

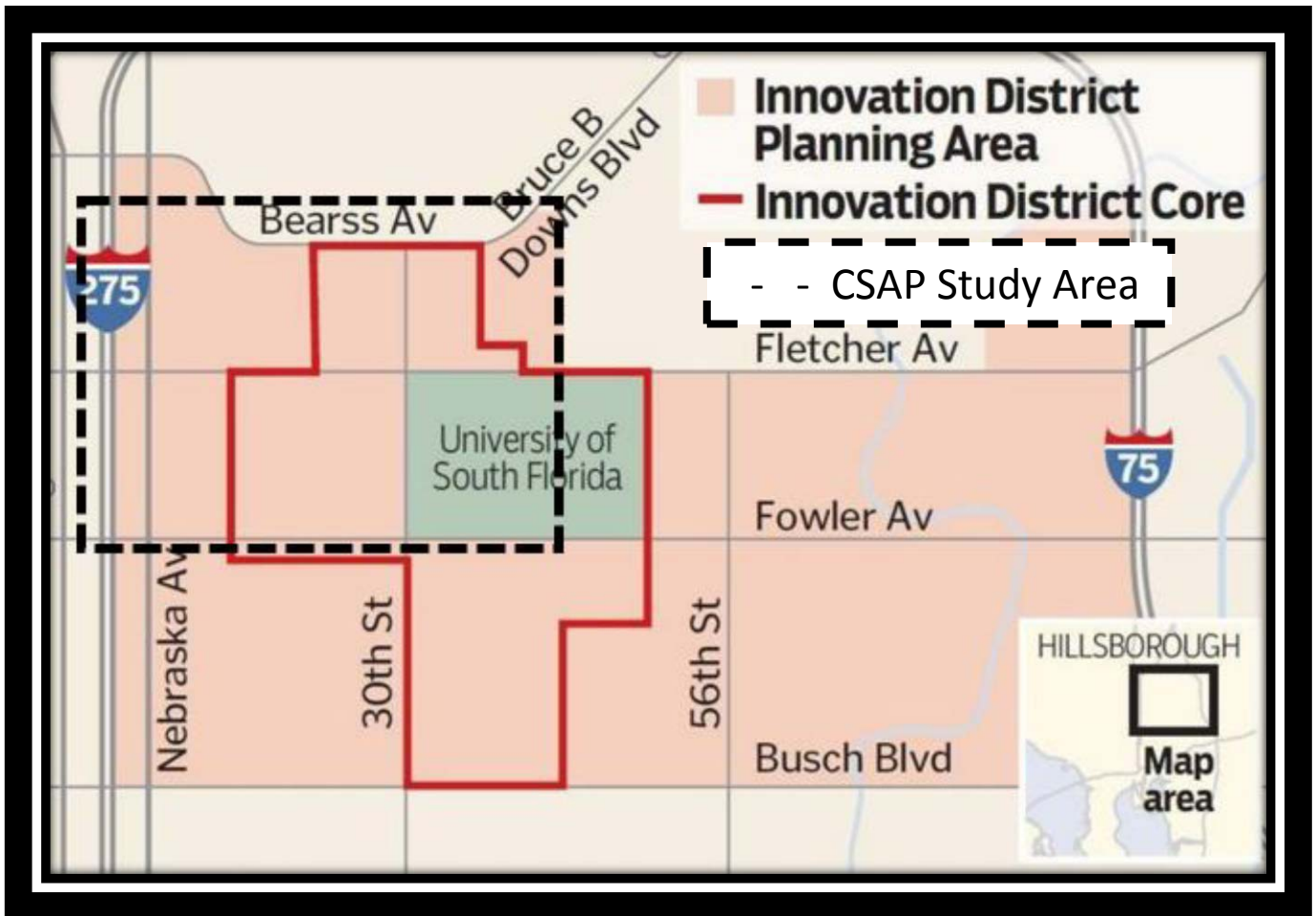


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## Final Report

# University Area/Tampa Innovation District Community Safety Action Plan



*December 2016*

## Acknowledgements

As with every effort to improve a community, the creation of this report was the work of many people. We truly appreciate those individuals who took the time to speak with us, provide important information, share historical insights, guide us on field tours and visits, and provide feedback on shared ideas. Multiple staff members and volunteers from the University Area CDC (UACDC), Tampa Innovation Alliance (TIA), University of South Florida (USF), Hillsborough County, Moffitt Cancer Center, Florida Hospital, and many others provided essential guidance, information, support, and feedback as we worked with their team to develop insights and recommendations.

### **Qualified Advice and Disclaimer:**

*Our recommendations are designed to help reduce crime and improve perceptions of safety based on sound research and our own experience. However, no crime prevention initiative can eliminate crime completely, and we make no representations that following our advice will eliminate the risks of crime for persons or property. Vigilance is always needed, and it is our fundamental recommendation to every resident, visitor, and business.*

*In addition, the effectiveness of our recommendations rests solidly on the available information provided to us at the time of the analysis and report. As conditions change or additional information becomes available, recommendations should be revisited and core principles re-applied to determine the best solutions and actions.*

*It should also be noted that certain observations and comments contained herein reflect conditions found on the survey dates only and therefore might not be representative of continuing situations or operations. In addition, certain information may have been obtained only from interviews conducted, and is identified as such. This information may not have been independently verified unless so stated.*

*While our recommendations do not guarantee a crime-free environment or absolute standards of security operations, it is our experience that application of the principles referred to will reduce the opportunity for crime to occur, will enhance the quality of life, and will serve to form a basis for the improvement of security and safety efforts on the property and adjacent areas.*

*This report includes a broad review of many components of security. Note that where technical solutions to specific issues have been noted or revealed, such as the need for video surveillance systems, this report does not include engineering or technical data for those solutions. Such specific technical surveys are available upon request, but are not covered in detail by this report. It must be noted that vulnerability to security risks can be reduced, but not eliminated entirely. There is no guarantee that any area will never experience workplace violence or criminal activity, even if the threat is low and security measures seem adequate. Ken Stapleton & Associates and Safedesign™ Institute do not assume any responsibility for the failure to detect any specific security breaches. In addition, we cannot guarantee that, even if the recommendations and suggestions herein are implemented, the security of your facility will not be breached.*

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## Executive Summary

A variety of outstanding efforts by the University Area Community Development Corporation (UACDC), Tampa Innovation Alliance (TIA) members, Hillsborough County Government (County), Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office (HCSO), and other community partners, private investors, and others have positioned the University Area/Tampa Innovation District (UA/TID) for both community improvement and new private investment. In order to accelerate their progress, stakeholders have agreed to expand efforts to more intentionally and actively address real and perceived safety that have long been considered a significant barrier to investment and improved quality of life. Building upon key property acquisitions, planned public improvements, community cleaning and safety initiatives, a variety of supportive services, and an expanding community policing approach, this Community Safety Action Plan (CSAP) outlines a comprehensive series of integrated efforts. The fundamental goal is to strengthen existing efforts and elevate their impacts.

The Plan has an intentional emphasis on perceptions because they drive behaviors of current and prospective residents and businesses, investors, and even criminals. Recommendations have been made using a variety of innovative concepts and approaches, including but not limited to the following:

- ❖ **Varying safety thresholds** – People of different ages, genders, and social backgrounds often feel different about the safety of a particular place. Recognizing and intentionally addressing those differences better impacts the behavioral changes sought by stakeholders. This might include home buying, retail or entertainment spending, or children walking to school. Decision makers for each of these must feel “safe enough” for the desired activity to occur.
- ❖ **Physical environment impacts** – Signs of care and concern, easy access for criminals, lighting, land use patterns, landscaping, physical signs of disorder, and other physical features impact both perceptions and real opportunities for crime to occur. More attention to the details of the physical environment can have a major impact on both real and perceived safety.
- ❖ **Strategic communications strategies** – By continuing to improve communications among various partners, focusing on positive messages about safety, and being thoughtful about indirect safety messages, the various stakeholders in the UA/TID can better impact safety perceptions and coordinate safety interventions.
- ❖ **Program adjustments for safety** – With intentional and often minor adjustments to programs already in place, a broad array of partners can increase their positive impact on real and perceived safety. County staff from Parks and Recreation, public art programs, utilities, events, youth development, workforce development and other departments can work with non-profit groups like UACDC, churches, TIA, Junior Achievement, anchor institutions, university student service organizations, and others to improve their impacts on both real and perceived safety.
- ❖ **Metrics that matter** – In addition to traditional aggregate crime statistics and measures of program effort (e.g. the number of people trained or bags of trash removed), metrics that track perceptions of key target markets both directly and indirectly, measure levels of physical disorder, and measure community cohesion, among others are needed to make real progress related to real and perceived safety in the UA/TID.
- ❖ **More Than Just Police™** - The comprehensive approach to real and perceived safety contained here emphasizes the fact that Police agencies are only one key player to making real progress. Real and perceived safety for the CSAP area must become a top priority for every organization operating in the area, and each of them will need to actively engage in the implementation of this plan in order to accelerate progress and maximize success. The phrase “all hands on deck” is an appropriate description.



Using these concepts and approaches along with more traditional efforts by police and community partners, this plan and related efforts provide over 200 new recommendations that can be used by more than 25 County departments and community partners and anchor institutions to substantially improve real and perceived safety over the next several years. To develop these recommendations about opportunities for improvement, an inclusive process used stakeholder interviews, community meetings, a review of numerous documents, and multiple field visits both day and night. There was also regular feedback from the project Core Team and the larger Steering Group.

Based on the understanding developed during this process, and in order to kick-start the implementation of the Plan, a number of Priority Next Steps were also identified. These include “mission critical” efforts, “fast impact” initiatives, and “culture shift” opportunities as summarized below.

1. **Partners kickoff workshop** – a professionally facilitated half-day meeting of all partners working in the Plan area to discuss who will lead and support implementation of each recommendation, proposed timelines for implementation, collective resource recruitment, and key metrics for progress.
2. **Clean & Green Teams** – a regular effort to deal with trash, weeds, graffiti, and other physical signs of disorder using both specially trained employees and volunteers.
3. **Partnerships to improve University Mall** – this includes exterior physical improvements on the site and nearby pathways as well as assistance with signature events.
4. **Signature Events** – this should start with one event for USF students and one event related to innovative ways to have fun. Both should draw from the entire region.
5. **Solar lighting for lots and homes** – installation of new lighting on private property using solar technology either on a permanent or temporary basis, including both occupied and vacant properties.
6. **Volunteer partnerships** - A robust volunteer partnership with anchor institutions – this should be a CEO driven major expansion of existing volunteering by anchor students and staff – focused on implementation of this plan.
7. **Safedesign™ or Advanced Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Project Reviews** – sophisticated crime prevention reviews of plans for planned public improvements like parks, government buildings, and Complete Streets conducted by very experienced experts on behalf of the UACDC and County. Similarly, requirements for such reviews for proposed private projects including new housing and commercial projects, but paid for by the developers as part of the entitlement approvals process and submitted as a separate complete report.
8. **Baseline metrics collection** – initial collection of improved crime, perceptions, disorder indicator, and other metrics that will serve as a baseline to measure improvements to both real and perceived safety.
9. **Crisis communications plan** – a careful plan prepared by various partners to help them respond appropriately to serious crime incidents that may occur.
10. **Gateway and image corridor lighting improvements** – beginning with current TIA/FDOT plans for Fowler Avenue and the I-275 intersection, those same partners should create an aggressive 5-year plan to complete the other areas.

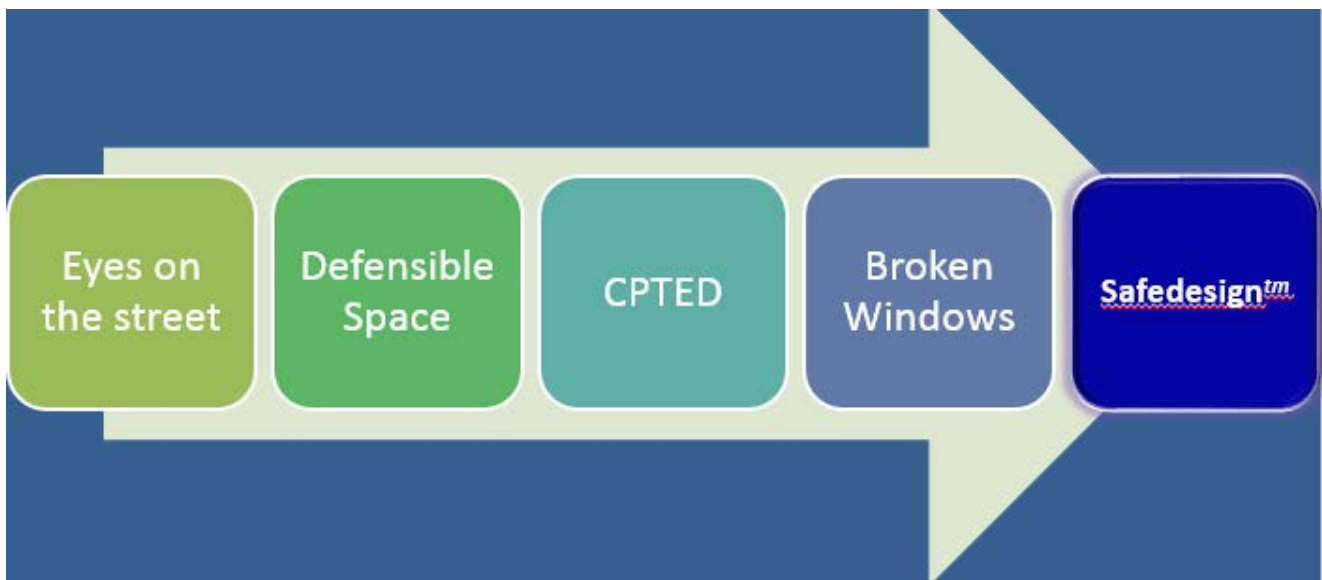
## Assignment and Unique Approach

As the University Area Community Development Corporation, Tampa Innovation Alliance, Hillsborough County Government and Anchor institution partners continue to strategically invest in the University Area and Tampa Innovation District (UA/TID) to stimulate community and economic development, they recognize the crucial need to address both real and perceived safety in innovative ways. Over the past decade, there have been a number of programs and initiatives concerning safety in UA/TID, but significant concerns remain, and stakeholders and County leaders desire more progress and impact.

To address these concerns and goals, this Plan uses the innovative **Safedesign™** system to more clearly understand current conditions and past trends, evaluate existing efforts, and provide recommended adjustments to systems, the physical environment, programs, patrols, metrics, and strategic communications. We interviewed stakeholders, participated in community meetings, reviewed past plans and studies, conducted multiple site visits both day and night, and carefully evaluated past metrics related to both crime and perceptions. To help ensure that diverse stakeholders better understand our innovative solutions, we provided training about both the Safedesign™ approach and community safety audits.

We created an assessment report (Appendix A), provided a detailed evaluation of the proposed Harvest Hope Park Project (Appendix B), performed a **Total Travel Path™** evaluation related to Mort Elementary and University Mall (Appendix C), and created the various recommendations contained in this Plan as well as the action matrix and budget estimates found in the Recommendations section. For more information about our Safedesign™ system, see Appendix D.

The recommendations contained in this report are based on our 30+ years of experience in community and economic development, including work in over a dozen states and provinces throughout North America. We have helped downtowns, urban neighborhoods, universities, park systems, and private developers enhance quality of life and economic prosperity and value. Additional insights and expertise for this report were also the result of Michael Bloom's 30+ years of experience as a strategic communications professional and university executive. For more details about our qualifications, go to [KSA-Urban.com](http://KSA-Urban.com).



## Evaluative Assessment Summary

There are many positive projects, programs, partnerships, and investments happening in the UA/TID (also referred to as the Plan area throughout this report). These include: a variety of real estate investments and public improvements by the County and State; neighborhood outreach to youth and other community members by UACDC, anchor institutions, and a variety of non-profits and faith-based organizations; exciting new events and marketing initiatives by the TIA; improvements to community policing and safety technologies by the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office (HCSO), University of South Florida (USF) and others; business investment incentive programs by Hillsborough County Economic Development; regular community cleanups and community discussions about safety coordinated by UACDC, HCSO, and others; a wide variety of assistance programs for existing residents and homeless provided by multiple partners; and much, much more. Details about these many positive partnerships and efforts are found in Appendices A through C.

At the same time, real and perceived safety concerns are slowing development progress and momentum. Based on our assessment of various conditions and efforts, our major assessment findings about those remaining challenges are listed below:

- 1) Poor Physical Environment conditions are contributing significantly to both real and perceived safety in the UA/TID, and crucial processes and standards are lacking to systematically make improvements. Lighting, litter, illegal dumping, and poorly maintained vacant properties are signs of disorder particularly in need of attention.
- 2) Additional Strategic Communications for real and perceived safety are needed as a more complete and consistent place-brand strategy is implemented - along with more attention to signature special events and their details. There is also a need to improve safety communications among partners.
- 3) Major image gateways and corridors along portions of Fowler Avenue and Fletcher Avenue are poor front doors. Their condition shows a lack of care and concern, particularly at night, that creates discomfort and a desire to speed through, not visit the adjacent neighborhood, businesses and institutions.
- 4) University Mall is the most crucial property in the Plan area in terms of impact on real and perceived safety.



- 5) Disorder crimes, such as open container violations, aggressive panhandling, and dumping need more innovative attention from Police and others. This includes better efforts to regulate convenience stores, better advanced CPTED or Safedesign™ reviews, and better tracking metrics.
- 6) While some baseline information about perceptions is now being collected, more information and better methodologies are needed to obtain real insights from key target markets – particularly women, realtors, millennials, and students/parents - about their safety perceptions and place avoidance behaviors.
- 7) Signs of care and concern – territoriality – are largely missing from the Plan area, most notably along the image corridors. Colorful flowers and banners, public art, uniquely designed commercial structures and mixed use projects, and unique streetscape elements are barely present in neighborhoods and along major image corridors.
- 8) The open grid street system that operates so well in stable urban neighborhoods is currently exacerbating drug sale activity, some illegal dumping, and some drive by criminal activity. There is a need to manage access more carefully until the stable phase is reached.
- 9) Land use patterns and urban design regulations are negatively impacting both natural surveillance and territoriality. Single use commercial, institutional, and residential zones create large areas that feel isolated at times, particularly after dark. Large setback requirements reduce natural surveillance along major roadways in particular.

## Recommendations

Fundamentally, our **Safedesign™** approach integrates innovative solutions into every aspect of the building and management of places. Our solutions range from urban design and land use pattern improvements to the details of events – and how best to communicate about both real and perceived safety. As more fully explained in the training sessions provided during this project, we also use several unique concepts to guide our recommendations, including but not limited to the following:

- ❖ Varying safety thresholds
- ❖ Total Travel Path™ considerations
- ❖ ShEconomy considerations
- ❖ Perception leads to reality
- ❖ Informal social interaction designs
- ❖ The 4C's of lighting (*color, consistency, context, candelas*)
- ❖ Positive-indirect messaging
- ❖ Indirect perception metrics

In order to focus on proposed solutions and improvements in this section, detailed past assessments and analytics are reported separately in the appendices of this report.

### **Programs and Patrols**

The integrated nature of the **Safedesign™** approach really suggests that **every program** operating in the Plan area should be adjusted to enhance real and perceived safety by applying the core principles and using the lens of safety as the top priority goal of every effort. We describe a number of more specific recommendations here, but community leaders, non-profit volunteers, and staff from other organizations should review every existing and proposed program for similar adjustments. This is an “all hands on deck” approach.

Given the highly transient nature of the Plan area, intentional efforts to improve emotional connections to the place are fundamentally important to sustainable safety. As many stakeholders noted, community stability must be part of the solutions to create both real and perceived safety.

### ***Housing and Resident Stability Programs***

Given the critical need to create emotional attachments and resident stability, special attention to that goal should be integrated wherever possible. We suggest using the following strategies to accelerate impacts and safety.

- ❖ ***Geographic focus strategy for stabilization*** – With limited resources, success will come from concentrating them in areas with a high probability of successful stabilization. This includes focusing on community strengths like Mort Elementary, USF, and Harvest Hope Park. The various programs and physical improvements described later in this plan should be focused on the chosen areas.
- ❖ ***Local hiring partnerships with anchor institutions*** – Stable employment is essential for stable residency. Partners should aggressively encourage local hiring commitments from anchor institutions and other large employers in the Plan area.

- ❖ **Community volunteering** – Creating an emotional connection requires that people invest in the community beyond their own property or residence. As a requirement for homeownership assistance, community service hours should be required. These community hours may be served at a school, Harvest Hope Park, the UACDC center, or as part of volunteer cleanup crews.
- ❖ **Robust engagement** – While HCSO has done an admirable job of engaging the community, a more intensive approach warrants further exploration. Resources are stretched to the limit and unlikely to increase in the near term., and HCSO capacity and resources will likely continue to be limited. Partners should explore the Metrowest Orlando model as part of a Safe Neighborhoods District. Given existing long term relationships with KKP Security Group, this is a better opportunity than for most other places.
- ❖ **Safe Affordable Housing** – While safe affordable housing is always a goal of subsidized programs, there is often a lack of attention to details of the security aspects of “safe” and sound. Partners should work to require advanced CPTED or Safedesign™ reviews for all subsidized housing in the University Area annually – including voucher units. Pre-development reviews should be conducted by highly experienced reviewers.
- ❖ **Requirements and incentives** for better rental housing management – Within the areas of geographic focus, inspect properties for adequate security features including lighting, locks, peepholes, landscape management, and other features already required by existing codes. If codes have been interpreted not to require such features, change them. Consider creating a series of incentive programs to motivate owners and managers to participate. This might include matching grants similar to commercial façade improvement programs.
- ❖ **Resident requested CPTED** or similar reviews - Create a program that educates stakeholders and permits residents to invite HCSO onto properties to conduct security assessments or CPTED reviews. Share such reviews with owners and managers with reminders about premises liability issues.
- ❖ **Land trust for affordable housing** –Consider strategies such as land trusts to improve neighborhood stability and increase opportunities for affordable housing. In addition, such properties must agree to maintain minimum security features included as part of a formal CPTED review. The UACDC is currently working on such as strategy.

## ***Disorder Management***

As described in the Assessment Report, litter, high weeds, broken windows, vacant properties, and other signs of disorder continue to negatively impact the Plan area. To maximize impact on actual and perceived safety, a broad array of County staff, community groups, churches, Police, non-profits, USF students, and business and property owners must join/continue to support the UACDC's and HCSO's efforts to address these signs of disorder. This will require some changes in how some of these partners currently operate, including adjustments to the County's spending on this aspect of innovative community policing.

Given the large and diverse area, our major recommendation, as detailed below, is the creation of two Clean & Green Teams (CGT) managed by two credible community partners – UACDC and TIA. Of course it is recognized that this will require additional funding and staffing. This program will have a visible positive impact on the Plan area, will engage residents, businesses, and other stakeholders, and will serve to support events and business growth by providing a more comfortable environment for residents, employees, customers, and visitors.

Beyond the CGT, the UACDC and TIA should engage other County Departments, Churches, businesses, non-profits, and others to intentionally address the signs of disorder throughout the Plan area. Some specific roles for each are also noted below, but efforts should not be limited to those efforts. Fundamentally, anyone involved in providing services in the Plan area needs to focus their efforts on removing such signs of disorder.

## ***Clean & Green Teams***

Given a shared mission of neighborhood and commercial/anchor corridor improvement around quality of life and opportunities for residents, including the improvement of real and perceived safety, the UACDC, TIA, and a number of area non-profit organizations have a terrific opportunity to accomplish these goals by creating and managing the CGTs.

UACDC currently manages volunteer cleanups, works with others to create job opportunities for residents, provide a wide variety of youth and adult programs, and assist with community events. This organizational capacity can be enhanced and expanded, along with new revenue streams, by creating a CGT with the features below. TIA is working diligently to improve the physical appearance of various gateways and commercial corridors, and they have a strong interest in making sure those areas are carefully maintained. While their goals are more inclined to business development and area brand image, the need to carefully maintain such areas to remove signs of disorder is just as compelling.

## ***Geography***

We suggest that each CGT initially focus on the areas noted below:

- ❖ UACDC – 15<sup>th</sup> Street; 22<sup>nd</sup> Street; pathways to/from the Harvest Hope Park complex; pathways to/from Mort Elementary; 131<sup>st</sup> Street from Transit Center to Nebraska Avenue; and areas around transit shelters in other important locations.
- ❖ TIA – all I-275 interchanges within the Plan area; Fowler Avenue; Fletcher Avenue; Bruce B Downs Boulevard; University Square Drive; 131<sup>st</sup> Street between the Transit Center and USF; Nebraska Avenue; and Bearss Avenue.

## ***Activities and Tasks***

- ❖ Maintain key pathways, transit stops/shelters, and gateways free of litter, landscape debris, graffiti, dumped materials, overgrown weeds, and trash. This includes litter and trash removal within/onto the first 10 feet of vacant properties. Cut any high grass or weeds in tree lawns and along the inside edge of sidewalks.

- ❖ Key pathways are noted above. Program staff is fully responsible for the condition of these pathways, not volunteers.
- ❖ Prune trees and landscaping blocking sidewalks or pedestrian light fixtures along key pathways.
- ❖ Remove graffiti and stickers from light poles, utility boxes, and bus shelters. Photo document all graffiti instances. Notify the appropriate County or City of Tampa Department program for instances that require paint over. Monitor County or City response and escalate after 48 hours. Focus on key pathways and volunteer cleanup areas.
- ❖ Use smartphones to report other issues in real time, including: crimes in progress (911), open container violations, trespassing, broken lighting, faded or damaged traffic signs, dirty bus shelters, aggressive panhandling, homeless camping, dumping on private property, faded roadway and crosswalk striping, etc. Photo document as much as possible.
- ❖ Recruit volunteers and youth interns to assist during monthly cleanup events. Continue to work with the HCSO on such efforts to help build trust and respect.
- ❖ Work to convince area businesses, churches, and non-profits to address disorder beyond their properties as part of their regular maintenance efforts.
- ❖ Partner with others to create youth employment opportunities, particularly in the summer. Consider connecting such opportunities to USF scholarships as well as part of the emotional connection and community stability strategies.
- ❖ Recruit property owners for lot maintenance services. Begin with active developer sites.
- ❖ Paint crosswalks and other roadway markings on side streets under a separate contract with County and/or City, as appropriate.
- ❖ Lead monthly volunteer clean up events in alleys and interior streets. Initially focus in areas near recent private investments. USF students should be recruited to work in teams alongside area residents to help build trust and respect.
- ❖ Photo-document physical disorder issues on private properties (date, time, and GPS stamps) and forward them to County code enforcement.
- ❖ Document impacts (before and after photos) as well as volunteer efforts (kids, USF students, and church members helping) and youth employment success stories (off to college).
- ❖ Placement and management of temporary hidden cameras where frequent illegal dumping occurs. This will likely need to be done in partnership with adjacent property owners.

### *Staffing*

- ❖ Two full-time staff to start for each CGT, reporting directly to an agency senior manager. It is recognized that additional funding will be needed before these staff members can be added. This may increase if enough private lot owners are recruited or additional contracts are obtained for maintenance of vacant properties. Hire from the neighborhood exclusively. Conduct full background checks, but carefully consider those working to overcome a criminal past if they are carefully vetted. Use text messaging from smartphones for a time clock, including for any breaks taken in the field.



- ❖ Early morning start (6am) for commuter visibility, transit user safety, and cleanliness along key residential street pathways. At least 4 hours per week after dark, including checks of light fixtures.
- ❖ Clean and neat appearance at all times, with uniform shirts, hats, and shorts. Friendly demeanor and appearance. Sunglasses off when speaking with others. Engaging in any disorderly or criminal behavior in the Plan area or other parts of the County will be cause for dismissal. This includes the “hanging out” behaviors concerning some stakeholders.
- ❖ Summer youth employees. Part time for 6-10 youth who have volunteered in past years for clean-up events. Youth must also start at 6am and always work near the full time staff.
- ❖ Targeted volunteers to include youth from UACDC athletic programs, USF student athletes, police officers, anchor institution staff, church members, residents of the TID, TIA and UACDC board members, and business owners.
- ❖ Also make use of regular County staff by providing them with documentation – photos, formal requests for service, etc. This will include tree trimming services from Parks, illegal dumping cleanups from Public Works, etc.



*Training*

- ❖ Both staff and volunteers will require training about the importance of disorder management, job safety (traffic, needles, glass, etc.), observe/report only roles, and media interactions (refer to their Executive Director).
- ❖ Non-profit staff and board members should receive training about how to use positive-indirect safety messages when speaking to the media and others about the program.
- ❖ Staff training on the use of smartphones for communications and documentation.

*Equipment & Supplies*

- ❖ Commercial grade lawn mowers and trimmers. Landscaping hand tools. Roundup or similar weed control.
- ❖ Smartphones used only while on duty (not personal phones) and equipped with GPS tracking.
- ❖ Gloves, t-shirts, safety vests, hats, and bags for volunteers. Uniforms for staff.
- ❖ Small pickup truck, maintenance, and gasoline.

### **Assistance Program Requirements**

Both existing County programs and any future programs could include a variety of provisions to enhance order and avoid disorder. Security bars and shutters should be avoided and replaced with impact windows. Signage should avoid a cluttered or unkempt look. Parking areas must be neatly paved and striped. Directional or other signage should be neat and clean. Negative signage should be discreet.

Maintenance requirements must be actively enforced. This may require significant financial remedies in the initial agreements. Addressing problems within 48 hours should be required, including: Peeling paint, broken lighting or windows, leaning fences, graffiti, weeds, broken glass and litter – on the site and adjacent sidewalks.

### **Mini-grant Pilot Program**

Consider creation of a “clean and green” mini-grant program offering up to \$5,000 grants to smaller groups in the Plan area for physical improvements to open spaces or even front yards. The program should be competitive. The Miami Open Space Challenge is a good example to follow, but applicants must intentionally address disorder and crime prevention with their ideas.

### **Vacant Properties Regulations**

While there appear to be adequate regulations related to litter, weeds, dumping, junk cars, and similar items, there are no requirements for lighting of vacant properties. In fact, ordinances often require electrical service to be removed from vacant structures – probably to avoid squatting or use by homeless – unless the owner **chooses** to have an alarm or exterior security lighting. Additionally, there does not appear to be a requirement to carefully paint any boarding that covers doors and windows.

Requirements for security lighting and careful painting of boarding should be added and actively enforced as part of the existing vacant property registration and maintenance requirements. Referrals to the Clean and Green team can result in the installation of solar security lights and the painting of windows and doors on the boards covering the real windows and doors – for a fee to a non-profit – in order to meet the code requirements. In addition, any contact information posting requirements should include vacant lots. We suggest this be done on a trial or pilot basis and not areawide until the process and impacts are better understood.

### **Code Enforcement**

While the CGTs can impact much of the disorder issues in or near the public right of way, without permission and payment, they will have limited impacts on private properties. The County code enforcement staff is already quite active in Plan area, but getting results in the field takes a very long time and those results are often not sustainable (e.g. vacant lots that almost immediately go back out of compliance). This is typical for most efforts, and the current County system appears to be working reasonably well by most standards. However, the system is not delivering the impacts and solutions desired by stakeholders.

Given the many legal and regulatory requirements, it is often difficult to improve on current efforts. Typically, communities are asked to invest in additional code enforcement inspectors. In our experience, this does not change outcomes from a community impact perspective. It still takes too long to get results, and those results are not lasting.

Instead, we suggest focusing code enforcement efforts on key travel pathways initially and combining them with more aggressive legal action. Fundamentally, the strategy has two key elements:

- ❑ to first clean up places that most impact perceptions; and
- ❑ to send a message to other property owners that they are looking at substantial legal expenses if they don't comply quickly.

### **Tracking Progress**

Many clean and safe programs miss the mark when it comes to tracking progress because they focus on measuring effort more than impact. They count the number of times they remove graffiti, the linear feet of sidewalks that teams power wash, the pounds of trash removed, or the number of people they helped with directions. Those can be useful for day to day management, but they don't provide insights into the effectiveness of the program – the impacts to customer and resident perceptions of the place.

We recommend a variety of different ways to measure impacts and real progress:

- ❖ Volunteer secret shoppers should anonymously rate key pathways, interactions with staff, lighting conditions, etc. This reflects their sense of disorder conditions. Given varying safety thresholds, the preference is to use female volunteers from outside the neighborhood, including some church members or area employees who live elsewhere. They will need a rating sheet for cleanliness, weed control, litter, trash, graffiti/stickers, etc. Visits should be random and unannounced during early morning hours or at dusk. For the safety of the shoppers, visits should not occur after dark. To maintain anonymity, shoppers should be recruited by, and report to, County staff, not staff of the non-profit partner(s). The target number of visits should be six per month for the first six months and three per month thereafter. (Appendix A contains a page from a sample report)
- ❖ The number of monthly volunteer hours should be carefully documented and should grow, not diminish, over time if the program is being successful. This is a very good measure of community engagement in improving community safety, and a fundamental metric for raising additional funding.
- ❖ Police should track the number of calls for service for disorder crimes and provide a monthly report, including the locations that have a large number of calls. Initially, the number of these should increase, but after 18-24 months they should begin to decline.
- ❖ Focus groups, intercept surveys at events, and formal TIA survey responses conducted as part of any overall perceptions measurement system should also be used to measure progress. It will likely take 18-24 months to begin to see improvements.
- ❖ The number of Illegal dumping incidents each month should be tracked over time and should decrease substantially after the first six months.
- ❖ Code enforcement tracking for the Plan area should include: compliance rates (30-day rates only); fines collected; and court actions taken. Compliance rates should increase after the first twelve months, fines collected should decrease after 18 months, and court actions should increase for the first 18 months and then decrease slowly over the following 18 months.

### **Strategic Communications – Disorder Management**

Both internal communications and external communications must be managed carefully. To effectively manage partnerships and coordinate efforts among the UACDC, TIA, the County, and other partners and non-profits, we recommend monthly coordination meetings with UACDC, TIA, Police, non-profit partners, and other County departments. The purpose of these meetings will include the quantitative review of both efforts and impacts related directly to disorder management. These meetings can shift to a quarterly schedule after the first year. In addition, external communications about the Clean & Green Team's efforts should be led by non-profit partners. There should be no publicly stated safety function – that is, don't mention crime prevention. Such statements would continue to propagate negative-indirect messages about the Plan area (e.g. - crime is bad here so we need a special program). The stated purpose should be to improve the quality of life for residents and enhance customer experiences for places like University Mall and USF (events). This may take some additional training and coaching for both staff and board members. It will also help position non-profit partners to attract more donations, sponsors, and investors for their various efforts.

## ***Police Efforts***

Given the existing strong relationships and extensive community policing already in place, we only have a few suggestions beyond the need for increased attention to disorder crimes.

## **Support for Infrastructure Reporting Efforts**

The HCSO has taken community policing to a new level in reporting needed infrastructure improvements. This makes it clear they understand the disorder management approach very well. To assist them, the UACDC, TIA and other partners should actively support HCSO in this effort by regularly sharing the list of needs with their own contacts and advocating for the requested improvements.

## **Advanced CPTED or Safedesign™ Reviews**

As detailed in the Physical Environment section, HCSO and USF Police should be welcomed into the design review process early and consistently as part of more advanced CPTED or Safedesign™ Reviews. This may require some additional training, but are a very affordable approach to crime prevention and perception enhancements.

## **Carryout Alcohol Sales**

The disorderly behaviors associated with public intoxication often have a direct connection with the easy availability of carry-out liquor and beer. HCSO is already addressing underage alcohol purchases, and these efforts should be expanded to include:

- ❖ The creation of “do not sell” lists of people who have been arrested frequently for public intoxication and related disorder crimes. (e.g. San Antonio)
- ❖ Prohibition of the sale of certain types/sizes of containers within 500 feet of churches, schools, playgrounds, etc.
- ❖ More active enforcement of convenience store security regulations where alcohol sales are leading to problem behaviors nearby.
- ❖ Community advocacy to deny additional licenses for carryout sales – as well as for the removal of licenses for chronic problem businesses.

## **Convenience Store Regulations**

HCSO should work with UACDC, TIA, and County to adopt stringent crime prevention regulations for convenience stores, including those at gas stations. At a minimum, the State standards should be adopted by reference and then aggressively enforced, including:

- ❖ Clear windows for natural surveillance.
- ❖ Consistent white lighting throughout the site with a 2 Footcandle minimum.
- ❖ Security cameras as required by State standards.
- ❖ Compliance with all alcohol and tobacco sales regulations.
- ❖ Outdoor seating regulations (ie. None permitted)





Convenience stores that participate in County redevelopment programs should be required to exceed such standards, including the following:

- ❖ Installing and maintaining fencing and other appropriate access control measures per approved designs.
- ❖ Installing and maintaining outdoor trash containers.
- ❖ Removing trash and litter from any adjacent properties for at least 20 feet.
- ❖ Cleaning trash and debris from the adjacent gutters and swales daily.

Finally, in regularly assessing compliance with regulations, HCSO should also offer crime prevention advice to owners that goes beyond regulations. This might include:

- ❖ Avoiding merchandise associated with drugs.
- ❖ Including more than one employee during evening or other crime-prone shifts.
- ❖ Internal physical changes that improve natural surveillance.
- ❖ Employee training to help reduce incidents and violence.
- ❖ Improved cash control systems.
- ❖ Enforcing prohibitions against loitering.

### **Partner Communications**

While there is clearly a strong positive relationship between HCSO and senior staff at UACDC, TIA, and other organizations, we also suggest **regular monthly update meetings** that include key UACDC/TIA staff and board members, security leadership from all anchor partners, one or two small business and faith leaders, and County Economic Development staff. This should be a leadership group, not a public community meeting. The purpose is to enhance trust and communications among key partners. HCSO should share easy to understand heat or pin maps of key crimes or calls for service – as requested by the group.

### **Expanded Assistance from USF Police**

HCSO and the various partners should actively support current efforts by USF Police to expand their jurisdictional boundaries off campus. It would be helpful if boundaries reached the Transit Center and the University Mall.

### **Media Management Partnership**

As noted in more detail in the Strategic Communications section of this report, Police should continue to work closely with UACDC/TIA staff, County staff, and others for the various types of communications about safety. This recognizes the need to communicate truthfully but with greater intentionality about managing perceptions of the Plan area.

### **Enhanced Analytics**

In order to set a clear baseline of information and measure regular progress, there should be enhanced analytics for the Plan area. Such information should be provided on a timely basis in order to provide better management guidance for programs. This might include disorder crime heat maps, crime rates using average daily population calculations, time of day analysis for drug sales, or even a thorough report about aggressive panhandling, as determined by the partners. The analytic process should feed problem solving efforts. The HCSO analyst should be rewarded for innovative efforts based on enhanced analysis. This would include additional training and participation in workshops similar to those provided by the International Association of Law Enforcement Intelligence Analysts (<http://www.ialeia.org/images/FIAT/FAZ-FIATClassAdvertisementFlyer.pdf>). The additional training and skills developed will help Police focus on social disorder, fear of crime and crime itself, but allow for problem solving that encourages territoriality, improved safety perceptions and effective matrix for the Plan area. The partners will then be better equipped to direct monies and resources appropriately.

## ***Youth Programs and Interventions***

The many existing efforts to help youth along positive life pathways should continue in the Plan area. At the same time, there are additional ways to address real and perceived safety as part of such efforts. We have the following suggestions:

### **Geographic Focus**

- ❖ Stakeholders shared a number of programs available, but most did not focus exclusively (or even primarily) on the Plan area. Because the fundamental strategy is transformation of the place on behalf of the people, there is a need to recruit special attention to the area from all Partners Group members.

### **Volunteer Activities**

- ❖ There is an additional opportunity for teaching youth about civic-mindedness and **community service**. Existing organizations like UACDC could require service hours as part of youth participation in their sports and similar programs. This might include clean-up efforts, installation of solar powered security lights for the elderly, planting flowers, creating public art, painting crosswalk striping, managing temporary dog parks, and assisting with special events, among other things.
- ❖ Certain kinds of **Mentorship programs** have been shown to be highly effective, including those from Harlem Children's Zone (<http://www.hcz.org/index.php>) and House of Umoja in Philadelphia (<http://www.houseofumoja.org/>). The Hidden Genius Project (<http://www.hiddengeniusproject.org/>) should also be explored because of its focus on jobs in the tech sector. A strategic investment in proven programs should be explored, with a focus on at-risk youth.
- ❖ Similarly, the involvement of **USF Student athletes** in mentoring, tutoring, and service projects with area youth can have a very positive impact on creating new aspirations and goals for Plan area youth.

### **Youth Employment**

- ❖ The **Clean and Green Teams** should utilize youth from the Plan area during the summer in very structured ways. The youth who regularly volunteer in the Plan area should be given preference for paid positions. At least some of the work should focus on lasting physical improvements like crosswalk striping, solar lighting installation, and painted murals.
- ❖ As **development agreements** are negotiated with new private projects in the Plan area that seek public incentives, businesses should be strongly encouraged to support employment opportunities for area youth. This might include on-site training programs, partnerships with non-profit training providers, and formal internships. The key is geographic focus within the Plan area boundaries.
- ❖ **Entrepreneurship opportunities** for youth should also be developed. Vending in the Harvest Hope Park or at events, property maintenance services for churches and businesses, social media marketing, and a variety of other opportunities will soon be available for Plan area youth – if efforts are made to prepare them to participate.
- ❖ Use **Police study circles** to help prepare youth for employment and build more trusting relationships. Study circles are a form of facilitated discussion that takes place over 2-3 months. They have been used and advocated by a number of organizations to help improve Police-Community relations (e.g. Buffalo, US Conference of Mayors, Study Circles Resource Center – [www.everyday-democracy.org](http://www.everyday-democracy.org))
- ❖ Develop a **medical careers program** for Plan area youth in partnership with Florida Hospital, the VA hospital, Moffitt Cancer Center, and others. This can involve volunteer opportunities as well as summer or part time paid positions in addition to educational efforts.

### **Recreational Programming**

- ❖ Stakeholders suggested additional sports leagues for area youth. While some programs are already offered by UACDC, there are advantages to reinstating a Police Athletic League (PAL) program. Such programs are proven to enhance police-community relationships and trust with youth.
- ❖ Involve HCSO and others in after-school activities at Mort and other area elementary schools. This will create opportunities to weave in messages about drugs and gangs that, unfortunately, must begin at the elementary school level.
- ❖ Harvest Hope Park will provide new facilities. Recreational programming in the evenings will be a way to activate the space and keep youth occupied with positive programs.



### **USF Students**

University students are often a major force for transformation of distressed urban places, and USF students have a major role to play in the CSAP implementation. Their spending, service, active presence in the evenings, social media and other communications, and their voices and talents in problem solving are all very powerful tools for improving real and perceived safety. There is some great work already in place, but more intentional efforts will have an even greater impact. According, we suggest the following:

- ❖ Expand student engagement beyond 2-3 days of service events. Aggressively add service learning courses focused geographically in the Plan area and on real or perceived safety. Work with student organizations to create long-term partnerships with area non-profits and civic organizations. Use students to expand public art installations off-campus. Create competitions for the best student service initiatives related to real and perceived safety.
- ❖ Conduct additional night walks between the campus core and off-campus business locations like Panera, the University Mall, WalMart, Target, and the Transit Station.
- ❖ Create an off-campus evening event for students at University Mall every fall.
- ❖ Review USF communications for unintended negative messages about off-campus safety.
- ❖ Conduct regular focus groups with USF students about safety in the area.

## ***Business Development***

A variety of business assistance programs are in place, but they could be modified to have more intentional impacts on real and perceived safety using those programs are needed. We suggest the following adjustments and additions:

### **Business Assistance**

- ❖ Small business assistance in the Plan area could be expanded, including a new effort for live-work developments. The focus of such programs should be to assist current residents in creating businesses or to assist businesses with expansion that creates jobs for current residents.
- ❖ The County codes should be adjusted to encourage vending at key locations in the Plan area, with a preference for businesses owned and operated by area residents. Care must be taken not to compete extensively with existing permanent businesses.
- ❖ Special efforts should be made to partner with University Mall to enhance safety perceptions. This might include incentives for public art, new signage, new lighting, and other features.
- ❖ County codes should provide development incentives for the inclusion of outdoor seating or “open doors” seating for cafes and restaurants. This helps businesses and creates very effective natural surveillance. One simple tool is to reduce or eliminate parking requirements for such seating.
- ❖ Street vendor regulations should be reviewed and used to support things like flower vendors at gateway locations along Fowler and Fletcher, and at University Mall. This will require a careful approach, but has many safety benefits.





### **Local Hiring Requirements**

- ❖ Work with TIA to actively encourage anchor institutions and other businesses to hire locally and adopt policies and metrics for local hiring. This should include educating those partners on the safety benefits of having stable residents in the area.

### **Physical Improvements**

- ❖ As mentioned previously in the disorder management section, incentive programs must include ways to enhance and include safety reviews and features. This must go beyond traditional lighting, cameras, and target hardening. Improvements that maximize natural surveillance and territoriality also need to be included.
- ❖ In addition, free crime prevention assessments should be offered to existing and proposed businesses – even if they are not participating in the County incentive programs. Importantly, such assessments will be most effective if they are done by highly skilled crime prevention professionals – including specially trained police officers.
- ❖ Finally, lighting and signage regulations need to be modified to require businesses to adequately illuminate nearby sidewalks, alleys, and even roadways. This helps the businesses as well as the neighborhood.

### **Social Service Coordination**

The Plan area is fortunate to have a significant number of organizations and programs to help those less fortunate, and some of those programs directly or indirectly assist with safety concerns. Carefully coordinated as part of the UACDC Partners Group, these can have very positive impacts on real and perceived safety. These should continue. Our suggested enhancements **focus on mental health and homeless services.**

- ❖ ***Expand partnerships with anchor institutions*** – The health anchors and USF are well positioned to actively assist with services that help people who are homeless or battling mental illness. Partners should approach them about special efforts within the Plan area that will help reduce the incidents of those individuals acting unpredictably in public areas.
- ❖ ***Avoid further concentrations of service facilities*** – Safety nets of family and friends are proven aspects of lifting people out of homelessness and mental health peaks and valleys. Concentrating services for such individuals in one or a few areas removes the likelihood of those safety net benefits. Partners should carefully evaluate and discuss proposals to add more service facilities in the Plan area, and focus services on local residents so that you are not attracting problem behaviors from outside the community. This includes services for youth and homeless. This will help address concerns expressed by many stakeholders, particularly other residents.
- ❖ ***Library challenges*** – As public places of learning, libraries are open to all and should be. However, many libraries are poorly designed to help manage those who actually use them more as housing, including bathing and sleeping. Partners should carefully review physical plans and proposed operations for the new library to help prevent poor behaviors that limit benefits for others.
- ❖ ***Panhandling*** – It is well known that panhandling enables many people with addiction or mental health issues to avoid getting real assistance with their diseases. From that perspective, panhandling helps create a major public health problem. To help combat this, and improve safety perceptions in the process, partners should work with area businesses to help them reduce panhandling and homeless camping on their properties using design, outreach, and enforcement.

Be mindful that panhandling could get worse as walkability gets better in the Plan area, and HCSO and other partners should make sure reasonable regulations are in place now to combat aggressive panhandling.

- ❖ **Minimize waiting lines** - Work with service providers to minimize any outside waiting lines or areas that can frighten the elderly or mothers with young children walking past. This reduces negative perceptions about safety as well as conflicts among clients. It can often also enhance client comfort due to heat and weather conditions.

### **Community Safety Audits**

The UACDC, TIA, non-profit partners, and Police should make regular use of Community Safety Audits in keeping with the instructions and forms used during the training session we provided on 12.15.16. Initially, such audits should be repeated quarterly **for the same locations** to more fully engage stakeholders and to track progress. As conditions improve, non-residents should be recruited as participants as well, including USF students.

### **Seniors Programs**

Create additional outdoor programming for seniors as well. This can be everything from chess/checkers to tai chi or art classes and gardening. The key is to create safe activities and enhance natural surveillance and safety perceptions with highly intentional programming. It also helps build support networks that reduce isolation and crime victimization, not to mention high rates of fear about crime.

Harvest Hope Park will be a great location for much of this programming.



## Multi-Family Housing Programs

Beyond physical improvements on rental properties, a variety of management efforts have been proven to substantially reduce criminal activities on multi-family properties. Many cities have instituted formal programs to help landlords implement such practices, and the Crime-Free Association is a great source of improvement practices. There is a solid program in place by the HCSO, but participation by private owners has been limited. To assist with this challenge, we suggest the following:

- ❖ As part of any rental property registration process, require owners in the Plan area to either pay Police or a certified CPTED practitioner to create a report and list of any needed improvements. If improvements are needed, owners must pay for a re-inspection every 60 days until they are. If annual assessments result in no needed improvements for two consecutive years, the CPTED review requirement will be waived for the following two years.
- ❖ For Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) approved properties, create a partnership with the Housing Authority to have them conduct the annual CPTED reviews as part of their HUD-required inspections. This is not currently required by HUD.
- ❖ Finally, train Code Enforcement personnel to recognize needed security improvements or those that have been part of CPTED inspection reports.
- ❖ Work closely with affordable housing developers like Habitat for Humanity to ensure their properties are designed to enhance real and perceived safety.

## Community-Building Events

People who know each other are more likely to protect each other, and small community events are often a great way to help make those connections happen. While the apartment socials have made good progress at engaging and connecting a small portion the community, they are not yet “owned” or even hosted by the full community. They are likely perceived primarily as a UACDC or HCSO marketing event, even if it is intended to serve both purposes. We suggest a different approach we call Family Fun Days, with the following features:

- ❖ Not a safety theme, but alcohol-free.
- ❖ Focused on existing residents, church members, police, schools, and children – not outside visitors. Not designed to promote or assist businesses.

## CRIME-FREE RENTAL HOUSING PROGRAM

Crime-Free Rental Housing is a program of the International Crime-Free Association, based in El Cajon, California, that is widely used by municipalities around the United States. It consists of three elements, carried out by or under the supervision of the municipal police department:

**Phase I** – An eight-hour training program taught by a trained police officer, covering a wide range of issues, and including a 100-page manual for every participant.

**Phase II** – A CPTED (crime prevention through environmental design) survey of the property by a trained police officer, covering such areas as door, window, and lock standards; exterior lighting, and landscape maintenance.

**Phase III** – A Crime-Free Commitment by the property owner, including commitment to proper tenant screening, use of a crime-free lease addendum, working with the police, etc.

While the term “crime-free program” does not appear to be subject to copyright or other restrictions, it is generally used to refer to this specific program. Many municipalities have similar programs, either designed locally or by other entities.

For more information, see [http://www.crime-free-association.org/rental\\_housing.htm](http://www.crime-free-association.org/rental_housing.htm).

- ❖ Held Quarterly – Spring, summer, fall, winter. Hosted by a different institution each quarter: UACDC, churches, schools, Junior Achievement, and others. Anchor campuses are not a good location for this event because it is of and for the community.
- ❖ Sponsored by social service organizations, banks, the housing authority, hospitals, major property owners, and developers - not the County or TIA.
- ❖ Don't confuse these with marketing events. These have a different purpose and are more organic celebrations of the history, the institutions, and the people.
- ❖ Raise money for college scholarships through donations, walk/dance-a-thon, raffle, etc.
- ❖ Recruit successful former residents to speak.
- ❖ Fun features include a Bounce house, family games, chalk art.
- ❖ A portion of each event should occur after dark. Outdoor family movies can be shown on building walls or inflatable screens.
- ❖ Silly contests and prizes. Best hat, stroller decoration, group dance, etc.
- ❖ Church choir performances, including youth choirs.
- ❖ For the first year to 18 months, include a significant but friendly police presence at events. Monitor officer behavior carefully. Mounted patrols, bike patrols, and historic police cars are all great tools that provide presence without creating fear, tension, or concerns of police abuse. Avoid SWAT vehicles, scissors observation posts, and similar tools. Police as musicians can also help ease tensions and improve relationships. (We once worked with a Chief who had his own Irish band).
- ❖ The Police recruitment efforts should also be on full display to encourage a career in law enforcement for Plan area residents. Representatives should be prepared to discuss the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to succeed as a police officer – even with younger children.
- ❖ Include self-improvement program information and services, such as learning new job skills, interview skills, life goals, and even study circles.
- ❖ Use the event to get additional community feedback through visual preference surveys, safety question surveys, etc. Participants are entered to win a contest or get free food if they participate.

## **Built Environment**

Recognizing the significant impact on real and perceived safety created by the physical environment features in the Plan area, our fundamental recommendation is for the County to adjust their process for new public and private projects to include **high-quality Safedesign™** or Advanced CPTED reviews – in the Plan area and beyond. To accomplish this in the long term, key staff from all anchor institutions (facilities managers) and **all** of the following County departments should attend training in advanced CPTED or Safedesign™ approaches:

- ❖ Planning
- ❖ Police
- ❖ Engineering
- ❖ Public Art
- ❖ Community Development
- ❖ Economic Development
- ❖ Code Enforcement
- ❖ Parks and Recreation
- ❖ Development Services

Also, the **development review process** itself must also be updated to include the following:

- ❖ Expand, enhance, and clarify CPTED or similar standards - and the review processes for both public and private projects – including anchor institutions.
- ❖ Change the current “pick one checklist” approach to a more detailed review with written recommendations. The same “guidelines” can be referenced, but the “meet only one” requirement must be removed to have any real impact. For expedience, consider testing this as a Pilot in the CSAP area initially.
- ❖ Involve Police early and add them to the formal process as part of team discussions
- ❖ For lighting, Partners need to put a clear project review process in place that includes early use of photometric analysis – during design development and conceptual plans. Evaluations must consider realistic tree canopy conflicts, not those with all mature trees with canopies that start at 15 feet above grade (unless that is an existing condition). Requiring night time renderings and existing conditions photos – even on complete streets projects – will help shift everyone’s perspective so they pay more attention to lighting and other natural surveillance features from the beginning.
- ❖ Add at least one CPTED trained design professional to the permanent committee/group for review of projects in the Plan area. When the Plan is next updated, make this a requirement. This person can be an architect, planner, landscape architect, or other design professional.
- ❖ In addition, such reviews must begin early in the design of the project, including site selection for some land uses like parks, homeless shelters, and even transit shelters and stations. Discussions and reviews should start no later than initial site plans. It is also critically important that the training and reviews have a **highly intentional focus on perceptions of safety**.

Finally, as detailed below, design standards are needed for key components.



## Lighting

Existing plans generally identify the need for “improved” or “pedestrian” lighting for the Plan area, but the recommendations should be more specific and provide meaningful direction and/or effective solutions. Given the highly inconsistent lighting we observed and reported by others, we recommend a variety of detailed improvements, including:

### Regulations and Design Reviews

- ❖ Create better lighting standards and enforce them. This includes establishment of **minimum and optimal lighting requirements** for at least the following:
  - Surface parking lots and sidewalks adjacent to business properties (including residential rentals and non-profit structures).
  - Vacant properties.
  - Parking facilities (new or existing).
  - Transit stops and shelters (including a 10 foot perimeter).
  - Multi-family housing
  - Underpass areas
  - Convenience stores (entire site)
- ❖ Explore amending the **County lighting programs with TECO** so that residents who rent, not just owners, can initiate and vote for the improvements. In addition, explore creating one or more Safe Neighborhoods Taxing Districts to fund lighting and other improvements, particularly in areas of low homeownership where absentee owners are failing to provide adequate safety improvements.
- ❖ The presence of multiple pawn shops and check cashing places on the western edges of the Plan area have a significant impact on perceptions of safety. Consider extra lighting requirements for them, just like for convenience stores. This includes lighting even when they are closed.
- ❖ **Code enforcement** team members should begin regularly inspecting lighting in the Plan area and enforcing any standards in place.
- ❖ With the exception of artistic or architectural lighting, improvements should **utilize white LED sources** to enhance color recognitions and minimize operational costs.
- ❖ Reviews of both public and private projects should include a **detailed evaluation of lighting**, including conflicts with landscaping/trees. The process should require submittal of photometric analyses show on landscaping plans at every phase of the project (conceptual through construction documents). It should also require realistic night-time renderings for all new projects that clearly show lighting levels, consistency, and color.
- ❖ Current **CPTED requirements** should be amended to reflect the new standards and processes above.

### Public Investments

- ❖ Require good lighting when the County **invests** in public or private projects or P3 projects (require renderings & photometrics as well).
- ❖ Work with FDOT and others to create excellent lighting at I-275 gateways.
- ❖ Invest in **solar fixtures** for public and private sites, including vacant properties, parks, alleys, and front yards where electrical service is not readily available. Consider a Safe Neighborhood District to fund such lighting (and more).



- ❖ Create architectural lighting grant programs for special or unique structures, particularly those that can serve as wayfinding icons after dark.
- ❖ Create a LED **porch and front yard light program** that encourages residents to leave lights on.
- ❖ Provide grants or other funding to light **wayfinding signs and icons** – church steeples, public art, historic structures, unique buildings.
- ❖ Explore investments in new Lighting technologies like the **smart street lights** being evaluated by HCSO.
- ❖ Use **unique lighting for territoriality** along key corridors and for gateways like those being considered by TIA and others.
- ❖ Require good lighting for all wayfinding signs and icons, public art, and public building exteriors. Place additional internally lighted street name signs at key gateways, neighborhood collector streets, and along image corridors (Fowler, Fletcher, Nebraska, Bearss, 22<sup>nd</sup>).
- ❖ On properties where the County or anchor partners make an investment, lighting should be designed to be excellent – not just to meet minimum standards. This includes residential properties. Security-related lighting on such projects should use photocells and motion sensors – tenants should not be able to turn them off.



### **Incentive Programs for Private Properties**

- ❖ Creation of **exterior lighting matching grant** programs for private properties, including solar security lights with motion detection for low income residents. This should include a special focus on multi-family properties.
- ❖ To help small businesses with the capital costs of the new lighting requirements, create a matching grant program for properties on image corridors.
- ❖ Encourage or incentivize new major private developments to fund lighting of pathways beyond their sites, including public sidewalks.

## **Lighting Partnerships**

- ❖ Work with TECO to actively **reduce tree-light conflicts**, identify school bus stops eligible for more lighting under the current program, and create an LED upgrade plan for the Plan area, beginning with residential streets.
- ❖ Work with FDOT to improve lighting conditions and standards for **pedestrians on sidewalks**. This will include more careful application of existing standards in coordination with existing and planned trees.
- ❖ Identify a student or faculty partner (or USF PD) and approach **USF Student Energy Green Fund** Board about installing solar lighting on/near sidewalks adjacent to the campus perimeter, particularly along Fowler Avenue, Fletcher Avenue, and Bruce B. Downs Boulevard. Longer term, work with TECO, Hillsborough County, and other partners to provide additional lighting solutions. Consider adjusting the **Green Fund** policy to expand such solar pedestrian lighting to areas near campus frequently visited by USF students. (e.g. pathway to the mall). See: <http://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/green-energy-fund/proposal/index.aspx>
- ❖ Using the Clean & Green Teams and UACDC volunteers, actively monitor, report, and track the repair of **broken light fixtures** on both public and private property. Collectively advocate for faster repairs when warranted.
- ❖ Partner with USF, Tampa Public Art, the Arts Council and others to ensure that **public art installations** in the Plan area have appropriate lighting.

## **Prioritizing Lighting Improvements**

Given limited resources, it will be necessary to prioritize lighting improvement investments, particularly those that cannot be addressed with regulations. We recommend using two criteria to evaluate potential investments:

1. Will the lighting address current persistent issues with drug sales on streets or in multi-family housing properties?
2. Will the lighting help substantially improve perceptions of either the residential or commercial image corridors?

Using these criteria, we suggest several initial priorities:

- ❖ The **initial geographic focus** of extra lighting should be at neighborhood gateways, along the “image corridors” mentioned previously, and along key pedestrian pathways to neighborhood assets like schools and Harvest Hope Park. More detailed example recommendations can be found in our detailed reviews of the Harvest Hope Park Plans and the Total Travel Path™ between Mort and University Mall.
- ❖ Working with University Mall, USF and others, greatly **improve lighting near and at the Mall**.
- ❖ Using USF service days, install a large number of **solar lighting fixtures** in residential areas. Fixtures should operate on both photocells and motion sensors.
- ❖ Creatively light one **I-275 gateway** with careful attention to both the off-ramp and underpass areas.



## Access Management

With multiple access points to I-275 and five (5) major County arterials, the Plan area is highly accessible. These roadway patterns also provide easy entry and escape that is likely impacting drug sales and some violent crimes. Also, fencing is limited in many parts of the Plan area, and this allows drug dealers and burglars on foot or bikes to move easily and stealthily. To combat these conditions, we suggest several traffic calming and access management measures.

- ❖ Expand existing **traffic calming improvements**. Speed humps and rumble strips are already in use and should be installed strategically throughout other parts of the Plan area.
- ❖ Create a **fencing assistance program** for multi-family and commercial properties. Use design standards to avoid fortressing and natural surveillance problems.
- ❖ Explore **temporary street closures** to directly combat know drug sale or prostitution hot spots.
- ❖ Create a **Motion sensor lighting program** for parks and pathways/alleys. This is a form of access management because it alerts others to movement through restricted space.
- ❖ Place **Stop signs at every intersection** and more traffic humps in residential portions of the Plan area.
- ❖ Assist convenience stores and other businesses to design and install better access control for their **parking lot and loading areas**. This may include fencing, bollards, landscaping, or other features.
- ❖ Consider **temporary closures of some streets** during construction of key projects. Use public art or planters where possible.
- ❖ Carefully designed fencing should be included in future parking lot plans.



## **Informal Social Interaction**

It is notable that part of the feedback from some stakeholders was the observation that people who are “hanging out” are sometimes just “visiting” as neighbors – a positive behavior from a crime prevention standpoint. However, casual perceptions of the current behavior are still negative, due in part to the physical environments where the visiting occurs. Also, stakeholder feedback was clear that many people are too afraid to go out walking. Going forward, creating more positive places for positive interactions will help with both real and perceived safety. We suggest the following improvements:

- ❖ Encourage the development of **multiple community gardens**, including flower gardens. This might include locations at schools, at churches, and on multi-family properties. USF student organizations would make good partners for this activity.
- ❖ Create a **limited street vendor program** that permits such businesses at appropriate locations with seating and required early evening hours. Assist with solar lighting.
- ❖ Add a **Splash pad and chess tables** in Harvest Hope Park. Both will help increase the building of relationships. Use low fencing around both areas to denote different rules of acceptable behavior and a sense of belonging to something special.
- ❖ Encourage **outdoor seating for restaurants and cafes**. Permit vendors to supply a few tables and chairs in and near the Harvest Hope Park as well. “Regulars” will get to know each other better, provide additional natural surveillance, and create more emotional attachments to the place. Expand such conditions at University Mall as well.
- ❖ Create monthly **temporary dog parks** in vacant or portions of Harvest Hope Park. This may actually draw residents from nearby areas and further activate such spaces. Provide free health checks and ID chips for pets of Plan area residents. Require proof of vaccination and chip registration for entry to the dog park. Scan each chip upon entry and again if there are behavior problems (dog or owner) that result in barring future entry. Also use a photo booth with costumes to print photos and affiliate people with dogs. No face masks for the photos.
- ❖ Encourage **private playgrounds** for small children at churches. Such spaces become both part of the fellowship and a community service. Areas should be fenced and monitored with security cameras.
- ❖ **Fencing the children’s play area** at Harvest Hope Park will encourage further use – and more informal social interaction by parents. Also include a **splash pad** at the Park for young children. It will be a great neighborhood amenity and will provide opportunities for parents to get to know each other.
- ❖ Work with area schools to pursue more operations as a **Community School** approach that serves the neighborhood and hosts more family activities during non-school hours. Parents often get to know each other during neighborhood school events, but the current structure does not present such opportunities. Physical adjustments are a key part of this kind of solution.



## **Natural Surveillance**

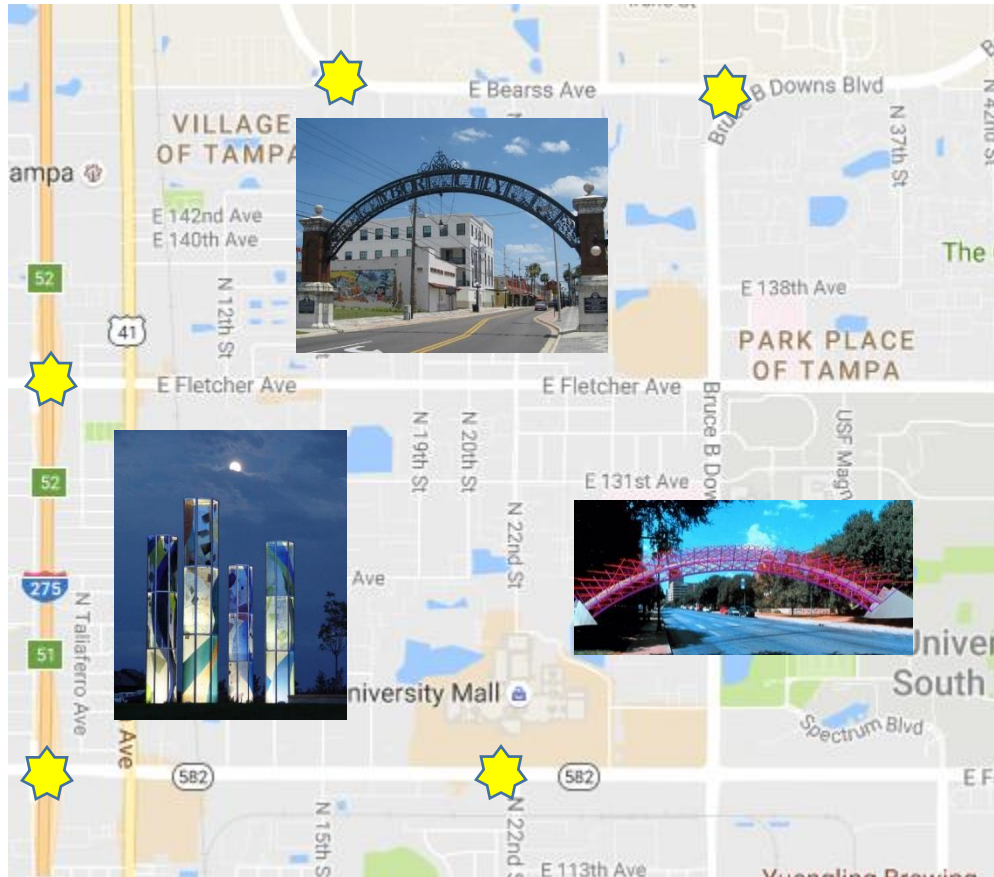
Beyond “clear sightlines” and “eyes on the street” generalities, achieving excellent natural surveillance in the Plan area will take very careful attention to details. **Good lighting** – as described earlier in this report – is a key aspect of natural surveillance, but a variety of other features are essential. To greatly enhance natural surveillance throughout the area – and along key pathways – we suggest the following:

- ❖ Work with anchor institutions to reduce setbacks from sidewalks, strategically place windows and retail functions, add outdoor seating along key pedestrian pathways, and carefully design landscaping to enhance natural surveillance on and near their campuses. Add housing on campuses in strategic locations to maximize natural surveillance along key pathways.
- ❖ Encourage residential land uses with clear views to the Transit Center and as many bus stops/shelters as possible.
- ❖ Avoid concentrations of institutional, industrial, and office land uses. They provide very limited natural surveillance, particularly in the evenings and after dark.
- ❖ Encourage large balconies for new Multi-Family housing projects. Adjust regulations to permit flexibility for large **balconies and bay windows that extend** over the Right of Way to greatly enhance natural surveillance of the sidewalk below.
- ❖ Practice of swales/drainage areas at prominent corners – without lighting and with poor landscape maintenance – has a significant negative impact
- ❖ Create a **limited street vendor program** that permits such businesses at appropriate locations with seating and required early evening hours. Assist with solar lighting.
- ❖ Encourage **mixed use buildings along key business corridors** to maximize natural surveillance. These include Fowler Avenue, Fletcher Avenue, Bruce B Downs Blvd, Bearss Avenue, and Nebraska Avenue.
- ❖ **Design guidelines** and development incentives should also be adjusted or created to encourage large balconies and bay windows, flower boxes, outdoor restaurant seating, and large windows or doors in restaurants and cafes – including those that open during good weather.
- ❖ Carefully review **window and tree placement** for projects (and in regulations) for their impact on natural surveillance from nearby residences – particularly in mixed used buildings with apartments.
- ❖ Avoid **concentrations** of institutional, industrial, and office land uses that provide little or no natural surveillance – particularly in the evenings and at night when it is most needed.
- ❖ Encourage hotels in the Plan area to have windows that open, even only slightly, so that guests can hear any problems outside and provide added natural surveillance.
- ❖ Create **artists affordable housing** in the structures on west side of Henrietta Avenue between 7<sup>th</sup> Street and 9<sup>th</sup> Street to greatly enhance natural surveillance of the Jazz Park.
- ❖ Regularly monitor landscaping that obscures views or creates hiding spaces near sidewalks or key pathways. Encourage property owners or the County to trim back as needed. The Clean & Green Teams can be used for this function.

## Territoriality

Physical features that express high levels of care and concern, suggest a likelihood for someone to intervene when unacceptable behaviors occur, and that make thresholds and boundaries obvious are largely absent from the Plan area at present. This includes the perimeter areas of anchor institutions. To add to the few expressions of territoriality that currently exist, we suggest the following kinds of improvements, with special attention to how such features communicate safety after dark:

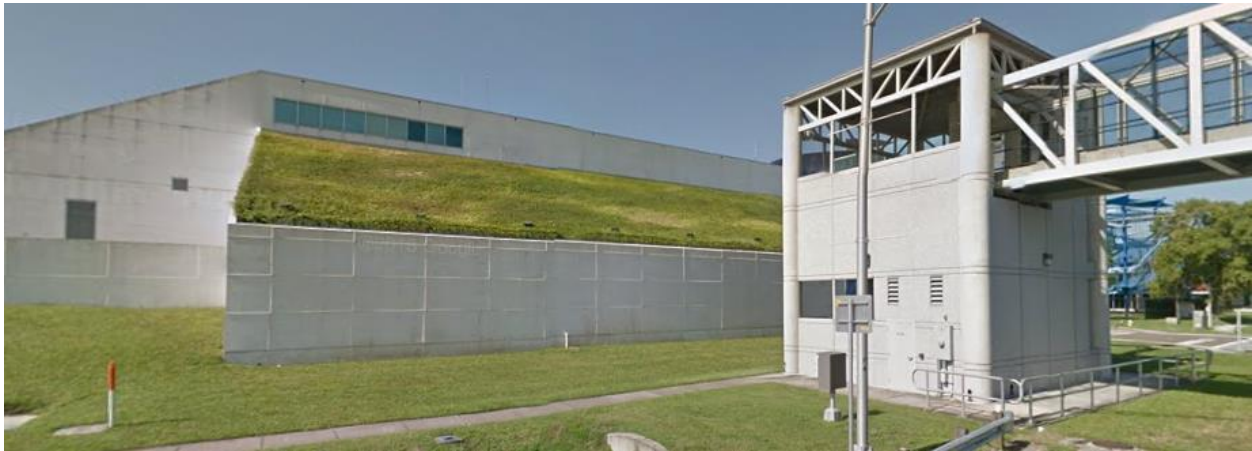
**Gateway features** – This can include formal arches, public art, or significant landscape beds of colorful flowers at the key entry points to the Plan area as shown below. Even pedestrian bridges can serve that purpose.



- ❖ Also, work with **private property owners** where gateways have vacant properties to improve territoriality. This might include lighted signage about coming projects (with renderings), landscaping improvements, and even temporary public art installations or lighted (solar) neighborhood entry signage.
- ❖ For the Plan area, even gateways and entrances to anchor institutions could benefit from additional territoriality features. This includes University Mall.
- ❖ Consider creating an “Adopt an interchange” program for the I-275 interchanges. Sororities, service organizations, major businesses or anchors, and nearby neighborhood associations could agree to regularly clean, plant and manage flower beds, remove weeds, and otherwise care for these gateway areas. The program would include recognition signs as well.



**Image Corridor Improvements** – The addition of everything from banners with vibrant colors, public Art, colorful flowers in planters/medians, twinkle lights in trees, and holiday decorations will enhance the sense of care and concern people look for when considering the safety of an entire area – even if subconsciously. One significant opportunity for this – just outside the official Plan area – is the MOSI pedestrian bridge and nearby walls. Projected public art there would substantially improve territoriality and safety perceptions.



- ❖ In addition to public improvements along image corridors, UACDC and TIA should encourage private business and property owners to add similar features. In some instances, even unique signage can express strong territoriality and care.
- ❖ Commercial Façade improvements along key corridors can also be useful when they intentionally incorporate territoriality features. Businesses along Nebraska, Fowler, Fletcher, Bearss Avenues, others should be encouraged and incentivized to include the kinds of lighting, landscaping, and signage described here.
- ❖ To get people to think about territorial creative placemaking at night, consider an annual design contest for a different location each year.
- ❖ As suggested previously, the TIA Clean and Green Team can assist with the installation and maintenance of some of these items.

**Residential Areas** – Familiar expressions of territoriality in neighborhoods include colorful flowers, picket fences, lawn decorations, holiday decorations, manicured lawns, porch swings, and well-maintained structures with appropriate lighting. UACDC and other non-profit partners should facilitate more of these kinds of things using the following efforts:

- ❖ Volunteer assistance with outdoor improvements for elderly residents. Neighborhood churches, youth programs, and USF students are obvious volunteer choices.
- ❖ Discounted window boxes and flowers. Whether below windows, on balconies, or in front yards, flower boxes with colorful blooms and even herbs demonstrate a clear sign of care and concern – along with the likelihood of watchful eyes. They should be encouraged as part of new housing projects or housing rehab programs, and volunteers can be used to install them for low-income households.
- ❖ A ‘friendly fence’ grant program for front yard fences. Well-designed and maintained front yard fences can be a highly impactful territoriality feature. They should be no higher than 42 inches, no more than

50% solid, and bordered by flowers. The County and UACDC should create a program to encourage them for single family structures.

- ❖ Inclusion of front yard porches, fencing, flower gardens, and flower boxes in new housing
- ❖ Discounted outdoor holiday decorations (bought the year before at 80% off!!)
- ❖ An LED porch or pole light program – Solar if needed
- ❖ Visible community flower gardens on apartment properties.
- ❖ **Vacant lot improvements** – Beginning with lots owned by the County or non-profit partners, add territoriality features that are appropriate for each setting. For example, the lot at the southeast corner of Bearss and 22<sup>nd</sup> might host a community garden with a perimeter of colorful flowers.
- ❖ **Community awards** – Celebrate expressions of territoriality using an annual awards event and an outside panel of judges. Different categories for churches, businesses, apartment buildings, and single family homes should be included. A particular property can only win every 5 years. Create a separate award for holiday decorations.

**Public Art improvements** – Even beyond the image corridors and gateways, murals on blank walls, sculptures in parks, and event temporary art in vacant lots can all impact behavior and perceptions. We suggest integrating public art to enhance territoriality in the following ways:

- ❖ Work with Tampa and County Art in Public Places (AIPP) staff and committees to recognize existing public art as a vital part of the public art assets of the Plan area. Have those places and art included in public art listings, tours, publications, a revised Master Plan, and other communications to help convey the care and concern it took to create them, as well as the ongoing care and concern being undertaken to maintain them as valuable community assets.
- ❖ Advocate for new signature public art installations at key. Make sure the installations are designed to function as wayfinding devices, are appropriately lighted to serve as wayfinding devices after dark, and reflect any subdistrict brands nearby.
- ❖ Advocate for new integrated public art for the Harvest Hope Park as a way to significantly enhance territoriality, interaction/discussion and informal social interaction, and participation by local artists and children.
- ❖ Make sure that Police and others review proposed public art in the Plan area for ways to minimize vandalism, including graffiti and stickers.
- ❖ Consider youth-created and professionally nurtured murals for some of the blank walls along 15<sup>th</sup> Street and Nebraska Avenue. Replace them every few years. The youth should be residents, and the murals should be lighted.

## Wayfinding

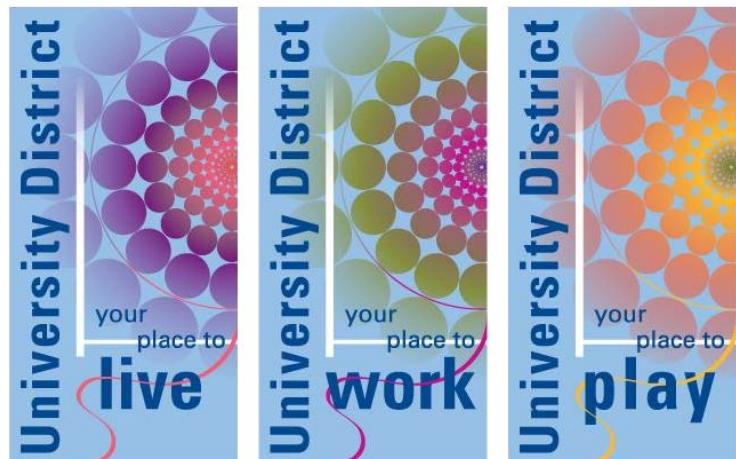
The fear of getting lost and ending up somewhere unsafe is common for people unfamiliar with urban places, and providing clear wayfinding signs, icons, and other cues will greatly enhance safety for visitors to the Plan area. Given the current lack of wayfinding features, we recommend the following:

- ❖ **Lighting of iconic architecture** – Depending on the planned improvements at the University Mall, that may be a great opportunity. New tall structures with unique roof features would also be very good. There are also several visible tall hospital buildings that could add features and lighting as part of a wayfinding program.
- ❖ **Public Art improvements** – Located at gateways, on buildings, and on key vacant lots, public art installations can serve as excellent wayfinding devices. This includes the art at campus entries. As noted earlier, excellent lighting is essential.
- ❖ **Street name signs** – While often overlooked in “wayfinding” plans, well-designed and placed street name signs are a crucial aspect of a great wayfinding system. Pre-intersection placement is very important on major roadways, and lighted signs are essential on all arterials and collector streets.



- ❖ **Placement prior to decision points** – A common shortcoming of wayfinding systems is the placement of signs or other features after a driver’s decision point. This is particularly important when visitors are already concerned about safety and getting lost. County and TIA staff should evaluate all planned signage.

- ❖ **Banners** - Add banners that reinforce the place name and brand, including any subdistricts that are created. Make sure they are visible at night.
- ❖ **Exit Wayfinding** - Add exit wayfinding signs to point visitors back to I-95 and to downtown. Such signage should begin at the exits of parking facilities near destinations like Sunset Lounge.



### ***Transit Facilities and Services***

There is a clear vision to transform the Plan area to a vibrant, dense, diverse, and urban place. To be successful, a terrific transit experience will be needed. As noted by stakeholders and our assessment, a variety of improvements will help make the transit experience more convenient and comfortable, both day and night. We suggest the following activities and efforts focused on improving real and perceived safety:

- ❖ Conduct community safety audits for all transit stops/shelters in the district – including Bull Runner stops. Lighting, landscaping, cleanliness, and seating arrangements should be evaluated, and formal reports provided to HART and USF.
- ❖ Add solar lighting as an interim measure at stops/shelters that need it.
- ❖ Work with HART to evaluate the relocation of transit stops that have limited night time natural surveillance from nearby residential properties.
- ❖ The County should require advanced CPTED or Safedesign™ evaluations for all future transit shelters, stops, and stations - including location selection.
- ❖ Conduct a full Safedesign™ evaluation of the UA Transit Center.
- ❖ Work with USF and HART to make sure GPS tracking systems are working accurately. To assist people without smart phones, where possible, work with nearby businesses and agencies to display bus arrival times on a computer/TV/tablet in the window or some similar arrangement.



## **Strategic Communications**

Safety is a highly emotional issue for most people, and the way we communicate with partners, community residents, local businesses, and the media and broader public has a major impact on perceptions – that lead to reality. UACDC and TIA staff and partners have been making significant efforts to address this, and they must also become highly intentional about safety communications. This will require some structural adjustments to be most effective. Staff meetings must always have real and perceived safety on the agenda. All communications materials must be reviewed for indirect messages about safety. Physical improvement projects must be designed with real and perceived safety in mind given their major role in creating communications impressions.

The UACDC and TIA must also assume the responsibility for continuously educating their other partners about the complexities and realities of safety communications. It will do little good if other media spokespersons or communications staff do not follow the same strategies - and inadvertently send substantial negative indirect messages on a regular basis. Or if they are not well prepared for incident response communications in ways that best impact perceptions. The UACDC and TIA must lead beyond their own ranks to be most effective.

Such communications strategies must constantly evolve and adjust given new circumstances, partners, crime events, and other dynamic conditions. At the same time, there are a number of adjustments that will be helpful to UACDC, TIA, and their partners.

### ***Community Partnerships Communications***

- ❖ TIA, HCSO, and County staff should regularly attend UACDC Community Safety and Wellness Committee meetings to share information and receive feedback about upcoming projects, programs, and events related to the Plan area. Participants should regularly ask for feedback about the success of events/programs, safety of events, and safety impacts of events/programs. HCSO should share crime trend information in graphic format. Crime and perceptions reports should be reviewed but not distributed outside the meeting. Initial meetings should be used to ensure that other partners understand and support this plan.
- ❖ To ensure that high level civic and business leaders understand the strategies and culture shift of the approach, a summary of the Plan should be presented to the UACDC Board and the TIA Executive and Advisory Boards. County Commissioners should be individually briefed as well. If a group of non-anchor small business leaders is formed, they should be carefully briefed as well in order to cultivate them as allies in the comprehensive approach. This may take a more robust presentation since they were not involved in the creation of the Plan.

In particular, leaders should be briefed about the importance of perceptions and the ways they will be managed and measured, including careful media strategies. They should also get a sense of the strong partnerships in place with HCSO and USF PD.

### ***Incident Management Communications***

- ❖ Create a crisis communications plan specific to crime in the Plan area and coordinate it with any similar plans for the TID overall. Coordinate efforts with HCSO, UACDC, TIA, individual anchor institution staff, and key business and civic leaders, including the County Commissioner's office. The plan should identify 3-5 spokespersons who can be easily briefed and trained to coordinate messaging – including positive

indirect messages. If needed, provide training for selected spokespersons to help them manage reporter interactions.

- ❖ Maintain accurate crime statistics and have them ready to counter inaccurate information - but only use them with the media when absolutely necessary. This should include monthly Part 1 crime totals for the last 3 years, quarterly pin or heat maps for violent crimes over the last 5 years, and separate maps for homicides and rapes/sexual assaults. Maintain positive graphs and maps for use in small meetings with realtors, community leaders and others, but do not distribute printed copies. This information should be organized so well that an intern can pull together what you need in less than 10 minutes.
- ❖ Given the large number of visitors in the Plan area, use an average daily population estimate to create more realistic crime **rates** for the area. For maximum usefulness, similar calculations will be needed for downtown, citywide, and countywide.
- ❖ Explore the creation of subdistricts with individually unique brands. This technique can be used to “isolate” crime crisis incidents when necessary. It avoids having the entire TID or University Area painted as a dangerous place in the media.
- ❖ As the Plan area becomes more walkable and urban, issues with panhandling will become more regular. Continue the strong partnerships with service providers, but make sure appropriate regulations are in place about panhandling and avoid negative-indirect messages about the Plan area being overwhelmed by the number of people panhandling. Importantly, avoid punitive measures as well as moral arguments about people’s “right” to panhandle. It is a losing battle with negative place brand consequences.

### ***Place-Brand Repositioning and Marketing Communications***

Cities, neighborhoods, entertainment districts, downtown districts, and planned communities all have place brands, and a key attribute of each brand is the sense of safety associated with the particular place. Such brands can and should be carefully managed to enhance property values, community cohesion, private investment, job creation, and quality of life features like physical and mental health.

As we noted in our assessment, the only place name used consistently for the Plan area is “University Area” and it is poorly defined in terms of geography. It also has generally negative safety attributes associated with the brand. Going forward, the partners need to clarify one or more place names for the Plan area and use them consistently. Clear boundaries are needed. Without them, a very large area gets painted with the same brush, and that is not helpful to the brand repositioning of all or part of the place.

Beyond that basic issue, it takes highly intentional efforts to reposition a place brand when it has a history of negative attributes like being unsafe and transient. These initiatives must go far beyond traditional tag lines and advertising to achieve any success, particularly within the short term. While TIA and others have begun some of this work, we offer the following suggestions to accelerate progress:

- ❖ Clarify the place brand or brands covered by the Plan with consistent name and boundary usage. This will require broad consensus and a very deliberate process involving anchors, businesses, residents, churches, property owners, and others. Without such a process, there will not be consistency of use, and confusion will prevail – with unfortunate brand consequences of the media continuing to use negative historic brand.
- ❖ Create and reinforce a **series of subdistrict brands**. Some already exist historically, and others may develop organically (e.g. Harvest Hope neighborhood). This will make it easier to reposition parts of the

neighborhood as safe in advance of positioning the entire Plan or TID area as safe, and it will be useful in isolating problems as part of incident management communications. Lighted banners, special events, public art, and other tools can help build each subdistrict brand and enhance territoriality and safety perceptions in the process. (insert San Antonio examples of subdistricts map)

- ❖ Aggressively use imagery with positive-indirect messages in a wide variety of marketing and communications materials. To help make this easier, actively **capture and utilize photos and videos** that indirectly communicate safety in the various districts, and maintain an **image library** for use in various communications. (insert image of waterfront apartments near mall here)
- ❖ Use a variety of communications tools to celebrate the quality places and homes that already exist in or near the area (a \$246k house, waterfront living options, cultural offerings, amazing health care, recreational opportunities, wonderful university campus, and beautiful naturescapes). Quality places and safety are linked in the minds of most consumers. One stakeholder suggested that “as things look better, safety will improve” – and we agree. We use the phrase that “perception leads to reality.” This technique is about celebrating and using the particular places that **already look better** in order to enhance perceptions and actual safety.
- ❖ Place brand repositioning is also about people believing in the vision and the change that is coming. By using “Coming Soon” signage at gateway sites showing renderings of new projects (and with good visibility after dark), TIA and developers can actively communicate that the Plan area is considered safe enough by developers for new developments. With even more attention to detail, the signage can also provide positive-indirect messages about safety and create millions of marketing impressions each month due to the high volume of traffic at those gateways.
- ❖ Recruit **USF student assistance** with subdistrict branding. This will help further engage them as residents and consumers that activate the places. They have a much lower safety threshold than their parents or most area employees, so they are a great group to begin the transformation with their presence.
- ❖ Use Annual Reports and regular presentations to realtor/developer groups to communicate about improved safety using positive-indirect messages. Avoid crime statistics, comments about security cameras, and similar items in order to minimize negative-indirect messages about safety.
- ❖ Create and use project **renderings** that communicate safety, including night-time renderings with children, strollers, and teenage girls. Work with private developers to create such images, explaining their importance for improving perceptions.
- ❖ Always look for ways to include **positive-indirect safety messages in every** brochure, report, press release, web page, project video, leasing brochure, annual report, and other communications vehicles. Consistently ask the question: How does this help us communicate about safety?
- ❖ For most safety related **programs**, focus limited announcements and communications on existing audiences and use quiet channels in order to avoid negative-indirect messages. This includes cameras, extra patrols, ambassadors, outreach, and even lighting improvements.
- ❖ Carefully position clean and green team services as “beautification” and “hospitality” for the growing number of visitors. Note the absence of words like patrols or safety.
- ❖ Given public records laws, be careful what gets communicated about safety in emails or other documents considered public.

- ❖ Use USF students to create and post many more positive story videos about the Plan area’s assets and people – staying away from talking about safety issues, even as a backdrop. The goal is to communicate high levels of care, concern, and territoriality. Reporters need to consistently refer to the place as the agreed upon place name. Students and partners should post videos and links to social media sites and share them via enews with neighborhood stakeholders. Suggested stories that can impact real and perceived safety include:
  - Historic buildings tour highlighting past and planned restorations
  - Successful people who grew up in the Plan area and are investing or moving back
  - Videos of events that focus on young children and young people enjoying the area after dark
  - Approved development projects not yet constructed
  
- ❖ Provide individual briefings about safety progress quarterly to County Commissioners. This will allow frank discussions without the negative impacts on perceptions of media coverage. Place safety items on the Commission agenda only when absolutely necessary, and then focus on positive progress and ways to accelerate it.
  
- ❖ Be very careful with messages, policies, and programs related to the *homeless*. The topic is frequently wrought with strong emotions, moral positioning, misinformation, and significant indirect-negative messages about safety. Because the discussions are inherently full of moral conflict, they always attract media attention and even the best intentioned programs and media stories can send powerfully negative messages about the safety of a place.
  
- ❖ Special efforts must be made to engage and educate the *Realtor community*. This crucial communications channel is often difficult to reach and even more difficult to convince of positive safety changes. We recommend a small leadership group of brokers be convened regularly for the express purpose of sharing progress about safety efforts.
  
- ❖ Similarly, make regular presentations about progress in the Plan area to ULI, CREW, AIA, APA, and other professional organizations involved in urban transformation – complete with positive indirect messages about safety as well as a ready bridge back to progress if safety questions are asked.

### **Special Events**

One of the most effective ways to change perceptions of safety about a place is to get people to spend some time there. Special events help solve the “chicken and egg” dilemma of attracting customers or attracting businesses. Carefully planned and promoted, special events permit people who are fearful to test the waters as part of a larger group – thus reducing their sense of risk. We recommend a variety of events and event features as part of the strategic communications for safety approach in the Plan area.

- ❖ Create one or more regionally promoted *signature events* with attributes that help create positive, indirect safety messages, using the following guidance:
  - Extend most events for at least one hour after dark. Events should begin during daylight hours, but major performances and other event highlights should be timed to finish after sunset – including some for young children. This helps give visitors an after dark safety experience that is not necessarily a late night experience. Over time, this will substantially help perceptions.
  - Hold two or more signature events on the University Mall property as part of its transformation. This will have an impact on perceptions far beyond the University Mall property itself.

- For at least the next 24 months, continue to use sworn police personnel for events to help avoid any serious incidents. At the same time, select officers with proven community policing skills and a guardian – not warrior – approach. Ask that uniforms be friendly (white shirts, polo shirts, try to avoid sunglasses or SWAT/Gang unit logos).
- Utilize volunteer or paid “greeters” in parking facilities for the entire time of events, including one hour after the events. They should be casually dressed, friendly, and equipped with radios and cell phones for emergency communications and to immediately report any suspicious behavior in or around the parking facilities. USF students are an obvious choice.
- Add a **Ciclovia on 22<sup>nd</sup> Street** – every Sunday from the University Mall to Bearss Avenue. Noon to 9pm. Include a bounce house for kids at the Mall. Police on bikes should participate. Food trucks and other vendors in parking lots and on vacant lots.
- **Manage panhandling** related to events or weekend crowds with strategically placed street musicians and Salvation army kettles. Pay them at first so you can audition the musicians, but make sure everyone is collecting money as well. This “competition” approach has proven very successful elsewhere, but it requires real people asking for support.
- **Teen party events** – Given concerns and examples of teen party events attracting uninvited violence, it is best to minimize such events during the next two years, particularly at night. They can become a more frequent community-building tool once the Plan area has become much more stable.
- Avoid hosting or promoting events in the Plan area that directly associate the area with crime. This includes National Night Out, gun buy backs, amnesty program events, etc. While they have a positive impact with local residents, they send strong negative indirect messages to potential homeowners and visitors.
- Include significant activities for young children in every outdoor event and in indoor events as appropriate (e.g. Greek Week events). The presence of young children communicates a strong sense of safety and changes the rules of acceptable behavior that parents and others will enforce. Imagery of young children can be used in future promotional materials as well to help communicate safety with positive-indirect approaches, and such images should be actively captured. Whenever possible, extend such activities at least one hour after sunset. Also, use children’s activity areas as the backdrop for any media interviews and work to have camera angles include the children having fun.
- Consider replicating events like Cleveland’s “Night Market” that focus on family fun after dark.







Night market Cleveland <http://www.nightmarketcle.com/>

- Consider a **5k Stroller Race** that starts and ends at the University Mall and serves as a fundraiser for local resident scholarships to USF. Anchor institutions should be major sponsors.
- Encourage events at gateway locations (when not at the University Mall).
- To better connect new projects to improved safety and perceptions in the Plan area, actively recruit developers as event sponsors. Also brief them regularly about success metrics.
- Better document event success and create more compelling safety stories by counting or estimating attendance, sponsorship revenues, and post-event media coverage.



- Position most events as friendly for young children and dogs. Both are associated with safe places.
- Add outdoor kids movie night at Harvest Hope Park, the University Mall, and USF.
- Use home tours and scavenger hunts to show off great projects and special fun places.

## Success Metrics

While traditional crime statistics, carefully analyzed, remain a key safety metric for the Plan area, a variety of additional detailed information can provide better insights about what is working from an economic and community development perspective. There are several reasons to invest in excellent metrics for this Community Safety Action Plan. First, it is essential to know which initiatives are actually working in the particular marketplace setting for the area. Relying on anecdotal information for safety programs is highly discouraged, in part because of the emotional nature of safety issues. Stories and numbers frequently get embellished – whether good or bad. Second, metrics help tell the positive stories with exponentially greater power and credibility. Finally, having great metrics will help the Plan area partners if and when a crisis occurs.

We recommend the following metrics be tracked by the UACDC, TIA, HCSO, and others related to real and perceived safety:

1. **Crime rates by sub-district.** This is the only credible way to compare trends and benchmark the sub-districts against the City of Tampa, County, downtown, and other districts, and over time. Importantly, the most accurate crime rates require estimates of average daily population (ADP) for each district and the City or County as a whole. ADP estimates were not available to us for this report, but it is strongly recommended they be created and updated annually. Crime incidents should be tracked monthly for each district so that quarterly crime rates are easy to calculate.

Verbal monthly reports from Police about drug sales activity in the Plan area compared to other areas should receive special attention. Such reports must be numerical, not just qualitative (e.g. - a little more than last month).

2. **Perceptions of strategic target markets.** Tracking perceptions that matter is difficult for several reasons. First, admitting fear is often difficult and many surveys and survey questions are not designed carefully enough to overcome the admission hurdle. Second, perceptions vary significantly by gender, age, income, and lifestyle – what the Safedesign™ system refers to as a **varying safety threshold**. Finally, understanding marketplace dynamics related to place avoidance requires a perceptions survey to isolate opinions of key decision makers and influencers. Blending responses together, as is typically done, simply does not work because it ignores varying safety thresholds.

For these reasons, surveys focused on target markets for each sub-district are recommended. Participants should be selected based on their status as decision makers or influencers, their familiarity with the Plan area, and their gender and age. Both direct and indirect questions about safety and location decisions should be included in the survey. TIA staff should also work to identify existing anchor surveys (like the campus climate survey) and include specific questions about the Plan area - as well as adjust survey procedures and analytics to gain better insights from women and, potentially, USF students – key target markets.

To further clarify perceptions of the target groups, more frequent use of focus groups is recommended. These should be used annually to drill down for more insightful information about safety concerns, and to test the validity of the survey results. One essential focus group is Realtors. Another is female students, visitors, and staff from the various anchor institutions.

3. **Indirect measures of perceptions.** Because of the psychological barriers related to admitting fear, the use of a variety of indirect measures of safety perceptions is recommended. Essentially, this means measuring place selection or avoidance behaviors, not statements. Favorites include stroller counts,

pedestrian counts, bicycle counts, and late night vehicle counts (and all of these can be used to support retail recruitment over time). For most people, their time as a pedestrian is when they are most vulnerable, they are extremely protective of infants and will not put them in danger, and they avoid late night visits to places they consider unsafe. By tracking both quantities and trends of these behaviors, the CSAP partners will gain insights about improving or worsening perceptions of safety.

We recommend initially using automated pedestrian count systems at key points along 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and on University Square Drive between the University Mall and USF. Collect baseline data for at least 18 months prior to the final improvements and “re-opening” of University Mall. In addition, the TIA and UACDC should consider tracking the percentage of media coverage about crime/safety in the Plan area (versus all stories), the annual number of volunteers that are not residents, and evening attendance at church functions. All of these can provide additional insights that do not require self-reporting and the inherent biases they bring.

4. **Image corridor environment rating systems.** Often used by Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to measure how well their cleaning crews are doing, field surveys that rank things like cleanliness, disorder, lighting, and flower maintenance will also provide important information about program management and perceptions for the Plan area. Such field surveys should be conducted quarterly by UACDC and TIA staff. In addition, use *secret shoppers* to rate the cleanliness/disorder of key streets and pathways at least quarterly. Non-profit partners and UACDC/TIA staff should not know when these ratings will occur, but they should focus on weekend time frames. Partners should create a one-page form/checklist that includes observations about trash (on the ground and in cans), graffiti, posters/stickers, weeds/grass in or near sidewalks, landscape “litter” (e.g. palm fronds), and other items. “Shoppers” should all be women and represent key target markets, including USF students and anchor employees.

A related measurement, though less quantitative, is using Community Safety Audits for key pathways each year and noting any changes.

5. **Other disorder conditions.** Monthly Police reports about disorder crime calls for service should be provided. This includes dumping, graffiti, public intoxication, open container, and similar incidents. Similar monthly reports from Code Enforcement should include formal cases involving tall weeds/grass, abandoned vehicles, building maintenance items (peeling paint, detached gutters, etc.). The Clean and Green teams should also share their monthly reports on such conditions.

## 6. Effort and Management Measures

To enhance day-to-day management of various efforts, UACDC, TIA, and others should track measures of effort as well as impact. We suggest the following:

- ❖ Total monthly volunteer hours for various safety efforts.
- ❖ Tons of trash removed each month.
- ❖ Items of graffiti removed each month.
- ❖ An annual community survey about the clean & green teams program. Get at least 300 responses from residents, anchor students/employees, and small business owners.
- ❖ Better document existing service efforts by youth, church members, university students, and others. Doing so helps encourage ongoing participation, communicates to potential residents

and businesses that the community is engaged in the care of the place, and provides very positive stories for communications purposes.

## 7. Health Metrics

The connections between mental and physical health and real and perceived safety are well documented by the Centers for Disease Control and others, and Physical and mental health improvements are a secondary benefit of improving real and perceived safety. This is particularly true in distressed urban places like the Plan area. Accordingly, UACDC and TIA should work with health partners to track community health conditions as an indirect measure of safety improvements. We suggest the following:

- ❖ Track rates of obesity reduction, activity levels, depression rates, and injury from violence rates.
- ❖ Annually estimate amounts of community health funding being used to help improve safety as a health intervention.
- ❖ Include health questions about depression, family violence victimization, and active lifestyles on survey instruments for safety. Track levels over time.

Baseline information should be collected as soon as possible for the metrics selected by UACDC, TIA, the County and others. Substantial impacts can occur quickly, and it is important to carefully measure the changes as part of the communications strategies – and some of the fundraising efforts.

## **Priority Next Steps**

The highly integrated approach described here provides a very large number of diverse initiatives to pursue as the various partners consider the implementation of our recommendations. A key benefit of this diversity is that so many other people and organizations now have clear roles they play to achieve the shared goal of greatly enhancing real and perceived safety in the Plan area. It is clearly understood that this is no longer a problem for the Police alone, and a variety of new non-County and non-Police resources can be focused on making improvements.

At the same time, the diversity can make it difficult to know where to begin. Given the limits of time and money, what initiatives should the partners tackle first? Using the lens of economic and community development, we suggest the following initiatives be included in the initial Phase of implementation of this Community Safety Action Plan:

1. Partners kickoff workshop
2. Clean & Green Teams
3. Partnerships to improve University Mall
4. Signature events
5. Solar lighting for lots and homes
6. A robust volunteer partnership with anchor institutions
7. Safedesign™ or Advanced CPTED Project Reviews
8. Baseline metrics collection
9. Crisis communications plan
10. Gateway and image corridor lighting improvements

Some of these are more complex than others and will have a “startup delay” as details and legal arrangements are worked out. However, a number of them can show visible progress in the first 30 days with only a small cash investment. This second group of action items is critically important to demonstrate the commitment of the UACDC, TIA, County, and other partners to begin real change for Plan area safety – both real and perceived.

Of course work is likely to begin quickly on many of our other recommendations as well. This speaks to the power of safety as a threshold issue and to the logical – almost instinctive - acceptance of our approach by most people after they better understand the rationale behind our suggestions. Such efforts should also be encouraged and celebrated, but from our perspective, focusing on the 10 listed above will accelerate impacts the most.



## Final Thoughts

Initially, the broad scope of this plan can feel overwhelming to the partners involved. While eventually that concern will pass due to the integrated nature of the solutions, there are a few important aspects of implementation for the Steering Group members and other partners to consider. These include organizing for success, understanding the power of safety improvements as part of fundraising strategies, and actively engaging residents to be part of the solutions in multiple ways.

**Organizing for success** begins with the Partners Kickoff Workshop. This 3-4 hour session should be professionally facilitated, happen soon after the final plan document is received, and include participants who have the authority to commit their organization to lead or support key initiatives. A task force should be formed for each major category of solutions (e.g. Disorder Management) and meet monthly for the first 6 months. Quarterly reports can occur at pre-existing meetings hosted by UACDC or TIA, and annual update reports should be presented to the TIA Executive Board and Hillsborough County.

**Fundraising for implementation** involves two kinds of resource allocations. The first is agreement by partners to spend existing funds in new ways to support the CSAP strategies. Examples of this include: focusing USF student volunteer efforts to help with CSAP implementation; youth cleanup efforts as part of all UACDC programs; safety requirements for County redevelopment assistance programs; and anchor campus edge landscaping adjustments to help enhance territoriality (e.g. Moffitt and University Mall). The second aspect of fundraising involves jointly attracting new resources by highlighting the highly intentional and innovative approaches of the CSAP. This will require partners to clearly demonstrate how such a diverse group is working together to address shared goals with unique approaches. Businesses, institutions, residents, and government representatives will need to clearly support the CSAP for this to occur.

**Current and future residents** have important roles to play in the implementation of this plan. As advocates, they can encourage elected officials to change lighting requirements, street vendor programs, and other regulations. They can lead efforts to create the Safe Neighborhoods Improvement District to pay for safety improvements. And they can advocate for a variety of pedestrian safety improvements, including crosswalk lighting and painting, transit shelter/station improvements, and new sidewalks. Residents can request CPTED reviews of their rental properties, encourage TECO to improve lighting programs, and report nuisance convenience stores to police or code enforcement. With more training, residents can provide important guidance for the inclusion of safety in project designs – by asking the right questions and insisting on detailed answers at public review meetings.

As volunteers, residents can help change the rules of acceptable behavior related to disorder crimes and conditions. This might be working with youth in the parks or at schools, helping with cleanups or service projects for seniors, assisting the homeless, helping with community events, installing solar lighting, or leading a walking school bus. A key volunteer role is providing feedback in the form of community safety audits – or just reporting problems with lighting, trash, dumping, graffiti, etc. to the clean and green team or others. Volunteer leaders can also play a major role in encouraging others to take pride and contribute – at least by not adding to problems.

Safety communications about the community always involve residents, and they can ensure they are accurate and balanced by staying informed. By regularly participating in discussions with HCSO and others, actively sharing the positive improvements being made, and dispelling inaccurate negative information, residents can play a key role in changing the brand and perceptions of the University Area.

Small business opportunities for residents are integral to this plan. There can be opportunities for vending, subcontracting for the clean and green team efforts, and even providing services to anchor institutions through special local purchasing initiatives. Recommended new employment opportunities with anchor institutions can also benefit residents, including homeownership assistance from anchors as part of their engagement efforts.

# Appendix A

## Assessment Report



## University Area/ Tampa Innovation District Community Safety Action Plan Assessment Report October 2016

Our comprehensive approach and solutions require us to evaluate a wide variety of physical conditions, programs in place, communications materials, crime statistics, plans for public projects, plans for private projects, organizational dynamics, and much, much more as part of a Community Safety Action Plan (CSAP). The following review contains our understanding, observations, and evaluation of those existing conditions, programs, communications, strategies, and plans.

As part of this process, we interviewed or met in groups with a wide variety of stakeholders and staff, reviewed an array of documents and online media reports and information, conducted multiple field visits day and night, and discussed our findings with both the project Core Team and Steering Group on multiple occasions.

### EVALUATIVE ASSESSMENT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Conceptually, there has been a significant amount of work done regarding real and perceived safety in the CSAP study area. Past plans and stakeholder interviews revealed good knowledge of tools like Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED), disorder management, quality lighting, and careful communications. Many great efforts are already in place. At the same time, most of these efforts lacked sufficient detail and focus to effectively guide future efforts, investment, and evaluation.

There are many positive projects, programs, partnerships, and investments happening in the University Area/Tampa Innovation District area covered by this Community Safety Action Plan. These include, among many others:

- ❖ The UACDC organizing efforts to make safety part of the regular set of priorities and conversations;
- ❖ TIA's expanded communications efforts and streetscape improvements that intentionally address both real and perceived safety;
- ❖ USF's off-campus safety efforts through their Police, Housing, and Engagement units;
- ❖ The Hillsborough County Economic Development office business development incentives that will help impact real and perceived safety; and
- ❖ The HCSO's many innovative efforts to address relationships, multi-family housing, and key environmental conditions.

Details about these many positive partnerships and efforts are found in Appendices A through C.

At the same time, real and perceived safety concerns are slowing progress and momentum. Based on our assessment of various conditions and efforts, our major assessment findings about those remaining challenges are listed below:

- 1) Signs of care and concern – territoriality – are largely missing from the CSAP area, particularly along the image corridors. Colorful flowers and banners, public art, uniquely designed commercial structures and mixed use projects, and carefully manicured lawns are present but relatively rare.
- 2) Poor Physical Environment conditions are contributing significantly to both real and perceived safety in the CSAP area, and crucial processes and standards are lacking to systematically make improvements. Lighting, litter, illegal dumping, and poorly maintained vacant properties are particularly in need of attention.
- 3) Strategic Communications for real and perceived safety have only recently begun in earnest, and a more complete and consistent place-brand strategy is needed along with more attention to signature special events details that impact real and perceived safety. There is also a need to improve consistent safety communications among partners.
- 4) Parts of major image corridors along Fowler, Fletcher, Nebraska Avenues, and I-275 are unattractive front doors. Their condition shows a lack of care and concern, particularly at night, that creates discomfort and a desire to speed through, not visit the adjacent neighborhoods.
- 5) While some very limited baseline information about perceptions is now being collected, better methodologies are needed to obtain real insights from key target markets – particularly women, realtors, millennials, and USF students/parents - about their safety perceptions and place avoidance behaviors. Delivery drivers, Uber drivers, and other business drivers who might avoid the place can also provide great feedback about community perceptions as part of a focus group.
- 6) More intentional actions and policies are needed to reduce the transient nature of the place and improve emotional connections and social cohesion.
- 7) The open grid street system that operates so well in stable urban neighborhoods is currently exacerbating drug sale activity, illegal dumping, and some drive by criminal activity. There is a need to manage access more carefully until the stable phase is reached.
- 8) Land use patterns are negatively impacting both natural surveillance and territoriality. Significant vacancies, clusters of institutional buildings, and the lack of mixed use buildings along commercial strips need to be changed to maximize impacts.

## BASIC OBSERVATIONS

Some of the following are our direct observations and some were provided by stakeholders and staff during our interviews. This kind of basic information provides context and an ability to make realistic comparisons to other areas that have been successful.

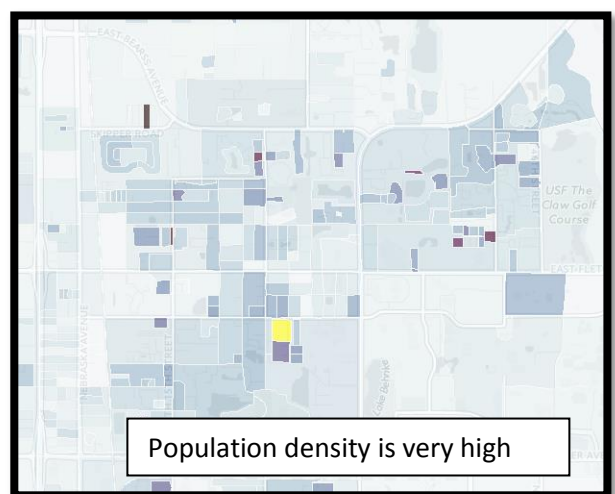
### Geography and Identity

- ❖ While this Plan is limited to address only a portion of the TID, it is viewed by most as being an integral part of a larger area that extends south and east, including parts of the City of Tampa. Further evaluations and plans should be coordinated with Tampa in the future. It may also be appropriate to consider similar efforts for Temple Terrace, but the issues and conditions seem less visible there.
- ❖ Much of the programmatic activity to address crime, education, recreation, immigrant assistance and youth development appears to be focused west of Bruce B. Downs Blvd. It's important to note that USF also focuses efforts east of Bruce B. Downs Blvd.
- ❖ While there are a number of neighborhood names within the Plan area (University Square, Nowatney, Park Place of Tampa, Azure Estates, Campus Hill Park), only "University Area" is used with consistency, even though the boundaries are vague. Stakeholders have only a vague idea about the boundaries for the Innovation District.
- ❖ It is notable that most portions of the Plan area fall within the boundaries of the Hillsborough County "Targeted Redevelopment Program" that provides additional incentives for business and jobs development.
- ❖ With a primary historical identity of "suitcase city" as crime-ridden, poor, and transient, the predominant place brand name of "University Area" is gaining traction but still has negative safety perception impacts even on stable or growing parts of the Plan area.
- ❖ University Mall is a recognized place name and identity at the center of the Plan area. While it has improved its reputation recently, it is still not seen as safe enough for large parts of the potential target markets within its primary and secondary trade areas. This includes a sizeable population of students and employees at nearby anchor institutions. The Mall is a clear "indicator" property to the larger region about safety within the Plan area.

### Demographics and Trends

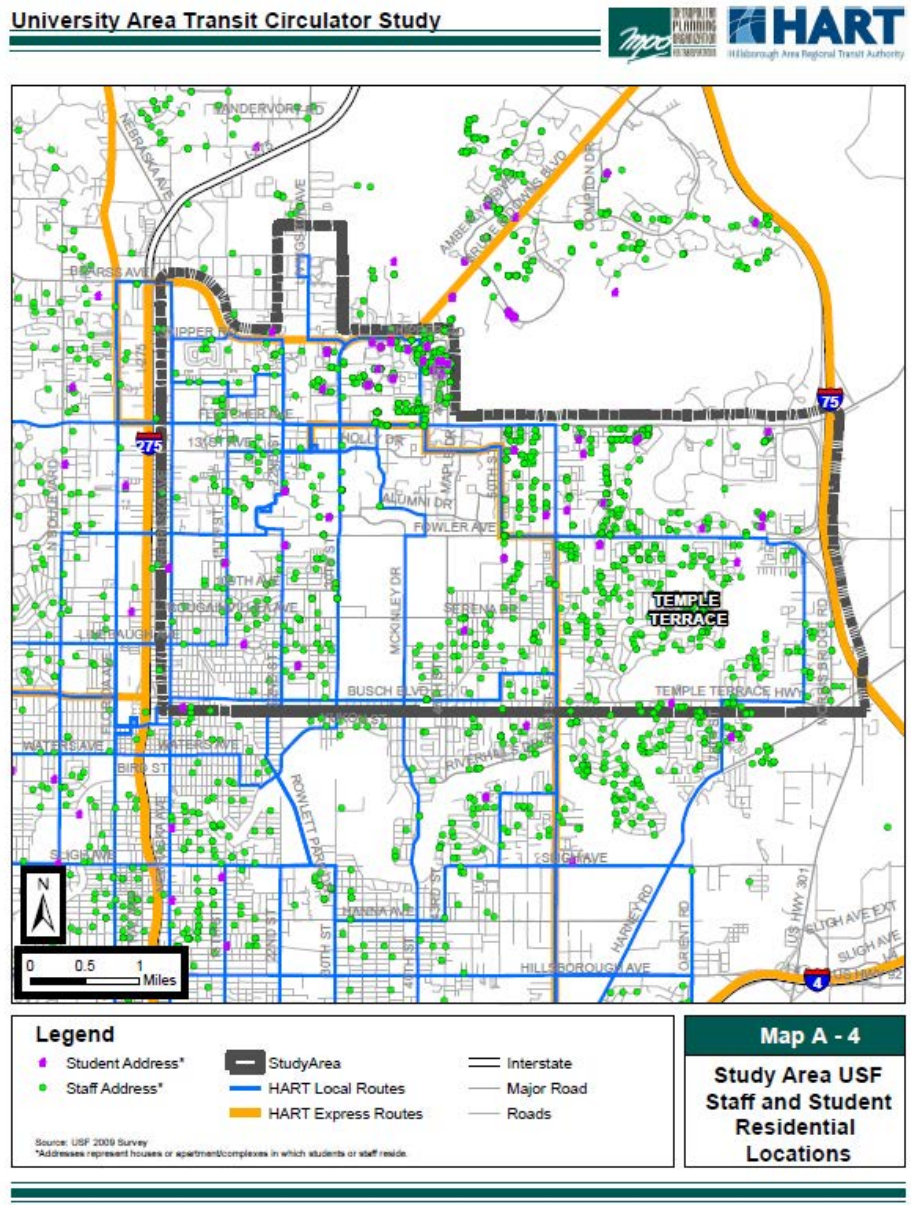
As summarized in the Demographic and Market information provided by the Planning Commission staff, this is a very poor neighborhood with low homeownership and educational attainment.

- ❖ Most of the Plan area has a household poverty rate above 20%, although this will clearly not reflect the poverty of illegal immigrants that often goes unreported. Overall, nearly 40% of households have income below the poverty rate.
- ❖ Homeownership rate of 7.2% compares to 61.4% Countywide.



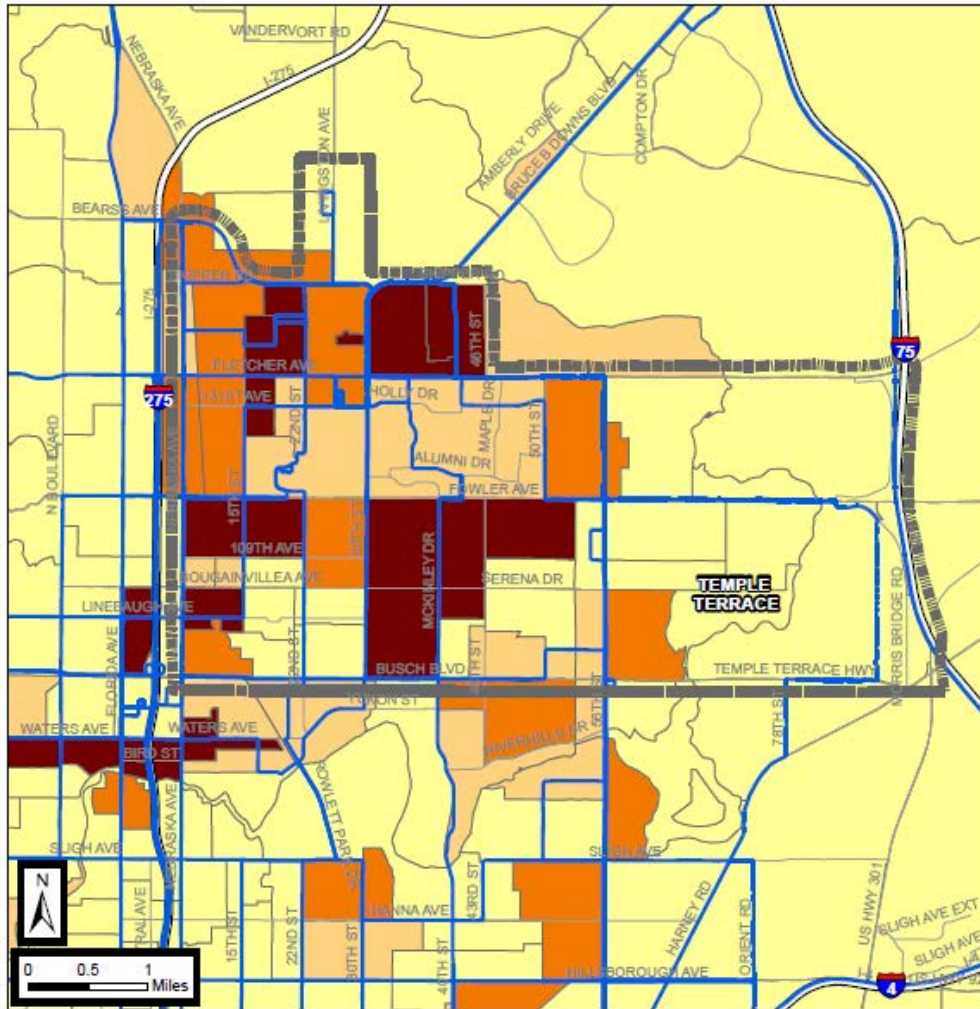


- ❖ Educational attainment of bachelor’s degree or higher for people over 25 is 17.5% compared to the Countywide level of 29.8%.
- ❖ Population density is among the highest in the County outside of a few areas in the City of Tampa. This combination of density and poverty is contributing to current crime rates.
- ❖ No information was available about the number of USF students and staff living near campus, but 5,600 students live on campus and 50% of them do not have vehicles. That means many students must walk to shopping or entertainment off-campus. Maps of student living patterns were unavailable for us to review. Interviews suggested that most USF students living off campus are located to the north, but there are clearly students living west of Bruce B. Downs Boulevard in the core of the study area as well. This is reinforced by the following 2009 map from the Transit Area Circulator Study.



- Approximately 30% of households in the study area do not have a vehicle. This is significantly higher than nearby areas and the rest of the county, and suggests that walking, biking, and transit are used more extensively, putting more residents at risk of being crime victims. The map below illustrates this point.

University Area Transit Circulator Study



**Legend**

<b>Transit Orientation Index</b>	Existing HART Services
Very High	Study Area
High	Interstate
Medium	Major Road
Low	Roads

Source: 2010 ESRI Data

**Map A-1**

**2010 Transit Dependent Populations**

## **Reported Crime**

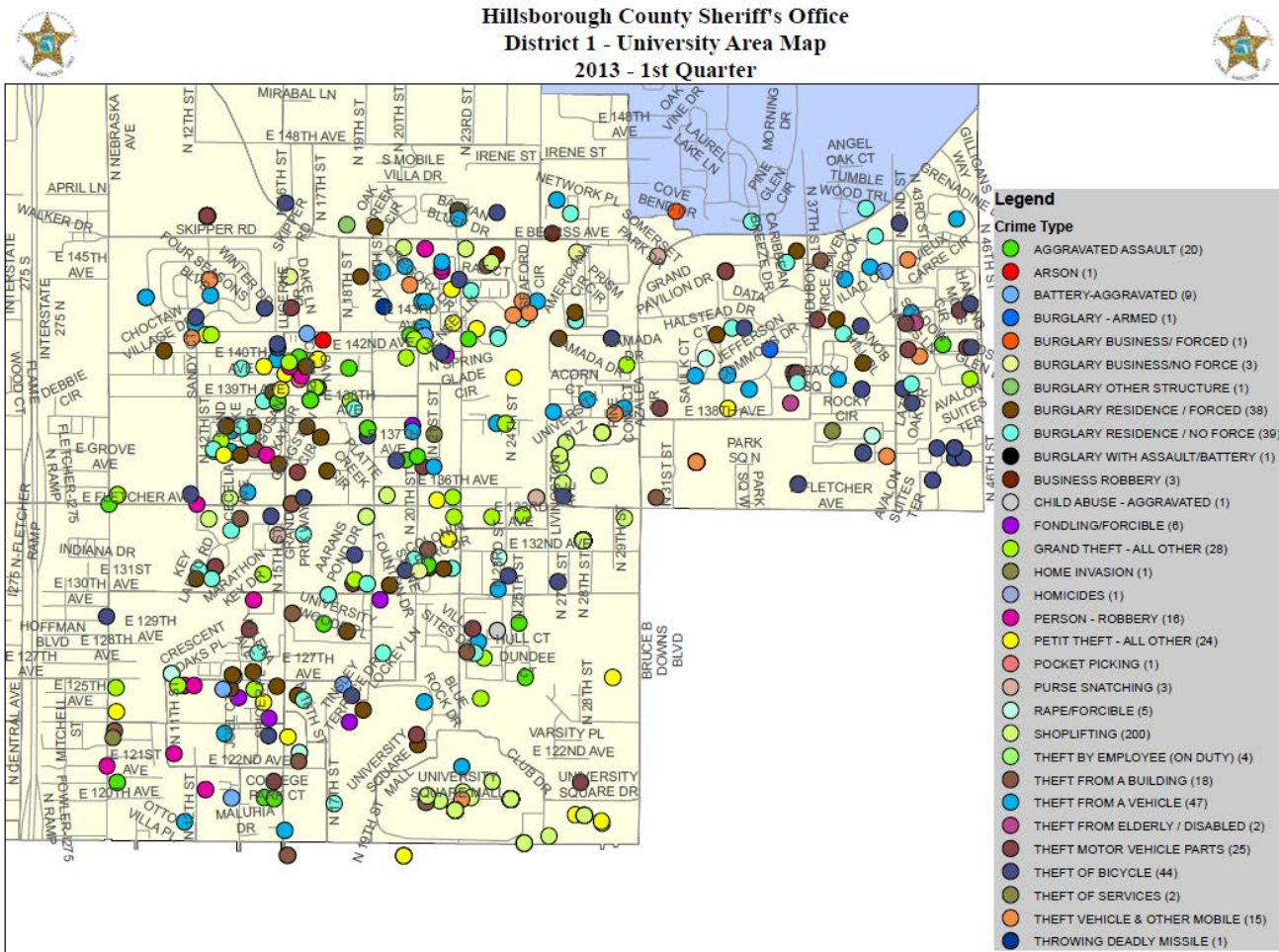
Crime reports must always be viewed with caution and analyzed carefully. The media and others often use such statistics to create very simplistic conclusions about the safety of a particular place or the effectiveness of various programs or initiatives, but more careful analysis always provides better insights and opportunities for improvement.

We reviewed crime statistics and analytics provided, spoke with HCSO Staff and UACDC Security providers, tested the online crime reports system, and received feedback from our interviews with community stakeholders, USF Police leadership, and civic leaders. Our basic observations include the following:

- ❖ There are some gang issues that also extend beyond Plan area. The groups are loosely organized but do have a gun culture and are very involved in drug sales.
- ❖ Burglaries are a persistent issue, and the 2015 UACDC Community Needs Assessment (survey of residents) noted that respondents considered Drugs, Burglary, Gang Activity, and Domestic Violence as the top crime issues. Stakeholders did express a concern about the police solve rate for burglaries, although no statistics were reviewed.
- ❖ Street robberies were suggested as a significant problem, including minorities targeting other minorities.
- ❖ Domestic violence was noted as a significant problem in the area, and both police and stakeholders seemed to agree that a significant amount of overall crime goes unreported.
- ❖ Mental health patient behaviors, including aggressiveness and harassment were reported are a serious ongoing issue.
- ❖ Convenience stores are a source of significant crime, including regular drug sales.
- ❖ Aggressive panhandling is a significant concern on private properties and at major intersections along Fletcher and Fowler Avenues. University Mall has a very proactive approach to manage this issue, but other properties do not. Also, we did still observe panhandling on the Mall property on some of our visits there.
- ❖ USF Clery Act reports were reviewed, but our interviews revealed they do not include incidents off campus, the focus of our evaluation. [Clery Act](#) reports are for crimes which occur on campus, adjacent to campus, or off-campus when associated with institutions of higher learning or students of the institution, and USF complies with those requirements. At the same time, there were no reports of problem parties off campus, a common concern near large university campuses.
- ❖ There is some consensus that substance abuse and related narcotic sales are at the root of many problems in the area. It has a clear nexus to higher levels of gun violence. The problem is still significant, even though much activity is no longer visible as transactions have moved out of public view due to the use of cellphones.
- ❖ Absentee landlords and poorly managed rental properties were noted by many stakeholders as a core issue. They reported that properties are regularly rented to known criminals due to poor tenant screening.
- ❖ The online reporting system is robust and useful, but the complexity will likely intimidate most stakeholders and staff unfamiliar with such statistics.



We received limited additional feedback about crime *trends*. Also, while the HCSO was very responsive to our requests for crime data, and their system is very advanced including a public user portal that is easy to use, the complexity of the tracking system reports made it difficult to discern overall crime patterns and trends based on the information provided in response to our requests (see map below). Statistics (or even anecdotes) were not reported to us as crime *rates* per population. Importantly, we did not perceive any reluctance to share such information, but we wanted to limit our demands on HCSO for the purpose of this initial assessment, and we wanted to understand what is readily and typically available.



While we did not request the more sophisticated crime analytics, none were referenced by any of the stakeholders we interviewed. It seems that stakeholders are provided the very basic analytics. It is possible this is due to staffing limitations in the HCSO, an issue that is not unique to the Tampa Bay area.

## **Perceptions**

Perceptions of safety for a particular place can be limiting factors for people choosing their homes, their shopping and entertainment experiences, their real estate investments, their higher education, and their business investments. Importantly, such perceptions vary by age, gender, and home zip code. In addition, fear of crime by existing residents has serious impacts on health, social isolation, economic opportunities, and general quality of life. Finally, anecdotal information about perceptions is inadequate to make key decisions about program investments and effectiveness. Formal and informal information about perceptions of safety in the Plan area were not readily available.

UACDC Staff did conduct a walkability analysis recently, including some safety perception questions, but preliminary results focused on accident prevention and did not explicitly address personal security, although 37% of respondents suggested the need for improved lighting. Similarly, we were unable to obtain any information from the USF Campus Climate survey.

Our request for a group discussion with real estate brokers in the area, another good technique to assess marketplace perceptions, did not materialize.

We did review surveys conducted by Safe & Sound Hillsborough and Mort Elementary, but the response samples and questions did not provide particular insights about the study area. The Mort report focused on student perceptions at the school, and the Safe & Sound report blended responses countywide from only youth.

Finally, our discussion with a group of female USF students (mostly USF Housing employees) suggested that student fears may not be as extensive as described by other non-student stakeholders, including some campus administrators.

**Stakeholder interviews** – A number of interviewees shared their perceptions of both safety and efforts to improve safety as noted below. They were not aware of any formal safety measurement or analysis specifically for the CSAP area.

- ❖ Perceptions are a challenge in attracting talent for institutions.
- ❖ University Mall success will hinge on safety perceptions. Perceptions of the Mall will have a significant impact on perceptions of the CSAP area.
- ❖ Perceptions are improving but there is still room for improvement.
- ❖ USF Officials reported students being uncomfortable at off campus locations like WalMart, University Mall and other retail spots. One graduate student housing brochure indirectly suggests avoiding the CSAP area by not listing it in the “Neighborhood Guide to Tampa” that lists places like Carrollwood as safe.
- ❖ People are afraid to make Code Enforcement complaints for fear of landlord retribution. They perceive that such complaints are not anonymous.
- ❖ People also perceive that there is no way to provide an anonymous tip to police. Some perceive that Police know the hot spots but do not provide a presence. Still others perceive there is a lack of follow up and effectiveness related to burglaries – and the solve rate for burglaries.
- ❖ Some stakeholders reported/perceived that there are racial issues involved in robberies, including targeting of people based on their race.



- ❖ Perceptions are an issue in attracting businesses. One stakeholder shared a story about a hotel developer who was hesitant because of safety concerns.
- ❖ There was consistent agreement about the lack of social cohesion in the community as contributing to the crime problems. Some identified household transience as the cause, but others suggested there are fundamental urban design issues at work.
- ❖ The 2015 UACDC Community Needs Assessment (survey of residents) noted that respondents considered Drugs, Burglary, Gang Activity, and Domestic Violence as the top crime issues. They also gave Police generally positive reviews.

***KSA Observations and Insights*** – Historic measures of safety perceptions were unavailable to us, and that possibly suggests they are not regularly used by existing stakeholder groups like UACDC or TIA, County staff, FDOT, or even anchor institutions as part of their decision making about built environments, programs, or communications. We did learn that University Mall representatives have made efforts to better understand perceptions, particularly of USF students, but they also found little existing information.

Importantly, we did not find any more sophisticated approaches to gaining insights about safety perceptions from key target markets. No regular formal focus groups were mentioned, no careful cross tabs had been evaluated regarding gender, age, or income for other surveys. No group discussions with Realtors were reported to us. Finally, we found no evidence of formal walking safety audits in areas beyond the USF campus – what we consider walking focus groups for safety perceptions.

### **Other Relevant Metrics**

We did not find evidence of other metrics sometimes used to track real and perceived safety. Pedestrian counts, formal lighting analyses, victimization studies, or maps of subsidized or students/student housing were not readily available for the study area.

## PAST/CURRENT PLANS AND STUDIES

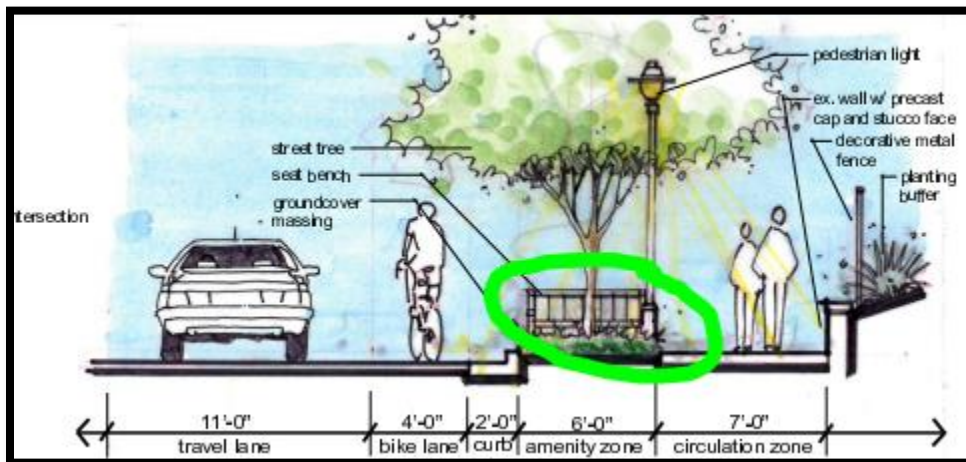
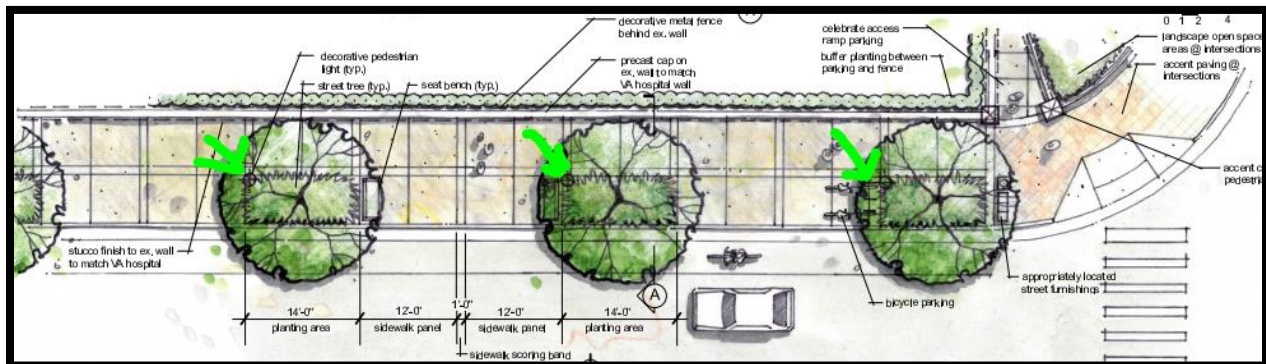
Future aspirations and planned improvement strategies for the study area can be found in a number of past studies and plans. Policies, regulations, funding allocations, and planned public improvements contained in these plans can have a significant impact on both real and perceived safety – positively or negatively. We reviewed a variety of these plans, and have a number of observations.

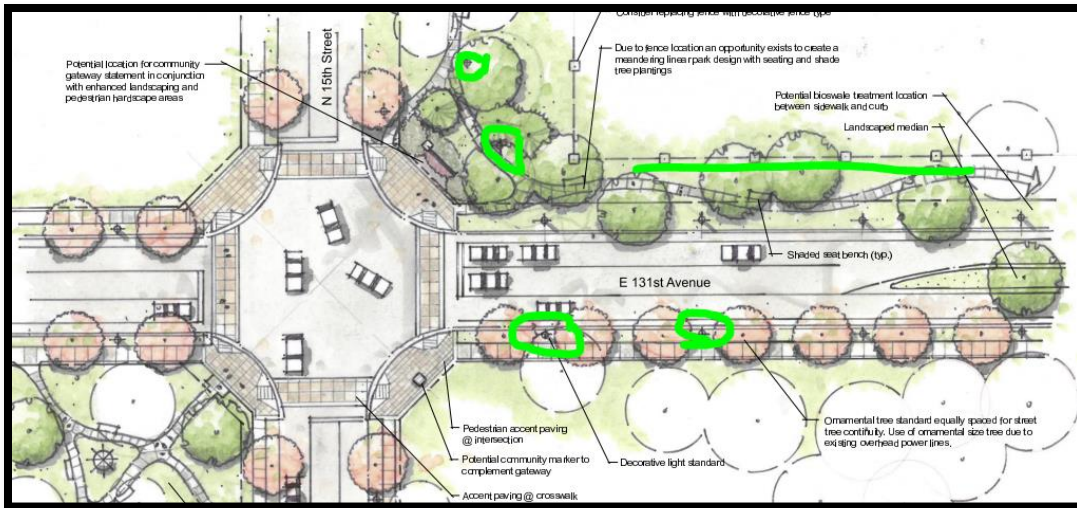
### Tampa Innovation District Transit Circulator Study

Crime, fear, perceptions, and darkness were not concepts explored by the study. User feedback in the form of surveys and discussions did identify the need for better lighting at stops and shelters, but proposed solution options did not address lighting or any other personal security issues. In addition, it appears there was little if any actual interaction with non-USF residents of the area during the process.

### USF Area Complete Streets Concept Plan – Pattern Book

This concept plan and pattern book does not discuss crime, CPTED, or perceptions. It does identify existing limited lighting and the need for “more,” “pedestrian-oriented,” and “brighter and directed” lighting to enhance aesthetics and security for users. However, it does not include a lighting assessment or recommendations for lighting standards. It also includes several diagrams where light poles clearly conflict with proposed or existing trees, and where seating will be in darkness due to tree-light conflicts. Renderings and sections only show mature trees with canopies that start at 15’ from the sidewalk – an unlikely condition.





Images from 131<sup>st</sup>/46<sup>th</sup> Street Complete Street Project. Light in and near tree heads do not create good uniformity. Security risks beyond sidewalk are most critical, but lights focus on roadway.

For territoriality, the plan does suggest neighborhood identity banners, but it stops short of suggesting colorful flowers or public art anywhere.

### **Coordinated Community Anti-Crime Initiative**

This effort included a quality of life survey with multiple questions about fear of crime and disorder conditions. Unfortunately, the actual survey instrument and results were not made available to us or even noted by other participants. The lack of such details did not permit us to understand differences in fears by gender, age, time of day, or race/ethnicity. The survey also did not include responses from *potential* residents or visitors who did not currently reside in the neighborhood. This was despite the stated objective of “Create positive change in the internal and external perceptions of the University Area” from the initial partners discussions in 2004.

With regard to disorder assessments, the effort did include windshield surveys addressing a variety of crime prevention conditions and disorder features as part of the housing inventory, but did not include lighting conditions. Also, no summary of conditions – or detailed reports – were included. A community indicators database was apparently created, but current stakeholders do not appear to have copies or access.

The report recommended an anti-crime advertising campaign that included a variety of meetings, a newsletter, a brochure and web address for businesses, a children’s comic book about drugs/alcohol/bullying, and other information. There were no details provided, and it does not appear any of the suggestions were implemented.

Multiple organizations were suggested to be formed to help support the anti-crime initiatives. These included teens, faith organizations, businesses, apartment owners/managers, and grassroots leadership. This community organizing approach does not seem to have been implemented in the forms recommended. Finally, the report mentions an “Empowering Communities Toolkit” but it does not seem to be in use or available online in any form.

### **56<sup>th</sup> Street Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements Feasibility Study Report**

This plan does not mention crime, CPTED, after-dark conditions, or personal security. It does mention that TECO will provide additional street lighting at mid-block crosswalks, but it does not identify the standards to be used. It does make a general recommendation to improve street lighting, but notes that implementation will be completed by TECO. No lighting standards are referenced. No need to coordinate lighting with trees is noted. No territoriality features like flowers or banners are mentioned.

## **42<sup>nd</sup> Street Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements Feasibility Study Report**

This plan does not mention crime, CPTED, after-dark conditions, or personal security. It does mention that TECO will provide additional street lighting at mid-block crosswalks, but it does not identify the standards to be used. It does make a general recommendation to improve street lighting, but notes that implementation will be completed by TECO. No lighting standards are referenced. No need to coordinate lighting with trees is noted. No territoriality features like flowers or banners are mentioned.

## **Fletcher Avenue Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Action Plan**

This plan does not mention crime, CPTED, or personal security. It does mention that roadway lighting is to be evaluated after the completion of the Plan by TECO. This indicated that such lighting was not integral to the other design components in the plan, and that sidewalk lighting was not a focus. Also missing are references to landscape materials that will enhance territoriality. Finally, it is notable that pedestrian and bicycle counts were only conducted during daylight hours (between 10am and 6:45 pm). This reinforces the “daytime” thinking of the roadway design solutions.

## **Livable Communities Element of the Hillsborough County Comprehensive Plan**

Within the University Area Community section, the Plan suggests robust use of CPTED to eliminate obsolete land uses. It also mentions the need for mixed use developments (and higher densities to encourage the pattern along main streets), crime prevention initiatives, traffic calming,

More specifically, the plan states:

*The County will, where feasible:*

- *revise the Land Development Code in the University Community Area zoning districts (UCA-MS and NHO) to:*
  1. *achieve a common architectural theme similar to public structures and roadway landscaping built since the district was established;*
  2. *allow alternate design techniques, in accordance with the Stormwater Technical Manual, such as natural sloping and limited fencing that improve the aesthetic and amenity value of stormwater management facilities; and*
  3. *encourage a common architectural theme to public structures and roadway landscaping built since the district was established*
- *to ensure safety and quality of life, the County will in collaboration with the Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Office maintain a strategic program for crime prevention and public safety within the UCA boundary. The strategic program will identify and implement actions appropriate both for the UAC as a whole and for specific areas within the UAC boundary. Tools, techniques and programs expected to reduce crime and promote public safety may include but not be limited to:*
  - *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) applied to building and site design;*
  - *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) applied to public spaces;*
  - *revisions to the Special Public Interest University Community and University Community zoning districts (SPI-UC-1,2,3 and 4 and UCA-MS and NHO to support CPTED principles;*
  - *enhanced police presence/community policing;*
  - *street lighting;*
  - *surveillance cameras with monitoring;*
  - *emergency call boxes;*
  - *improved bike/pedestrian crossings; and*
  - *traffic control improvements*

Notably, the Plan uses generally vague terms like “adequate lighting” and “pedestrian scale lighting” and does not provide further details about CPTED principles and standards, leaving actual implementation open to a wide variety of interpretations.

### **Safe & Sound Hillsborough Strategic Plan**

This violence prevention plan uses a public health approach to identify a wide variety of action steps to address both real and perceived safety throughout Hillsborough County, with a focus on neighborhoods and families most impacted by violence. It recommends the creation of public spaces that are safe, clean, and inviting to improve community connections and conditions. The plan notes that elements of safe spaces include: well maintained, proper lighting, adequate sidewalks, a sense of openness and an absence of trash and debris. Makes similar recommendations about the physical appearance of neighborhoods including art programs, community gardens, and the removal of graffiti and blight. These are consistent with the concepts of informal social interaction, disorder management, natural surveillance, and the impacts of perceptions on good (or bad) behaviors.

While the plan includes economic development and job opportunities as a strategy, and although it suggests highlighting the fiscal benefits of improving community appearance and social cohesion to recruit local businesses, it does not explicitly connect safety perceptions with economic development opportunities that impact families and individuals.

Although the safety survey used to help create the plan was only administered to youth, it provides a good template for other populations and for analysis over time. Also, the plan supports the need for a comprehensive and integrated approach to real and perceived safety. The Strategic Plan does not identify safety perceptions as a key metric for monitoring progress.

### **Terrace Park – University Square Vision Plan**

The Plan identified crime as a significant concern and suggested additional policing and streetlights as well as mixed use along Fowler Avenue. While it does reference CPTED, it does not discuss any detailed standards or initiatives along Fowler Avenue – the only portion of the plan in the CSAP area.



## PROGRAMS AND PATROLS

### Youth Development Programs

Positive interventions with youth have been shown to be effective in reducing violence and disorder crimes. Our interviews and research uncovered a variety of existing programs and conditions, but the list below is not exhaustive.

- ❖ UACDC offers a variety of high-quality youth programs in the arts, sports, computers, and other areas of interest. They provide facilities to support informal activities as well.
- ❖ Safe and Sound Hillsborough is implementing a youth leadership program for the area.
- ❖ Junior Achievement provides a variety of programs for area youth.
- ❖ The Police Athletic League (PAL) program for the area was discontinued.
- ❖ The relative lack of public parks facilities and programs may be impacting youth behavioral problems and social cohesion.
- ❖ While several elementary schools have after school activities, the junior high and high school are located outside the neighborhood. This creates some challenges due to transportation needs.
- ❖ MOSI provides a variety of youth programs, but many are not affordable to area residents.
- ❖ Mort Elementary also has a formal Safe Routes to School initiative.

### Policing Strategies and Efforts

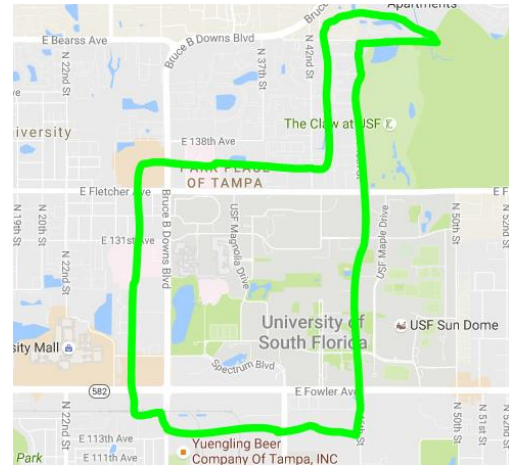
While our review of policing strategies and efforts was limited, we did receive extensive supporting information from the HCSO and USF Police, as well as some feedback about the Police from stakeholders. We also made some of our own observations during various meetings and field visits.

- ❖ The HCSO already provides a wide variety of community policing, camera and shot spotter technology, and crime prevention services. Cameras, social events at apartment complexes, limited CPTED surveys, a Crime Free Multi-Housing program and training, street light problem reporting, and infrastructure repair reporting are but a few of the ongoing efforts in place. Bike and foot patrols are in use, but we did not observe them on our limited field visits. There is also a robust partnership with Code Enforcement in place.





- ❖ USF Police are already actively patrolling to the current limits of their jurisdiction (1000 feet from campus) and have a positive and active partnership with HCSO. They are currently working to expand the jurisdictional limits. USF Police also provide a variety of crime prevention educational materials and instruction for students – including an annual campus safety event, but they no longer conduct CPTED or Security surveys for off-campus student apartments. CPTED reviews of campus properties also appear limited in number and scope. Community stakeholders do not perceive USF and other anchors to be actively involved in community safety.



- ❖ USF recently dropped the on-campus living requirement for freshman, and this will likely have an impact on student crime victimization as young students unfamiliar with the area put themselves at risk more often.
- ❖ There does appear to be a “broken windows” approach to dealing with serious disorder issues like public drug sales, open containers, panhandling, and dumping. However, stakeholders do not seem to consider it adequate at this time.
- ❖ Stakeholders reported that police know drug sales and hot spots locations but do not provide sufficient presence to impact the problem. They also expressed concerns about burglary solve rates for the area.
- ❖ Sophisticated Crime Analysis systems are in place, but communications of crime trends to stakeholders are limited at this time. There does not seem to be resistance to this, though.
- ❖ Communications between HCSO and UACDC appear frequent and supportive. It is not clear whether similar communications regularly occur with business groups via TIA or others.
- ❖ University Mall also has a very positive relationship with HCSO.
- ❖ The VA Hospital has sworn police personnel, but they do not operate off-campus.
- ❖ While CPTED is a stated part of the Police system of interventions, and there are some guidelines in place, we did not review any past CPTED review reports from Police. It does not appear there is regular or sophisticated use of CPTED concepts and strategies during plan review processes.

**Other Safety Program Initiatives**

A variety of other non-Police safety programs are ongoing in the CSAP area by anchor institutions, private businesses, other public agencies, and housing complexes. We list several here:

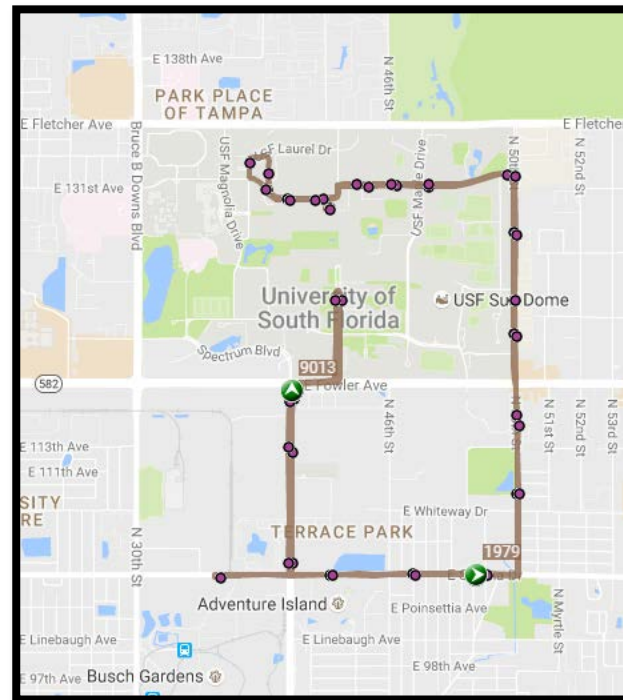
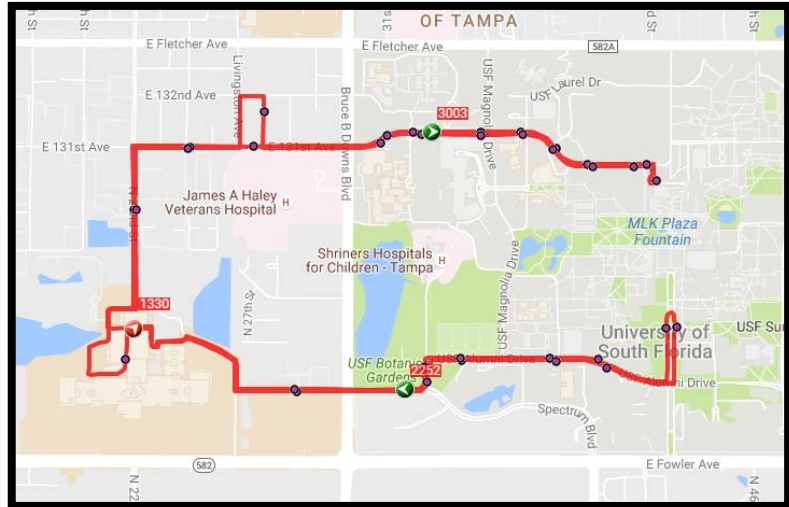
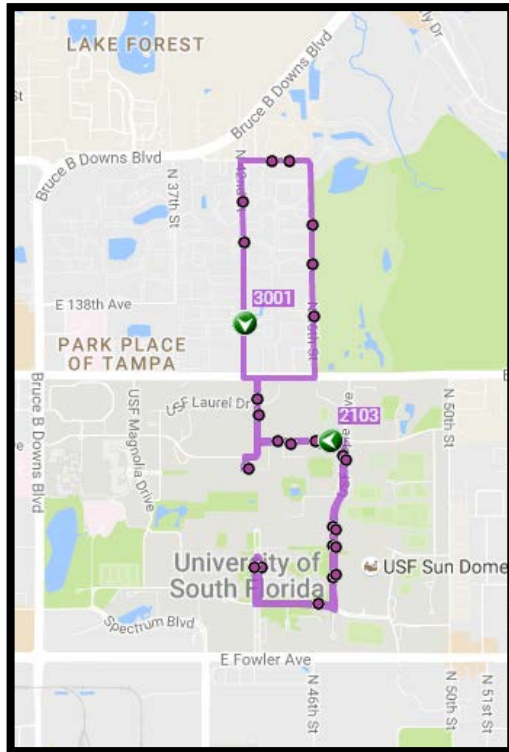
- ❖ USF Off the Grid program works to educate students about off-campus safety. It includes online and printed materials. While we were unable to speak with anyone about the current status of the efforts, we did note that the materials use graphic designs that appear “ominous” in their use of black backgrounds.
- ❖ USF Night Walks and safe ride programs occur on campus only. Details of either program were not readily available for review, including sample reports of recommendations from the Night Walks.

- ❖ USF has created special partnerships with a small number of private housing complexes that meet a variety of quality criteria, including security and safety. However, those criteria were not available, and USF does not rate other student housing complexes on behalf of their students.

### Transit Services

Good transit service can help reduce victimization and fear of crime by providing safe and predictable mobility options, drivers that observe and report, well lit stops/shelters/stations, and vendors for natural surveillance.

- ❖ Bull Runner routes extend throughout the CSAP area. While the vehicles have GPS locaters to help minimize wait times at stops, we received some feedback that the system often does not work. In addition, many of the off-campus stops have little or no lighting and are in isolated locations. While vehicles are consistently identified with USF logos, not all were obviously USF vehicles. We also heard a stakeholder story about losing their USF ID over a weekend and being left at an off-campus stop late at night.



- ❖ We were unable to review HART safety initiatives with a HART representative during our discovery process. Online reviews did not uncover reports addressing security at stops and shelters or the University Area transit center. Stakeholder

feedback identified stops and the transit center as problem areas for loitering, drug use, aggressive panhandling, and other crimes. We observed numerous stops/shelters that had very little natural surveillance and lighting. (see photos under lighting) These conditions are less common on anchor campuses.

- ❖ The HART Transit Center is also isolated with very little natural surveillance and limited access control. Seating is abundant, but no vendors or other positive activities are present to help improve real and perceived safety. Lighting is generally adequate at the Center, but pathways to/from it are isolated and dark in many areas.
- ❖ Transit service to the University Mall is good, but the stop is generally isolated and dim, particularly at night.

### **Safe Routes to School**

Another transportation program currently in place for Mort Elementary is the Walking School Bus and other initiatives that are part of the Safe Routes to School program. A number of physical improvements are to be made along several key pathways south of Bearss Avenue. At the same time, the program does not currently address lighting or excessive landscaping, even though some travel to and from the school must occur in the dark at some times of the year.

### **Other Social Services**

General feedback from a variety of stakeholders revealed a significant level of care and concern for those less fortunate who find themselves in the University Area. In addition to the Youth programs described earlier, our research revealed the following:

- ❖ There are a large number of homeless and mental health programs, and sizeable groups of people gather regularly to access them.
- ❖ There are also some good programs for the elderly, including computer and internet access at UACDC.
- ❖ A number of civic organizations and Churches provide services beyond their own congregations, including some for the homeless and immigrants.
- ❖ USF and others provide a variety of health services at the Bridge Clinic and other service locations.

### **Job Training & Education**

A variety of educational and job training programs are available to residents of the area, including the recent Tech-Hire grant and programs available through the UACDC.

### **Clean Up Events and Efforts**

Many previous plans recognize the problems of litter, illegal dumping, landscape/tree litter, graffiti and stickers, and other cleanup needs. We found some existing programs in place to address these.

- ❖ USF days of service once or twice a year.
- ❖ Regular UACDC sponsored clean up events around Harvest Hope Park and other locations, but no list of specific locations was available.

### **Community Events**

There appears to be no historical pattern of major “signature” events in the area that might attract outside visitors and begin to change perceptions of safety. USF does work with the Target Store on Fletcher Avenue for

an annual “Target Takeover” event at the beginning of each academic year, but we did not learn of other similar events for other locations or times. Notably, we have not observed any major “consumer” events at University Mall.

In addition, any free community events in the area seem to occur at the UACDC Community Center, which is not particularly visible from the street. This may inadvertently exclude others in the community that need to be better engaged and connected as part of a safety network.

### **Private Property Grants and Loans**

While they generally improve property conditions in ways that enhance territoriality and natural surveillance through supporting mixed use, we found no systematic integration of security improvements or Safedesign™/Advanced CPTED reviews as part of County incentive programs.

- ❖ Lighting is a permitted improvement, but no minimum standards are noted.
- ❖ Landscaping is a permitted improvement, but no instructions are provided to design such improvements in ways that enhance real and perceived safety.
- ❖ Mixed-use projects are permitted and can greatly improve natural surveillance when properly designed, but no guidelines are provided to help ensure this impact.
- ❖ No bonus incentives are suggested for projects that substantially enhance real and perceived safety in the CSAP area.

### **Public Property Available for Private Development**

Our research revealed that a number of government and anchor controlled properties may be made available for partnerships with private developers. These include the USF Research Park, the current MOSI site, and others. This presents a significant opportunity to improve real and perceived safety as part of any Public, Private Partnership (P3) projects, but we are not aware of efforts to do so at this point.

### **Homeownership Programs**

Both formal metrics and stakeholder feedback identified low homeownership rates and a highly transient population as major issues in much of the CSAP area. From a safety perspective, this negatively impacts the social cohesion and territoriality needed for people to actively take part in making a place safer. We did learn that UACDC is moving forward with an affordable housing initiative, but we did not find evidence of any active homeownership assistance programs specific to the area. This includes the lack of any programs by the anchor institutions for local homeownership or local hiring, even though the 2009 transit analysis clearly indicates a number of anchor employees live in the area. The one exception is the local hiring initiatives of University Mall. Such incentives have been used in many successful anchor-community partnerships elsewhere, but we did not find any evidence of their use here.

***KSA Observations and Insights*** – Many programs are in place to provide assistance to people in need in the CSAP area. But we did not discover any highly intentional approaches or programs aimed at creating strong emotional connections to the place and long-term residents. In the words of one stakeholder, no one proudly states they live in or grew up in University Area or the other place names associated with the CSAP area, whether they own a home or not. It does seem clear that such stability is a broadly shared goal, but the path has not been laid out for it to occur, and most individual programs do not seem to reflect the goal. To create sustainable safety solutions, this goal must be pursued with much more intentionality.

## Physical Environment

### Access Management

Drug sales, drive-by violence, and dumping are made easier by the porous nature of access in the neighborhood. There are dozens of vehicular access points along the perimeter of the CSAP area, and several of them are high speed roadways. We also observed the following:

- ❖ A small number of traffic calming devices are present on residential side streets including speed humps and chicanes, which are good. However, the lack of stop signs at all intersections is contributing to the easy access that leads to dumping and drug sales.
- ❖ Some parking lots also contribute to the easy access by providing easy pathways through them. This includes the University Mall.
- ❖ Many individual apartment properties do have access control systems in place, including fences, vehicle gates, and security personnel. But this still represents a small portion of area properties overall.
- ❖ Anchor campuses have good access management by design and the lack of “gated” places helps with perceptions.
- ❖ Some housing communities do have the gated features, but there are few that also seem like fortresses.

### Parking

Parking is a key aspect of the total travel path for visitors – including anchor institution visitors - and auto theft and break-ins were identified as significant concerns. We observed the following:

- ❖ Parking facility lighting throughout the area is generally poor and very inconsistent, even within some properties. Lighting-tree conflicts are also significant.
- ❖ Parking is often isolated due to location or overgrown landscaping, with very little natural surveillance from nearby residential or outdoor seating uses. Pathways to and from such parking facilities often have similar challenges.
- ❖ Design regulations for parking lots and garages do not appear to include minimum lighting standards for either commercial or residential properties.

### Signs of Disorder

While we did not observe excessive graffiti, disorganized newsboxes, litter, unfriendly fences with outward spikes or barbed wire, poorly maintained streets – including striping, poorly maintained rental housing and vacant lots/buildings, and poorly maintained traffic and parking control signage, were all notable in various parts of the district, some highly visible. This contributes to a sense of disorder where crime is perceived to be more prevalent. Based on stakeholder feedback and our own field observations, we note the following substantial list of disorder indicators in the CSAP area:

- ❖ Roadway striping for lanes, stop bars, crosswalks, school zone, etc. are regularly missing from secondary and residential streets.





- ❖ Trash and untrimmed landscaping on public lots and Parks.

- ❖ Trash and untrimmed landscaping on key gateway properties. I-275 Ramps, Nebraska Avenue, and Fowler Avenue at Bruce B Downs Boulevard.



- ❖ Boarded up vacant buildings, some with broken windows or fire damage.

- ❖ Weeds growing from cracks in sidewalks

- ❖ Sidewalks partially covered by sand and weeds

- ❖ Overgrown trees hanging down and blocking the sidewalk

- ❖ Dirty bus benches with poor quality graphics and advertisements



- ❖ Bars on windows of many buildings

- ❖ Cracked driveways, sidewalks and roadways

- ❖ Trash and landscaping debris in gutters – no signs of street sweeping

- ❖ Old and faded traffic control signs (no parking, no right turn, etc.)

- ❖ Overgrown landscaping near transit shelters.

- ❖ Fences and low walls in poor repair and leaning. Rusted chain link. Barbed wire fencing

- ❖ Homeless camping on vacant property sites and near lakes/ponds by the University Mall.

- ❖ Groups of men hanging out on vacant lots or in front of vacant buildings.

- ❖ Poorly maintained landscaping in the public realm (e.g. Medians or the ends of freeway ramps) or at the edge of private properties. This includes everything from weeds in sidewalk cracks to overgrown shrubs and scrub on vacant lots.

- ❖ Non-functioning vehicles in open view on residential or commercial lots.

- ❖ Poor drainage conditions.

- ❖ Missing or incomplete sidewalks.



## Lighting



No lighting surveys or analytics were available. The only lighting standards made available to us were for vehicles on streets – and those were minimal FDOT PPM standards. However, we visited the area on a number of occasions after dark to observe lighting and other conditions with the following observations and insights:

- ❖ Lighting conditions are impacted significantly by the prevalence of vacant parcels and structures without lighting, including those owned by the County, USF, and non-profit partners.
- ❖ Even with the actual FDOT lighting standards, designs continue to focus on vehicles and the roadway, as demonstrated by the chart, photometric analysis, and images below.

**Table 7.3.1 Conventional Lighting – Roadways and Signalized Intersections**

ROADWAY CLASSIFICATIONS	ILLUMINATION LEVEL AVERAGE INITIAL HORIZONTAL FOOT CANDLE (H.F.C.)	ILLUMINATION UNIFORMITY RATIOS		VEILING LUMINANCE RATIO
		AVG./MIN.	MAX./MIN.	Lv(max)/Lavg
INTERSTATE, EXPRESSWAY, FREEWAY & MAJOR ARTERIALS	1.5	4:1 or Less	10:1 or Less	0.3:1 or Less
ALL OTHER ROADWAYS	1.0	4:1 or Less	10:1 or Less	0.3:1 or Less
*SIDEWALKS AND SHARED USED PATHS	2.5	4:1 or Less	10:1 or Less	-----

**Note:** \* These values are intended for facilities separate from the roadway. Use illumination levels of the roadway for facilities within the range of the proposed or existing light poles.



*From the 2012 ped/bike plan and analysis – High Crash Areas Strategic Plan  
Good conceptual recommendations but few specific standards recommended for lighting.  
Note dark areas adjacent to and on sidewalks.*

### Exhibit 3 - Pedestrian Crossing 2 Photometric Calculations

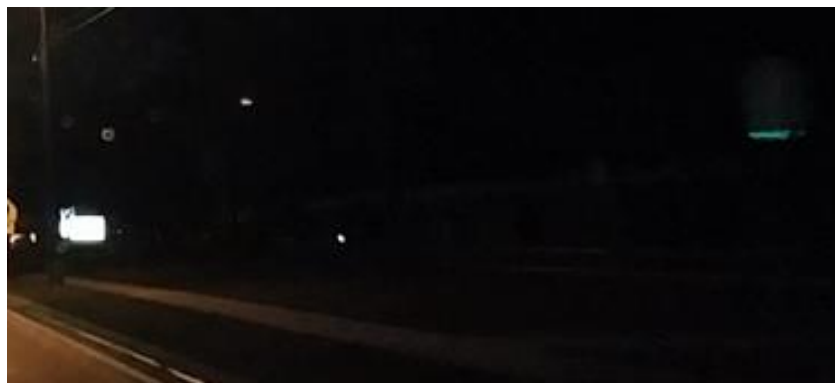


From the 2011 Lighting analysis for Fletcher Avenue Complete Streets: note the lack of photometric measurements on the sidewalks and areas “behind” the sidewalks. Also note that such analyses were only done after all the other improvements were approved.

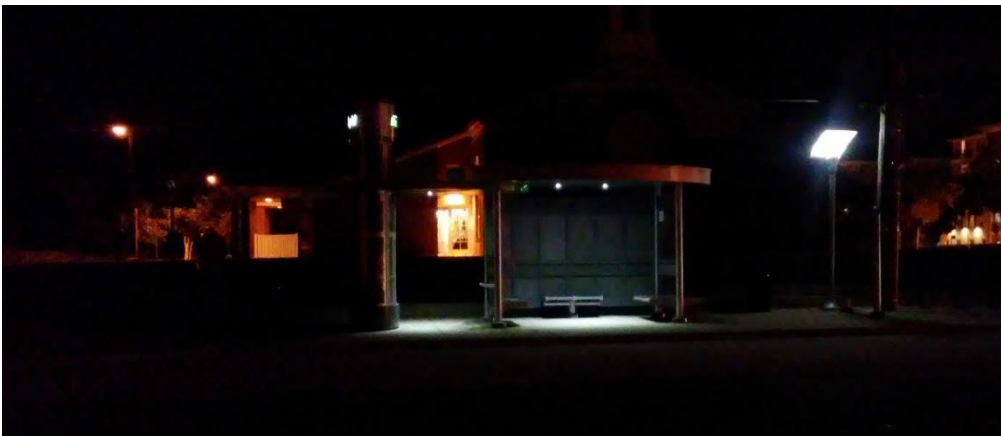
- ❖ Another indication of the lack of attention to lighting for pedestrians as they walk along a roadway is the failure to count pedestrians after dark. From the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street project report:
 

*As part of this study, pedestrian and bicycle behavior was observed along the study limits. Pedestrian and bicycle counts were performed in early December of 2012, while local schools and USF were in session. In order to document the level of activity in this area, pedestrian/bike counts were performed on Saturday, December 8th, and Wednesday, December 12th. The 9-hour counts were performed essentially from dawn to dusk in order to observe behavior throughout an entire day.*

- ❖ School properties could also use better lighting. This includes Mort (below) and Muller. Better lighting will help with crime prevention and the community’s sense of the schools as safe places.



- ❖ Transit stop lighting is inconsistent and generally poor throughout the area. Even newer shelters do not ensure or provide light nearby where assailants might hide. This is also crucial when drug sales are known to occur at area transit shelters.





❖ Tree-light conflicts are prevalent, even on anchor campuses.

❖ Street lights vary greatly, including spacing, height, intensity, color, and tree conflicts. Most of the newer pedestrian fixtures along 22nd Street sit behind the sidewalk on both sides of the street and provide some good light beyond the sidewalk.

❖ Lighting on parts of Bruce B Downs Boulevard and Bearss Avenue is just barely adequate for vehicular traffic, and many sidewalk areas are dark due to tree-light conflicts. This is a significant issue given the roadways' role as an "image corridor" for the CSAP area and its anchor institutions.

❖ Lighting of and from occupied private properties is quite inconsistent as well. This includes apartments, medical offices, some retailers, hotels, and restaurants.



❖ Street light color is also very inconsistent in the neighborhood. Newer lights appear to use white LEDs but older bulbs are HPS and Metal Halide.

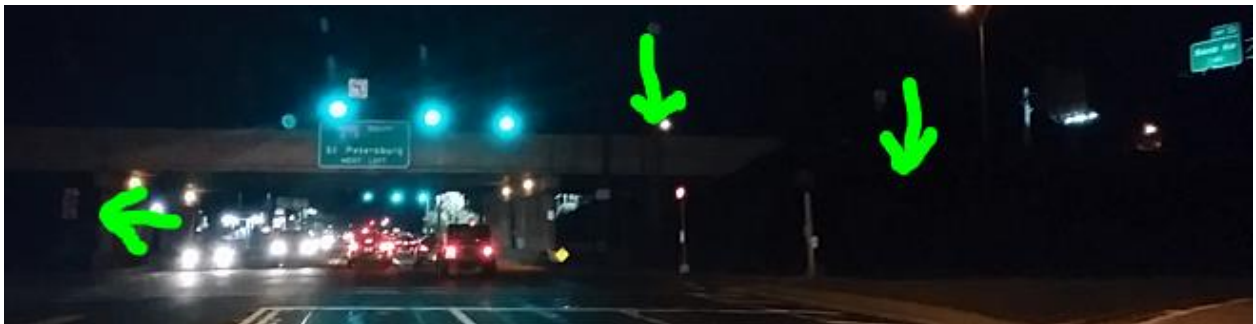
❖ TECO installs and manages public street lighting throughout the area, but it is unclear what standards they use, who reviews their designs for compliance with those standards, and how those reviews are accomplished. They do have a good online system with email confirmation for reporting fixtures that are not functioning, but it is not systematically used by Police or other stakeholder groups. We observed a number of fixtures out on all of our field visits.

❖ It is also significant that TECO does not assume responsibility for tree trimming when there are conflicts with lighting. Their Bright Choices® program clearly states that TECO has no tree trimming responsibilities.

❖ We were unable to obtain or evaluate County lighting standards for private properties, and it is unclear whether any exist in the current regulations. The wide variation in existing lighting conditions suggests they are not yet in place.

❖ Lighting at I-275 gateway locations is reasonable along most exit ramps, but the underpass conditions are marginal at best, with very dark sidewalk areas as shown here at Fletcher Avenue and elsewhere:





- ❖ A number of private properties near I-275 gateways also have very poor lighting, creating a negative first impression about the safety of the area.





*Enterprise car rental is a good example of poor business lighting in a key location*

- ❖ There appear to be no lighting requirements for vacant structures or properties, as shown by this gas station on Bearss Avenue:



- ❖ The current County residential street light program appears to have been set up for high homeownership areas of single family homes. It requires signatures of more than 50% of property owners in a district before it will make improvements using a special assessment. This is a challenge in the CSAP area given the low levels of homeownership.



- ❖ Lighting is inconsistent on local collector streets as well. The photo below shows conditions on 15<sup>th</sup> Street just north of Fowler Avenue.



## **Private Development Design Reviews**

While we did not review the entire array of land development regulations and processes, we spoke with staff and reviewed several documents for a general sense of how projects are reviewed and observed the following:

- ❖ There are limited provisions for advanced CPTED or similar reviews (eg. SafeDesign™ or SafeGrowth). No past evaluations were provided by the Police, citing security and privacy concerns.
- ❖ There is a CPTED process during zoning review. Per ordinance, projects must meet at least **one** of the criteria from several categories. As shown below, the criteria are vague enough that it is unlikely any project would not meet the minimum CPTED requirements. Fundamentally, no one is reviewing plans to ensure the quality basic CPTED features and designs, let alone advanced CPTED principles or Safedesign™ approaches.

- **Sec. 6.03.11. - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)**

- A. *Intent.*

- The intent of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is to achieve the creation and re-creation of a safe, attractive and economically viable physical environment, and that the proper design and effective use of the physical environment would lead to a reduction in the incidence and fear of crime and an improvement in the quality of life.*

- B. *Applicability.*

- The provisions of [Section 6.03.11](#) shall be incorporated into the site design of all newly developed and redeveloped properties with non-residential or multi-family uses. For expansions to existing developments meeting the above criteria, these regulations shall apply only to the area of expansion. If the application of CPTED principles conflict with other sections of this Code, the most restrictive shall apply.*

- C. *Requirements.*

- A minimum of one CPTED strategy from each of the principles of Natural Surveillance, Natural Access Control and Territorial Reinforcement shall be incorporated into the site design phase for all applicable development.*

- 1. *Natural Surveillance (Reduce Opportunities)*

- Criminal opportunities can be reduced by creating an atmosphere that does not encourage or invite unlawful activity. Strategies include;*

- a. *well lit public outdoor areas and pedestrian walkways;*
      - b. *well lit parking areas;*
      - c. *direction to general public access from all parking areas;*
      - d. *signs directing general public to entrances for general public;*
      - e. *easily identifiable store entrances;*
      - f. *restrict the access to roofs or upper levels;*
      - g. *elevators and stairs in parking garages located on the perimeter to permit natural surveillance from exterior public areas via glass-back elevators and glass at stairs and elevator lobbies; and*
      - h. *Parking areas designed in a way to accommodate the immediate or future installation of emergency communications.*

- 2. *Natural Access Control (Increase Visibility)*

- Visibility in and around the business and residential areas will help to reduce crime. strategies include:*

- a. *store windows facing all parking areas;*
      - b. *interior shelves and displays not exceeding five feet in height;*

- c. well lit interior/exterior spaces;
- d. building-mounted lighting installed on all exterior walls, especially at delivery/service and entrances for general public;
- e. clear visibility maintained from the store to the street, parking areas, pedestrian walkways, and passing vehicles;
- f. all entrances and exits under visual or electronic surveillance; and
- g. landscaping, buildings, walls and fences which do not create hiding places or hinder visibility.

3. Territorial Reinforcement

Physical features can be used to distinguish private areas from public spaces. Residential areas should be designed to mark territory, sending a message that the property belongs to someone. Strategies to differentiate private areas from public spaces include:

- a. landscaping, special pavement, and low fences;
- b. security system signage displayed at access points;
- c. public spaces identified by welcome, directional, marquee, or similar signs; and
- d. wrought iron, aluminum picket or similar non-opaque decorative gates used to identify entrances or direct pedestrian traffic.

4. Maintenance and Management

Maintenance and management shall be considered at the site design phase, as the selection of materials and finishes impact the types of maintenance methods that can be sustained over time. Proper maintenance prevents reduced visibility due to, for example, plant overgrowth, and obstructed or inoperative lighting. Strategies include:

- a. low-maintenance landscaping and lighting treatments;
- b. location of light fixtures at suitable heights for easy maintenance and replacement; and
- c. posting current information indicating who to call when maintenance is required, such as light bulb burnout, plant overgrowth, etc.

(Ord. No. 08-29, § 2, eff. 2-1-09; Ord. No. 09-62, Item Q, 10-26-09, eff. 2-1-2010)

**Editor's note**— Ord. No. 08-29, § 2, effective February 1, 2009, amended the Code by adding two separate sections both numbered 6.03.10. The second was renumbered as [6.03.11](#) at the discretion of the editor.

- ❖ This description from a project plan proposal was deemed sufficient for reviewers for compliance with current CPTED regulations.



- ❖ Conversations with staff indicated that photometric analyses, night time renderings, and surveys of existing lighting are rarely, if ever, required during the review process.

- ❖ Poor lighting conditions along sidewalks of recently completed projects reinforce the fact that current CPTED regulations are not effective. The image below is from the property where the second CSAP Steering Group meeting was held, a senior housing project.



- ❖ Lighting on and near the University Mall is also problematic, particularly given its role as an image maker for the community. Several entrances have marginal or poor lighting due to tree conflicts or a lack of fixtures. The garage lighting is adequate but not appealing, and general parking lot lighting is barely adequate in a number of spots. The images below illustrate the issue.

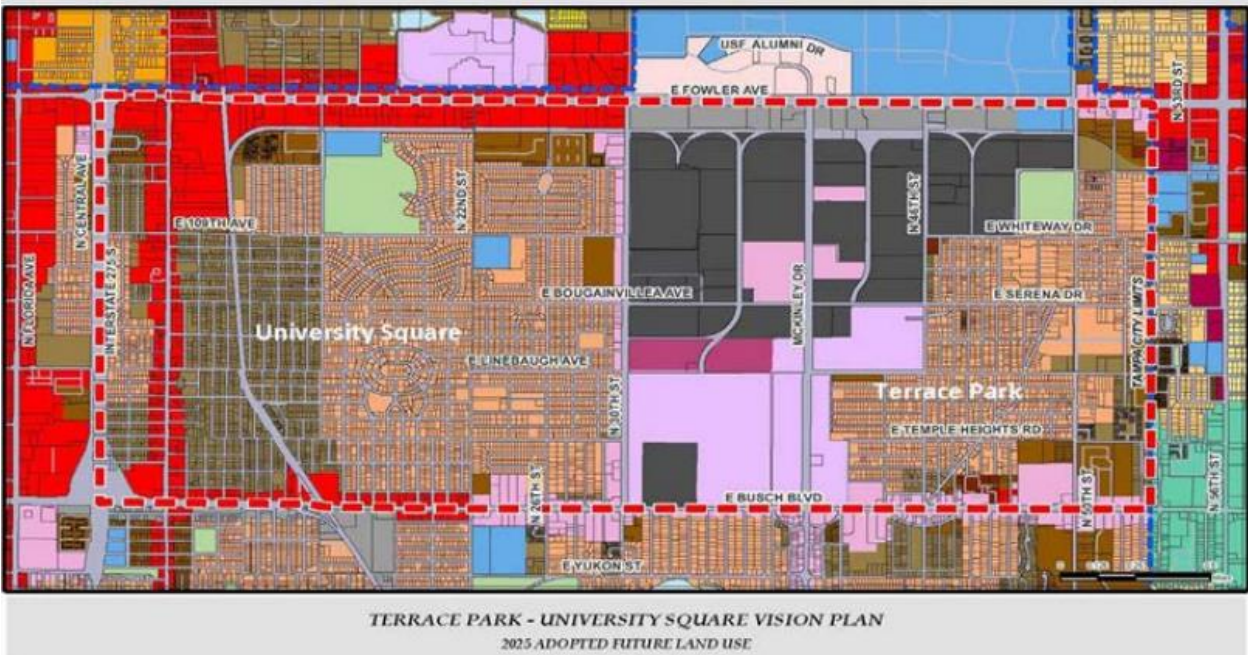


## Land Use Patterns and Regulations

Commercial and multifamily land uses dominate the CSAP area. Commercial buildings are concentrated on major roadways but occasionally are found elsewhere. Mixed use building are generally not present, and large institutional land uses are clustered on the eastern edge.

In addition, vacant buildings and lots are pervasive. This has a major impact on territoriality (no one “owns” or actively controls behavior on vacant parcels) as well as natural surveillance – no “eyes on the street” come from vacant buildings or lots.

While a number of plans suggest mixed use patterns along major arterials and some collectors, that land use pattern has not yet developed, and required building setbacks and landscaping will still reduce natural surveillance of key pedestrian pathways. Also, the south side of Fowler Avenue is restricted to commercial uses as shown below.





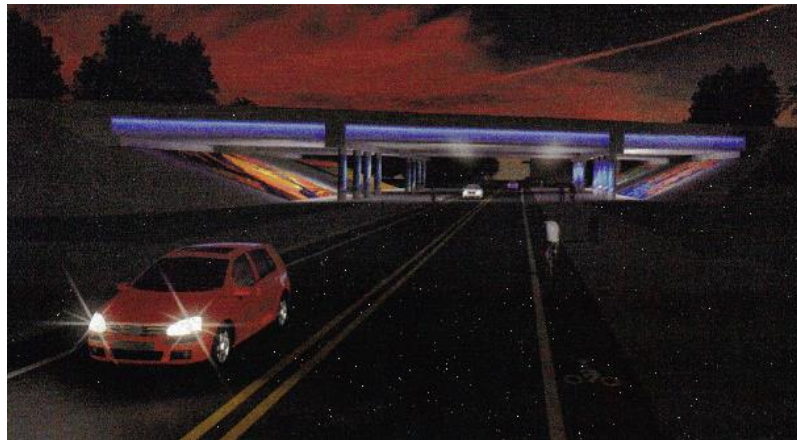
## Signs of Territoriality

In contrast to signs of disorder, signs of territoriality can improve perceptions, reduce anti-social behaviors, prevent crime, and improve property values. Our observations about such conditions in the CSAP area included the following:

- ❖ Signs of territoriality are very limited in the public realm. For example, anchor campus edges along major roadways have very few seasonally colorful flowers, no visible public art, and contain only understated street banners. Even the new median plantings along Fletcher Avenue and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street only include dull green vegetation. The new fencing on the USF campus uses the school logo as a sign of positive territoriality, but the fence itself can be perceived as a defensive and hostile sign of the lack of safety, particularly given the lack of more colorful landscaping in strategic locations.



- ❖ Murals and similar public art installations are largely absent from the CSAP area, although a proposed lighting design for the I-275 underpass at Fowler Avenue will be helpful.



- ❖ The Harvest Hope Park community garden is a positive sign of territoriality, including the building art. Plans for expansion can also have strong impacts on territoriality.



- ❖ Neighborhood vendors provide some positive territoriality. At the same time, some careful guidance and management could amplify those benefits.

- ❖ The UACDC campus also includes a variety of landscape, lighting, and signage improvements that enhance that portion of the CSAP area. However, the schools and other non-profit buildings still could benefit from similar improvements.
- ❖ Several businesses maintain their properties very well and exert great territoriality on adjacent sidewalks, but not much further. Some new University Mall outparcel buildings embody this, but much of the rest of the Mall perimeter does not.
- ❖ Residential areas have some signs of territoriality, but much less than is typical. The lack of holiday decorations, porch lighting, colorful flowers and well-maintained fencing is notable.

### **Convenience Stores**

While no formal analytics were requested or reviewed, our site visits revealed a consistent pattern of loitering, panhandling, and open containers at a number of convenience stores in the CSAP area. Convenience stores in many locations are not following best practices or State guidelines for security. None of the establishments were designed and operated according to best practices for convenience stores. Windows were limited or blocked with advertisements, lighting was inconsistent, security cameras were not visible in most exterior locations, and sites had little fencing or other access control features.

Some of our community stakeholder and Police interviews did specifically identify these as problem sites, but there appear to be no special regulations in place. In other Florida cities, they adopt the Florida State standards for Convenience Store Security. HCSO is also using the S.A.V.E. and S.U.C.C.E.E.D. programs to combat underage alcohol purchases at convenience stores – including gas stations, and these efforts could be combined.

### **Pathway and Sidewalk Landscaping**

The extensive tree cover in the CSAP area is a very positive community feature, and the culture of extensive landscaping as part of placemaking is clear. At the same time, in areas where there is significant fear of crime – as well as actual crime – extensive or excessive landscaping along pedestrian pathways and sidewalks can be a negative feature. We observed such conditions in a number of locations along major roadways as well as neighborhood streets, including along key school walking routes, making them less safe as well.



Some of this kind of landscaping is on public property, but much is on private property. We did not discover any significant efforts to address this issue, and no stakeholders actually raised it specifically. However, combined with poor lighting in many locations, such conditions are a significant concern for the CSAP area.

### **Wayfinding**

Getting lost in “unsafe” urban places is a regular concern for many visitors, and effective wayfinding systems are an essential tool to manage those concerns, particularly after dark along exit pathways. We observed existing wayfinding features during our field visits and reviewed available plans and materials for future improvements.

- ❖ Many Street Name signs in the CSAP area are difficult to read at the decision point. It is good that many are lighted along major roadways, but placement in large intersections is poor.
- ❖ Exit wayfinding is also limited, particularly given the large number of visitors to the district hospitals, University Mall, and USF.
- ❖ Some good freeway directional signage points to anchors, but reinforcing signage is a bit limited.
- ❖ Importantly, there are multiple routes to the CSAP area and its anchor institution destinations. This Southbound I-275 sign directs people onto Fletcher to reach USF. This means TIA and others cannot focus exclusively on Fowler improvements and wayfinding signage if they want to help people address fears of getting lost.



- ❖ Banners are absent as a wayfinding device except at the USF campus, as are unique streetscape elements.
- ❖ Finally, wayfinding icons are absent from key points along major travel pathways. This includes lighted tall or prominent buildings, public art, signature archways or bridges, and similar structures.
- ❖ No plans for wayfinding signage were made available to us, but we understand they may be in development as part of Fowler roadway improvements.

## Strategic Communications & Marketing

We reviewed a variety of information both online and provided to us in printed or electronic formats. We also reviewed mainstream and social media reports directly related to the University Area and TID, and we compiled comments from stakeholder interviews and community discussions.

USF, TIA, the University Mall, and others have formulated and distributed positive messages and images about the CSAP area as an important economic district, an emerging visitor destination, and a place where institutions care deeply about those in need. Mainstream media has recently been supportive of those brand attributes, but it has also highlighted historically negative place names and attributes. The negative safety aspects of the place brand remain a major challenge.

At the same time, most messaging has been about individual institutions or organizations, and there has been minimal past efforts to enhance the place brand beyond the “campus” brands. While recent efforts have begun under the auspices of TIA to address this, it is not yet known how well that initiative will address the safety aspects of the brand.

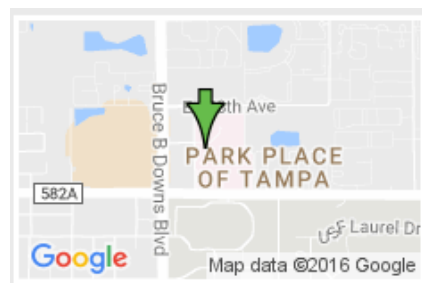
Importantly, we did not find attempts to counter negative media messages by making announcements about crime statistics, new Police initiatives or patrols, new safety regulations, or new anti-crime lighting. Nor did we read about protest marches or safety rallies in the media. All of these kinds of communications carry negative-indirect messages about the safety of a place, ***and it is good that they have not been used***. For example: if they are talking about crime stats, there must be a crime problem; if they need new crime regulations, there must be a crime problem; if they need extra lighting, it must not be safe.

We did find some evidence of negative safety messages provided to USF students, but they were not as significant as some business and community stakeholders suggested. Students we interviewed indicated that informal advice from other students was sometimes to avoid the “sketchy” WalMart and University Mall, but formal advice from the University during orientation was more general about being safe anywhere off campus. Some negativity was reinforced by the Off the Grid educational materials, but it was also fairly general.

On the other hand, we found very few examples of positive-indirect messages about safety in the CSAP area. Promotional photos and other imagery do not highlight families with young children and strollers in public spaces or at public events – particularly after dark. Personal interest stories do not highlight young women or elderly residents dining in area at night or attending the sports or concert events. Almost all promotional messaging by anchors focused only on that individual campus.

Businesses are also not collectively marketing the district/neighborhood, including any intentional messages about safety. They do not appear to be organized to do so at this point, but that will likely change under the auspices of TIA. But there was not a marketing and communications plan for the **place** available for us to review at the time of our evaluation.

In addition, the basic place brand itself is generally weak. There are multiple descriptor names used, and there are no significant signs, banners, entry markers, or even business names that reinforce the place brand name. There does not seem to be consensus about the name itself. Anchors do not use a local place name to describe their location, instead using phrases like “located in the heart of beautiful Tampa Bay”, “Tampa Bay, FL”, or “Tampa Bay region.” Even the map on one anchor website has a little used place name. Two only use a street address with no neighborhood or place name at all.





Given this lack of place branding in general, there is very limited intentional effort or strategy related to managing communications *for safety perceptions*, and existing communications efforts of the various stakeholders do not currently highlight the positive safety place-brand attributes beyond the anchor campuses. We do expect that the work by others will address some of this in the near future.

### **Strategic Communications – Negative Incidents and Responses**

Negative media stories about safety events can completely undermine other marketing and promotional efforts if not carefully managed. This requires planning, preparation, and cooperation among a variety of partners both at the County and in the community. We reviewed media coverage, press releases, and a variety of materials needed to manage these kinds of messages (e.g. historical crime stats and reports). We also interviewed several people who would likely be required to respond in the case of a major event. While our research and inquiries were limited, we note the following:

- ❖ A collection of media coverage about the CSAP area over the last 2 years was not readily available, but we did receive some positive stories through TIA and their consultants.
- ❖ We did not receive a crisis communications plan and assume one is not in place. We also did not hear about any coordinated efforts.
- ❖ There do not appear to be regular meetings among anchor institutions, Police, and UACDC about safety concerns and communications.
- ❖ We heard significantly different perspectives about how successful past safety efforts, past events, and past programs have been. Such differences are often exploited by reporters to create negative controversy and negative safety messages.
- ❖ We did not find any regular publications – electronic or print – about progress in the neighborhood related to community-identified needs like dumping, lighting, and vacant lots. Such reports may exist, but no one in the community shared them. Those reports can be helpful as a counterbalance to negative media coverage.

### **Events and Branding/Marketing**

Signature events that are carefully designed and managed often help visitors and others overcome past fears and perceptions. With consistency and other signs of progress, those “event experiences” often lead to increased demand for services, goods, housing, and development sites. At the same time, not all events have these impacts, and some can actually create more negative perceptions and experiences, further reducing demand for those things.

We reviewed information and media reports looking for past and planned signature community events, but we found none beyond those held on the USF campus for USF patrons. While this reinforces the weak nature of the current community place brand, it also provides a great opportunity to integrate safety messages and strategies as TIA and others consider new signature events.

### **Image Corridors and Marketing/Communications**

There was a significant amount of discussion about negative impacts of several of the main corridors in the CSAP area, including Fowler, Fletcher, and Nebraska Avenues. In marketing terms, the negative physical conditions along such highly-travelled corridors creates millions of negative safety “impressions” annually about the place that are very difficult to counteract with traditional branding campaigns and advertising. We often suggest such conditions act like a series of billboards with negative “disorder” messages about a place.



USF, TIA, and others are working carefully to improve perceptions of the area with physical improvements to Fowler Avenue, banners along several major roadways, some lighted signage, and notable campus entryways. More improvements are being planned, but plans were not available at the time of our evaluation.

At the same time, we did not find public incentive programs focused on private properties along these corridors, and past and planned streetscaping improvements have not been intentional enough about ways to impact safety perceptions. Understanding and making the connection between these physical conditions and the overall marketing and communications for the CSAP area is crucial to successfully changing perceptions of safety.

University Mall has a unique role to play in the enhancement of the Fowler Avenue corridor, and their recent improvements to outparcels has had a very positive impact, including the outdoor seating that greatly enhances natural surveillance. However, the main mall entry features, signage, landscaping, lighting, and other physical features of the site still contribute negatively. Multiple stakeholders expressed the importance of improving the look and brand of the Mall as part of the place brand for the area, and those same improvements will have a significant positive impact on safety perceptions.

### **Partner Safety Communications**

Addressing real safety issues requires true partnerships, and so does addressing safety perceptions. Crime/safety is also a highly emotional issue that invites miscommunications. All this makes excellent communications among partners absolutely crucial to success.

In our stakeholder interviews, in community meetings, and in our review of various communications materials, we paid close attention to signs of communication among partners, including but not limited to: Police, UACDC, anchors, social service providers, the Mall, area businesses, and others. We observed the following efforts and issues:

- ❖ There are no regular meetings among the diverse partners focused exclusively on real and perceived safety in the CSAP area.
- ❖ The recently organized UACDC Community Safety & Wellness Committee may provide the primary mechanism for regular partner safety communications, but the membership composition needs to include USF and other major anchor representatives to be most useful.
- ❖ UACDC and TIA will need to improve communications at the board level to have the greatest impact on real and perceived safety programs and messages.

### **Strategic Communications - KSA Insights:**

There appears to be a general understanding of the importance of communications related to safety, and there is clearly some sophisticated and strategic thinking by the various stakeholders as well as significant investment in a variety of marketing and communications efforts in the area. At the same time, we did not find intentional or methodical activities to make high quality communications about real and perceived safety the regular practice of any of the partners. We did note a few instances of partners promoting safety initiatives in ways that also inadvertently carried negative-indirect safety messages about the place. Here is one example:

*TAMPA. Fla. - A Tampa community, terrified they'll be killed while simply walking down the street, is getting some much needed help. **University Area** Resident Rachel Linen said she feels exposed walking down 20th street in Tampa to pick her kids up from daycare. "I feel unsafe and scared with my kids," she said.*

At the same time, we were pleased to find that, despite some frustration, none of the partners have sought to elevate concerns and use the media to try to resolve issues. This happens frequently in other communities, it sends substantial negative-indirect messages, and we have never seen it have sustainable positive impacts.

Progress to improve the place brand, and potentially subdistrict place brands, has been slow. Given the current dominant “unsafe” aspect of the University Area brand, there is urgency to put a shared strategy in place. While it makes sense to do this under the auspices of TIA, care must be taken to be inclusive of existing businesses and residents.

Finally, good structures are in place to move things forward, and there appears to be reasonable leadership in place among the partners. This will make improving strategic communications for safety much easier than in many other similarly-situated neighborhoods.

# Appendix A-2

## Documents Reviewed

(does not include all media reports reviewed)

- ❖ Crime Free Multifamily Housing (CFMH) Application Agreement – HCSO
- ❖ CFMH CPTED Requirements – HCSO
- ❖ CFMH Program – Letter to Residents – HCSO
- ❖ CFMH Program Workbook – HCSO
- ❖ CFMH Training Invitation – HCSO
- ❖ CFMH Lease Addendum – HCSO
- ❖ CFMH CPTED Survey Form – HCSO
- ❖ CFMH Invitation Letter – Managers/Owners – HCSO
- ❖ Redevelopment Incentives for Pilot Project Areas – July 2016
- ❖ Palm River Industrial Park – Sample CPTED Review
- ❖ 2013 through 2015 Sex Crimes Maps
- ❖ University Area Sub-district Map series – HC MPO
- ❖ Harvest Hope Park Site Plan and Summary Description
- ❖ USF Area Complete Streets Concept Plan – 46<sup>th</sup> St./Skipper Rd. & 131<sup>st</sup> Ave. – Pattern Book
- ❖ Coordinated Community Anti-Crime Initiative – UACDC
- ❖ University Area Community Plan Update – 2013 – The Planning Commission
- ❖ 42<sup>nd</sup> Street Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements Final Feasibility Report – RS&H for County
- ❖ 56<sup>th</sup> Street Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements Final Feasibility Report – RS&H for County
- ❖ Fletcher Avenue Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Action Plan – URS and Volkert for County
- ❖ Future of Hillsborough Comprehensive Plan – Livable Communities Element
- ❖ Terrace Park-University Square Vision Plan – City of Tampa
- ❖ University Area Transit Circulator Study – Final Report – MPO and HART
- ❖ Choosing an Apartment - A Safety Guide – USF
- ❖ Campus Safety Day Materials – USF
- ❖ Off The Grid Safety Brochure – USF
- ❖ Living Off-Campus Safety Features and Tips – USF
- ❖ Walkability Report and Brochure – UACDC
- ❖ Mort Elementary, A Community School – Needs Assessment
- ❖ 2015 Community Needs Assessment – UACDC
- ❖ Bright Choices® Outdoor Lighting Program brochure – TECO
- ❖ Part 6.10.00 – Exterior Lighting – County
- ❖ Pedestrian & Bicycle High Crash Areas Strategic Plan 2012 – MPO
- ❖ FDOT Pedestrian Lighting Training presentation – 2015
- ❖ Roadway Design Memorandum 16-02 – Design Methodology for Intersection Lighting Retrofit Projects – FDOT
- ❖ Residential Street Lighting program brochure – County Public Works
- ❖ 2014-2015 Strategic Plan – Safe & Sound Hillsborough
- ❖ S.A.V.E. and S.U.C.C.E.E.D. Program Description – HCSO
- ❖ Sec. 6.03.11. – Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) – Hillsborough County
- ❖ Bike and Pedestrian Improvements and Educations – HCPS
- ❖ Tampa Greenways and Trails Master Plan

- ❖ Tampa Innovation District Transit Circulator report – Hillsborough MPO
- ❖ Safer Stops for Vulnerable Customers – FDOT and USF/CUTR (2003)
- ❖ Coordinated Community Anti-Crime Initiative Quarterly Report – June 2011 – UACDC
- ❖ UACDC Community Safety & Wellness Committee Charter
- ❖ University Area Cameras map – HCSO
- ❖ University Area Rental/Redevelopment Study – Wade Trim for HUD, County, TPC
- ❖ University Community Area Master Plan – Addendum A – 2001
- ❖ USF Clery Report Statistics
- ❖ 2015-2016 Annual Security Report & Fire Safety Guide – USF Police
- ❖ Neighborhood Guide to Tampa – USF Graduate School (online)
- ❖ Mort Elementary SRTS Applications – April 2016
- ❖ Tampa Innovation District Anchor-Community Partnerships Engagement Report – DRAFT

# Appendix B

## Harvest Hope Park Project Review





## Safedesign™ Project Review - DRAFT Harvest Hope Park

### Background

As part of their strategic community development investments, the University Area Community Development Corporation (UACDC) has purchased and plans to further improve the property generally bounded by E 138<sup>th</sup> Avenue, N 20<sup>th</sup> Street, E 137<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and N 19<sup>th</sup> Street. The site currently contains a community garden and small structure that is used for meetings and food classes, among other things. A more complete description of the project can be found in Appendix B-2. From our review of the plans, interviews with UACDC staff, and other research, the key goals and attributes of the proposed Park include the following:

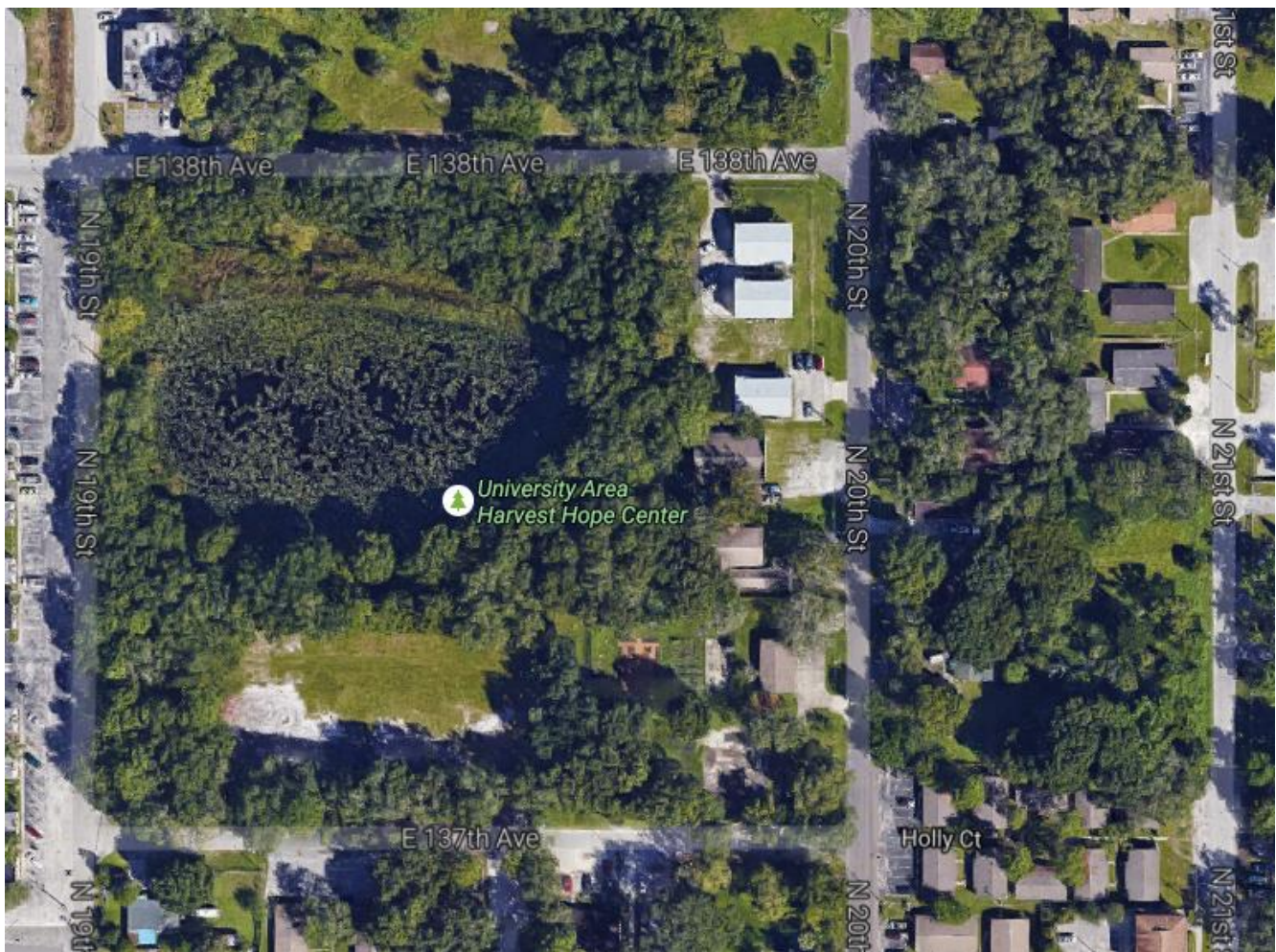
### Existing Conditions

- ❖ The site is located in the heart of the community.
- ❖ Currently there are major safety issues including unsafe secluded spaces where homeless camping and drug activity take place. Stakeholders also reported that there is major drug activity west of the site.
- ❖ Easy access to the pond, unsafe ground conditions and large amounts of trash scattered throughout has prevented the land from becoming a resident friendly space.
- ❖ Park site is privately owned by UACDC and will not be protected by the sovereign immunity of the State or County in the manner that public parks are protected. Premises liability issues must be carefully addressed.
- ❖ The site was recently rezoned to Planned Development (PD) using the site plan we reviewed.

### Goals for the Park

- ❖ Be a ***catalyst for transformation*** change in the University Area Community.
- ❖ ***Enhance the living conditions*** for community members who are low to moderate in income.
- ❖ Make the University Area community ***more attractive*** and make residents more likely to call the University Area home
- ❖ Be a community ***friendly space*** that encourages family play, healthy eating, environmental sustainability, education and community interactions.
- ❖ Serve as the ***hub where the Neighborhood Crime Watch*** Program will be based out of to give residents a voice and a platform to take ownership of their community by uniting together for a specific purpose and unified message.

- ❖ Serve as the critical mass and **positive anchor**, pushing out from that location with other investments.
- ❖ Serve as a **beacon of hope** for residents who live in the University Area.
- ❖ Develop and program a **multi-purpose sports field** where sports leagues for youth and adults will be held through the Get Moving program.
- ❖ Create a **walking trail** will give residents a safe place to exercise and enjoy the outdoors, while meeting other residents with the intent to build community efficacy.
- ❖ Vegetation and landscaping will be managed to create a reassuring environment, reduce fear, and increase citizen surveillance and defensible space, while minimizing environmental impacts.
- ❖ Project descriptions states that the built infrastructure of sidewalks, lighting, parking and fencing all created with the Principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) will be adopted to build a safer park.



### ***Additional Planned Programming and Features***

- ❖ Hours from sunup to sundown.
- ❖ Membership-based fishing in the spring-fed pond.
- ❖ Playground as a memorial for child who died nearby.
- ❖ Free access to most programs.
- ❖ Private security patrols.
- ❖ Additional perimeter lighting in partnership with TECO. Interior lighting will be UACDC responsibility.
- ❖ The 47 off-street parking spaces were required by County zoning as part of the approval process.
- ❖ The minimum building setback of 50' along 137<sup>th</sup> Street is more extensive than all but one of the other structures in the immediate area. The remaining setbacks are similar to the surrounding area.
- ❖ There is also a 30' conservation setback around the pond.
- ❖ A large number of picnic tables are proposed to be scattered around the site.
- ❖ Two bathrooms are proposed for the interior of the site, far away from the main structure and out of view of most organized activities.
- ❖ A Saturday Farmer's market is planned for the site.
- ❖ Several meandering pathways are proposed through trees and other landscaped areas.
- ❖ Outdoor exercise equipment is proposed for a midblock area near 19<sup>th</sup> Street, set back behind the trees.
- ❖ The plan and rendering clearly anticipate the removal of many trees and much of the underbrush. An arborist will be engaged to make more specific recommendations.
- ❖ Other than current fencing for the community garden and around the pond, the site plan does not show any fencing for the site. However, the rendering seems to include a low split rail type fence along some of the perimeter.

### ***Community Input and Concerns***

In addition to concerns about safety on the site by local residents, conservation advocates have expressed concerns about the potential loss of trees and other vegetation. It does not appear that any of the conservation advocates live in the immediate vicinity, however.

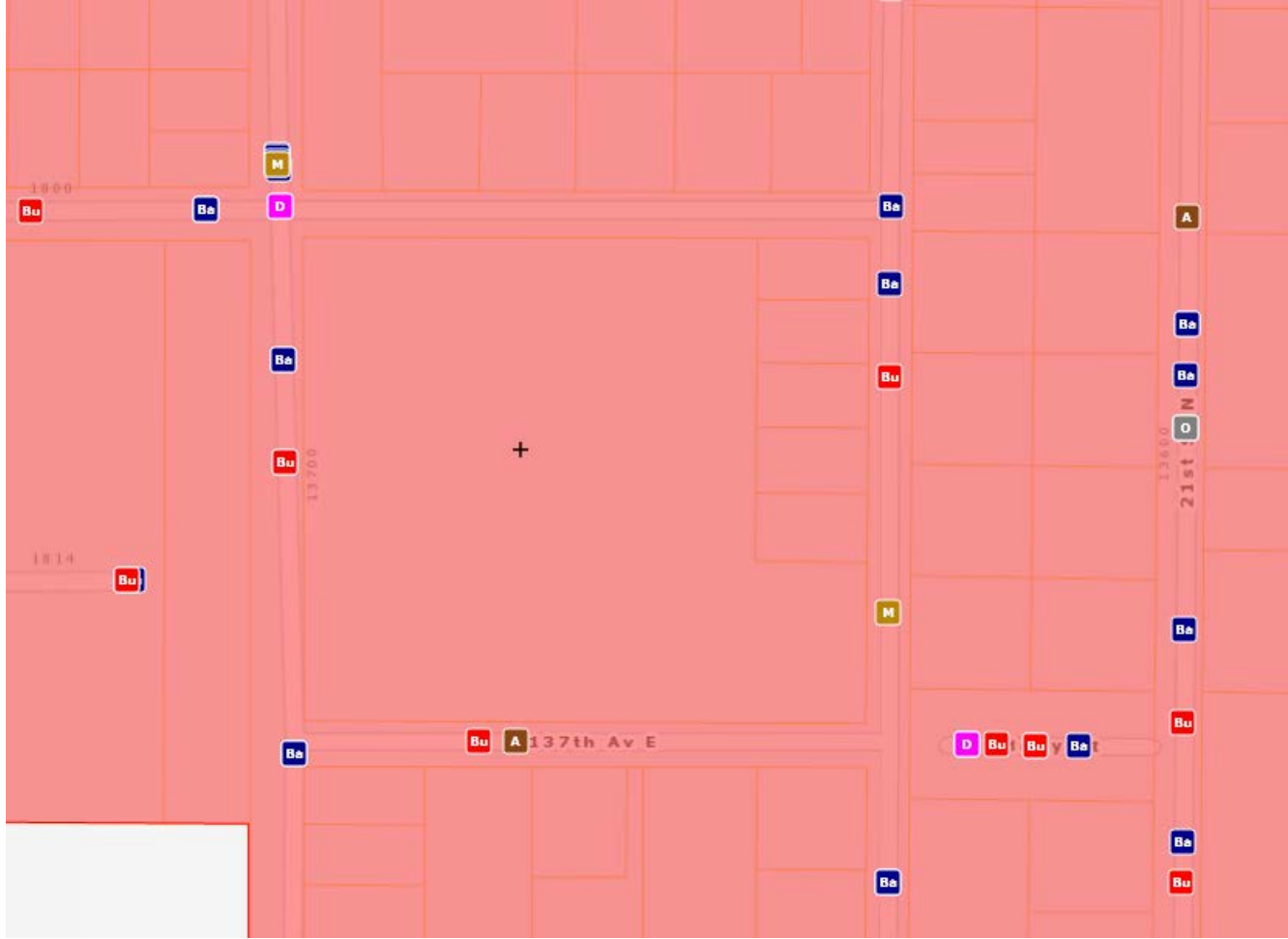
### ***Other Area Conditions and Improvements***

Beyond the park site, UACDC also plans to implement the block by block model program, addressing housing concerns, and implementing wrap-around services. They have already purchased additional sites for the purpose of creating new housing. UACDC has already purchased the parcels indicated on the following map:





Hillsborough County online crime maps indicate a variety of criminal incidents over the last 12 months as shown on the map below. Drug arrests, burglaries, batteries, assaults, and a kidnapping indicate the general area is an active crime location. However, it is unclear whether any of the incidents happened on the actual Park property.



## Observations and Insights

We conducted multiple site visits both day and night for the site and surrounding areas. We also reviewed specific preliminary and conceptual plans provided for the project and surrounding public realm improvements to provide initial Safedesign™ recommendations regarding real and perceived safety in advance of more detailed plans. For readers unfamiliar with our Safedesign™ approach, more information can be found in Appendix D. Our observations and insights include the following:

### **Field Notes – After Dark**

Properties and streets to the north and south have very limited or inconsistent lighting. Property to the west has good lighting but no access control. Current street lights are very inadequate, particularly given the tree conflicts (appropriate for a park!) Nearby alleyway to the east (really only a pedestrian pathway) does not have



any light. Approach to the park from the south is also very dark. Little if any light on the property beyond the current structure and community garden. We did observe individuals sitting in portable chairs after dark on the southeast corner of the property on 3 occasions. We did not traverse the site on foot.

### **Field Notes - Daytime**

To the west, 19<sup>th</sup> Street had been recently paved but still had no striping (a month later). Parking lots immediately west are poorly configured and maintained, creating a significant sense of disorder and lack of control. There is a need to improve them as part of the plan. There is too much undefined space here.





Along 138<sup>th</sup> on both sides of the street, there is substantial landscaping including large trees and extensive undergrowth that limit natural surveillance.



As can be seen in the following photos, we found frequent signs of disorder on nearby sites including fencing in disrepair, overgrown weeds, litter, unscreened dumpsters, bulk trash outside of dumpsters, poorly maintained swales (used for parking), lack of roadway and crosswalk markings,









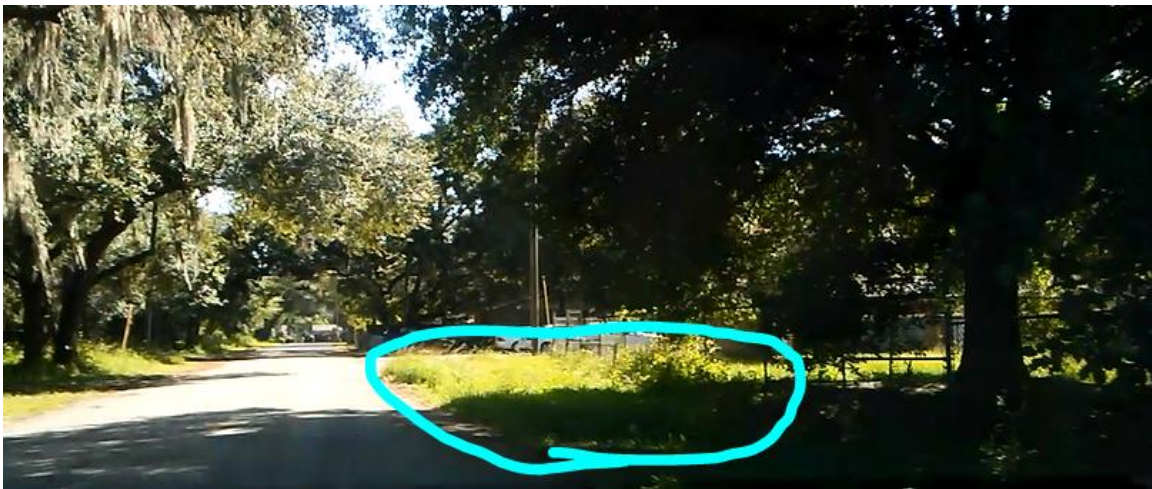


On the park site itself, we observed high weeds, a vehicle for sale, and a seemingly abandoned port-o-let as well as some old barrels.





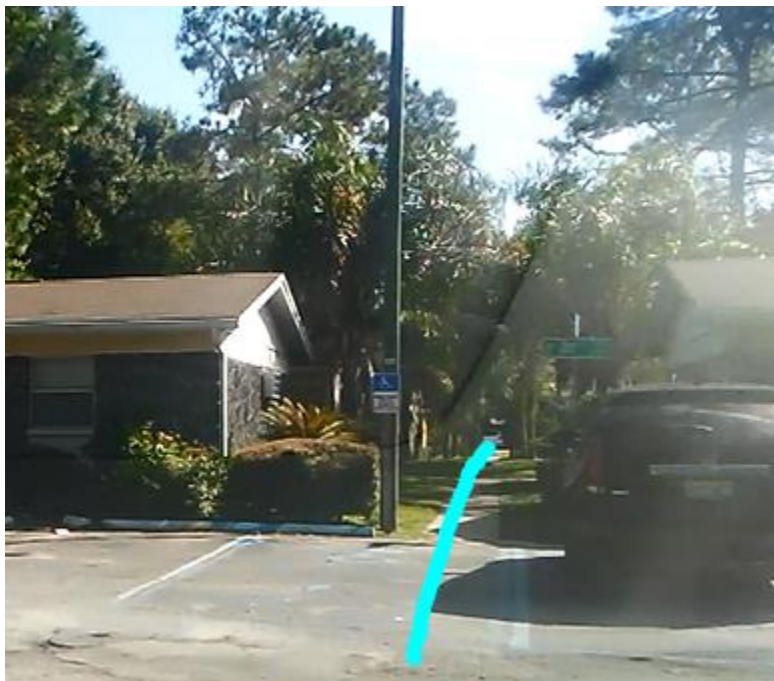
Many edges of the site were overgrown with landscaping, prohibiting natural surveillance and blocking the limited available street lighting. The following photos show some of those conditions.



There were also some signs of order and territoriality near the Park site. This picket fence on 137<sup>th</sup> provides access control, natural surveillance, and territoriality.



A unique nearby feature is Holly Court, an open public walkway between 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Streets. Because it is publicly accessible, appropriate lighting will help keep it safer.



We did notice a single soccer goal on the property but did not observe anyone at play during our multiple visits. The site seems to have very little programming at the moment.



**Review of Conceptual Planning Study (by Luis Lara, AIA – Lara Design Collaborative)**

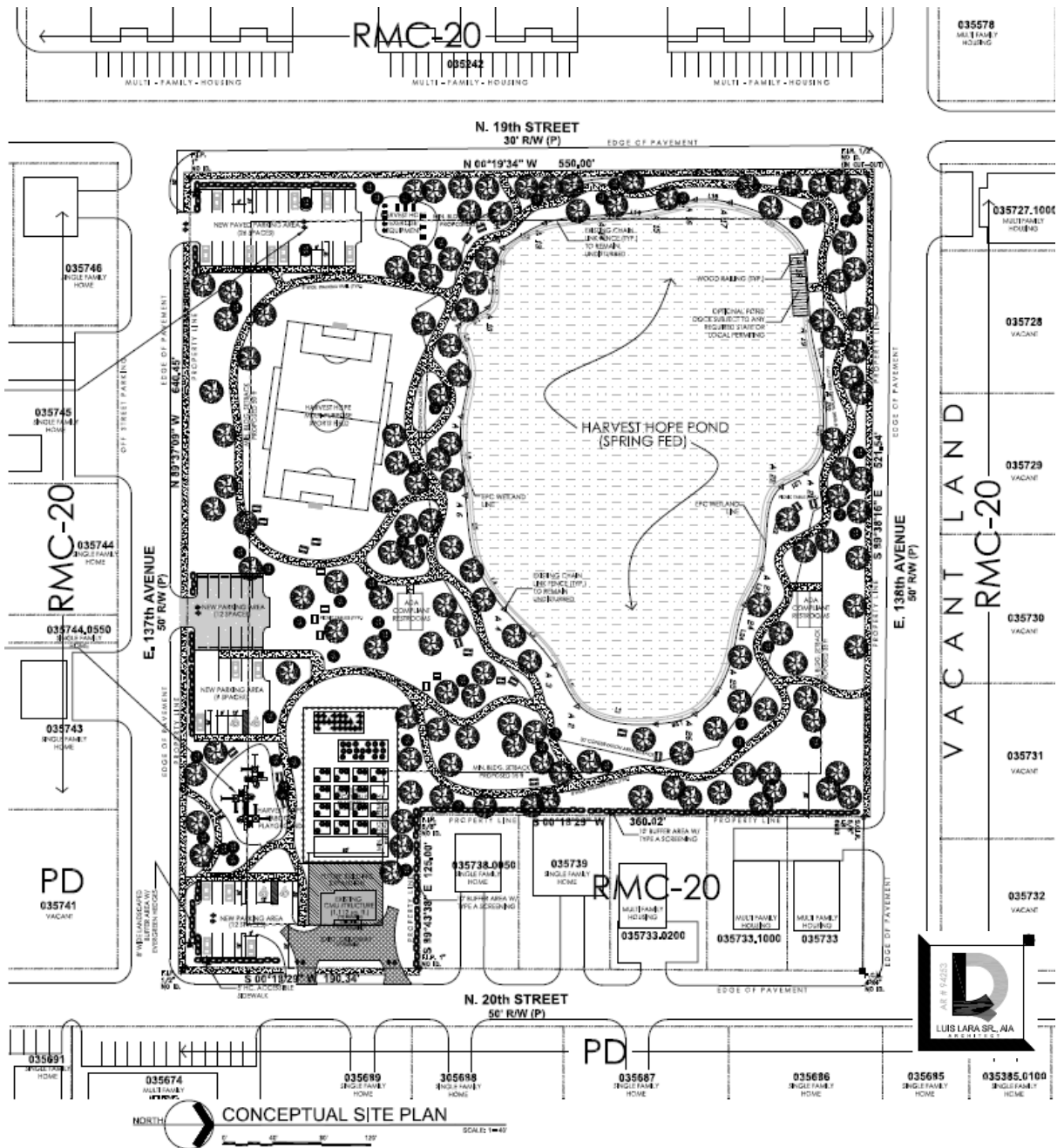
We reviewed the conceptual site plan and rendering used for zoning approvals as shown below, and share the following observations and insights:

- ❖ The community park is much needed for both the existing neighborhood needs for informal social interaction and healthy food opportunities as well as other community-building events. Bordering the park with residential as suggested is essential to enhance natural surveillance. Careful design will maximize both natural surveillance and territoriality. It appears to be conceived as a “flat” park without berms or other significant obstructions, and that is a very good feature.



See current tree cover below.





- ❑ Less clear is whether the Park development will substantially reduce the extensive tree cover. Many of the existing perimeter trees are not shown in the conceptual site plan and rendering.
- ❑ No renderings show after dark conditions, and no light poles, banners, or similar concepts are mentioned or shown on the conceptual site plan. The plan documents only indicate lighting conceptually by placing a few pedestrian fixtures on the rendering. Given the fundamentally urban nature of this park, in spite of its unique natural features, strategically designed lighting will be essential for the park to serve its intended functions.
- ❑ Several of the proposed parking areas are remote from the main building. This reduces both access management and natural surveillance opportunities.



- ❖ Suggested windows in the main building are small, limiting natural surveillance.
- ❖ The location of the children’s play structure at an angle to the main building limits natural surveillance. There is also no proposed fencing for child management or access management.
- ❖ Location of the outdoor gym has limited natural surveillance and no access management features. Its proximity to known drug sales areas could make it a problem spot with legitimized loitering that facilitates drive-by drug purchases.
- ❖ Meandering pathways create many points of surprise, particularly given the extensive existing landscaping and the internal site location of much of the pathways.
- ❖ The new perimeter sidewalks currently are not shown in front of homes at the northeast corner of the block. This reduced territoriality and may result in more mid-block crossings.
- ❖ While the plan goals include benefits for seniors, it does not accentuate the concept. The park does not have specific items for seniors like chess or domino tables.
- ❖ Although the perimeter fence shown in the rendering provides some boundary definition, it will have limited value in managing access to the site. The suggested design makes the fence easy to climb. It also invites leaning and “hanging out”. That may be beneficial in the long term, but could make some existing problems worse in the short term.
- ❖ The flagpoles and flags shown in the rendering are a positive territoriality feature.
- ❖ The lack of colorful flowers in the rendering may not be intentional, but it misses an important opportunity to enhance territoriality.
- ❖ The mature trees are a unique feature in the Park. Strategically retaining many of them and keeping them trimmed will enhance territoriality.

## Recommendations

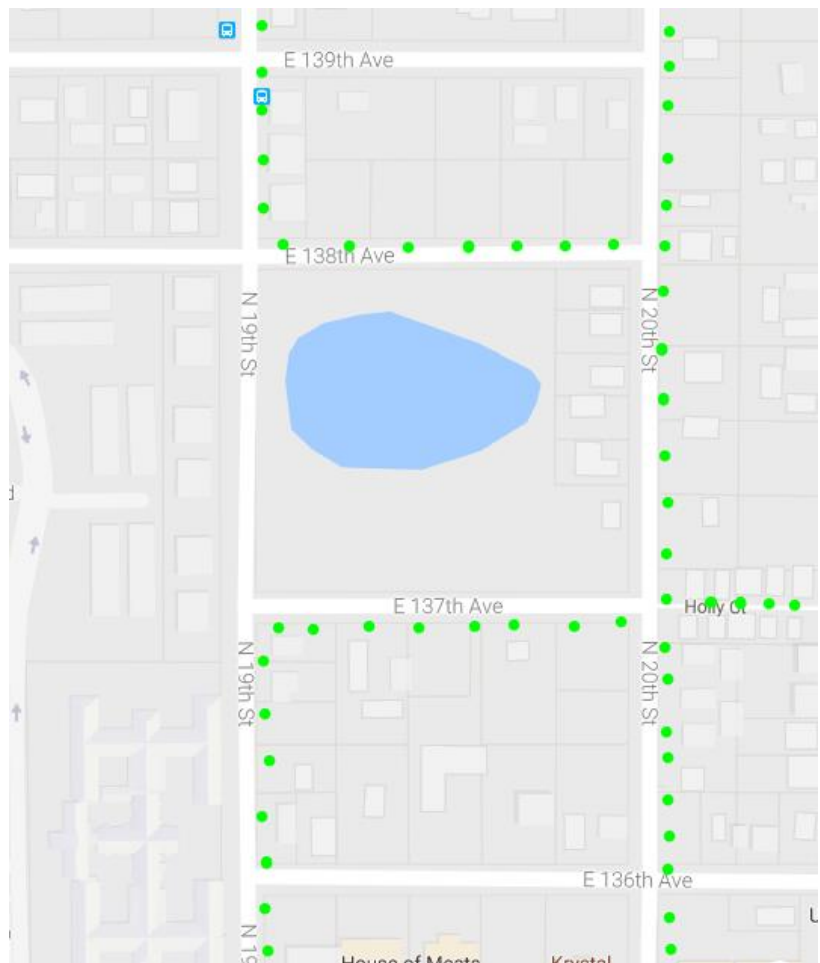
While technically separate projects, the Harvest Hope Park, UACDC housing, and other nearby properties will be seen as a single place and brand. The real and perceived safety of each will reflect significantly on the other. Therefore, the solutions required are also intertwined. In addition, the optimal impacts of the Park and new housing will be fourfold: to create a safe and attractive amenity with great programs; to create pride in place and emotional attachments that reduce transience; to improve informal social interaction in ways that create lasting relationships among neighbors that lead to actions to improve shared safety; and to improve perceptions of safety in ways that others decide to invest in the area and make it their home. The following sections summarize our recommendations for better designs and actions to achieve those impacts.

### Physical Environment

#### Lighting

Given the poor existing lighting on the property and surrounding pathways, a comprehensive series of improvements are needed, including:

- ❖ Additional street lights with LED fixtures should be placed along the perimeter of the Park and adjacent pathways. This diagram shows the conceptual improvements.
- 1. Existing street lights should be upgraded to LED fixtures as part of these improvements. LED fixtures should be utilized to meet FDOT sidewalk standards of 2.5 fc with uniformity ratios no greater than 3.5.
- ❖ Designs must use accurate photometric analyses that include existing or future tree conflicts. At least two renderings should accurately depict proposed lighting solutions on the project site.
- ❖ Include lighting of any signs.
- ❖ Use motion sensor lighting extensively in the Park, including at: all entry points, any parking areas, the fishing dock, the play field, children's play structure, remote parts of the walking paths, and outdoor gym areas.
- ❖ Extend electrical service along all Park pathways in ways that permit installation of twinkle lights or other lights in trees.

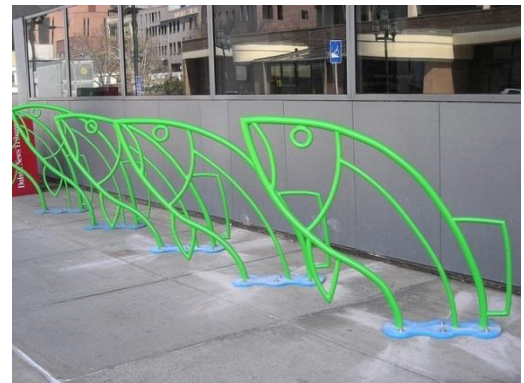


#### Natural Surveillance



To maximize natural surveillance of the park from nearby residences and passing vehicles – as well as from the main Park building, we suggest the following:

- ❖ Pursue new housing development on the north side of 138<sup>th</sup> Street and include large front porches or balconies facing the street and with a view to the park and pond area. Use minimum front yard setbacks and carefully placed windows (and trees) to provide the best views into the park.
- ❖ Remove all existing underbrush and keep other landscaping below one foot in height, particularly along the perimeter of the Park.
- ❖ Relocate the main Park building to the setback limit lines at the southeast corner of the site. This will provide better natural surveillance of key areas like the play area, splash pad, outdoor gym, and fishing dock. Consider a 2<sup>nd</sup> level deck or balcony to further enhance the natural surveillance. Properly designed, the balcony can also be used for performances during events – music, dance, etc. A movie screen can also be hung from it for kids movies. Note that the play area may need to shift south to create a lawn area for audiences.
- ❖ Consider adding a small house or apartment on site for a live-in groundskeeper. We suggest the northeast corner of the site.
- ❖ Proposed fishing dock is very isolated. We suggest it be moved closer to the Park building and parking where a fish cleaning station can also be set up and keep clean.
- ❖ Also relocate the outdoor gym to an area nearer the main Park building and fence it, with the entrance gate to the gym well inside the Park. Set the equipment back at least 25' from the roadway pavement.
- ❖ Straighten the pathways somewhat and evaluate landscaping details to minimize potential hiding areas around bends in the pathways.
- ❖ Windows in the new building should be operable with seating positioned for outside views. This will enhance natural surveillance of outside activities.
- ❖ Add bicycle racks in locations with strong natural surveillance from the main Park building. The area should also be surrounded with a 4 foot tall fence for access management. Have bike locks available to borrow as well. Racks that double as public art will also help with territoriality.



### **Access Management**

Making it somewhat difficult to enter or exit the Park will help reduce bad behaviors, vandalism, and criminal acts. It will also help reduce maintenance and security costs and improve pedestrian safety. We suggest a variety of improvements to help.

- ❖ Install traffic control and calming devices on the roads surrounding the park. This includes stop signs at every intersection, speed humps and rumble strips, and raised curbing along the perimeter of the park.
- ❖ Include a 4 foot high perimeter fence around the entire Park with a limited number of lockable gates, including at the parking entrances. All gates to be located to take advantage of strong natural

surveillance from nearby housing and locked every night. Consider electronic locks that can only be opened with a membership card. This will also help track usage and identify potential witnesses.

- ❖ Redesign the parking to have only one lot with an entrance from 137<sup>th</sup> Avenue and extend closer to the pond. Handicapped spaces will be located in the “front” lot off of 18<sup>th</sup> Street.
- ❖ Relocate parking into 2 lots that are both visible from the main building. Keep all but the “front” parking area near the building closed except during major events or sports activities.
- ❖ Use wide flower beds along the outside of the fence as an access management device.
- ❖ Post friendly but visible signage at all entrances about Park hours, prohibiting camping, and a trespass warning. Be sure that signs are clearly visible after dark.
- ❖ Use fencing to manage access to the outdoor gym and children’s play structure. Both should have lockable gates and require a membership card. The Play structure area should have signage indicating that adults may not enter unless accompanied by a child under 10, and that children must be accompanied by an adult over 18.
- ❖ Reposition the multi-purpose field closer to 19<sup>th</sup> Street and include a high net along the perimeter to keep balls from going into the streets or pond.
- ❖ Use cameras connected to HCSO and a private security company to help manage access, particularly when the park is closed. The system should work in conjunction with the motion sensing lights and have good coverage of the pond/fishing dock, outdoor gym, and play structure. The main Park building should have alarms and cameras as well to help with access management. If an on-site groundskeeper home is built, it should also have access to the video feeds.
- ❖ Cameras should be utilized with discretion so as not to create negative perceptions and negative-indirect messages. We also suggest a public “watch us grow” camera showing the site during construction – day and night. If carefully placed, it can become a “watch the fun” camera after the Harvest Hope Park is operational.
- ❖ Provide a gate from the 138<sup>th</sup> Street side of the park only if an on-site groundskeeper home is built and the gate is adjacent to the home. This will maximize natural surveillance both day and night of a potentially vulnerable access point.
- ❖ Create a community council to help create and adjudicate rules that prohibit some people from using the park due to past poor behaviors.



### **Bathrooms**

While bathrooms are a major convenience for legitimate Park users, they can attract very bad behaviors and criminal activities when poorly located, designed, and maintained. We suggest the following solutions:

- ❖ Bathrooms should only be located in the main building with access carefully controlled. We recommend single occupant/family style bathrooms only. Designs should permit an ability to hear inside, and entrances should be clearly visible by a greeter or other staff member.
- ❖ Remote bathrooms suggested on the conceptual site plan should be removed.

### **Seating**

Relaxing in a park setting is one of the key benefits of such places, and that usually requires comfortable places to sit. While a blanket on the grass works for some people, many prefer actual seats. At the same time, excessive or poorly designed and located seating often leads to poor behaviors that make a park less safe – and certainly feel less safe. This is particularly a problem where there are historical issues with homeless camping, drug sales, and other negative activities. We suggest a phased approach to seating for Harvest Hope Park as follows:

- ❖ Phase in any permanent seating and place it where there is excellent natural surveillance both day and night. Avoid benches and other types of seating that are easily used to sleep, particularly for the first two years. This includes the proposed picnic tables.
- ❖ Utilize only movable and temporary seating for at least the first 18 months. Such seating can be checked out, like a library book, for the day.
- ❖ One picnic table can be strategically placed inside the fenced children’s play structure area, and another inside the splash pad area. Be prepared to replace them with less comfortable seating if they are abused for sleeping or by people without children. Ideally, it will serve to put parents close enough to each other so they have conversations. Permit parents to use portable chairs in these areas as well.
- ❖ Add permanent chess and dominos tables near the main building to maximize natural surveillance and informal social interaction. Provide portable chairs that can be borrowed and put away after use. More permanent seating may be added later once a positive pattern is established for use of the tables.
- ❖ Do not place benches or other formal seating along the trails initially, but permit people to use moveable seating they bring or check out.
- ❖ Experiment with food vendors or UACDC fundraising volunteers that also provide portable seats as part of their operation. Operations at sporting events, holiday events, and weekends – into the evenings – can help with both natural surveillance and territoriality in the park.
- ❖ To help reduce lawn “camping” by homeless individuals, set clear rules that prohibit sleeping in the Park.



### **Territoriality**

A series of improvements and programs should be included to improve territoriality, create a sense of care and concern, and denote the Park and surrounding streets as having a special set of rules of acceptable behavior. We suggest the following as a starting point:

- ❖ Add a children’s splash pad at the southeast corner of the site and inside the fence for the play structure.
- ❖ Artistically painted crosswalks at all adjacent intersections. Make it an annual community event to update the designs or just repaint existing designs. Involve residents in as many of the tasks to create the park as possible. All of this enhances a sense of ownership and territoriality.
- ❖ Properties to the immediate west need improvements between the buildings and street lanes. We suggest that UACDC work with the property owner and County to appropriately restripe, add landscaping, and add signage so Park patrons don’t inappropriately use those spaces. This will help with territoriality and slow traffic as well.

- ❖ Work with nearby property owners to address signs of disorder. Use grants and code enforcement for motivation to improve and maintain things better.

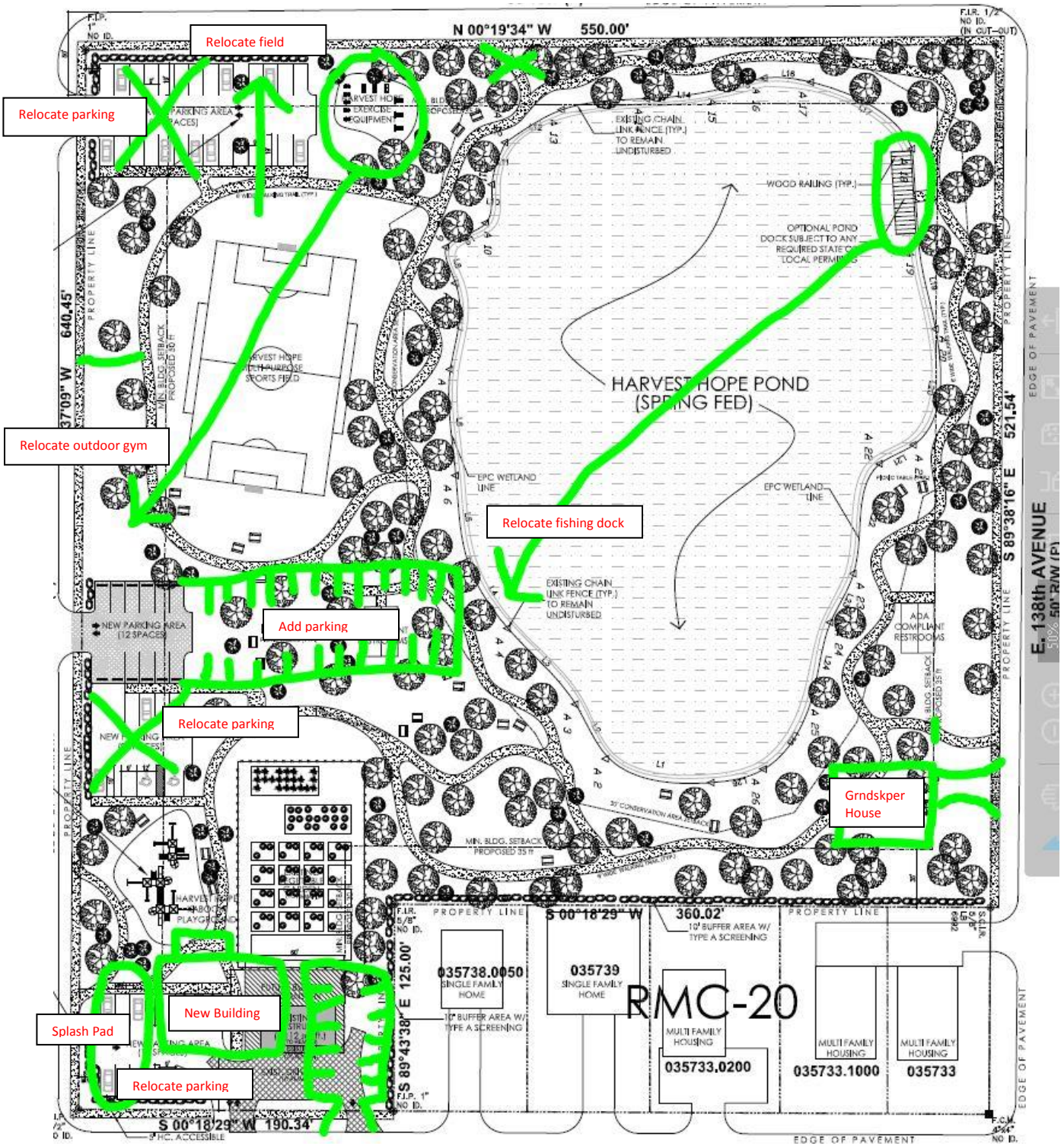


- ❖ Include integrated public art as a way to significantly enhance territoriality, interaction/discussion and informal social interaction, and participation by local artists and children. This might include topiary of food forms. Lighting should be integral.

- ❖ Place planters or beds with colorful, but low flowers at each corner of the Park as well as at building entrances to enhance territoriality.
- ❖ Invest in quality architecture and materials for the main Park building. It will greatly enhance the territoriality of the entire Park.
- ❖ Sidewalks should be extended around the entire block to minimize mid-block pedestrian crossings and enhance territoriality.



The following figure provides a graphic representation of many of our recommendations:



## ***Programs and Patrols***

Activating the various spaces in the Park, keeping the park clean and beautiful, engaging young people of all ages to play and connect, and providing affordable security coverage are all important aspects of providing real and perceived safety. We suggest that UACDC work to integrate safety into all their programs and management efforts, beginning with the following ideas:

### **Programs**

- ❖ Host cooking classes and contests on the weekends in conjunction with the Farmers Market. This will create additional informal social interaction as people “judge” the cooking of others.
- ❖ Create a holiday lighting display for the neighborhood residents and other visitors at the Park. Use volunteers and charge a small fee for non-residents to provide toys for area children. Partner with nearby anchor institutions. This will enhance both territoriality and community cohesion.
- ❖ Use the balcony/deck for outdoor classrooms to teach everything from ESL to watercolor painting. This will provide excellent natural surveillance.
- ❖ Have volunteers manage early morning fishing. This will activate the park at a key time of day and provide natural surveillance.
- ❖ Use children’s movies, fireworks, night fishing lessons, youth evening sporting leagues, and other children’s events after dark to help activate the Park and enhance a sense of safety.
- ❖ Host evening chess tournaments for adults and children.
- ❖ For at least the first several years, the Park should avoid shows or performers that might attract crowds prone to violence or aggressive behaviors.
- ❖ Encourage student musical performances in the Park. Adding young children to the mix changes acceptable rules of behavior.
- ❖ Street Vendors and Food Trucks should be encouraged but carefully screened and regulated to ensure quality and minimize direct competition with nearby existing businesses.
- ❖ Other special events should be regular, family-oriented, and extend into the evenings.
- ❖ Actively recruit student volunteers from USF to help with Park programs. Their presence will also help enhance safety perceptions.
- ❖ Create other positive youth activities and programs in the park as a way to avoid negative activities. This might be painting or music lessons, simple games like hopscotch or chess, or even yoga.
- ❖ For programming, make special efforts to recruit female performers and male performers who have a large female following. By actively inviting women to the area, safety perceptions will improve.
- ❖ Provide exercise programs in the park for seniors and young mothers.



## **Management and Maintenance**

- ❖ Utilize active volunteers for a wide variety of tasks whenever possible to create emotional connections and a sense of belonging. Go maintenance and cleanup, and require youth who participate in programs to volunteer a certain number of hours.
- ❖ Require sports teams to clean up after their games, removing litter from the entire park perimeter and returning any borrowed chairs.
- ❖ Create a garden club to maintain flower beds and pots.
- ❖ Create and enforce a no alcohol or drugs policy. Enforcement should be aggressive during the first six months in order to set the tone. Staff and volunteers should be trained to summon security or HCSO as soon as they see any violations. Create partnerships with homeless service providers in advance of opening the park.
- ❖ Regular police presence in the area will be needed for at least two years. Disorder crimes should be actively addressed.
- ❖ Park maintenance must be high quality, and staff must be trained to observe and immediately report any disorderly behavior.
- ❖ Litter and weeds along the key travel paths to/from the Park must be actively addressed by the recommended Clean and Green team.
- ❖ Maintenance activities should be focused early morning and in the evening to provide extra observers and territoriality.
- ❖ As suggested earlier, consider a groundskeeper that lives on site and gets to know regular users, police, security personnel, and volunteers.
- ❖ Initially, do not permit dogs in the park. They can be intimidating to many users. Consider purchasing a nearby vacant lot for a dog park if there is strong demand. Otherwise, have an annual dog event at the park to help with informal social interaction.



## Strategic Communications

Using the Park as a way to help people feel safer about the entire neighborhood will require a thoughtful and consistent communications strategy. Many of the physical improvements and programs already described will be helpful to those communications, but a variety of electronic and printed materials are equally important, as is proper mass media management. We suggest the following ways to enhance such efforts.

- ❖ Involve existing residents and businesses in the design process for the district and Park as well as the operational standards and any potential vending opportunities. This will open and maintain lines of communication about acceptable behavior and create a kind of psychological “ownership” that improves territoriality.
- ❖ Create a philosophy of integrating safety messages into every communication about the Park and district, but focus almost exclusively on positive-indirect messages.
- ❖ Consistently position the Harvest Hope Park as family-friendly. Avoid any tendency to focus only on the adult programs. Use photos of young children and women in the park after dark to promote some activities.
- ❖ Create a crisis communications plan for the district before the new park and housing open.
- ❖ Consider creating a new place-name for the district as part of that plan in order to distinguish it from problems in other parts of the University or TID areas.
- ❖ Use well-designed banners in the district and the park to help with wayfinding, reinforce family-friendly messages, and create territoriality. Note: the best banners have the simplest designs and adequate lighting to be easily seen at night.
- ❖ Use the Park for school fundraisers regularly and promote the district through those channels.
- ❖ Highlight any public art, topiary, and colorful flowers in promotional imagery. This helps communicate a sense of care and concern as people consider a trip to the “dangerous” University Area Harvest Hope Park.
- ❖ Focus any district branding efforts on the Harvest Hope Park. This helps reinforce the family-friendly theme as well as the care and concern involved with a beautiful and welcoming place.
- ❖ Design and place signage carefully to make clear that controls are in place without sending significant negative-indirect messages. Balance signage about park hours, alcohol, camping, and other restrictions with more playful sign messages.
- ❖ Utilize signage promoting events and programs, but carefully manage the style, quantity, and locations to avoid perceptions of chaos or disorder.
- ❖ Create a women’s advisory council to provide feedback about park safety conditions. Include a variety of ages, cultural backgrounds, and languages. Treat it like an informal focus group, and make sure all the voices are heard.





- ❖ Reinforce messages about diversity and tolerance through imagery as well. This means imagery is not dominated by any race or income cohort, but inclusive of all. From a safety standpoint, the goal should be that non-residents understand there will be other people “like themselves” present in the place – along with existing residents.



- ❖ For the first three months after opening any part of the Park (beyond the garden), meet weekly with HCSO and others. For the following nine months meet monthly unless particular problems require more frequent discussions. Thereafter, meet quarterly.
- ❖ Conduct quarterly Community Safety Audits of the Park and nearby pathways. This communications feedback mechanism is essential to uncovering whether and why people are actually avoiding the Park.

## Next Steps

Because plans are still very preliminary, there is much work left to do to ensure the Harvest Hope Park and district becomes a beacon of safety for UA and the TID. The following are key next steps:

1. **Remove Disorder** - Begin clearing underbrush now along the perimeter of the property and use parking lot stops or other inexpensive means to prevent parking, even in the swale. Enlist anchor institutions and their facilities staff to help – including any needed equipment. Remove the port-o-let and trash drums. Tag and then tow any vehicles on the property. Post no trespassing and no dumping signs as an interim measure.
2. **Lighting First** - In partnership with TECO, lighting should be carefully evaluated for 2 blocks in every direction and upgraded as needed in advance of the Park opening. Several of the pathways we observed were very dark, and existing lights did not create conditions needed to get people to walk to the park area.
3. **Details Matter** - Each time plans are revised, review them against these recommendations and evaluate the additional details using Safedesign™ or advanced CPTED principles and strategies. Seemingly insignificant adjustments can often create new problems. If expert advice cannot be found among existing staff, hire outside consultants to help throughout the process until 60 days after the Park opens.
4. **Liability Help** - Pursue a sale-leaseback or similar operating arrangement with the County such that sovereign immunity applies and the property reverts to UACDC if that agreement is terminated. This would happen once the park is developed and before it is operational.
5. **Build Community Capacity** - As part of the process going forward, introduce more people in the community to Safedesign™ concepts with a 30-minute training session. This should precede the planned **community engagement discussions** about the design details and use of the spaces. Both current and future community members and visitors must be given clear opportunities to discuss concerns about safety. At the same time, community members are not likely to provide the most sustainable and effective solutions – and the process needs to manage such expectations carefully.
6. **Adjacent Development Patterns** – UACDC’s planned housing and other development along the key pathways that enhance natural surveillance and territoriality – are crucial components to enhance real and perceived safety. These projects should be given priority over those in other locations, and they should be intentionally designed to improve safety as well.
7. **Coordinated Communications** – UACDC, TIA, HCSO, County Economic Development, elected officials, and many others are likely to speak publicly about the Park and surrounding areas. Coordinate those messages carefully to avoid negative-indirect messages.

## Appendix B-2 Harvest Hope Park Description

The UACDC owns 6.82 acres in the heart of the community where currently there are major safety issues including unsafe secluded spaces where homelessness and drug activity take place. Additionally, easy access to the pond, unsafe ground conditions and large amounts of trash scattered throughout has prevented the land from becoming a resident friendly space. A community garden and center have already been implemented at the park as phase one, phase two is the creation of the Harvest Hope Park. The park will be a community friendly space that encourages family play, healthy eating, environmental sustainability, education and community interactions. Phase three of the plan will be to implement the block by block model program, addressing housing concerns, implementing wrap-around services with the idea to make a dramatic improvement by utilizing the park as the critical mass and pushing out from that location. The park will also serve as the hub where the Neighborhood Crime Watch Program will be based out of to give residents a voice and a platform to take ownership of their community by uniting together for a specific purpose and unified message.



The Harvest Hope Park is a community development project that will serve as a beacon of hope for residents who live in the University Area Community. The park beautification project will make the University Area community more attractive and make residents more likely to call the University Area home. With committed funds, the UACDC will be able to build a park that includes a multi-purpose sports field where sports leagues for youth and adults will be held through the Get Moving program. Creating a walking trail will give residents a safe place to exercise and enjoy the outdoors, while meeting other residents with the intent to build community efficacy. The addition of a dedicated fitness area where residents can work out utilizing outdoor exercise equipment will begin to build options for a healthier community where accessibility is created. Vegetation and landscaping will be managed to create a reassuring environment, reduce fear, and increase citizen surveillance and defensible space, while minimizing environmental impacts. The built infrastructure of sidewalks, lighting, parking and fencing all created with the Principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) will be adopted to build a safer park.

The Harvest Hope Park is entering into phase two of three phases, phase one is completed and phase two is the implementation of the full park. UACDC is committed to making this park happen and it has included it into our three year strategic plan, approved by the board. UACDC believes that the park can be a catalyst for transformation change in the University Area Community and by leveraging our resources and partners we can continue to track the data to show the project's viability, sustainability and overall success. The park has been thoroughly vetted over three years and the data shows that in a community like university, this park is not only needed but critical in creating a suitable living environment to promote neighborhood sustainability through health and nutrition in conjunction with utilizing outdoor green space. The UACDC believes in the importance of focusing on focusing on health and wellness with the goal in mind to enhance the living conditions for community members who are low to moderate in income. With the completion of the Harvest Hope Park we will "level the playing field" for all residents in our community where living a healthy lifestyle is possible.

**Appendix C**  
**Total Travel Path™ Analysis**  
**Mort Elementary to University Mall**





Ken Stapleton  
& ASSOCIATES

Miami | Cleveland | Cincinnati

**UACDC/TIA**  
**Community Safety Action Plan**  
**Total Travel Path™ Analysis – DRAFT**  
**Mort Elementary to/from University Mall**

**Total Travel Path™ Analysis framework**

All of us exhibit place avoidance behavior in our daily lives to some extent. Whether it is a dark park or parking garage, an isolated parking lot at night, or even a playground to avoid bullies or gangs, we make location and travel decisions based on our individual level of fear/comfort of both the destination itself and the pathway to or from the destination. Fundamentally, we will frequently avoid a place if any point along our pathway does not meet our minimum safety threshold – the level of safety that makes us “comfortable enough” to spend time in a place or even passing through a place. The Total Travel Path™ Analysis (TTP) systematically evaluates the travel path of a particular target market from their current place of safety (home, hotel, airport, etc.) to a potential urban destination (downtown, hospital, museum, neighborhood, etc.) and back again. Because different groups of people or target markets can have significantly different safety thresholds (e.g. Elderly women vs. young men), the TTP Analysis always assumes the perspective of the most sensitive user group within the target market population.

The TTP Analysis also varies depending on parking conditions, vehicular or pedestrian travel modes, and even whether transit is part of the expected travel path. Wayfinding signage, **disorder indicators** (graffiti, unkempt lots), **safe place indicators** (strollers, children playing, flowers in planters), **pre-intersection conditions** (where a car must stop and wait at a red-light signal), and other physical environment and programming factors are carefully evaluated, for both daytime and after-dark conditions. Various improvements are then recommended to bring the TTP up to the safety threshold (safe enough) of the targeted user group.

**Target Market Population:**

Young mothers from the neighborhood without a private vehicle travelling by foot with young children who attend Mort Elementary, or have siblings that do.

**Basic Travel Path:**

Mort Elementary to/from University Mall along 18<sup>th</sup> Street, 143<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Fletcher Avenue, and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street.

**Destinations:**

University Mall and Mort Elementary.

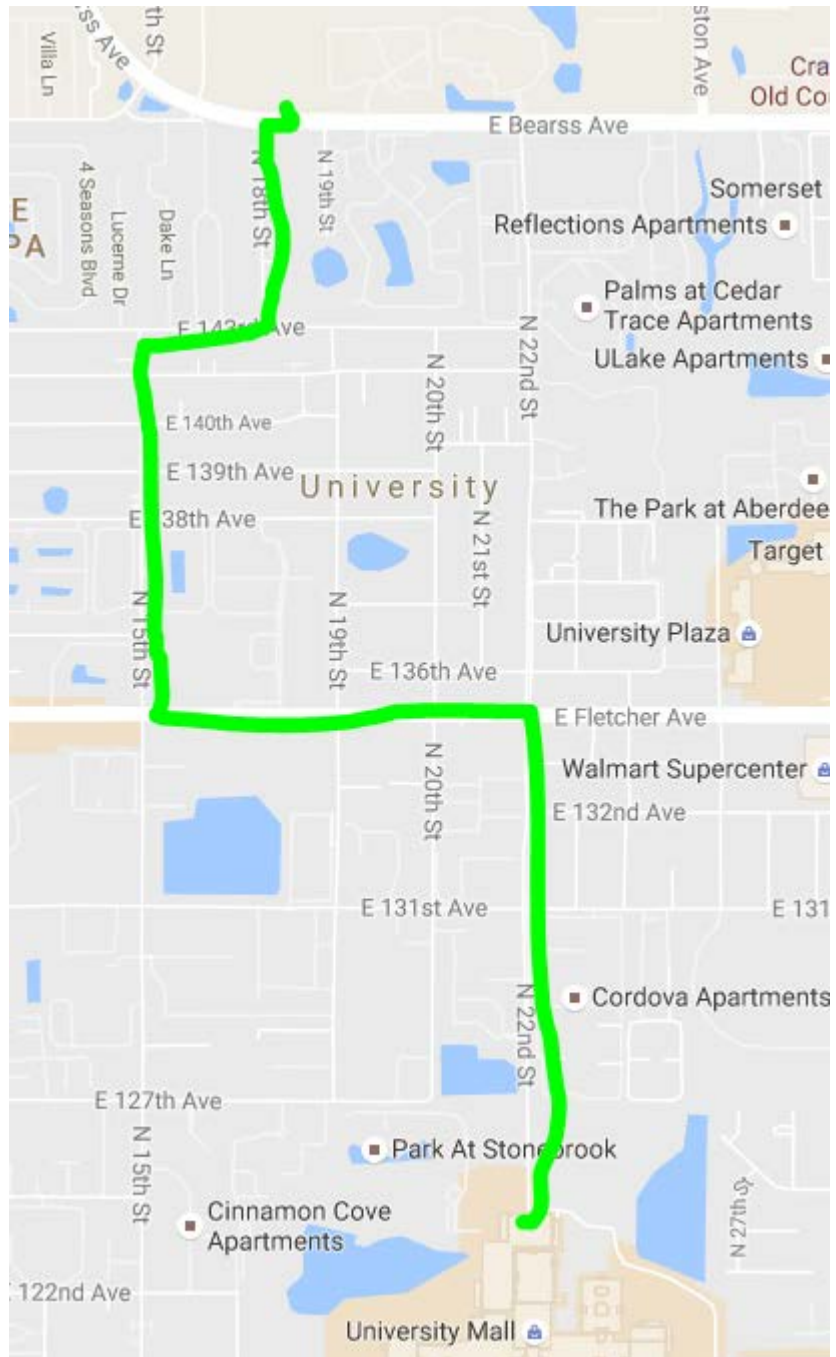
**Issues:**

According to stakeholder interviews for the neighborhood in general, lighting is poor, groups of youth and homeless hang out and intimidate others, and drug deals are frequent along 15<sup>th</sup> Street.

## Summary Observations

In general, people are most vulnerable as pedestrians, and women feel more vulnerable than men. The selected pathway is likely moderately comfortable during daylight for the target audience except for the areas along 15<sup>th</sup> Street between 143<sup>rd</sup> and 137<sup>th</sup> Avenues. After dark, conditions change significantly and the target market will likely avoid much of the pathway if possible. This is significant since the pathway can be dark between 6pm and 7am during certain times of the year. We have the following major observations about the pathway:

- ❖ Most buildings are set back significantly from the roadway and pedestrian pathway. This limits natural surveillance significantly.
- ❖ The vast majority of the pathway is bordered by commercial or multifamily properties. This limits territoriality significantly.
- ❖ Lighting is good along some portions of the pathway, but very poor along others. Street lights are not coordinated with the presence of sidewalks. They are often across the street.
- ❖ Signs of disorder are somewhat prevalent, and they include missing or broken sidewalks, poorly maintained landscaping, unscreened dumpsters, bulk trash left or dumped, poorly maintained roadway markings, overgrown weeds, and poorly maintained tree-lawns/swales and medians.



- ❖ Parents and children were regularly present on the pathway both day and night, although we noted more of them during the day. A young mother with a stroller (and parents walking with young children) were observed on various parts of the path.



- ❖ Wayfinding signs and devices are not relevant to this analysis because these are pedestrians familiar with the place and pathway. Similarly, the direction of movement does not differ substantially for pedestrians.
- ❖ Because the pathway approaches and leaves the University Mall from the “back” entrance, there are some unique challenges for pedestrians, particularly since no pathway for pedestrians was part of the original design.
- ❖ Significantly, we did not find any substantial graffiti or stickers along the pathway.

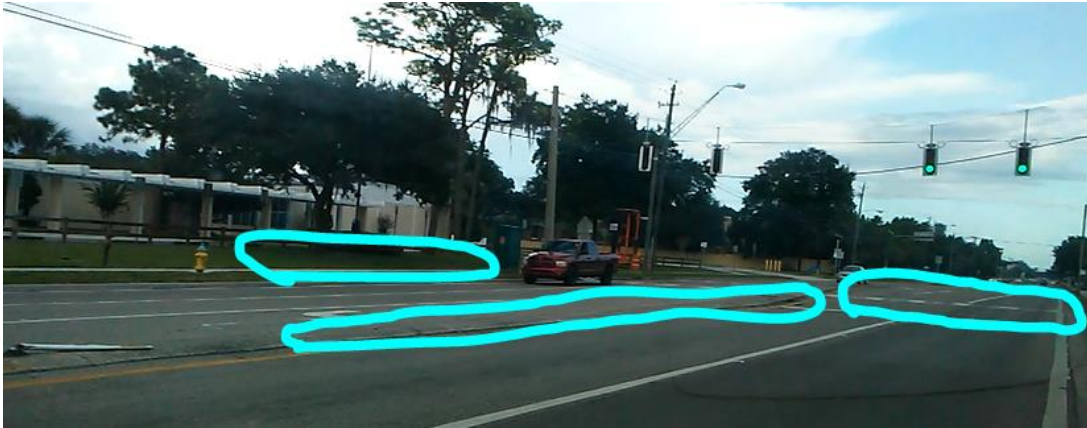


## Observations - Daytime

### Mort Elementary to 143<sup>rd</sup> Avenue along 18<sup>th</sup> Street

#### *Order/Disorder/Safe Place Indicators*

- ❖ The area around the school is generally well maintained and orderly. However, there is a lack of any signs of territoriality like flowering shrubs, banners, art, etc.



- ❖ Across Bearss Avenue from the school and for the first 100+ feet of 18<sup>th</sup> Street, the law offices are well maintained but have overgrown landscaping creating potential hiding places and limiting natural surveillance from the building. There are very limited signs of territoriality as well.

- ❖ The Sunny Food store signage, window bars, unscreened dumpster, and weeds are all signs of disorder.



- ❖ Sidewalks on 18<sup>th</sup> Street have some signs of disorder at driveways where they are broken or poorly maintained. Poorly maintained mailboxes add to the concerns and negative perceptions.





- ❖ There are also unscreened dumpsters and bulk trash along this part of the pathway.
- ❖ The street was recently repaved but has not been striped.



- ❖ Overgrown landscaping and tree light conflicts along the 18<sup>th</sup> Street sidewalk south of Bearss Avenue create natural surveillance and hiding place issues both day and night.



143<sup>rd</sup> Avenue between 18<sup>th</sup> Street and 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
*Order/Disorder/Safe Place Indicators*

- ❖ A number of properties are generally unkempt along this segment, including some poorly maintained fencing along the sidewalk.
- ❖ We also observed several other disorder signs including large trucks parked on the sidewalk, unscreened dumpsters, poorly maintained parking areas, and abandoned shopping carts.





15<sup>th</sup> Street between Fletcher and 143<sup>rd</sup> Avenues

*Order/Disorder/Safe Place Indicators*

- ❖ East side of 15<sup>th</sup> Street between Fletcher Avenue and 138<sup>th</sup> Avenue has a sidewalk for most of the segment, but some areas are used for parking access and undefined for pedestrians, a sign of disorder.
- ❖ We also noted unscreened dumpsters, poor roadway and pedestrian crossing striping,



- ❖ Crosswalks, stop bars, and other roadway markings are poorly maintained or missing, creating a sense of disorder and lack of territoriality.



- ❖ Dumpsters, overgrown landscaping, and poor sidewalk markings along 15<sup>th</sup> Street create a sense of disorder and provide hiding places for criminals.





- ❖ Some properties have expressed territoriality very strongly along this segment of the path. Unfortunately, there is no sidewalk on either side of the roadway in some places.

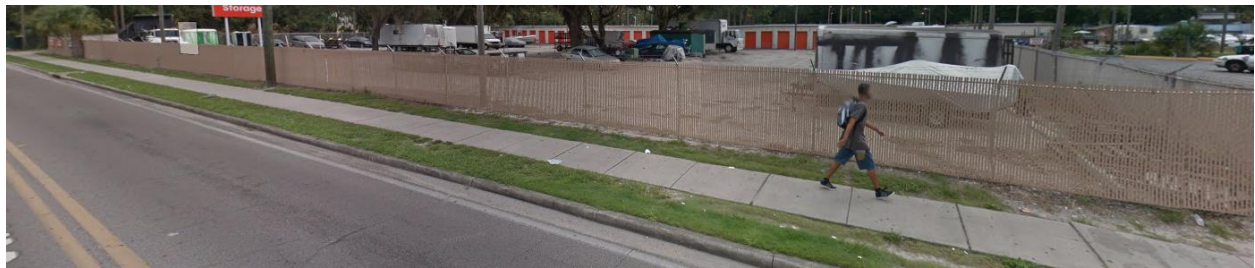


- ❖ Sidewalks in this segment are also not consistent on one side of the road. This leads to dirt pathways that become a sign of disorder. It also limits people's ability to comfortably walk on the other side if there are people who concern them along the pathway.





- ❖ Decent quality fencing along the sidewalk in a substantial part of this segment manages access from attacks and creates a kind of territoriality that improves the comfort of the pathway.



- ❖ Some of the larger apartment complexes along the pathway have flower beds at their entrances, but the planting is minimal and misses an opportunity to greatly enhance territoriality.



Fletcher Avenue between 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> Streets  
Order/Disorder/Safe Place Indicators

- ❖ Key corners appear unkempt and miss a great opportunity to improve territoriality along the path.



- ❖ Landscaping along Fletcher Avenue sidewalks is poor and does not appear much different from the new median plantings. Both appear overgrown and unkempt.



- ❖ Landscaping along the north side of Fletcher Avenue is generally low and does not provide hiding spaces. The south side is good, but has more overgrown areas. One exception is the McDonalds at the corner of 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, a key location.





- ❑ Some properties along this segment have enhanced territoriality with colorful flowers, manicured lawns, fountain sculptures, and quality fencing and signage. Nearby medians are better maintained as well. These are clustered on the north side of Fletcher Avenue.



- ❑ In contrast, clusters of overgrown landscaping near the sidewalk dot south side, creating discomfort.





- ❖ We did observe one vendor in the parking lot of a laundromat. A good feature for the property, but it had limited influence and natural surveillance for the pathway because of overgrown hedges.



- ❖ Another vendor at the Citgo Station at 22<sup>nd</sup> Street provides additional territoriality and natural surveillance along the pathway at times, but not always.



- ❖ The newer style transit stops have been installed in this segment as well, and one stop on the north side has a quality fence that helps manage access and threats of attack. We did observe protesters there several times however, making the location less inviting.



22<sup>nd</sup> Street between Fletcher Avenue and University Mall

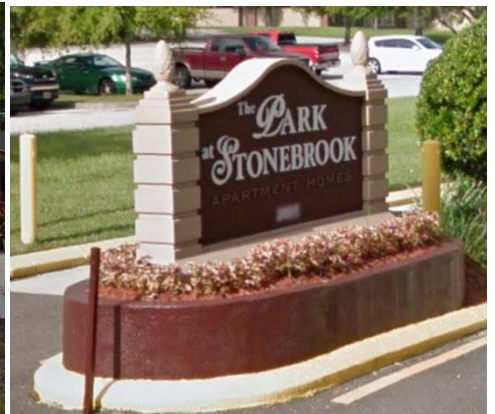
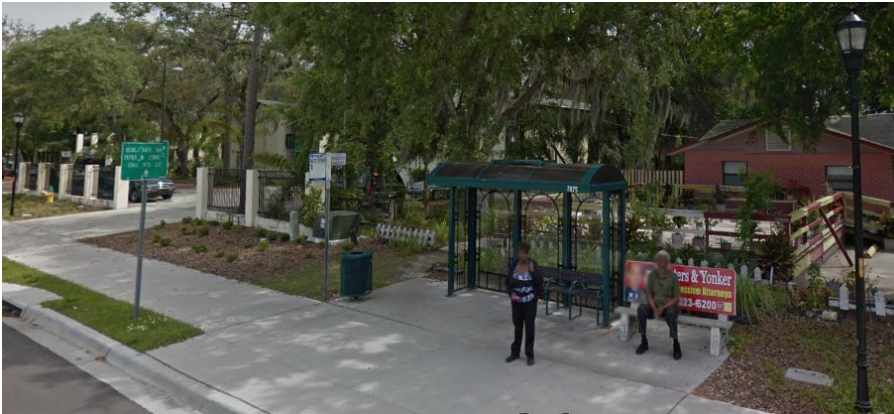


Order/Disorder/Safe Place Indicators

- ❖ Median plantings along 22<sup>nd</sup> Street also need improvement and better maintenance to enhance territoriality.



- ❖ Several properties along this segment have excellent territoriality features. Bus shelters along this segment are generally well designed and do not seem to attract panhandlers.



- ❖ Between 133<sup>rd</sup> and 131<sup>st</sup> Avenues, natural surveillance of the pathway is very good from adjacent residential buildings.



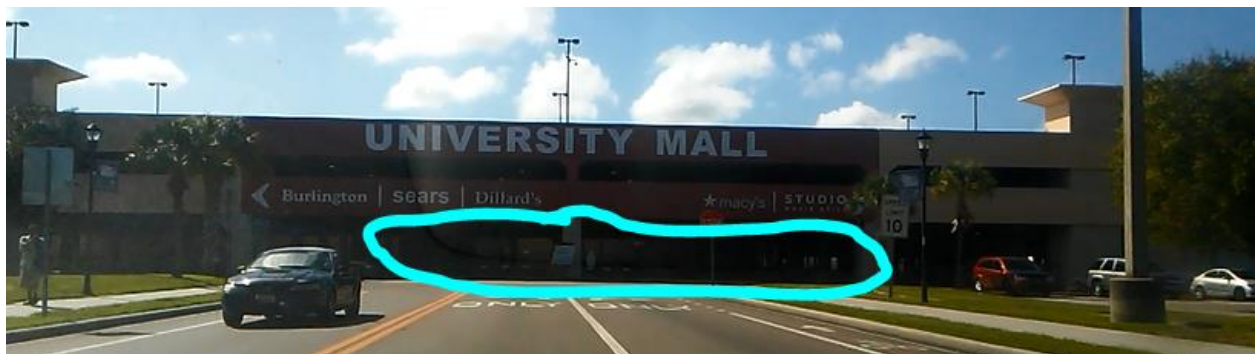


- ❖ Building setbacks and lush landscaping limit natural surveillance of the pathway along the parts of this segment closest to University Mall. The location of the parking garage, including the lack of any active uses within the garage, exacerbates this issue.



### Mall Pedestrian Pathway

- ❖ The pathway leads to the Mall entrance through the parking garage. While the garage has reasonable daytime lighting, it still appears foreboding in contrast to the daylighted areas surrounding it.





- ❖ Additionally, there are several signs of disorder at the pedestrian entry point to the garage. Poorly maintained pavement traffic symbols,
- ❖ Simple painted signage also exerts very little territoriality to this key area.
- ❖ The entry area lacks flowers, art, or other signs of territoriality as well.





## Pre-Intersection Conditions - Daytime

Pre-intersection conditions (where people are forced to wait for a traffic signal) at 131<sup>st</sup> Avenue and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, Fletcher Avenue and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, and Fletcher Avenue and 18<sup>th</sup> Street are generally good, with no overgrown landscaping, loitering on bus benches, or excessive signs of disorder. There were some overgrown landscaping issues at the NE corner of Fletcher Avenue and 18<sup>th</sup> Street, but not enough to cause serious disorder concerns.





Pre-intersection conditions at Bearss Avenue and Mort Elementary are generally acceptable as well, with the exception of the overgrown landscaping at the Law offices on the south side of Bearss Avenue.



## Observations – After Dark

### 22<sup>nd</sup> Street between University Mall and Fletcher Avenue

- ❖ University Mall “entrance” has good lighting, but little to no territorial features, including a well-designed and lighted sign. Not much that is welcoming.



- ❖ The area generally reads as isolated and lonely, even at 7:30 in the evening.



- ❖ Along the pathway, there is limited lighting from adjacent structures. The pedestrian streetlights are providing good light in most areas, with minimal tree conflicts. We did observe several fixtures that were out, however.

- ❖ There is a dark corner by McDonalds – the drainage area – that is somewhat uncomfortable. Also at that intersection, the Pawn shop lights were not on at dusk/dark.



- ❖ The West side bus stop and shelter on 22<sup>nd</sup> Street need more lighting. Note that shelter is not located properly but is closer to the light pole.



#### Fletcher Avenue between 22<sup>nd</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Streets

- ❖ Lighting generally good along Fletcher Avenue on the northside, but we did observe a used car lot with no lights.
- ❖ Amスコt store and the gas stations have good lighting.
- ❖ The south side of Fletcher between 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> Streets is generally well lit, but there are a couple of dark pockets.
- ❖ Private properties at all but the southeast quadrant of Fletcher Avenue and 15<sup>th</sup> Street provide very good lighting.
- ❖ Strong natural surveillance comes from the traffic along Fletcher, particularly at night.

#### 15<sup>th</sup> Street between Fletcher and 143<sup>rd</sup> Avenues

- ❖ The east side of 15<sup>th</sup> Street between Fletcher and 138<sup>th</sup> Avenues has generally good lighting, due in part to the lack of tree conflicts. North of 138<sup>th</sup> Avenue is quite dark, with only a few lights
- ❖ Lighting improves on the west side of 15<sup>th</sup> Street north of 139<sup>th</sup>. Then it alternates, but sidewalks and lighting are not consistent on both sides, nor are they coordinated. (need consistency of lights with sidewalks)
- ❖ We still noticed a number of pedestrians and people riding bikes in this area.



#### 143<sup>rd</sup> Avenue between 18<sup>th</sup> Street and 15<sup>th</sup> Street

- ❖ We observed very dark conditions at 15<sup>th</sup> Street and 143<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.



- ❖ Lighting is better on south side of 143<sup>rd</sup> Avenue between 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Streets, but the sidewalk is on the north side and is much darker.

#### 18<sup>th</sup> Street between 143<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Bearss Avenue

- ❖ Lighting at 143<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and 18<sup>th</sup> Street is very poor.
- ❖ There are street lights on the east side with the sidewalk, but they do not provide adequate or consistent lighting for a safe pedestrian pathway. The lighting pattern then alternates on both sides of the street, clearly focused on providing light for vehicles.
- ❖ There are also no streetlights until mid block on the east side, and no lights from adjacent buildings or yards. Lights switch to the west side about 100 yards from Bearss Avenue, leaving the east side sidewalk dark. There are significant tree canopies on the east side impacting light distribution as well. Street lights are High Pressure Sodium and appear to be old with reduced light output.



- ❖ Good lighting from the Sunny store on Bearss Avenue helps illuminate that part of the travel path.

from Food



- ❖ Law offices had no lights on, even though they have a lighted sign and a shoe box fixture for the parking lot. The lack of lighting exacerbates the negative impacts of the overgrown landscaping.



#### Mort Elementary and Bearss Avenue Crossing

- ❖ Lighting on Bearss Avenue is generally good, but the school lot and building have minimal lighting. While this may depend on whether there are active programs in the evenings, it harms the overall perception of the path when lights are not in use.

#### **Pre-Intersection Conditions – After Dark**

Pre-intersection conditions (where people are forced to wait for a traffic signal) at 131<sup>st</sup> Avenue and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, Fletcher Avenue and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, and Fletcher Avenue and 18<sup>th</sup> Street are generally good, with adequate and consistent lighting conditions.

## Recommendations

### Mort Elementary

- ❖ Add painted crosswalks, an artistic new walkway directly to the school from the existing sidewalk, flowers in the median and along the artistic walkway, and more manicured lawn areas to enhance territoriality. One concept is shown below.
- ❖ Create better lighting at the school using dual intensity LED motion sensor fixtures in front of the school building and solar lights along the new walkway.
- ❖ Light the school sign better to improve territoriality as well.



### 18<sup>th</sup> Street

- ❖ Ask the law offices to install new lighting or better use existing lighting, and trim back the landscaping. Add some colorful flowers at the corners of the property.
- ❖ Work with private property owners to install solar lighting along the pathway and to trim back excessive landscaping – potentially using the Clean and Green Team (CGT). This will enhance natural surveillance both day and night.
- ❖ Work with TECO to upgrade existing fixtures and add new fixtures – all LED with white light – to better illuminate at least the east side sidewalk area.

### 143<sup>rd</sup> Avenue

- ❖ Improve north side lighting, including intersections. Work with TECO to upgrade existing fixtures and add new fixtures – all LED with white light – to better illuminate at least the east side sidewalk area.
- ❖ Focus code enforcement efforts on this part of the pathway, with special attention to the fencing on the north side. Work with the property owner to make the fence less fortress-like, potentially including a public art mural.
- ❖ Upgrade crosswalks, including more artistic patterns, to enhance territoriality.

### 15<sup>th</sup> Street

- ❖ Create a consistent sidewalk pattern on the east side of 15<sup>th</sup> Street including “painted” sidewalks behind parked cars where necessary.
- ❖ Light the east side of 15<sup>th</sup> Street between 143<sup>rd</sup> and Fletcher Avenues adequately by upgrading TECO fixtures to LED, adding solar pedestrian LED fixtures, and working with private owners to add solar or standard LED fixtures.
- ❖ Add stop signs at every intersection along 15<sup>th</sup> Street to slow down traffic and enhance access management.
- ❖ For areas with parking that backs directly onto the roadway, require owners to maintain a painted pedestrian path using a ladder strip pattern. Maintenance must include sweeping the area to keep it free from sand and debris.
- ❖ Work with businesses along 15<sup>th</sup> St. like Public Storage and the larger apartment complexes to add territorial landscaping improvements along the sidewalk.



### Fletcher Avenue

- ❖ Work with Metro Self storage and Family Dollar to add lighting along Fletcher Avenue. It will be good for their business to appear safe as well.
- ❖ Work with McDonalds to add twinkle lights in the trees to help improve lighting for their parking and the corner retention basin. Consider a large public art installation in the corner retention basin.
- ❖ Use the CGT to add colorful flowers to the medians and carefully maintain them.

### 22<sup>nd</sup> Street

- ❖ The large number of traffic control boxes along this segment creates a great opportunity for public art using wrap technology. This will enhance territoriality.
- ❖ Use the CGT to add colorful flowers to the medians and carefully maintain them.
- ❖ Upgrade the banners to create public art. Consider solar lights to better highlight the banners at night.



### University Mall



- ❖ Upgrade signage on the garage using a Public Art approach to enhance territoriality. This might include specially lighted signage or even variable signage, but it must be artistic in nature.
- ❖ To maximize activity and natural surveillance along the path from Club Drive, activate the north entry of the Mall, particularly in the evenings, with Food trucks, fundraiser car washes, other appropriate vendors, or even a roller rink with a lighting system.
- ❖ Create a more welcoming pathway from Club Drive to the Mall entrance doors. Use special lighting both day and night, public art installations, lighted banners, and other features that make the pathway clear and compelling.
- ❖ Improve roadway and crosswalk striping/designations and other traffic markings across Club Drive. Use artistic patterns on the pathway and update annually.
- ❖ Consider adding residential units above the garage (with large balconies) to enhance both natural surveillance of the pathway and territoriality.



## **All Along the Pathway**

### ***Crosswalks***

Artistically Painted crosswalks all along the pathway can also become an annual back to school community event that enhances social cohesion and informal social interaction. Local artists and students (Mort, High School, USF) can design and help paint them. Use a contest for the designs to help create new emotional connections to the place. Particularly important locations include crossing Bearss Avenue at Mort Elementary, 22<sup>nd</sup> Street at University Mall, and 143<sup>rd</sup> Avenue at 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Streets.



### ***Public Art***



- ❖ Wrap traffic control boxes along the path on Bearss Avenue, Fletcher Avenue, and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street with artistic designs.
- ❖ Use design competitions and sponsor panels for banners along the pathway.
- ❖ Explore public art in medians along with colorful flowers to greatly enhance territoriality. Be sure to light the art.



### **Dumpsters**

- ❖ Establish or update dumpster enclosure and setback regulations for the pathway area. Enforce them aggressively.

### **Building Setbacks**

- ❖ Review regulations for building setbacks along the pathway and reduce the setbacks wherever possible. This will greatly enhance natural surveillance, particularly for mixed use or housing properties.

### **Lighting**

- ❖ Pawn shops and public storage businesses should be required to have more light. Review, update, and enforce such regulations along the pathway.
- ❖ Consider a commercial lighting grant program (façade as well) using a matching requirement.

### **Code/Traffic Enforcement**

- ❖ Aggressively enforce any parking on sidewalks or marked pedestrian pathways. This reduces a major sign of disorder.

- ❖ Use code enforcement to address poorly maintained fencing, dumpsters, sidewalks and driveway aprons.

### ***Vendors***

- ❖ Continue to permit and encourage vendors in commercial parking lots along the path, including at University Mall.
- ❖ Encourage their presence until at least 10pm. Require solar lighting where needed.

### ***Landscaping***

- ❖ Work with property owners all along the path to remove overgrown landscaping from areas adjacent to the path. Consider using the Clean and Green Team to accomplish this – for a fee.

### ***Awards***

- ❖ Consider annual awards for public art, lighting, and landscaping along the pathway. This will help encourage private owners to make such improvements.

## **Final Thoughts**

Conditions along every travel path are constantly changing. Roadway improvements, new private developments, new regulations, and new public buildings will be a regular occurrence, particularly if things are going well. Our most significant recommendation is ongoing vigilance. Regularly re-evaluate this key travel path using our analysis as a guide of what to look for.

Additionally, as Mort Elementary and University Mall become more successful, even more people will use the pathway, creating a new kind of natural surveillance. Programs like Safe Routes to School, walking clubs, bicycle clubs, and others should be regularly consulted about the needs along the pathway – both day and night.

Finally, as highlighted in other reports we have shared, maintenance is crucial. Litter around public art, or graffiti on well lighted bus shelters minimize the impacts of those investments. New lighting that is turned off for roadway construction does not accomplish its intended tasks. Vigilance to these elements with an understanding of their impact on the perceptions and place avoidance behaviors of key target markets is essential to success.

# Appendix D

## Safedesign™ Basics

## Safedesign™ Basics

### The 5i's of Safedesign™

- ❖ **intentional** – We avoid the “if you build new they will feel safer” paradox by directly connecting each of our detailed recommendations to a proven crime prevention approach, not just generalized “eyes on the street” or “better lighting” concepts found in most plans.
- ❖ **integrated** – Our cost-effective “More Than Just Police™” approach helps clients utilize and adjust many other existing resources and programs in their efforts to improve real and perceived safety.
- ❖ **innovative** – Because our work combines CPTED, urban design, program management, real estate master planning, social capital development, perception metrics, disorder crime management, and strategic communications at every step, our solutions go far beyond others that focus almost exclusively on technology, patrols, and target hardening. Innovative concepts include:
  - Safety Thresholds – what is safe enough varies by target market;
  - Total Travel Path™ Analyses – is the complete path safe enough;
  - Perception leads to reality;
  - 4C's of Lighting – Color, Consistency, Context, and Candelas (footcandles)
  - Complete Streets After Dark;
  - Master developer perspective to maximize total value for the district or downtown;
  - SHEconomy dynamics and target markets – women make the vast majority of purchase and location decisions;
  - Innovative impact metrics like pedestrian and stroller counts;
  - Importance of Wayfinding to address fears of getting lost;
  - Multi-district branding approach;
  - Informal Social Interaction enhancements; and
  - Walking focus groups for women after dark.
- ❖ **impactful** – We focus on impacts and measure real progress, not just efforts (e.g. pounds of trash picked up) or generalized crime statistics. Once carefully implemented over the initial 3-year phase, our system of improvements to physical environment, programs/patrols, and strategic communications will result in a number of measurable benefits. These include:
  - ✓ improved safety **perceptions** (both residents and potential visitors/customers),
  - ✓ reduced **crime** rates,
  - ✓ increased **property values**,
  - ✓ increased **pedestrian counts**,
  - ✓ reduced policing and private security **costs**,
  - ✓ increased sales, property, and income tax **revenues**, and
  - ✓ increased private development and business **investment**.
- ❖ **investors** – The communities we serve need new investors – from homeowners to small businesses to developers. We provide solutions to improve investor confidence, replacing investor fears about safety and place avoidance by potential customers and employees.



## Safedesign™ Strategies and Fundamentals

1. **Maximize Natural Surveillance** – Fundamentally, this strategy involves the ability of regular people (not just police) to easily and naturally observe any criminal threats or disorderly behaviors. The placement of windows, landscaping, kitchens, lighting, fencing - and even buildings on a site or land uses in a city - can make it easier or harder for Natural Surveillance to occur. This does not mean that all visual obstructions should be eliminated or minimized, but they must be coordinated and considered as designers and managers work to balance Natural Surveillance with Access Management, Territoriality, Informal Social Interaction, privacy, and other important features of the site/property.
2. **Maximize Access Management** (not necessarily prohibition) – By hindering the ability for quick entrance and escape, property owners and tenants can significantly reduce the risk of crime occurring. However, this does not usually mean prohibiting all access – like at a prison. The goal is to increase the risk of apprehension enough to prevent criminal or disorderly behavior – while still creating a great place and property that people enjoy. Picket fences, canals, even flower beds can help control access without creating the fear, stress, and place-avoidance behaviors caused by bars on windows, razor wire, and bricked up windows. The real goal is managing access as much as possible while making it feel like part of the design aesthetics to the casual user (the criminal will definitely notice).
3. **Maximize Territoriality** and signs of care/concern – Key aspects of territoriality for a site or place include clear boundary markers (e.g. fencing, pavers, shrubs), fragile landscaping or outdoor decorations/art, the lack of trash/graffiti/weeds and other signs of neglect, carefully maintained landscaping and building exteriors, and even well-maintained striping in parking lots. Fundamentally, these are outward signs of care and concern that typically mean people are watching the area and will act to protect it.
4. Maximize natural surveillance along **key travel paths** (e.g. – walk to/from the bus stop) – People are often most vulnerable when they move along a pathway where they must be out of their vehicles. This can be the walk to the bus stop, the walk to the parking garage after work, through the subway/train station, or even along the bike path they use for fun and exercise. When parts of those pathways are isolated visually, people are at much greater risk of attack. Land use patterns, window placement, careful tree and landscaping placement, and good lighting can all be used to address this. Otherwise, people will stay in their cars and use them as both shield and weapon (when needed).
5. **Maximize opportunities for informal social interaction** – While Police are the formal enforcers and play an absolutely critical role in maintaining public safety, the first line of defense is actually the people around us. They help prevent crime against us and our property simply by being present and willing to help or call for help. But for this to happen, people must first get to know each other. Front porches, dog parks, children’s play grounds, community gardens, and even just “friendly” fences make a huge difference in the amount of



this informal social interaction that leads to shared protection. Such features need to be intentionally integrated and located to have the best impacts

6. **Minimize any negative safety messaging** (direct or indirect) – Perception leads to reality. Good people avoid places they perceive as unsafe or dominated by bad people – resulting in the place **actually** dominated by bad people. Managing such perceptions is complex, and managing safety messages has a big impact on perceptions. However, many people do not pay close attention to the negative aspects of their messages. “We’re passing a new panhandling ordinance” or “we are marching against violence in our neighborhood” or “we only had 23 murders last year” contain indirect messages of “we have a big problem with panhandlers”, “we have a lot of violence here”, and “a lot of people get killed here.” The Safedesign™ approach focuses on integrating positive-indirect messages about safety. Some examples include:

- ❖ Photos of young children playing in a park at night that used to be dominated by homeless men.
- ❖ Photos of young women walking and laughing in a downtown setting after dark.
- ❖ Stories about elderly working with youth in a community garden.
- ❖ Stories about awards for the best holiday lighting in a neighborhood.
- ❖ Stories about after-dark events involving strollers, babies, and puppies.

There is much more to managing such messages, but it is essential to be intentional and cautious about the indirect messages people send on a daily basis about the safety of a place.



Perceptions

## Implementation Partners

(initial list)

State of Florida  
University of South Florida  
Tampa Innovation Alliance  
University Area CDC  
Florida Hospital  
Moffitt Cancer Center  
James A Haley Veterans Hospital  
Busch Gardens  
Hillsborough County  
Safe & Sound Hillsborough County  
University Mall  
Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority  
Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office  
City of Tampa  
Tampa Housing Authority  
Plan Hillsborough  
Tampa Hillsborough EDC  
Tampa Bay Partnership

Area Businesses  
Area Property Owners  
Area Residents  
Casa Chiapas  
Tampa Para Cristo  
Crossover Church  
USF Student Organizations  
Caribbean-American National Development  
Organization  
Hillsborough County Public Library  
Habitat for Humanity  
Mort Elementary Community School  
Junior Achievement  
Safe Routes to School  
Tampa Family Health Centers  
Tampa Electric (TECO)  
Public Art Alliance  
Other area Churches