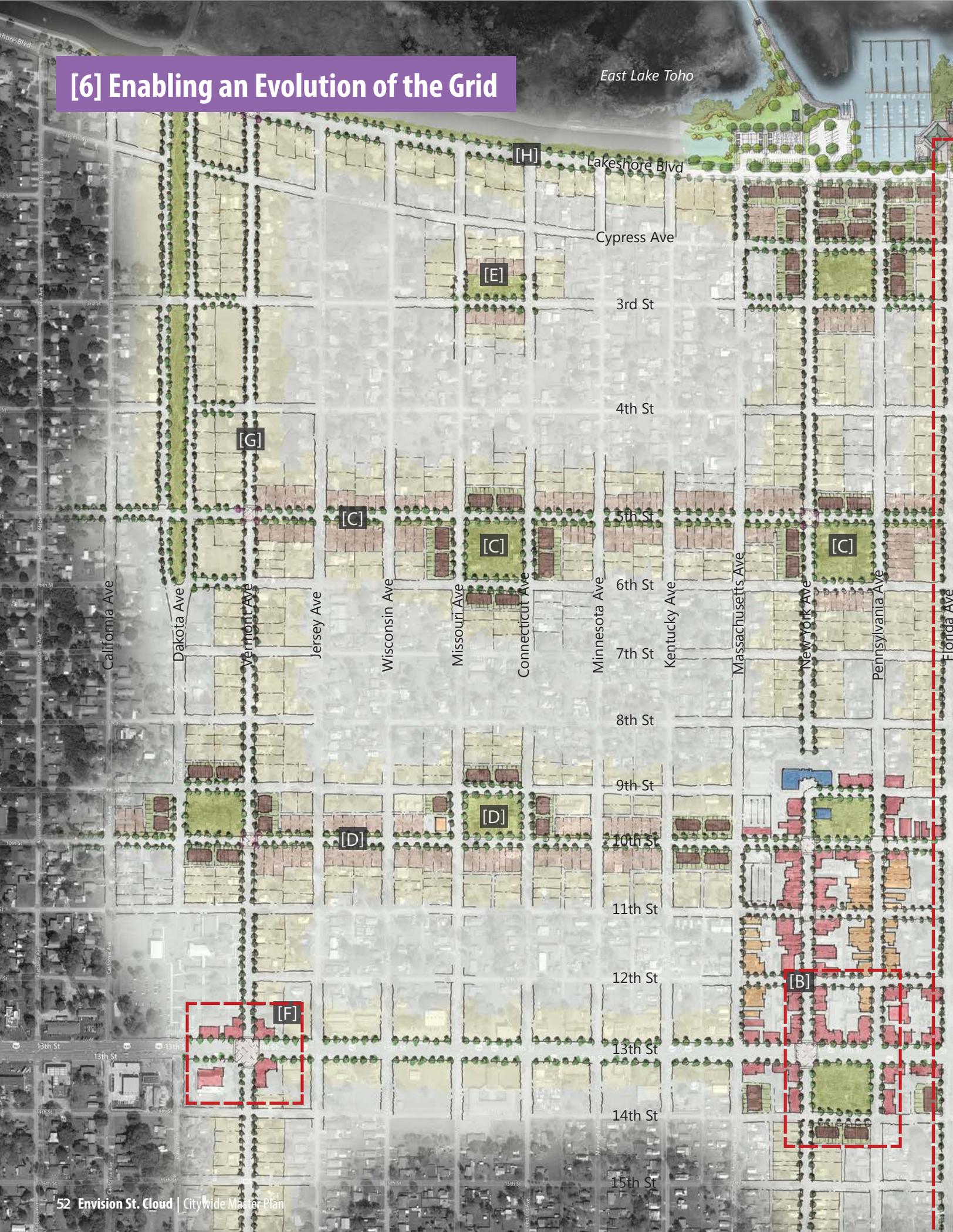
- [E] Commercial
- [F] Multi-Family Residential

Example Character of Employment Center



[6] Enabling an Evolution of the Grid

East Lake Toho



[H]

Lakeshore Blvd

Cypress Ave

3rd St

4th St

5th St

6th St

7th St

8th St

9th St

10th St

11th St

12th St

13th St

14th St

15th St

California Ave

Dakota Ave

Vermont Ave

Jersey Ave

Wisconsin Ave

Missouri Ave

Connecticut Ave

Minnesota Ave

Kentucky Ave

Massachusetts Ave

New York Ave

Pennsylvania Ave

Florida Ave

[G]

[C]

[C]

[C]

[E]

[D]

[D]

[F]

[B]



St. Cloud's historic grid is a very unique asset of the community. And though it engenders both positive and negative reactions, it has hidden, yet undeniable potential for enhancing the character of the City and its citizens. Today the grid is fairly uniform in land use, block size, and street type, but in the future, it can evolve into a much more dynamic neighborhood. Key opportunities are to better connect the Lakefront Park to Downtown, creating a hierarchy of street types, introduce pocket parks as nodes for redevelopment, and creating a node of redevelopment adjacent to the Lakefront Park.

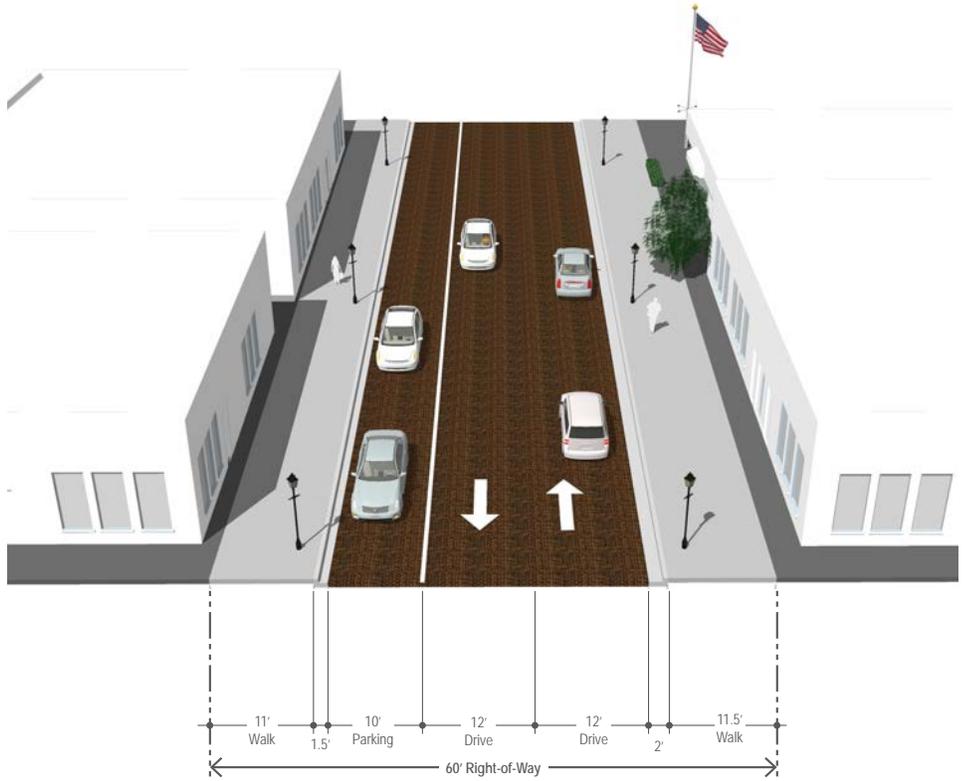
- [A] Florida Avenue multi-use trail (See page 59) provides strong connection between Downtown core and Lakefront to encourage safe non-motorized travel within the neighborhood
- [B] Enable a fundamental restructuring of development on 13th Street at New York Avenue - the front door to Downtown should transition away from highway-oriented commercial to a more mixed-use, streetfront environment
- [C] Position 5th Street as an east-west "Green Street" that is the focus of more development density, enhanced bike and pedestrian facilities (potentially off-street), and consider redevelopment organized around public spaces for neighborhood-friendly density
- [D] Over time, position 10th Street as a Livable Connection (see network on page 39) with enhanced bike and pedestrian facilities improving access to transit and consider redevelopment organized around public spaces for increased transit-supportive density
- [E] Additional locations to consider redevelopment organized around public spaces for neighborhood-friendly density; use residential types such as townhomes to create transition between higher-density uses and single-family homes
- [F] Infill and reorganize key nodes along 13th Street at Vermont Avenue and Michigan Avenue to contain a core of non-residential uses (e.g. neighborhood-scale retail and services) positioned at key intersection
- [G] Through enhanced sidewalks and on-street markings ("sharrows"), emphasize north-south bike and pedestrian connectivity to Lakefront
- [H] Formalize crosswalks and introduce traffic calming where key streets access the park along Lakeshore Boulevard

[7] A New Streetscape for New York Avenue

The Conditions Today



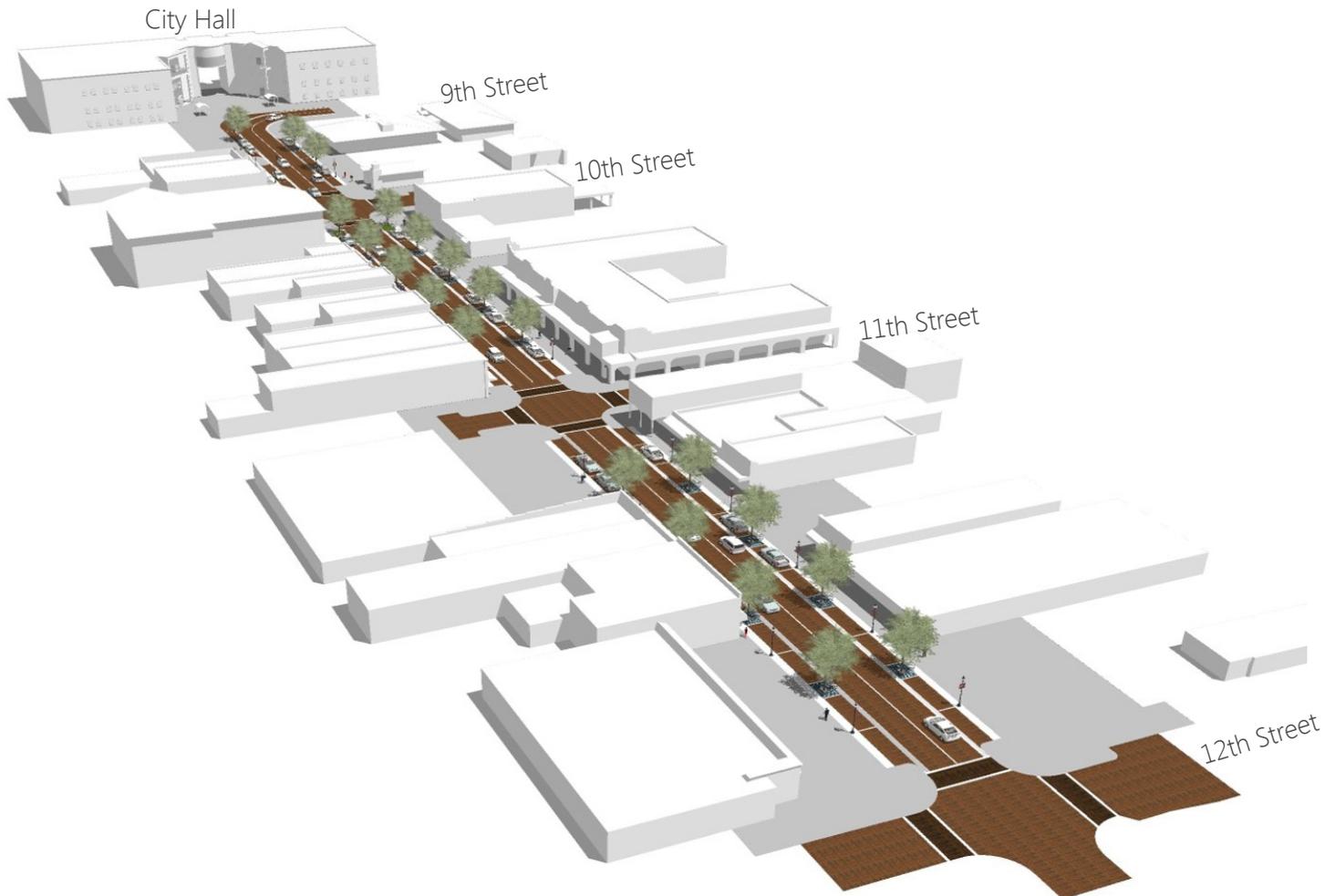
Existing Street Section



Future Street Section



Our Revitalized Main Street



Downtown St. Cloud is in the midst of a revitalization. Efforts are underway to facilitate the growth of new businesses, encourage infill development, and address the condition of the public realm. The building stock downtown is good, but can be improved with focus on restoring facades to their original design.

We have two main streets in downtown. New York Avenue, which has traditionally been the shopping street, and Pennsylvania Avenue that's emerging as a main street, as well. The goal is to organize the pair as complementary to each other so that both can work together.

This is a very important idea for how the town works. It is supported by rethinking the plans for Centennial Park not as a space with an object in it but a space that

can have a more active role at more times of the year and can serve to physically organize that part of downtown and link the two main streets together with 10th Street as a "Livable Connection"

Downtown's "A" streets – high finish shopping streets like New York and Pennsylvania, need to be two-way streets that are as legible and easy to get around as possible. One-way streets force people out of direction. Visitors to downtown need a clear and legible way around. We want people to get out of their car and be able to walk to any and all of their downtown destinations safely and comfortably. Other streets in downtown are "B" streets – service streets that deliver people to the A streets. This is the way a downtown is really meant function. When these aspects are not in line, it becomes

hard to read Downtown as a place that works and is worth visiting.

New York Avenue needs to be more polished. The building stock is good, and the brick street is something that many small downtowns across the country would love to have. However, the street looks "tired" and should be brought up to a 21st century standard. The current proposal envisions a space reorganized to maximize sidewalk space, logical on-street parking, and new street trees in each block. Pedestrian comfort is the number one goal in a downtown, and this concept improves that through sidewalk space and shade from street trees. Vertical curbs are eliminated in favor of a "flush condition" street that creates an environment where events like street festivals can occupy the space without barriers to pedestrians.

[7] A New Streetscape for New York Avenue





New York Avenue at 11th Street looking north toward City Hall

[7] A New Streetscape for New York Avenue

Example Character of Revitalized New York Avenue



Parklet Opportunities

The design of the proposed improvements on New York Avenue can allow for the eventual integration of “parklets.” These are seating pedestals that occupy one or two parking stalls on a semi-permanent basis. As shown in these examples, parklets give expanded seating options to adjacent restaurants beyond what is available on the sidewalk. In a place with a robust streetfront environment, they serve to enhance the activity on the street at a relatively small cost.



[8] Repurposing Bike and Pedestrian Connections

Florida Avenue is a key route in the St. Cloud roadway grid providing north-south connectivity from Lakeshore Boulevard to 17th Street with a fully signalized intersection at 13th Street. The roadway features a wide tree-lined right of way with one travel lane in each direction separated by a wide landscaped median featuring prominent trees and landscaping. Sidewalks are present on one or both sides of the road from 4th Street to 17th Street.

The traditional grid structure of St. Cloud's core roadway network has ensured that, despite its physical and visual prominence, Florida Avenue has remained a low-volume corridor. This condition reveals an opportunity for creation of an avenue which services all users of the street while maintaining its tree-lined experience and comfortable setback to the homes situated on either side.

This vision can be achieved through a reallocation of existing space and minimal physical changes to the existing infrastructure. The wide landscape median currently located between the two travel lanes will be narrowed by moving its eastern edge enough to allow for both lanes to be located east of the median. This can be accomplished without significant impact to the existing large trees in the median. The relocation of all vehicular traffic to the east side of the median will allow for the former southbound lane of Florida Avenue to be repurposed as a dedicated bicycle and pedestrian boulevard benefiting from the existing connectivity and tree-lined avenue experience.

Existing Florida Avenue



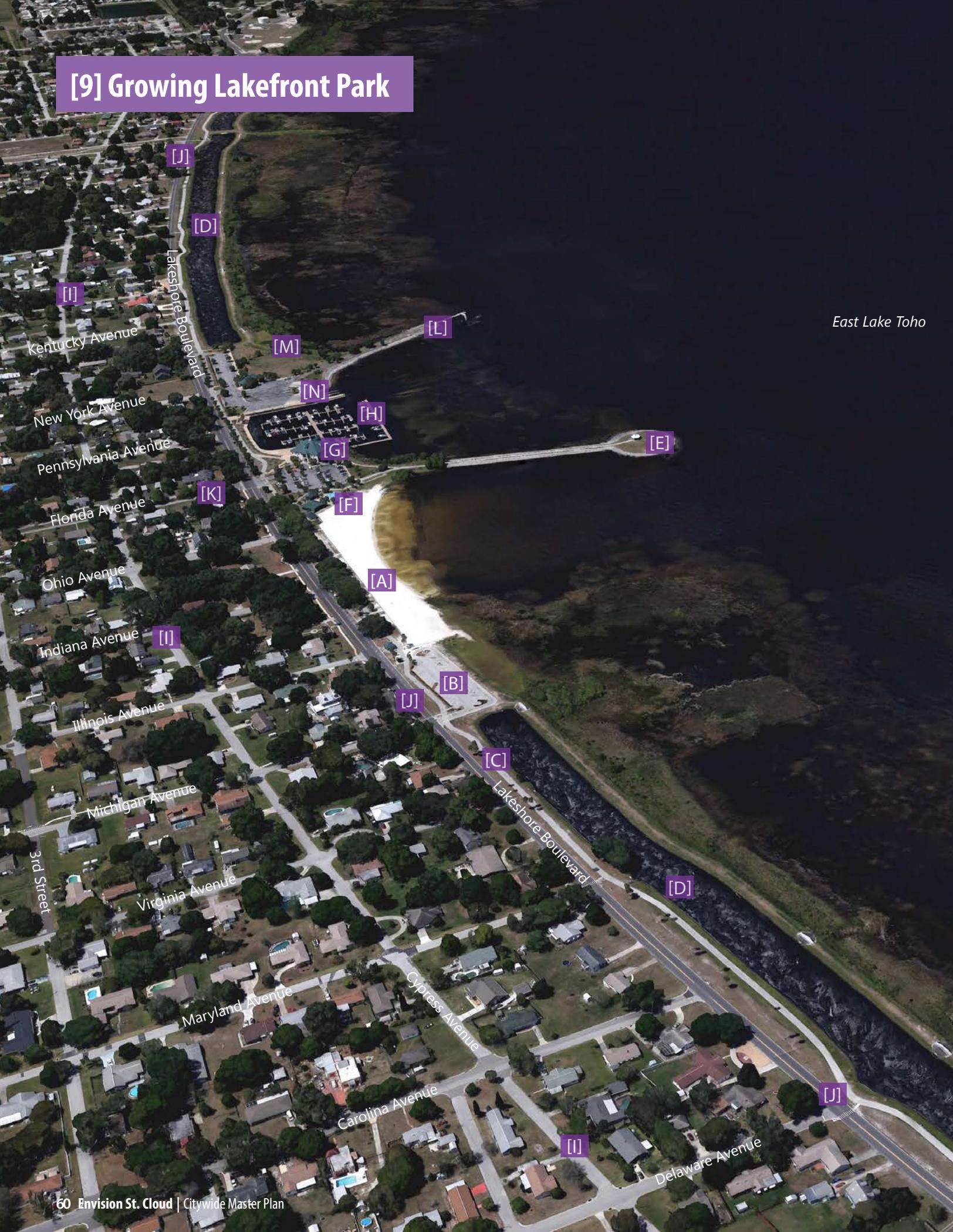
Examples



Potential Florida Avenue with Multi-Use Trail



[9] Growing Lakefront Park



East Lake Toho

Lakefront Park is the most visible and important public space in St. Cloud. It is a regional destination for boating, walking, fishing, and events. While it is performing well, there are opportunities for it to be improved and take on a larger role in the growing city. These opportunities relate on the ability of the park to be connected and usable by a wider range of users, for both everyday informal use and more formal events, and to have an overall higher level of finish.

- [A] Beach is uncommon asset, but is large and fairly underutilized along its length
- [B] Eastern parking area is disconnected from main activity areas and not positioned to handle overflow parking from main lot
- [C] Trail is significant asset; opportunity exists to have the trail reach the lake at certain places (since it is separated by retention ponds along much of its length) to vary the user experience; shelters along trail are utilized but constrained between street and trail
- [D] Retention ponds can be better integrated into the park and landscape of the lake
- [E] Pavilion has community value as wedding location; presents opportunity to be “in the lake” and birdwatch or merely look back to land; approach is hot and shadeless
- [F] Splash pads and pavilions are well-used, but create issues with overlapping parking needs
- [G] Lakeshore Center and ground floor restaurant represent important destination in the park, but parking lot is not positioned well to serve all needs
- [H] Marina is great amenity for the city; waiting list for a slip means that there is demand for expansion
- [I] In addition to its regional destinations, Lakefront Park must serve as the everyday park for the neighbors in the grid
- [J] Access and connectivity across Lakeshore Drive is challenging; speeds adjacent to park can be in excess of preferred slow speeds that make park safe
- [K] Florida Avenue creates axis to downtown; opportunity to strengthen and celebrate the connection
- [L] Proposed seaplane base can add additional layer of activity to park, but care must be taken to integrate facility into park design
- [M] Multi-purpose lawn is small and isolated; events are held here but not well-integrated with rest of park because it is separated by boat ramp and marina; underutilized aside from events
- [N] Boat ramp is important to community, but isolates the western portion of the park from other park activities

[9] Growing Lakefront Park

Comparable waterfronts in Central Florida shown at the same scale

St. Cloud



Kissimmee



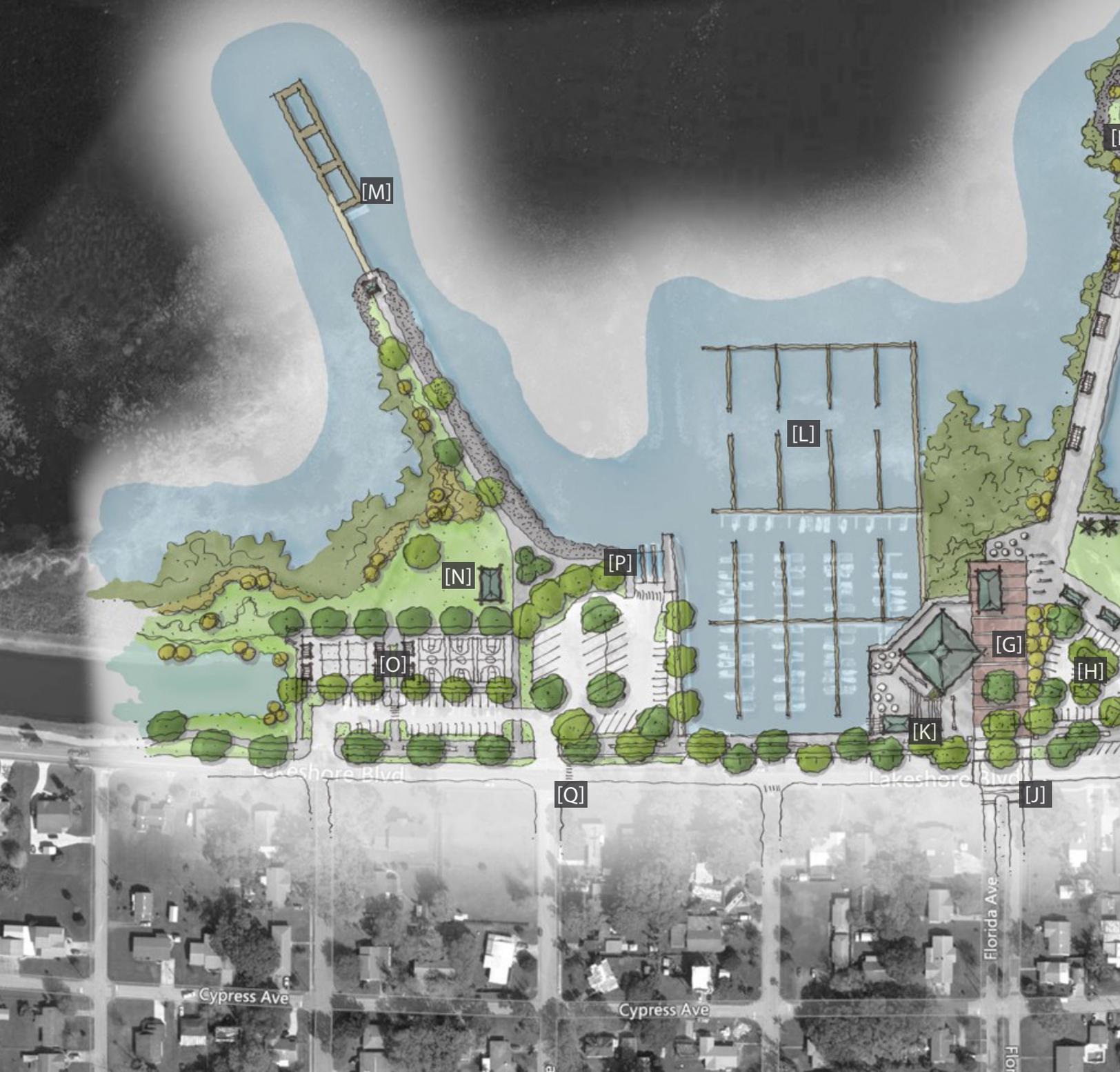
Clermont



Tavares



[9] Growing Lakefront Park



Park Development Concepts

- [A] New event space that can function as passive park space during most times; push out into lake with new seawall
- [B] Beach is reduced in size, but remains large enough to accommodate any event and handle peak crowds
- [C] Relocated splash pad, playground, and pavilion maintains connection to lake and beach and can be accessed by currently underutilized east parking area
- [D] Trail on boardwalk gets walkers and runners closer to lake to improve overall experience
- [E] Shelters/pavilions for events and shade
- [F] On-street parking re-oriented to head-out angled parking to improve parking efficiency
- [G] Florida Avenue ends in multi-use shared space to access parking and also provide venue for expanded events
- [H] Parking lot re-configured; additional parking gained through on-street re-orientation
- [I] Pavilion and approach improved with shade and additional seating
- [J] Crosswalk improvements at Lakeshore and Florida
- [K] Reconfigured seating area and steps adjacent to marina and Lakeshore Center; introduce small "bait shop" or similar use
- [L] Expand marina to north
- [M] Seaplane base
- [N] Current event space repurposed to passive play area
- [O] Volleyball and basketball courts added to park
- [P] Boat ramp remains
- [Q] Raised intersections for pedestrian access and traffic calming added at key locations along Lakeshore Boulevard to mitigate speeds and improve safety of park users



[9] Growing Lakefront Park

Example Park Character: Core



Example Park Character: Architecture



Example Park Character: Edges

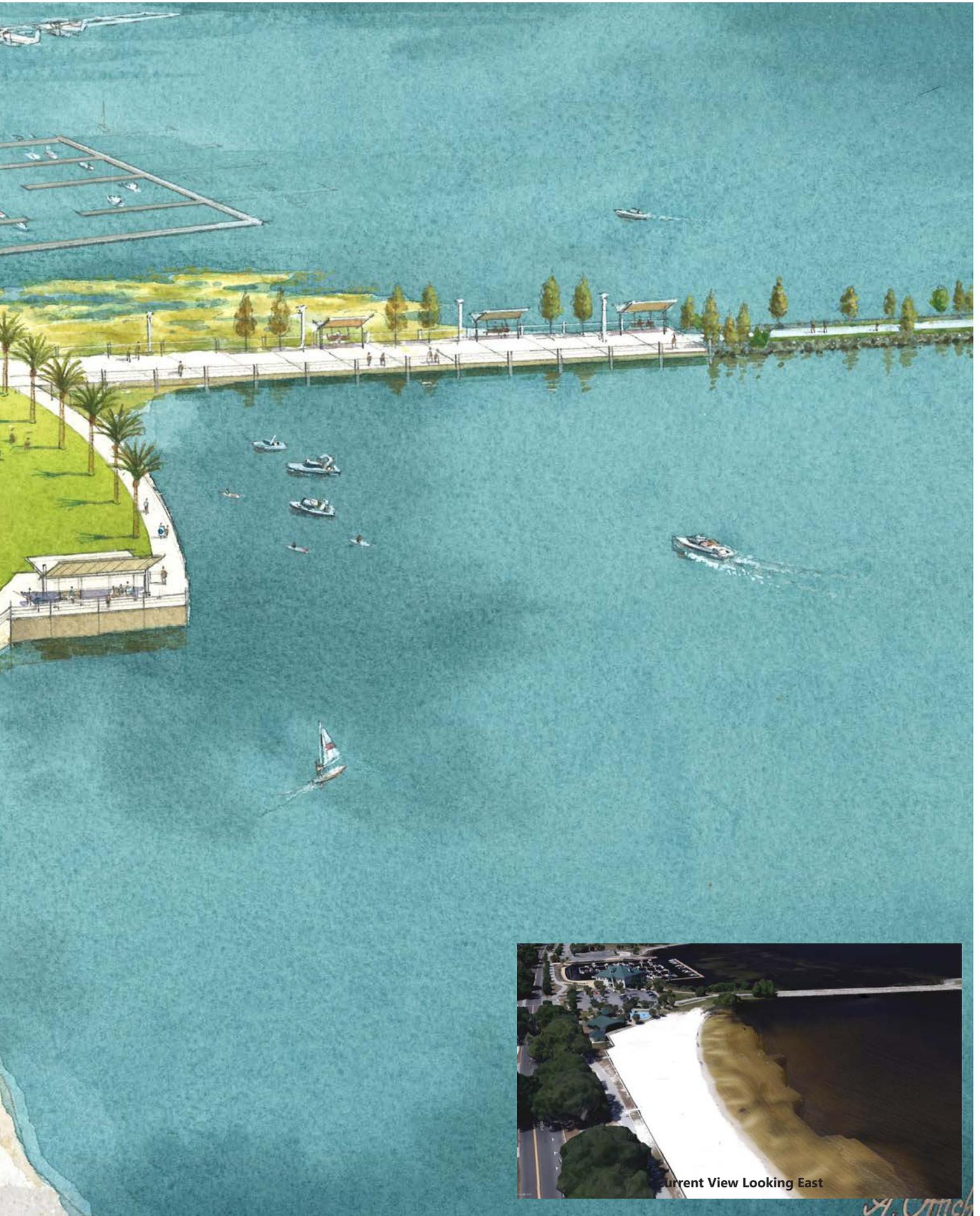


Example Park Character: Paths and Trails



[9] Growing Lakefront Park





Current View Looking East



IMPLEMENTATION

These are incremental steps for evolving circumstances that allow the City to be nimble in moving toward achieving the overall vision through many parallel actions.

Economic Development Model

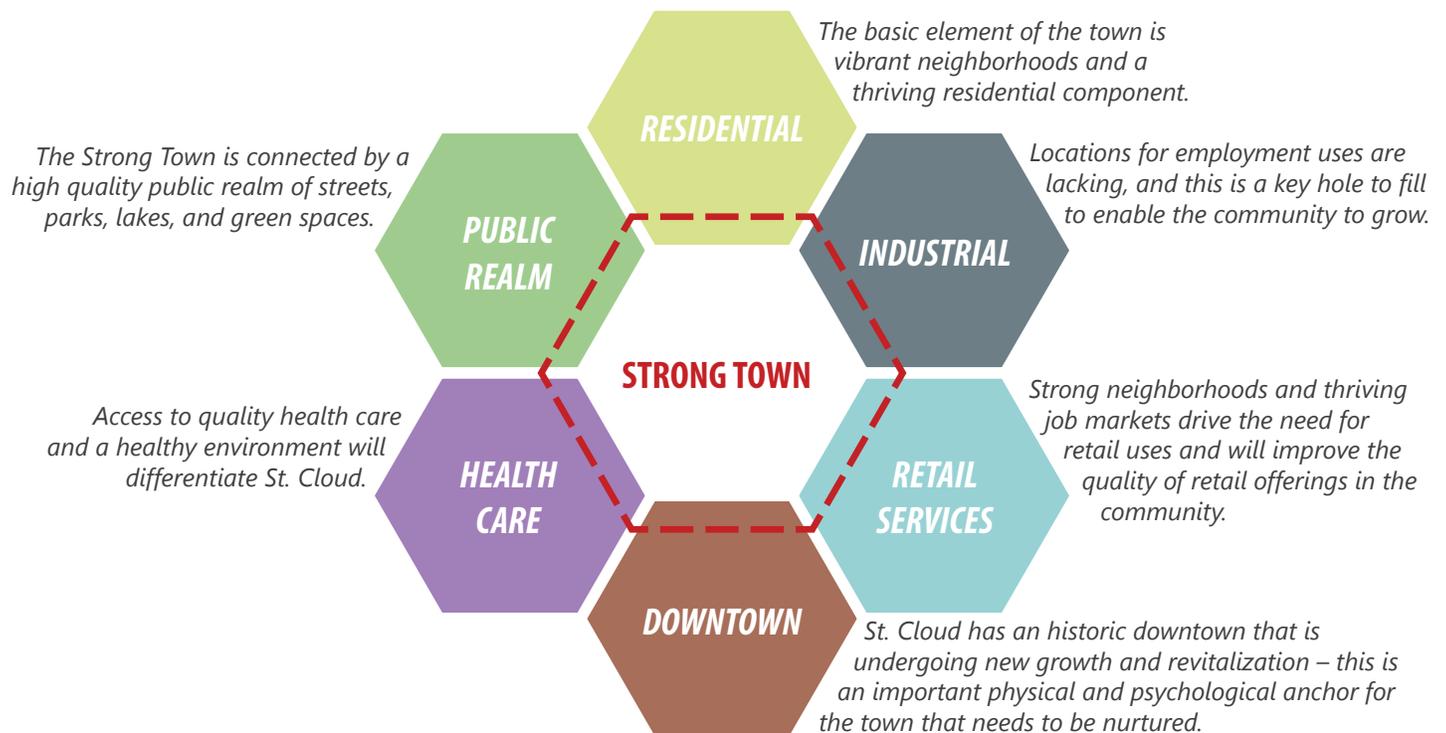
Economic development is a hot topic for jurisdictions in Florida and around the country. The desire to bring more jobs, elevate and expand the tax base, provide more services, and improve quality of life are fundamental aims of local government, including for St. Cloud. Many times economic development by jurisdictions has focused on narrow avenues such as programs and incentives, looking to attract that next big employer or retailer. While those efforts are definitely an important aspect of economic development, they are certainly not a large part of what should be a much broader view of the subject. And with the accelerating global

changes in major economic drivers such as retail, warehousing, manufacturing, and transportation the whole model of economic development for local governments should change as well.

The places of the future that people will want to live and work in are those that can excel in coordinating six areas: Residential Neighborhoods, Downtown, the Public Realm, Healthcare, Retail Services, and Industrial Employment. We call this the Strong Town Model, as shown in the diagram below. All towns have a mix of these at different stages of development and they are all interconnected and have direct effects on each other. When all six are in alignment they set up positive

feedback loops, strengthening the town as a whole. Of course towns can survive and grow without all six, but will continually struggle to maximize their economic development as long as they are out of balance.

The implementation steps that St. Cloud takes towards the new Vision must address all six of these areas. Although, more effort can be spent on areas that are more deficient, it cannot focus on one or two at the expense of the others or else it will not be as strong in the end. But the momentum created by the positive feedback loop of the Strong Town model could create an incredibly bright future for St. Cloud.



Strategic Fiscal Implementation Plan

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT AND MAJOR INFLUENCES

All of central Florida, and especially some portions of Osceola County, are poised for growth over the next several years

The City of St. Cloud is one of only two major incorporated areas in in Osceola County, FL, the 20th largest county in the state with a 2016 population of about 323,000 people. Orange County its neighbor to the north, and also part of the Orlando MSA, had a 2016 estimated population of about 1,300,000. Although Brevard County, located just to east, is not formally a part of the Orlando MSA, Some in St Cloud perceive Brevard's commuting patterns and potential for future development have impacts on St Cloud. In 2016, Brevard had a population count of about 569,000 people.

While Osceola County by itself will add some 170,000 to its population by 2030, Orange, and Brevard together will add about 530,000 to the total regional counts bringing the tri-county increase over the next several years to over 700,000 additional people. Settlement patterns pushing southward from Orange and westward from Brevard County could push Osceola's numbers higher but today these projections fall within the normal range of the statistical low and high projections made by the University of Florida and other sources. These projections reflect a variety of growth models but do not adjust explicitly for either population induced by job growth, land ownership, land use entitlements or the related settlement patterns which may accompany location specific development activity occurring from such influences. Without suggesting that jurisdictional lines do not matter, they can be arbitrary demarcations for purposes of addressing the full impacts of these influences.

In 2016, the population of St. Cloud was estimated at almost 44,000 people. The City of Kissimmee, its most immediate incorporated neighbor, had a 2016 estimated population of about 65,000 people. Poinciana, a major population center within the county, but not an incorporated area, had about 60,000 people in 2016 with additional numbers spilling over

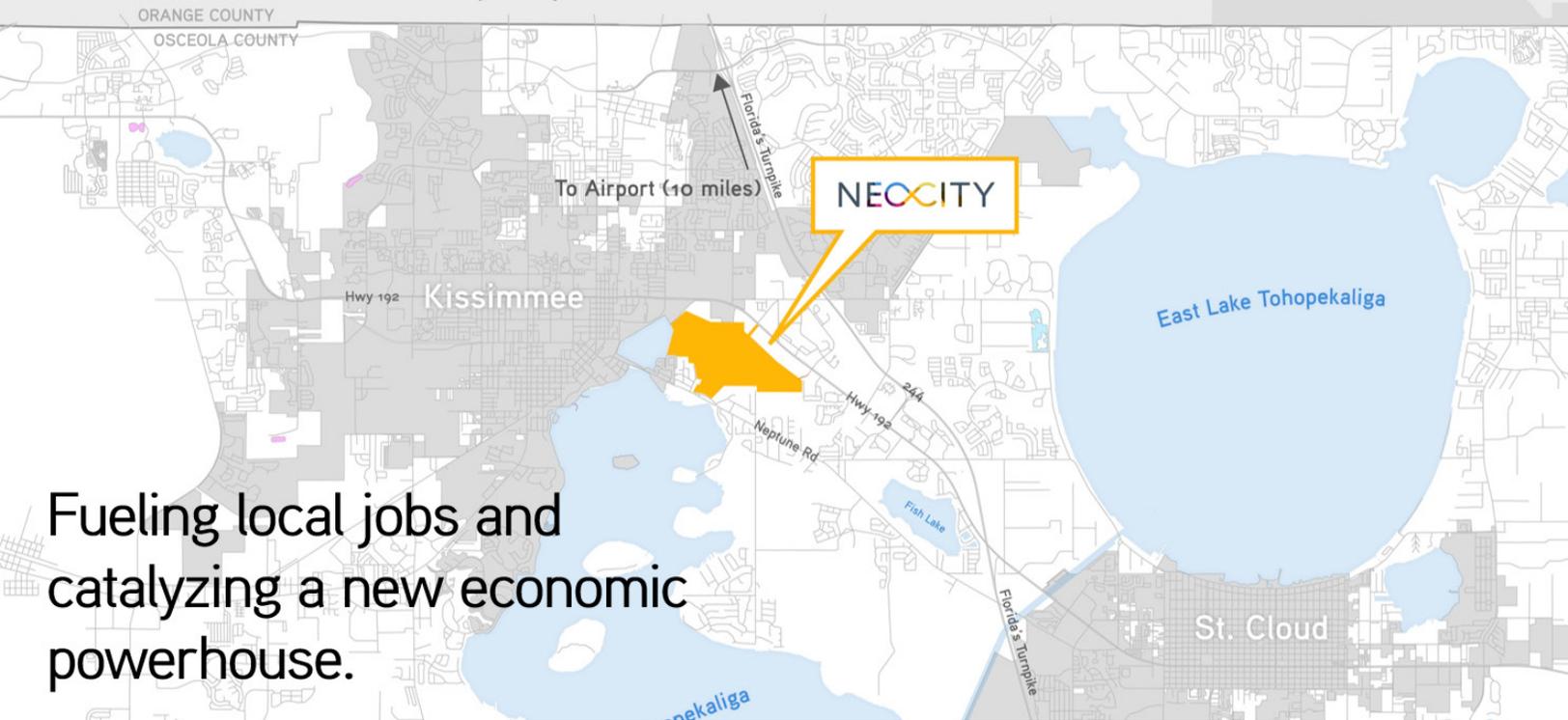
into adjacent Polk County. Substantive impacts from the variables affecting settlement patterns, described above, are likely to be realized in St. Cloud. These include:

- The city's proximity to many large land owners now pursuing development approvals;
- Formerly approved but yet unconstructed residential communities;
- Direct turnpike access;
- Proximity to an emerging [but challenged] medical/bio cluster at Lake Nona; and
- Advancement of NeoCity, a major technology employment center sited just west of St. Cloud and just outside of Kissimmee.

Absent any unusual growth such as that described above, St. Cloud has a moderately superior economic position compared to the rest of Osceola County. The median household income in Osceola County, FL was \$45,244 in 2015, which represents a 5.47% growth from the previous year while still lagging the state median of about \$47,000. The median household income in St. Cloud, FL was \$50,467 in 2015, materially higher than Osceola County as a whole, as well as the state, but representing a smaller 3.18% growth from the previous year. In 2015, there were 18,287 working residents in St. Cloud, a 7.78% growth from the previous year. The growth and wage gains together suggest community stability and a measurable recovery from the recession.

“St. Cloud has a moderately superior economic position compared to the rest of Osceola County.”

The Local Osceola County Impact



Fueling local jobs and catalyzing a new economic powerhouse.

NeoCity as a Major Influencer

Notwithstanding other changes which will occur nearby, NeoCity by itself should be a major factor in St. Cloud's future growth position.

Considered largely rural today, Osceola County anticipates leveraging its direct ownership of NeoCity and its control of the nation's largest micro sensor research facility located there into a high tech hub. Osceola County's strategy has been partially validated through a working agreement involving Imec, a Belgian nanotechnology research firm and one of the world's most visible corporate names heavily invested in this industrial sector. Local parties, well known nationally, include Brevard's Harris Corporation which is also engaged in smaller and lighter sensors. According to documents distributed for NeoCity, sensors will be a \$19 trillion global industry by 2025 and Osceola will have secured early entry positioning in this competitive world market.

Of relevance to St. Cloud's planning initiatives more than 100,000 estimated jobs will reportedly be associated with NeoCity's buildout. More than 34,000 of these permanent direct jobs will be in various stages of sensor research and production. These jobs will be well-paying technical jobs, largely unavailable in Osceola County today; however, only a portion of those are expected to be accommodated directly on NeoCity property because of its restrictive guidelines calling for research intensive users [laboratories, research, model or prototype development, testing, education, corporate support] and covenants imposing strong design standards.

Current documents indicate that at least 67% of these jobs could be located in Osceola County, but only

about 2,000 to 5,000 jobs will be within very narrowly defined areas of research and testing. As for the remaining employment sectors positively influenced by NeoCity's launch, initial plans may not be favorable to many businesses or skills functioning at the edge of the sensor production continuum [product fabrication and assembly, construction, short term contracting, component manufacturing, materials sourcing, materials handling and storage, distribution, other] which will be forced to secure complementing locations and facilities within serviceable proximity. Just as the jobs will produce distributive demand for certain kinds of less intensive research facilities, they will produce demand for higher valued housing which is relatively limited in Osceola County.

Effectively, because of NeoCity and other influences, Osceola County and its constituent municipalities have an opportunity to disproportionately capture and benefit from both residential and non-residential growth which could exceed historical expectations.



EXISTING LAND USE PATTERNS AND PLANS

Today, St. Cloud's current land use plan and inventory substantively favors residential development. Neither the city's existing Comprehensive Plan nor its interlocal agreement with Osceola County adequately address the potential to diversify this established pattern based on recent shifts in the region's concentrations of development, much of it stemming from jurisdictions or governmental units outside of St. Cloud's direct control.

Existing areas of non-residential development in St. Cloud do not match to the opportunities stemming from encroaching urbanization as it is being experienced in Orange, Brevard and elsewhere in Osceola County, especially that which would be generated by NeoCity. Properties that may be properly zoned are neither well located nor sufficient in size to capture emerging opportunities in the region. Areas of the city with connections to Brevard via US 192 [east] and access to Florida's Turnpike [west] are not well leveraged.

Disregarding the legal and regulatory limitations arising from county and municipal boundaries, the spillover effects of major industrial clustering has been shown to extend many miles, especially as it involves the full continuum of related land use activities. Among the best examples is the bio-cluster outside La Jolla and the semiconductor cluster in and around San Francisco. In

each case, those in the supply and production chain easily span 100 miles. On a per capita basis, St. Cloud appears to lag other communities of similar physical size and population in terms of its non-residential development.

While the information contained in Table 1 should not be construed as a market analysis for specific land use activities, it does offer certain reference points drawn from a number of communities. Each of these incorporated municipalities, with the exception of Kissimmee - St. Cloud's most proximate neighbor - is deemed "comparable" on the basis described above. For each of these places, we have profiled the non-residential environment as it currently exists.

Beginning on page 80, additional budgetary information from these same communities, as well as our reason for selecting them, brings perspective to their levels of service given their scale of development.

The data summarized above does not perfectly reconcile to other data presented in this broader socio-economic analysis because the source material and the basic time frames are different. This specific data set is drawn from CoStar which actively monitors development and leasing activity occurring in the non-residential marketplace. While similar to the tax rolls, the source of information for other parts of this analysis

Table 1 Non-residential benchmarks, other Florida incorporated areas

Municipality	Kissimmee	St. Cloud	Ocoee	Oviedo	Winter Garden	Winter Springs	Clermont
Population	70,472	45,780	42,134	37,835	42,756	36,490	35,717
Office SF	3,005,393	610,714	615,531	1,306,106	552,206	479,815	1,527,114
Office SF/Pp	42.7	13.3	14.6	34.5	12.9	13.2	42.8
Retail SF	12,615,123	2,237,674	3,220,964	4,083,500	3,244,861	1,371,607	4,235,328
Retail SF/Pp	179.0	48.9	76.5	107.9	75.9	37.6	118.6
Industrial SF	5,957,108	695,814	1,340,024	1,173,656	2,049,494	589,394	739,182
Industrial SF/Pp	84.5	15.2	31.8	31.0	47.9	16.2	20.7
Total Non-Res SF	21,577,624	3,544,202	5,176,519	6,563,262	5,846,561	2,440,816	6,501,624
Total Non-Res SF/Pp	306.2	77.4	122.9	173.5	136.7	66.9	182.0

reflecting the built environment, CoStar's data is a subset of the rolls, and is compiled differently. With that caveat, the data is representative for the purposes and observations described.

CoStar reports that St. Cloud has about 3,500,000 SF of various non-residential development distributed across office, retail and industrial land uses today. In almost each case or category of land use, St Cloud has far less square footage (SF) than might be reasonably expected, assuming the other locations are generally in equilibrium conditions. CoStar suggests that most segments of these non-residential sectors are at vacancy rates from 10%-15%, not fully occupied but sufficiently so for comparisons.

The data indicate that most of these communities, in fact, have at least one category of land use which, by itself, exceeds the total in place in St. Cloud. Although there are many reasons for the deficit, the differences are pronounced and at least suggest additional non-residential development is warranted and potentially supportable. From what we see at a cursory level, the inventory of non-residential space that does exist is largely inadequate to handle contemporary business requirements. Effectively, the deficit, if adjusted for the quality, age and actual suitability of the space for the intended use could become larger. Much of the difference observed when comparing this information with the tax rolls would be this: the locations or facilities identified in the tax rolls may be so inferior that are simply not reported in CoStar.

While several land uses or facilities are more closely associated with specific business linkages and needs retail spaces is highly correlated with resident population. The obvious exception in this list is Kissimmee, where the scale of the retail inventory is driven largely by the community's emphasis on tourism and the historical pattern of activity along the US 192 corridor. While the future of retail can be debated, it appears that lands and buildings for this purpose in particular are underrepresented in St. Cloud, especially if the type, scale, and condition of retail spaces are further segmented. Only Winter Springs has fewer retail options, although they are mostly newer than those options in St. Cloud. Oviedo and Winter Garden with their high numbers are suggestive of the ways well placed retail concentrations I can draw from areas outside the host community

If the need for additional non-residential space is speculative, the opportunity for residential development is very compelling simply at an anecdotal level. At the very least, there are reasonable expectations about compatible demands and needs for housing at multiple price points in the St. Cloud area as NeoCity and Lake Nona's medical cluster mature. Today, in Osceola County, there are only limited locations

where higher priced housing has been developed, in part because of the area's underperforming education system, but also because the region's employment has been largely lower waged. Because in virtually every jurisdiction, residential development is the dominant form of land use, a lower valued residential inventory exerts disproportionate impacts on the local government's fiscal health.

PREFERRED LAND USE PATTERNS AND FUTURE NEEDS

Given both the prospect of anticipated population growth as well as the potential that the rate of growth could be materially toward the higher end of the projected range, it makes sense to think simultaneously about those areas suitably situated to accommodate specific kinds of activities and areas where the form of development will favorably complement both land use and fiscal objectives. Whatever plans are made, they must be balanced against their costs to implement and to service relative to their revenue potential for the City.

The data in Table 1.0XXX suggests, among other things, that St. Cloud's population might be capable of supporting almost twice the non-residential inventory now in place. The community is literally at half the average of that for the total set of benchmark communities, about 77 SF per resident compared with 166 SF per resident for the entire group. Winter Springs, the only other incorporated community with figures comparable to those in St Cloud. Winter Springs has about 67 SF per resident. As the area and its economic base matures, the existing number will appear as something of a larger deficit. Were the objective to simply double the non-residential inventory, some 325 acres of land would be required assuming a modest 0.25 Floor Area Ratio (FAR). Given the influence of spreading development, much of it nearby, this target is not an unreasonable goal. Still, to emphasize, this figure is not a forecast nor a "need". It is simply a reference point based on communities of comparable size and is useful as a beginning point for scaling and allocating certain land use activities going forward.

To the degree that the opportunities to capture non-residential development are dependent on the community's surface transportation system, compatible patterns of land use, and the availability of other infrastructure, the most desirable location to designate for intense concentrations of employment are proximate to the existing turnpike interchange. Retail locations might be established in larger and smaller areas throughout the City but primarily in the north and east to draw existing residents, support new development, and attract non-residents from outside the City.

RECONCILING LONGER TERM PLANS WITH BUDGETING

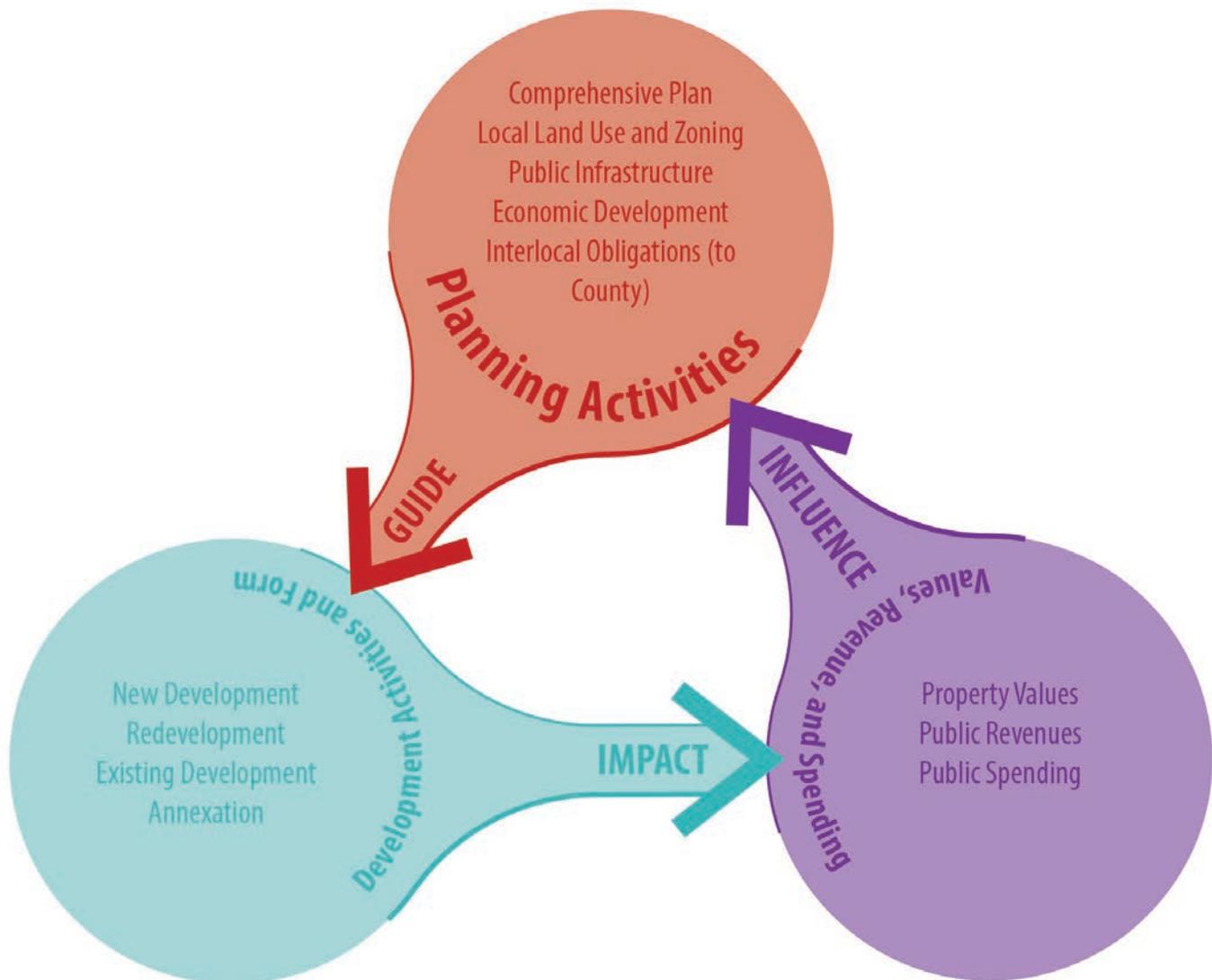
The most effective plans will shape the future of their jurisdictions for a number of years, and Florida’s legal process for updating or adjusting the comprehensive plans of its local governments acknowledges the relationship among the planned, actual, and functional dimensions of the built environment. The actual describes the current set of conditions [existing land use plans and patterns]. The planned relates to the aspirational form and the pathways to achieving it [preferred land use plans and patterns]. The functional addresses the services necessary to support the desired form and which may deviate from the current systems, the latter to include a formal means of identifying and allocating available resources.

Precisely how these components connect relates to the means we have recommended for making alterations to the future built environment. For example, annexations involve properties of a specific character

[actual form or conditions]. A community may have a long term outlook or vision for their deployment or stabilization [planned or desired]. The annexed area, however, may add to service expenditures or make better use of existing resources but the analysis needs to address the cost and benefits the larger systems in place for such decisions [functional]. Given competing priorities, the chances of implementing a local plan, with or without annexations, is enhanced materially when all planning actions reflect the municipal budgets and the related financial implications.

The resources in large measure derive from the local budget and local budgeting process. Municipal budgets are generally made up of three broad parts: revenues, spending, and debt.

The connections between planning and the budget are captured in Figure 1.



Revenues are the various funds available to fund activities. St. Cloud, like all of Florida's governments, principally draws upon ad valorem receipts [primarily local real property taxes], intergovernmental accounts [transfers], and charges for local services. Many of the latter are enterprise funds and cover their own costs. Some, like permitting, may offset only a small part of the true costs. Housing tends to comprise the largest part of real property tax collections. Mobile homes, which comprise a large substantial share of the housing inventory in rural areas of Osceola County and St. Cloud, generally do not pay real property taxes.

Expenditures or spending involve the array of services and facilities provided by the jurisdiction and include police and fire protection, transportation, trash, water and waste water services, parks and recreation, and various community development activities. Here, as in most communities, police and fire protection require the major budget allocations, and these services are distributed without regard to property type and need.

Debt tends to include major investments of a longer term, even when some of the costs are recognized annually. In effect, debt financing allows major community expenditures to be realized in a short term while the costs are recognized in smaller sums over an extended period, usually over many years.

Planned actions related to land use and service requirements affect in material ways the means by which expenditures and revenues of various local governments are recognized and realized. However, if the service needs generated by a plan are themselves clear, the implications of form, service delivery, and the true costs of implementing them are less understood and often shaped by perceptions [intuitive, visible and often subjective] and political context.

To the degree misperceptions exist about plan options and their costs, they frequently arise from three things: [1] less than complete knowledge about the fixed cost of government, primarily operations, [2] prior deficiencies, typically capital, which might be brought forward and [3] the wrong unit of analysis.

- **Less than complete knowledge.** Unlike revenues which can be easily verified and tied to a single source or activity, many costs are by default treated as simple allocations. By definition, an allocation is arbitrary and may mask the true or real source of the cost. Many costs are lumpy and can't be estimated on a per capita basis reliably. Other costs are fixed or relatively fixed but the default analysis considers average costs, typically per person, unit, or per square foot.

Fire budgets are instructive examples. These budgets are based on response time and density, but once the budget is established, the costs are almost entirely fixed. Consider this hypothetical: even if there was not a single deployment of fire personnel in the course of a one month period, the budget will still be entirely fixed. As additional deployments occur, small budgetary changes, such as gas and truck maintenance, become added variable costs. In most cases, these added variable costs are much smaller than the lumpy fixed costs. In effect, what is being budgeted is not "calls for service" but capacity to address calls for service when and if needed.

Given that fixed versus variable cost construct, incremental expansion of a developed area is likely to add costs at the margin, but not on an average unit basis. Similarly, additional development does not boost direct all administrative cost: there will not be additional mayors or elected officials. To the degree there might be minor incremental costs for planners, permit reviewers, inspectors, and secretaries, those cost can be offset in measure by service fees. The costs of the mayor, of course, cannot.

- **Prior deficiencies.** Just as per capita analysis frequently fails, addressing excess capacity or the true cost of past deficiencies is difficult. Poor budgeting practices and community discord created by insufficient service levels often result in an implied obligation for new development to carry that burden. Need gets confused with capacity and resources. To the degree a deficiency exists, the item is more easily and discretely handled by an enterprise fund [water/sewer where users are identifiable] than a public good [roads] where specific users are more difficult to isolate. Many local governments opt to levy materially lower taxes than the law permits, often resulting in these deficiencies.
- **Unit of Analysis.** Again, fire budgets are instructive. The capital costs are lumpy so they don't occur evenly over time and there will almost always be more [or less] capacity than needed. Although the fire budget is relatively fixed the budgeting and planning processes tend to be biased against residential. While residential development generates many of the calls it doesn't explicitly push the budget upward. Because the greatest part of the budget is fixed, it can be inappropriate to allocate or assign cost exclusively on a per unit basis.

Florida-Specific Budget Implications

Florida's tax and financial systems, which operate in ways very specific to this state, exacerbate the potential to misalign planning and budgeting objectives. In Florida, for example, tax reassessments occur, more or less, in real time while in other states reassessments are much less frequent. Further, in Florida residential property occupied by its homeowners is treated very differently from that owned by non-residents forcing an uneven - although possibly politically desired - distributive outcome. Thus, properties with homestead exemptions carry a lower tax burden compared with all classes of residential property without homestead exemptions.

Mobile homes do not generally pay real property taxes so their role in terms of creating [or defraying] service costs is not well recognized, especially in rural or semi-rural counties where there are many of these units. To the degree, they might pay real property taxes, their value is such that they pay nominal if any taxes because of scheduled exemptions. Likewise, it is often misunderstood that sales taxes are distributed to Florida's local governments based on population not on the site of the enterprise, so incorporated areas neither gain nor lose revenue by resisting retail development. Unlike mobile homes, however, retail development will generate property tax to the host community and increase the total collections which are distributed to all local governments in the county.

Overall, this combination of factors results in odd juxtapositions among commercial and residential properties of various kinds and service expectations having little to do with needs but having much to do

with the ways in which the costs are then allocated or misallocated.

One particularly unexpected artifact of Florida's property tax system is that new residential ad valorem receipts are often higher than non-residential receipts when quantified in terms of tax yield based on square footage or net acreage. Stated somewhat differently, residential development can yield high returns relative to non-residential type of activity. The challenge is to create comprehensive plans that balance preferred uses and functional needs. The most effective plans encourage development and urban forms that recognize the appropriate balance in land use types without distorting the expense and financial picture arising from misinformation regarding the city's fiscal position.

While it is true some Florida cities are limited in their capacity to issue debt, the limitation is usually imposed politically, not due to financial constraints. Most jurisdictions in Florida operate well below their allowed millage ceilings. Though Florida's local governments can impose up to 10 mills [\$1.00 of tax per \$1,000 of value], most opt to levy much less, often 4.00 to 6.00 mills, trying to leverage the increasing values rather than to raise the tax rate itself.

In sum, activities and actions undertaken in Florida by its planners can significantly affect the revenues and expenditures of its local governments. The issues involved are much more complex and robust than categorical impressions involving a specific mix of land uses and their reported costs.

FISCAL BENCHMARKING

In the context of statistical analysis, making comparisons between and among groups or entities allows for specific inferences or conclusions to be drawn from individual metrics. Benchmarking does not require that groups or entities are identical in every aspect or on every dimension, only one or two specific attributes. In fact, the many potential differences among groups or entities that share something in common is a main contributor to the process of making inferences or drawing conclusions. That process is used here to further inform the community about the implications of planning initiatives as these could impact specific budgeting needs.

Based on multiple analyses and past experience with fiscal and economic impacts, two attributes of cities and towns that have a very strong relationship

with governmental revenues and costs are land area (service area) and density (population or housing per square mile). There are more than 400 cities, towns, and villages in the State of Florida from which we can apply these two variable markers. Using a test to match these jurisdictions with the City of St Cloud based a range of +/- 20% of land area and +/- 20% of gross density identified a comparative set of cities listed in the following table. Remarkably, the five cities within the State that meet these criteria are all within Central Florida, and will no doubt be very familiar communities to St. Cloud. With the exception of Kissimmee, these are the same communities profiled in Table 1.

Table 2: Land Area and Gross Population Density

Municipality	2016 Population	Land Area (sq mi)	Land Area (sq mi)	Density (pop/sq mi)
St Cloud	45,300	17.8	17.8	2,551
Ocoee	43,600	14.7	14.7	2,964
Oviedo	38,600	15.2	15.2	2,535
Winter Garden	40,400	15.4	15.4	2,619
Winter Springs	34,800	14.7	14.7	2,319
Clermont	32,400	13.6	13.6	2,376

The following items reflect a summary of various metrics among the set of cities selected for benchmarking against St. Cloud.

Gross Operating Costs

(2015) There is a consistent pattern of gross operating (excluding capital) spending per capita with Public Safety accounting for a majority of total spending. Winter Springs contracts with Seminole County for fire services.

Table 3: 2015 Gross Operating Costs per Capita of Governmental Activities

Municipality	Public Safety	Other	Total	<i>Compared to St. Cloud</i>
St. Cloud	\$ 405	\$ 253	\$ 658	--
Ocoee	324	407	703	+7%
Oviedo	409	360	770	+16%
Winter Garden	394	238	632	-3%
Winter Springs	193	310	503	-25%
Clermont	430	248	678	+4%

(2005) There is a consistent pattern of declining marginal costs when considering the change in 2005 to 2015 spending per capital and inflation. Most cities experienced increases in cost per capita but mainly due to inflation. Accounting for inflation reflects in decreases of marginal cost per capita for each city except Clermont.

Table 4: 2005 Gross Operating Costs per Capita of Governmental-Activities

Municipality	Public Safety	Other	Total	<i>Compared to St. Cloud</i>
St. Cloud	\$ 279	\$ 404	\$ 684	--
Ocoee	365	273	638	-7%
Oviedo	374	329	702	+10%
Winter Garden	323	222	545	-22%
Winter Springs	255	362	617	13%
Clermont	256	219	475	-23%

General revenues (2015)

There is a consistent pattern of sources of general revenues used to fund net operating costs. All of the differences in ad valorem contributions are explained either by taxable value per capita or millage rate. The largest differences in funding sources for general revenues comes from the proportion of revenue transferred from Business-type activities.

Table 5: 2015 General Revenues per Capita

Municipality	Ad Valorem	Other Taxes and Fees	Business-type Transfers	Total	Compared to St. Cloud
St Cloud	\$ 144	\$ 324	\$ 192	\$ 660	--
Ocoee	227	356	60	640	-3%
Oviedo	269	341	3	614	-7%
Winter Garden	223	370	-	593	-11%
Winter Springs	123	228	59	411	-42%
Clermont	132	245	64	441	-53%

Taxable Value per Gross Acre (2015)

There is a consistent pattern in the proportion of taxable value that is derived from residential uses. But, there are some measureable differences in taxable value per gross acre. Note in particular, given some expressed concerns about the burdens stemming from residential activity, that Winter Springs and Oviedo have materially higher percentages of their taxable values accruing from various residential land uses. At the same time Winter Springs, has a lower cost for public safety.

Table 6: Total Taxable Value and Value per Gross Acre

Municipality	Taxable Value (000's)	Value per Gross Acre	Compared to St. Cloud	% Residential	Compared to St. Cloud
St Cloud	\$1,320,900	\$116,200	--	74%	--
Ocoee	\$1,819,200	\$193,200	+66%	72%	-3%
Oviedo	\$2,035,300	\$209,200	+80%	80%	8%
Winter Garden	\$2,193,400	\$222,400	+91%	71%	-4%
Winter Springs	\$1,749,100	\$186,300	+60%	90%	22%
Clermont	\$1,913,100	\$219,300	+89%	71%	-4%

Taxable Value per Developed Acre (2015)

This measure is the observable difference in taxable value per acre remains when considering only developed acres. Taxable value is materially lower in St. Cloud per developed acre and per unit.

Table 7: Total Taxable per Developed Acre and Value per Single-family unit

Municipality	Taxable Value per Developed Acre	<i>Compared to St. Cloud</i>	Taxable Value per Single-family unit	<i>Compared to St. Cloud</i>
St Cloud	\$247,500	--	\$79,500	--
Ocoee	\$355,200	+44%	\$113,100	+42%
Oviedo	\$342,800	+39%	\$149,100	+88%
Winter Garden	\$372,016	+50%	\$155,178	+95%
Winter Springs	\$320,293	+29%	\$132,200	+66%
Clermont	\$453,138	+83%	\$121,900	+53%

Net Single-family development (2015)

We observed a consistent pattern in net development of single-family housing. Winter Springs deviates from this relationship with the lowest density.

Table 8: Single-family Housing and Net Density

Municipality	Total Acres	Density (Net)	Total Units
St Cloud	2,897	4.5 DU/Ac	13,062
Ocoee	2,824	4.3 DU/Ac	12,017
Oviedo	2,873	4.0 DU/Ac	11,215
Winter Garden	2,726	4.2 DU/Ac	11,336
Winter Springs	3,688	3.2 DU/Ac	11,817
Clermont	2,743	4.2 DU/Ac	11,412

Single-family housing by year built (2015)

There is a consistent pattern in development of single-family housing. Generally the market is developing larger single-family product resulting in increases in market values per unit exceeding inflationary increases. In the case of Winter Springs and Clermont, about half of the housing stock was constructed from 1996-2005 and about 80-90% 1996-present. The age of the stock figures prominently into the valuations seen in subsequent tables. St. Cloud lags materially behind these other benchmark communities.

Table 9: Total Single-family units by year built

Municipality	Pre-1996	1996-2005	% of Total	2006-2015	% of Total
St Cloud	5,454	3,668	28%	3,940	30%
Ocoee	5,927	3,661	30%	2,429	20%
Oviedo	6,419	3,225	29%	1,571	14%
Winter Garden	2,567	5,109	45%	3,660	32%
Winter Springs	8,456	2,515	21%	846	7%
Clermont	1,784	6,505	57%	3,123	27%

Table 10: Average Living Area of Single-family Housing

Municipality	Pre-1996	1996-2005	2006-2015
St Cloud	1,610	2,150	2,540
Ocoee	1,780	2,630	2,650
Oviedo	1,830	2,440	2,690
Winter Garden	1,670	2,520	2,940
Winter Springs	1,850	2,350	2,130
Clermont	1,450	2,070	2,500

Table 11: Average Market Value of Single-family Housing

Municipality	Pre-1996	1996-2005	Compared to St. Cloud	2006-2015	Compared to St. Cloud
St Cloud	\$98,000	\$147,400	--	\$174,900	--
Ocoee	\$129,300	\$214,300	+45%	\$222,300	+27%
Oviedo	\$185,400	\$269,100	+83%	\$296,000	+69%
Winter Garden	\$119,600	\$231,500	+57%	\$215,400	+23%
Winter Springs	\$183,400	\$253,100	+72%	\$220,600	+26%
Clermont	\$117,900	\$179,300	+22%	\$218,500	+25%

Taxable value of Single-family housing by year built (2015)

A consistent pattern exists in terms of the impact of assessment increases on homesteaded single-family units. Restrictive increases in assessed value ("Save-our-homes") has a measurable impact on the relationship between the proportion of single-family homes and taxable value by year built.

Table 12: Average Taxable Value of Single-family Housing

Municipality	Year Built:		
	Pre-1996	1996-2005	2006-2015
St Cloud	\$53,600	\$82,600	\$114,100
Ocoee	\$72,500	\$143,900	\$166,400
Oviedo	\$114,100	\$184,700	\$219,500
Winter Garden	\$69,600	\$157,400	\$215,400
Winter Springs	\$114,800	\$178,300	\$171,200
Clermont	\$75,100	\$115,800	\$162,300

Table 13: Index of Cost to Taxable Value

Municipality	Pre-1996	1996-2005	2006-2015
St Cloud	67.0	103.3	142.6
Ocoee	64.0	127.1	147.0
Oviedo	76.5	123.8	147.2
Winter Garden	44.5	100.7	137.9
Winter Springs	86.7	134.7	129.4
Clermont	61.5	94.8	132.9

Estimated Market Value required to break-even on operating and capital (2015)

All of the above allows us to determine a reasonable proxy for service costs delivered to residential units. The figures indicate wide variation. In effect, St Cloud ranks somewhere in the middle with Oviedo and Clermont requiring materially higher values to deliver their set of respective services.

Table 14: Break-even Market Value

Municipality	Market Value
St Cloud	\$155,000
Ocoee	\$123,000
Oviedo	\$199,000
Winter Garden	\$151,000
Winter Springs	\$162,000
Clermont	\$200,000

IMPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING GENERALLY

Even a cursory comparison between St. Cloud and a number benchmarking communities suggests that the St. Cloud's non-residential land use potential is in excess of what has been achieved. While there are many market and economic based reasons to explain the lag, the region's distribution of such land uses offers some evidence that the community has not been positioned nor active in supporting these kinds of land uses. Going forward there is some rational basis for believing that the growth initiatives of adjacent projects and jurisdictions could drive population and employment gains in St. Cloud well beyond recent projections. Given more aggressive positioning and improved siting options, the community might be able to capture a significant share of those growth driven opportunities. It is rational to believe the community can compete and succeed in luring non-residential business users simply on the strength of the regional changes underway.

While these non-residential uses are obviously missing elements in the community, there must be recognition that these additions are not, by themselves, the foundation of a more fiscally sustainable community.

Such action(s) by itself will not solve all our supposed budgetary problems. The functioning community will continue to be comprised substantially of residential development. Perceptions that such development increases service costs and fails to contribute its fair share to the city's fiscal position stem from a misunderstanding of the budgeting process and the ways in revenues and costs are align. A balance is needed to extract the highest values from the resources available. What is correct in this context is that St. Cloud's historical residential development is badly undervalued, certainly when the relevant data is benchmarked to other communities with lower costs and, in some cases, higher concentrations of residential development. As part of the community's efforts to create a new vision for the future, there must be an emphasis on newer and higher valued housing that raises the average valuations of all residential development. Like opportunities to secure additional non-residential development, the higher valued residential development envisioned here could occur in areas that are now not under control of the city.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ANNEXATIONS GENERALLY

To some degree, the issues stemming from the budgetary impacts of growth and development need to be distinguished from discussions about annexations, especially if the latter is comprised of existing lower valued development.

The incremental costs, if any, in such a situation may grow very slowly relative to receipts because values of that existing development are also likely to increase very slowly. Unless there are obvious opportunities for new construction or redevelopment, there are commensurately reduced opportunities to enhance economic reasons which might justify an annexation decision. Drawing on the analysis, property valuations which are below the community's overall average could have deleterious effects on the spread between revenues and expenditures. Where the area is largely comprised of mobile homes or low value single family units with full homestead exemptions, there may be no fiscal advantage to an annexation. If the affected costs are largely fixed, then some additional tax base will increase economic efficiencies of those services. If all costs are variable, then the decision must be carefully weighed and the unit of analysis generating that cost carefully identified.

Specific to the Manor, which has been contemplated an annexation target, an exhaustive analysis must consider the potential for enhanced revenues relative to the cost of services and the need for upgrades or repairs to existing infrastructure. While it may be premature to conclude that the Manor is ill-suited to be a part of this city, the advantages and disadvantages are not immediately obvious for the reasons outlined.

Specific to supporting new development, the opportunities to gain a financial advantage for the city are more apparent. From this perspective, the data suggest the City should focus on the major transportation corridors serving St. Cloud, especially the areas around the Florida Turnpike, which is the major regional connection, if the City wishes to secure and support a major employment center. Similar observations can be made about retail and commercial activity but there are multiple locations across the community where these kinds of uses should be sited. For the most part, the community's planning must consider additional areas outside the city, now controlled by the county, to realize these non-residential visions.

Programs, Policies, and Public Improvements: Getting Started

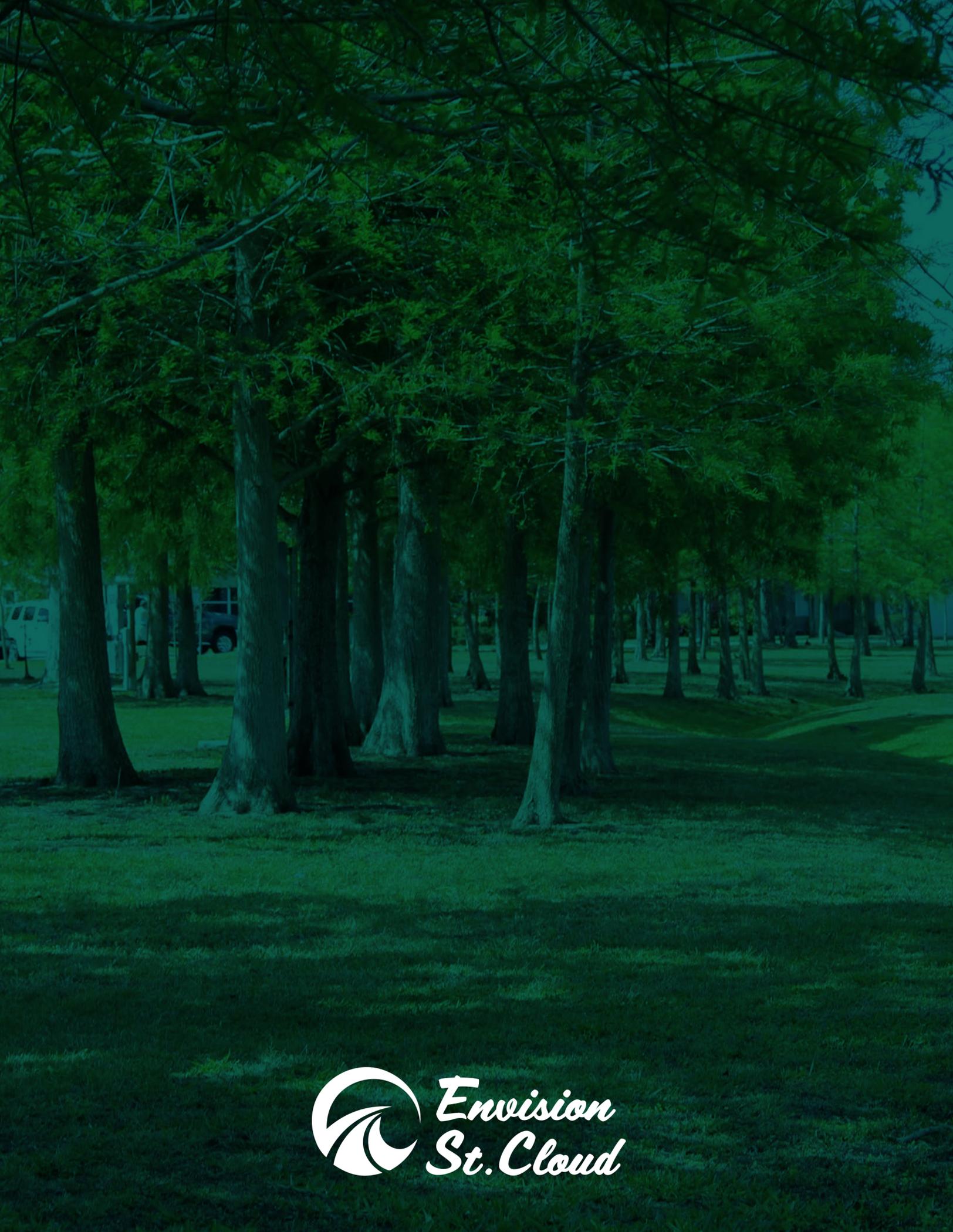
Advancing the plan will occur on many fronts. The plan is a guide for the future. It describes the important shared community values, which should form the basis for future planning and development decisions. The structure of the plan is intended to allow the City to be agile enough to meet changing development conditions while holding true to the important tenets of the plan.

The nine Forward Moves are examples of ways to advance the vision, but they should not be interpreted as the only ways to advance the vision. Therefore, the actions listed below are a starting point to move toward the vision. As time passes, new opportunities will arise and contexts will change - the actions should always be evaluated for their potential impact and continued relevance to advancing the Vision.

Action

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | Incorporate recommendations into Comprehensive Plan update. |
| 2 | Require connected street network in all new development consistent with Livable Corridors Framework. |
| 3 | Identify, plan, and entitle target sites for major employers near transportation access and open land. |
| 4 | Identify at least two north-south and east-west multi-purpose trail corridors through the study area for completion. |
| 5 | Develop branded trail system to include wayfinding and system identification signage and mapping. |
| 6 | Identify target industries and study incentives to encourage these businesses to locate within the study area. |
| 7 | Develop plan to improve internet speed in Downtown and identified employment centers. |
| 8 | Develop Parks and Recreation Master Plan update to identify areas underserved by parks and conventional, as well as creative, non-traditional opportunities for park system. |
| 9 | Advance park design for Lakefront Park and identify funding opportunities to implement construction. |
| 10 | Develop master plan for Chisholm Park, recognizing its place within the region as well as day-to-day needs for surrounding neighborhoods. |
| 11 | As part of employment center planning and implementation, work with Lynx to identify potential new transit lines and circulator options to connect with Downtown and NeoCity. |
| 12 | Advance construction of New York Avenue streetscape improvements. |
| 13 | Advance plans for Centennial Park and identify funding opportunities to implement construction. |
| 14 | In New York Avenue design, locate places for art installations and work with local artists to have rotating exhibitions or permanent displays. |
| 15 | Continue to foster mural initiative in Downtown. |
| 16 | As part of employment center planning and implementation, identify corridor connection across Turnpike to Budinger. |
| 17 | Develop standards for cluster development to include in City's land development code. |
| 18 | Coordinate with Osceola County to adopt interim standards for unincorporated land in study area that are consistent with principles and frameworks of this plan. |
| 19 | Develop standards for infill neighborhoods addressing street connectivity, allocation of park lands, and more urban development approach. |
| 20 | Draft and adopt a Complete Streets policy. Policy should address all phases of construction - from new roadways to "3R" projects. |
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 *Envision
St. Cloud*