



**PLAN PUNTA GORDA**  
2019 CITYWIDE MASTER PLAN  
NOVEMBER 15, 2019





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### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**City of Punta Gorda**

City Council  
City Communication Manager  
City Manager  
Finance Department  
Police & Fire Department  
Public Works Department  
Urban Design Department  
Utilities Department

**Community Partners & Stakeholders**

Blanchard House Museum  
Charlotte County Economic  
Development Partnership  
Charlotte County Chamber  
Downtown Historic HOA  
Fishermen’s Village  
Florida Department of Transportation  
District 1 Staff  
Gulf Coast Partnership  
Harborside Center for the Arts  
Learn-to-Sail  
Local Cycling Shops and Groups  
Local Developers & Property Owners  
Local Real-Estate Professionals  
PGI Civic Association  
Punta Gorda Boat Club  
Punta Gorda Boaters Alliance  
Punta Gorda Chamber and Downtown  
Merchants Association  
Punta Gorda Historical Society  
Punta Gorda Historic Mural Society  
Smart Growth Punta Gorda  
South Charlotte County Coalition  
TEAM Punta Gorda  
Visual Arts Center

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## HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

The physical form of Punta Gorda has shifted greatly through the years, though its small fishing village charm has always remained a key part its identity. Over time, businesses in downtown and the surrounding areas have shifted from industrial and commercial uses to service and tourism. Most of the growth in the City over the last 50 years has been the result of suburban residential development. In the absence of new strategic planning efforts for this area, this pattern of development is likely to continue. With new concerns regarding the economic and fiscal sustainability of the city given its current tax base, job growth, demographics, and neighboring planned developments, the City of Punta Gorda commissioned an update to the 2005 Citizens Master Plan—this time with a focus on economic feasibility and budgetary impacts. The purpose of this Citywide Master Plan is to bring together a comprehensive set of recommendations that balance community goals with the desire for a more vibrant and economically sustainable future.

The planning process was initiated to allow community members to engage with each other, city staff, leadership, and planning consultants and envision the future of Punta Gorda together. This Master Plan summarizes the community's big ideas and the resulting recommendations. It also includes a comprehensive list of strategies and actions items to achieve this future vision, as well as an implementation matrix that includes key information on how to enact the plan over time. A Draft Master Plan was shared publicly to collect community input on the plan's recommendations and implementation strategy. These comments were consolidated into a Summary and Response to Comments Memo and, to the extent possible, incorporated along with City staff and City Council input into this final version of the Citywide Master Plan. The final plan will be used by the City, community members, local businesses, and property owners as a road map to guide future change and improvements.

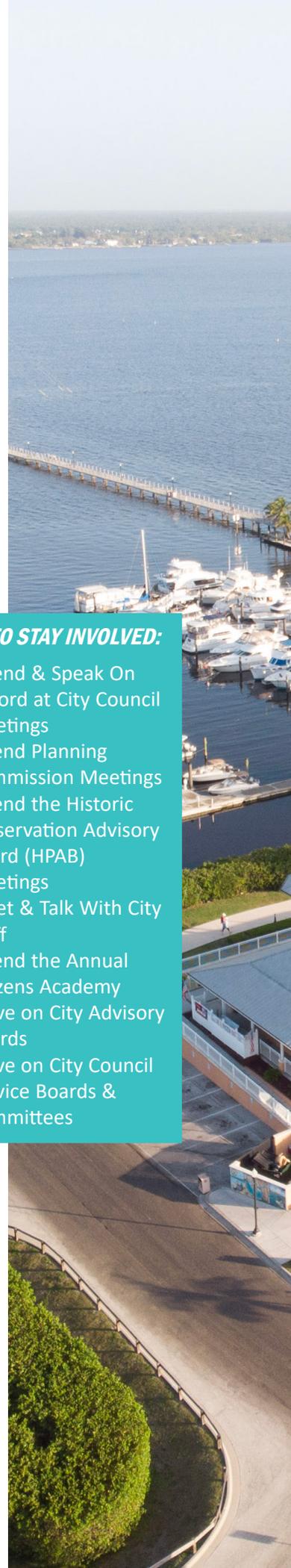
## PROJECT TEAM

At Dover, Kohl & Partners, there is a belief that each community deserves planners as interested in the history and future of the town as the most passionate local resident. For 31 years, Dover-Kohl has helped communities engage in the process of redefining themselves and successfully implementing their vision, creating meaningful places and thriving communities. The firm's work includes restoring existing urban centers and towns, reconfiguring sprawling suburbs, conserving natural environments, and preserving our society's built legacy.

The firm has proven experience in directing the work of multidisciplinary team members. This has given them the capability to know how to best organize the project schedule to bring in the required expertise at the right times, providing the most benefit to their clients. For the Punta Gorda Citywide Master Plan, they have included Anita Morrison and Abigail Ferretti from Partners for Economic Solutions (PES), national experts in market and economic analysis with a focus on practical implementation strategies, and transportation engineer Rick Hall, a leader in walkable and holistic transportation planning.

### HOW TO STAY INVOLVED:

- Attend & Speak On Record at City Council Meetings
- Attend Planning Commission Meetings
- Attend the Historic Preservation Advisory Board (HPAB) Meetings
- Meet & Talk With City Staff
- Attend the Annual Citizens Academy
- Serve on City Advisory Boards
- Serve on City Council Service Boards & Committees





## I. Introduction & Process

### Introduction





# 1. Introduction & Process

*This section takes a glimpse into previous plans and studies completed for the City of Punta Gorda. It also summarizes the public engagement process for this Citywide Master Plan and the resulting big ideas that form the basis for the recommendations and designs presented in this Draft Plan document.*

# PREVIOUS PLANS & STUDIES

## 1. URBAN DESIGN & PLANNING:

- 2005 Citizens' Master Plan
- Punta Gorda CRA Charrette (2005)
- Punta Gorda East side & Downtown Planning Study (2000)
- City of Punta Gorda Comprehensive Plan 2040 (2017)
- Harborwalk Area II - Site Plan and Design (2018)
- Boaters Alliance Waterfront Development Master Plan (2018)
- TEAM's Gilchrist Park Activity Center Project Report (2018)
- Historic District HOA Feedback to Boaters Alliance Plan (2019)

## 2. TRANSPORTATION:

- Downtown Circulation & Parking Study (2006)
- Transportation & Buildout Study Presentation (2018)
- Transportation & Buildout Study Draft Report (2019)
- Alternative Transportation Plan 2030

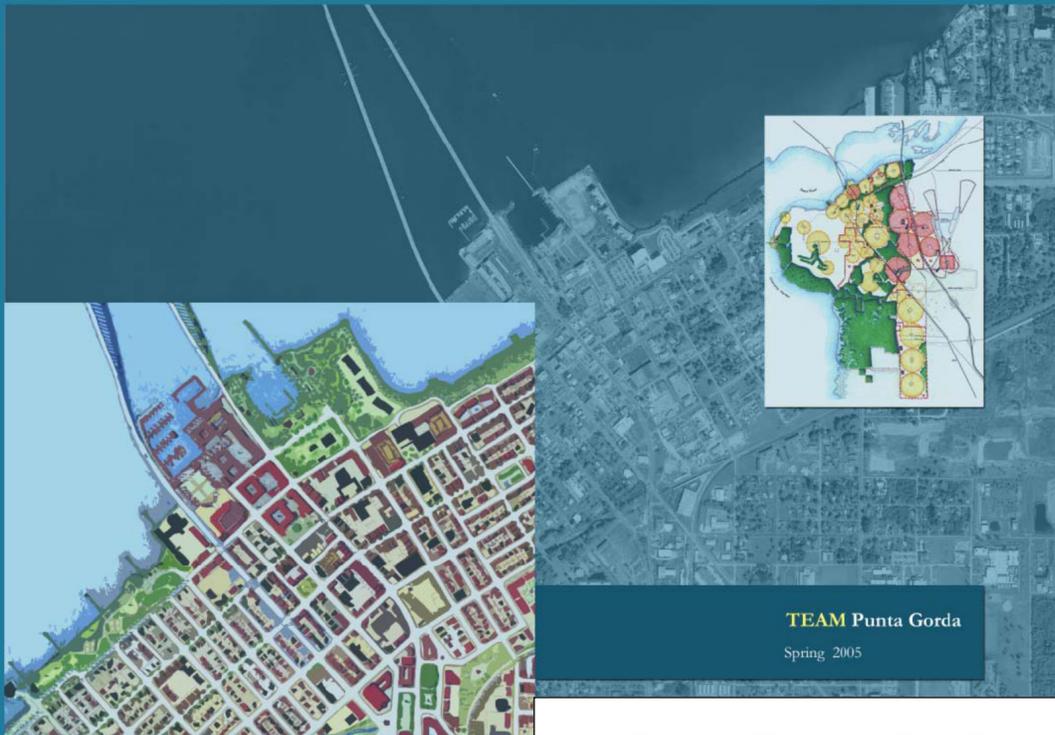
## 3. ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS:

- Harbor Inn Resort & Marina Proposal (2005-2006)
- Punta Gorda Economic Development Strategy (2007)
- The City Market Place Development Plan (2008)
- Charlotte County Demographic Profile (2010)
- Market Analysis: Mixed-Use Planned Community - Jones Loop Village (2015)
- Executive Annexation Summary Report (2016)
- City of Punta Gorda Discovery Report by AQUA (2017)
- AQUA Strategic Communications Plan (2017)
- Four Points Parking & Living Shoreline Proposals (2017)
- ADA Transition Plan Final Report (2018)
- 20/20 Housing Report Charlotte County (2018)
- City Market Place Brochure (2019)

## 4. ENVIRONMENT:

- City of Punta Gorda Adaptation Plan (2009)
- Parks & Recreation Master Plan (2009)
- Parks & Recreation Master Plan Update Input Meeting (2017)

# 2005 CITIZENS MASTER PLAN



TEAM Punta Gorda  
Spring 2005

J A I M E  
C O R R E A  
A N D  
A S S O C I A T E S

City of Punta Gorda  
Discovery Report



## CITY OF PUNTA GORDA ADA TRANSITION PLAN FINAL REPORT

NOVEMBER 2018

Prepared For:  
City of Punta Gorda  
326 West Marion Avenue  
Punta Gorda, Florida, 33950



Tindale & Oliver  
[www.tindaleoliver.com](http://www.tindaleoliver.com)

# PUBLIC PROCESS

## SITE VISIT AND PROJECT KICKOFF

The Punta Gorda Citywide Master Plan process kicked-off in December 2018 with a conference call between city staff and the consultant team. The team followed up that meeting with a 3-day site visit in late January 2019, where they met with city departments, planning staff, council members, and local stakeholders and community groups to begin assessing the key challenges and opportunities that are addressed in this master plan.

## INTERVIEWS AND TECHNICAL MEETINGS

Between January and March of 2019, the planning team held meetings, phone calls, and interviews with a variety of stakeholders in Punta Gorda to learn how current efforts, concerns, and future goals might be included as a part of the master plan. These groups included:

### City of Punta Gorda

City Council  
 City Communication Manager  
 City Manager  
 Finance Department  
 Police & Fire Department  
 Public Works Department  
 Urban Design Department  
 Utilities Department

### Community Partners & Stakeholders

Blanchard House Museum  
 Charlotte County Economic Development Partnership  
 Charlotte County Chamber

Downtown Historic HOA  
 Fishermen’s Village  
 Florida DOT District 1 Staff  
 Gulf Coast Partnership  
 Harborside Center for the Arts  
 Learn-to-Sail  
 Local Cycling Shops and Groups  
 Local Developers & Property Owners  
 Local Real-Estate Professionals  
 PGI Civic Association  
 Punta Gorda Boat Club  
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 Punta Gorda Downtown Merchants Association  
 Punta Gorda Historical Society  
 Punta Gorda Historic Mural Society  
 Smart Growth Punta Gorda  
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 Visual Arts Center

### CHARRETTE SCHEDULE



## PUBLIC CHARRETTE: CREATING A COMMON VISION

From Monday, March 11, 2019 through Friday, March 15, 2019, members of the Dover-Kohl team went to Punta Gorda to engage the community in a public design charrette. The planning team was led by Dover, Kohl and Partners and included Partners for Economic Solutions, and Hall Planning and Engineering. During the week, the team presented initial findings, gathered feedback, and worked on potential design and policy solutions for Punta Gorda. The goal during this time was to identify key priorities and to build consensus on a vision and direction for the future of Punta Gorda. The week culminated in a “Work-

Figure 1.1: Public process schedule

in-Progress” meeting on Friday, March 15, 2019 to summarize the week’s events, possible solutions, and confirm the path for the master plan. Over the course of the charrette, the planning team heard from over 500 participants during the hands-on sessions, 200 visitors during the Gilchrist Park open house, held 30 interviews and technical meetings, met over 120 visitors during the open design studio, and had over 1,000 hands-on touch points on printouts and maps.

### Charrette: Kick-Off Presentations

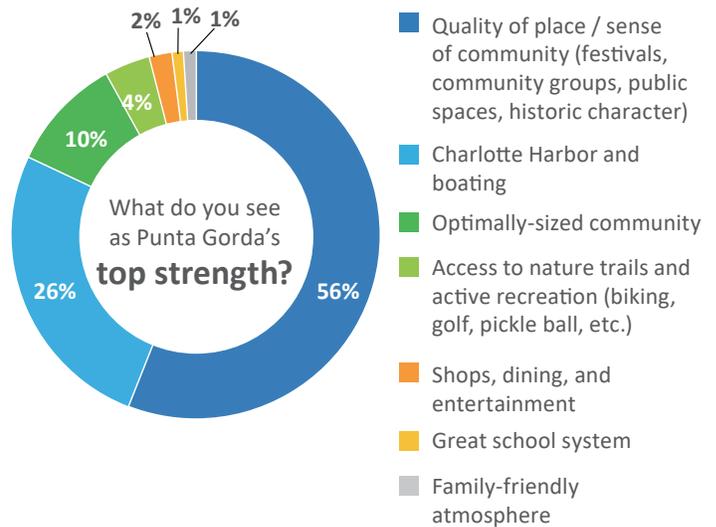
On Monday, March 11, 2019 two Kick-Off presentations and Hands-On Design Sessions were held at First United Methodist Church Auditorium. During this event, the Dover-Kohl team presented initial findings based on the existing conditions in Punta Gorda. Project Director, Luiza Leite, discussed the master plan and charrette process, and the importance of involving the public. Anita Morrison from Partners for Economic Solutions, Rick Hall from Hall Planning and Engineering, Victor Dover from Dover, Kohl and Partners presented initial findings regarding transportation and placemaking.

Participants were asked keypad polling questions to get a better understanding of who was represented and what the group’s priorities might be. A visual preference survey was also presented to determine what the participants wanted to see and avoid.

### Charrette: Hands-On Design Sessions

Following the Kick-Off Presentation, participants broke off into groups of six at nearby tables for a hands-on design session. Each table had a large map of Punta Gorda, markers, pens, and pencils. Participants were asked to discuss and document on the maps what is most important to preserve, where growth should occur, what that growth should be like, what is missing from Punta Gorda that could improve their quality of life, and where bicycle and pedestrian safety could be improved.

At the end of their hands-on design session, each table was asked to distill their solutions and identify their “Big 3 Ideas” to present to the assembly. As groups presented, potential subjects for consensus and key focus areas within Punta Gorda emerged.



## 500+ Keypad Polling Participants

Figure 1.2: Poll results

### Housing & Economic Development



Figure 1.3: BIG Ideas summary

### Charrette: The BIG Ideas

The chart above summarizes the themes that emerged from each group in both the morning and afternoon hands-on sessions. A wide range of goals were expressed. While housing and economic development were featured more prominently, other concerns such as the waterfront were also recurring talking points from the community.

## I. Introduction & Process

### Public Process

#### Charrette: One Word Cards

The following word clouds provide guidance for the plan and were generated from an exercise conducted throughout the week. With over 500 responses, participants were asked to write down one word that came to mind about Punta Gorda “Now” and “In the Future.” The more respondents used a particular word, the larger that word appears.

Asked to describe Punta Gorda now, many people noted the small, historic, charming, and water-oriented nature of the City. In the future, people expressed a desire for a vibrant and diverse city with new development, that still maintained its small and historic character. Based on the words used the most often, one can imagine a mission statement being written similar to:

*“Punta Gorda today is a small, historic, waterfront community. It is a friendly city with a charming atmosphere. In the future, the Punta Gorda Citywide Master Plan will endeavor to preserve the small town character while increasing diversity and vibrancy. This will be done with development that respects the quaint, friendly, boating community that we are proud of.”*

#### Charrette: Open Design Studio

Following the Kick-Off Presentation and the Hands-On Design Sessions, the Dover-Kohl team began working on potential solutions to the themes and concerns that emerged during the table workshops. To begin, the team studied the table maps from Monday’s sessions to begin formulating concepts for the master plan. The studio was located at the Lashley Marina Community Room from Tuesday, March 12, 2019 through Thursday, March 15, 2019. During this time, each member of the planning team studied specific areas in Punta Gorda to illustrate ideas about how the City might resolve community concerns and improve the overall quality of life. Key topics studied included street design, bicycle infrastructure, workforce housing, boating infrastructure, traffic and parking, and economic sustainability.

The public was invited and encouraged to visit from 9 to 11 am and from 5 to 7 pm to see the work as it was being produced, engage in discussions about the potential solutions, and bring suggestions. Over 120 people from Punta Gorda visited the open design studio with ideas to further improve the master plan.



Urban designers illustrating concepts at the Open Studio



Community members stopping by the Open Studio to discuss their ideas and concerns

## GILCHRIST PARK OPEN HOUSE

On Wednesday evening, March 13th, 2019 the consultant team and city staff gathered at Charlotte High to present the four initial design concepts for the Bayfront Center and Boat Club sites at an open house meeting. Attendees provided written comments on presentation boards and in exit surveys. Dover, Kohl & Partners worked to address the community's feedback before presenting the options again at the Work-In-Progress Presentation on Friday. The two pairs of pie charts to the right compare responses regarding the Gilchrist Park Activity Center and boating in general from both of these meetings.



Residents attending the Gilchrist Park Open House

### Charrette: “Work-in-Progress” Presentation

At the end of the charrette week, the community gathered for a “Work-in-Progress” presentation where members of the Dover-Kohl team summarized the week's progress. Subjects included an economics check-up, the big ideas, transportation close-ups, and setting the path ahead with what's next.

Luiza and Victor presented draft design solutions for Punta Gorda including a bridge lighting installation, and new mixed-use developments downtown. Polling was used to measure responses for each concept. Anita Morrison discussed existing conditions, the concept of annexation of nearby county land, business challenges, and financial implications. Rick Hall discussed street design concepts, roundabouts, and conversion into two-way streets.

At the end of the presentation, the audience was asked if they thought that the plan was heading in

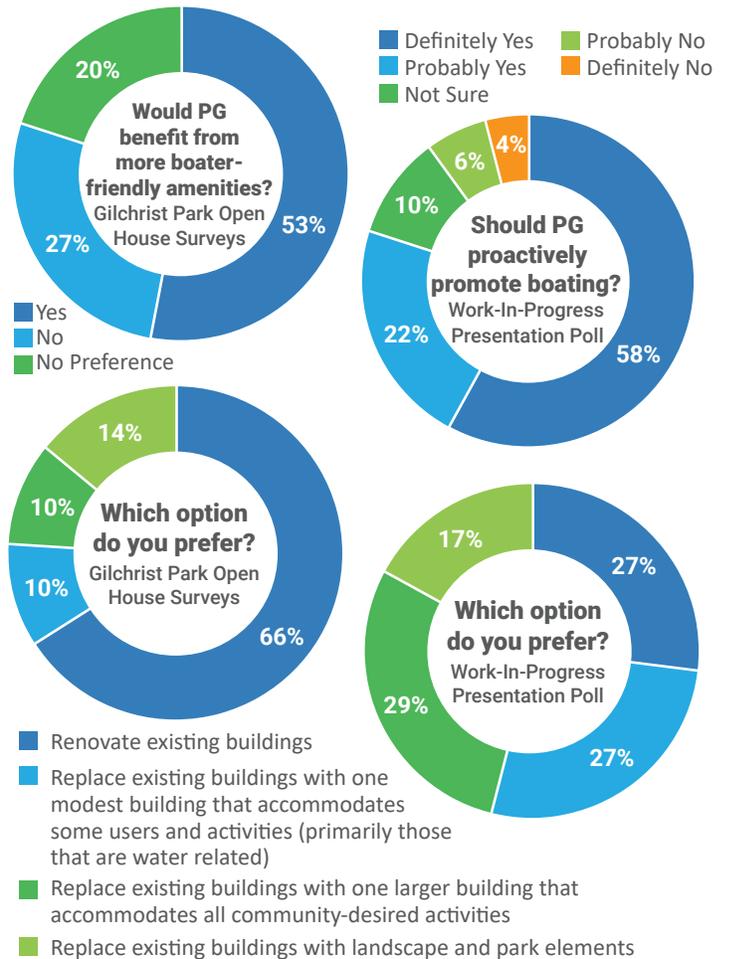


Figure 1.4: Feedback responses from Work-In-Progress Presentation

the right direction. 89 percent believed that the ideas presented were either definitely, or probably on the right track. The meeting adjourned with the planning team departing to continue working on the master plan with a draft report prepared for summer 2019.

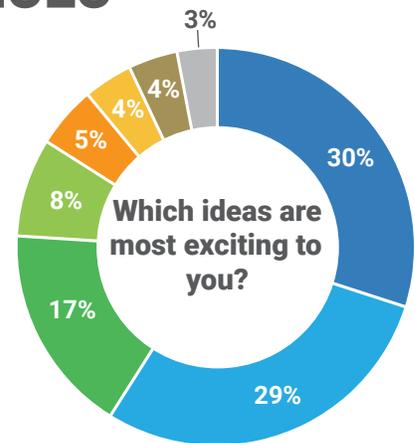


Dover-Kohl presenting initial design concepts at the Work-In-Progress Presentation

# CHARRETTE - EXIT SURVEY RESPONSES

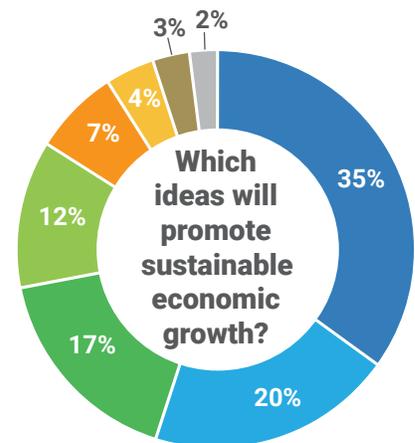
## OF THE IDEAS THAT YOU HAVE HEARD, WHICH ARE THE MOST EXCITING TO YOU?

Throughout the week of the charrette, the community was asked to identify the ideas that they had heard that were the most exciting to them. The chart to the right visualizes themes and examples presented as the “Big 3 Ideas”, in the open studio, technical meetings, and the Work-in-Progress presentation.



## WHICH IDEAS SEEM MOST CRUCIAL TO RESPONSIBLE GROWTH AND ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IN PUNTA GORDA?

In the exit interview sheet at the Kick-Off presentation, participants were asked to identify the ideas that they thought were the most crucial to achieving responsible growth and economic sustainability in Punta Gorda. These responses were collected and related responses were organized into themes. The adjacent chart illustrates the percentage of each theme.



## ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

After the Kick-Off presentation, participants were asked to identify additional questions for the planning team that may have come up during the hands-on session, or as each group was presenting their “Big 3 Ideas” to the assembly. These questions were collected and reviewed. Related questions were organized into groups and are identified in the chart to the right.

Examples of initiatives include the development of a City Market Place, the adoption of a form-based code, the creation of green, public gathering space, and the maintenance of community character.

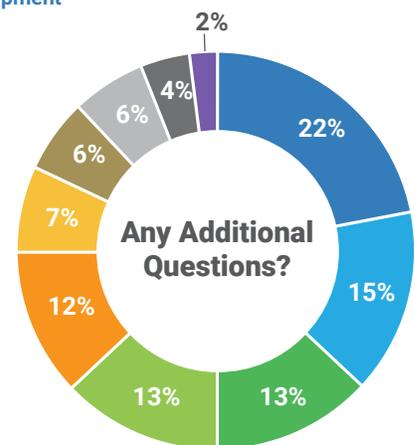
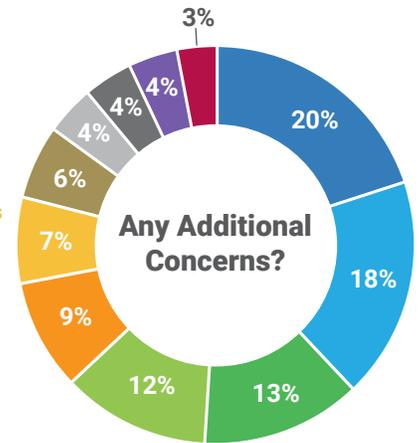


Figure 1.5: Charrette exit survey responses

## ARE THERE ADDITIONAL ISSUES THAT YOU WOULD LIKE THE PLANNING TEAM TO EXAMINE IN MORE DETAIL?

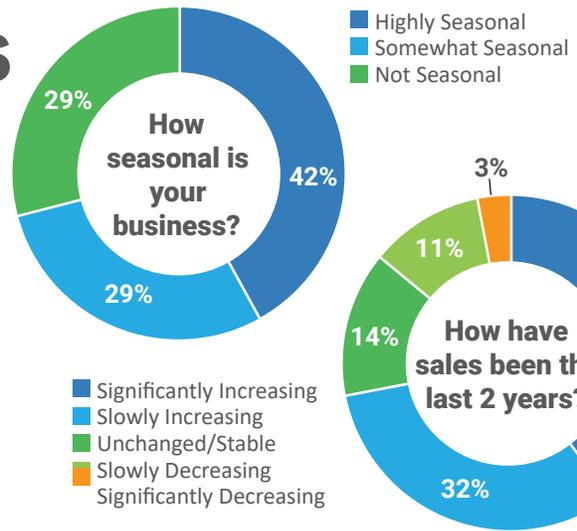
After the Work-in-Progress presentation, participants were asked if there were any issues in addition to those that had been presented and discussed during the week. Information was collected from printed exit interviews and feedback online. The responses were reviewed and grouped into themes. The percentage of each theme is represented in the adjacent chart.

Examples of investigated issues include increasing pedestrian and bicycle safety, making more two-way streets, improving medical services, and estimating the economic impact of these initiatives.



## BUSINESS COMMUNITY - ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

Following the charrette, an online poll was distributed to gather additional input from local business owners, employees, and commercial property owners in Punta Gorda. This new information would be used to supplement previous stakeholder meetings with the Punta Gorda Chamber, Charlotte County Chamber, and local developers and real estate professionals. In addition to general information, respondents were asked how the master plan could help address the most pressing challenges they face as employees, business owners, and/or property owners. In total, 89 responses were collected.



### Challenges to Consider (% mentioned)

- 21% Downtown Business Development
- 19% Traffic/Street Improvements
- 16% Economic/Employment Diversity
- 16% Encourage Development
- 16% Other - affordable housing, political imbalance
- 13% Community Character

### How to Address Business Challenges? Rank the Following Strategies:



Figure 1.6: Business community - online survey results

## II. Existing Conditions & Key Issues

### Introduction





# Existing Conditions & Key Issues

## 2.

.....  
*This section summarizes the existing conditions and key issues in Punta Gorda as they relate to demographics, resilience, the natural environment, land use, urban form, walking and biking, and economic growth and sustainability.*  
.....

## II. Existing Conditions & Key Issues

### Overview of Existing Conditions

## PUNTA GORDA EXISTING CONDITIONS

### DEMOGRAPHICS

The following data was taken from the Draft Economic and Fiscal Analysis (March 4th, 2019) prepared by Partners for Economic Solutions (PES).

#### 1. POPULATION:

- 19,472 year-round residents
- 9,772 households
- 18 to 20% population growth during winter from seasonal residents
- 17% population growth from 2010 to 2018, more rapid than Charlotte County and Southwest Florida

#### 2. AGE DISTRIBUTION:

- Median Age: 66 in 2018
- 54% of the population is aged 65 and over
- 72% of the population is aged 55 and over
- Charlotte County: 39% aged 65 and over
- Southwest Florida: 31% ages 65 and over
- 9% of city residents are aged 25-44
- Only 11.2% of new residents were aged 25-34 (from 2011-2015)

#### 3. INCOME & TENURE:

- 82.6% of HH are owner-occupied
- Charlotte County: 79.5% HH are owner-occupied
- SW Florida: 72.2% HH are owner-occupied
- 23% of HH headed by a 25-34 year-old own their homes as opposed to 92% of HH headed by a 65+ year-old own their home
- Median HH Income: \$59,507 (24% above County)
- Median Net Worth: \$337,000 (compared to \$192,000 for Charlotte County)

#### 4. EMPLOYMENT:

- 30% of residents aged 16+ are working or looking for work (only 5,500 resident in total)
- 71% of employed residents work in white-collar professions, 19% in service professions, and 11% in blue-collar profession
- Almost 14% of employed residents work at home
- 9% of jobs in Punta Gorda are held by residents
- 50% of PG workers travel less than 10 miles to work
- 22% travel more than 25 miles

### ANALYSIS MAPS

The following maps present a snapshot of the existing conditions in Punta Gorda. Key takeaways by topic for each of these maps are summarized below.

#### 1. EXISTING DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS:

The most dominant development pattern found in Punta Gorda is conventional suburban sprawl, though there are areas of traditional urban patterns, with smaller blocks a regular street grid, in and around the historic downtown.

#### 2. STORM SURGE:

All of Punta Gorda would be effected to some degree by a Category 2 or greater storm surge event.

#### 3. NATURAL AREAS:

Roughly 45.9% of land in Punta Gorda is held for preservation purposes, with an additional 5.4% going to recreational uses. These areas are vital to the health of the harbor and the mitigation of storm events.

#### 4. FUTURE LAND USE:

Only 1.0% of the city's future land has been set aside for medium-density housing and only 7.8% of land is dedicated to mixed-use development, being that 4.7% of that is highway commercial.

#### 5. ZONING:

Though the zoning code distinguishes between general residential and neighborhood residential zones, the latter of which seeks to preserve the traditional neighborhood patterns, permitted uses and allowable number of housing units in this district do not currently permit that this result is fully realized.

#### 6. SPECIAL DISTRICTS:

Punta Gorda utilizes special zoning overlay districts to better control uses and urban form in special areas.

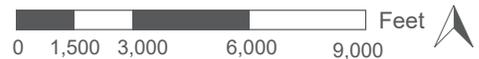
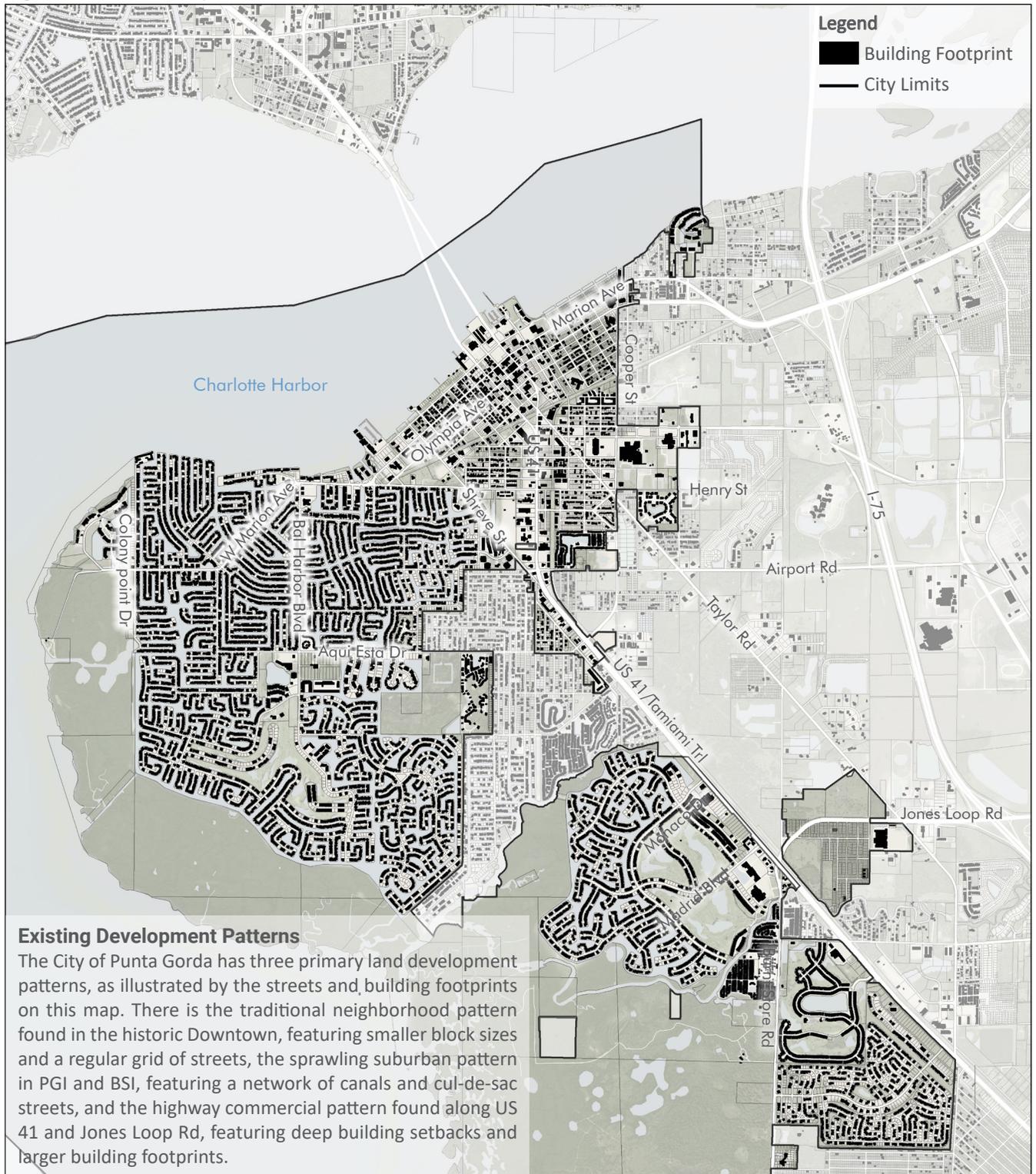
#### 7. CONCENTRATION OF SENIOR RESIDENTS:

Downtown, PGI and BSI have the highest concentrations of retirement aged residents, while Burnt Store Meadows, northern Charlotte Park and the area south and east of the railroad track have the lowest.

#### 8. BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN NETWORK:

Punta Gorda features roughly 17 miles of bicycle and 80 miles of pedestrian facilities as of 2015.

Figure 2.1: Ground Map



## II. Existing Conditions & Key Issues

### Analysis Maps

Figure 2.2: Storm Surge Map

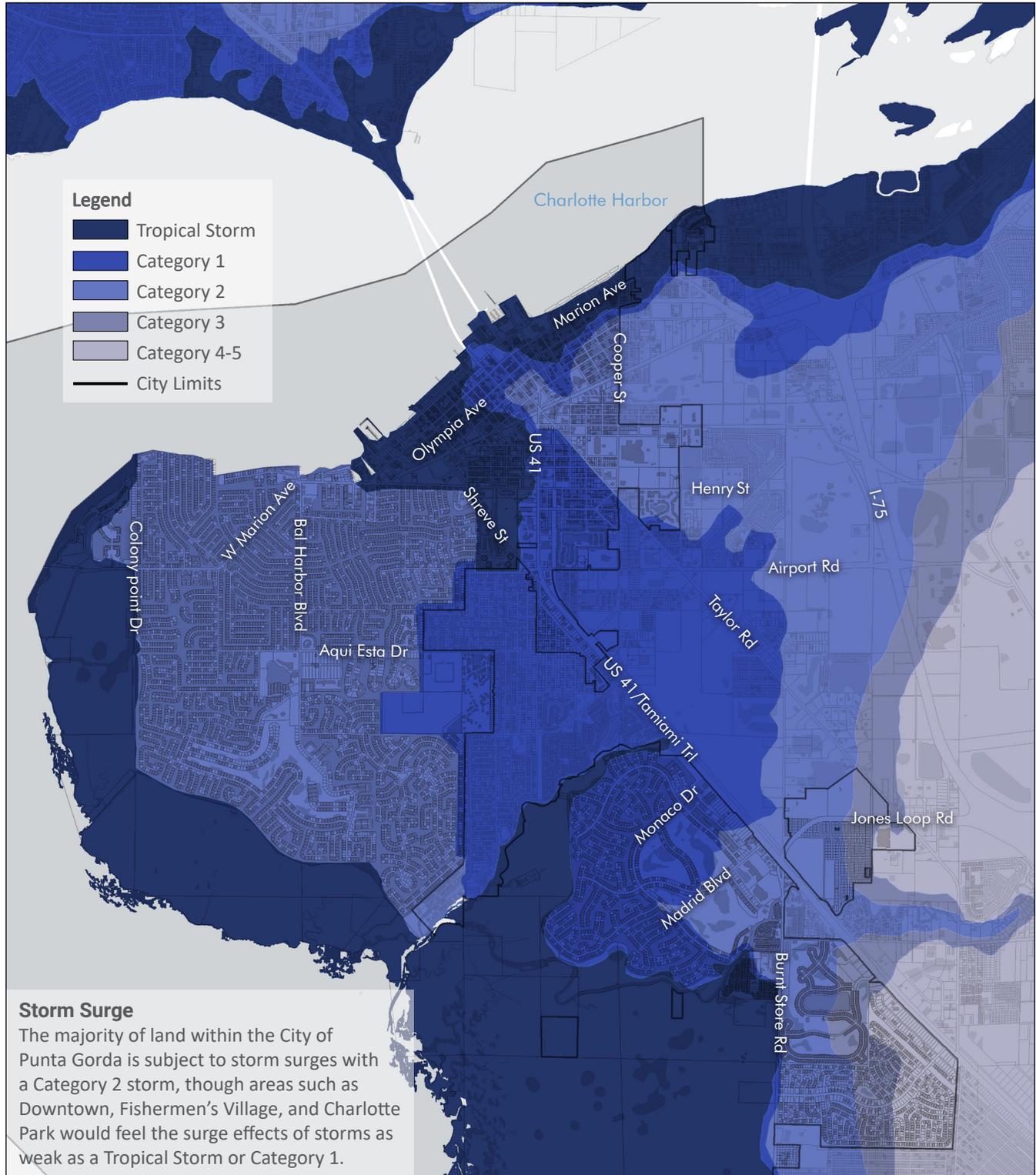
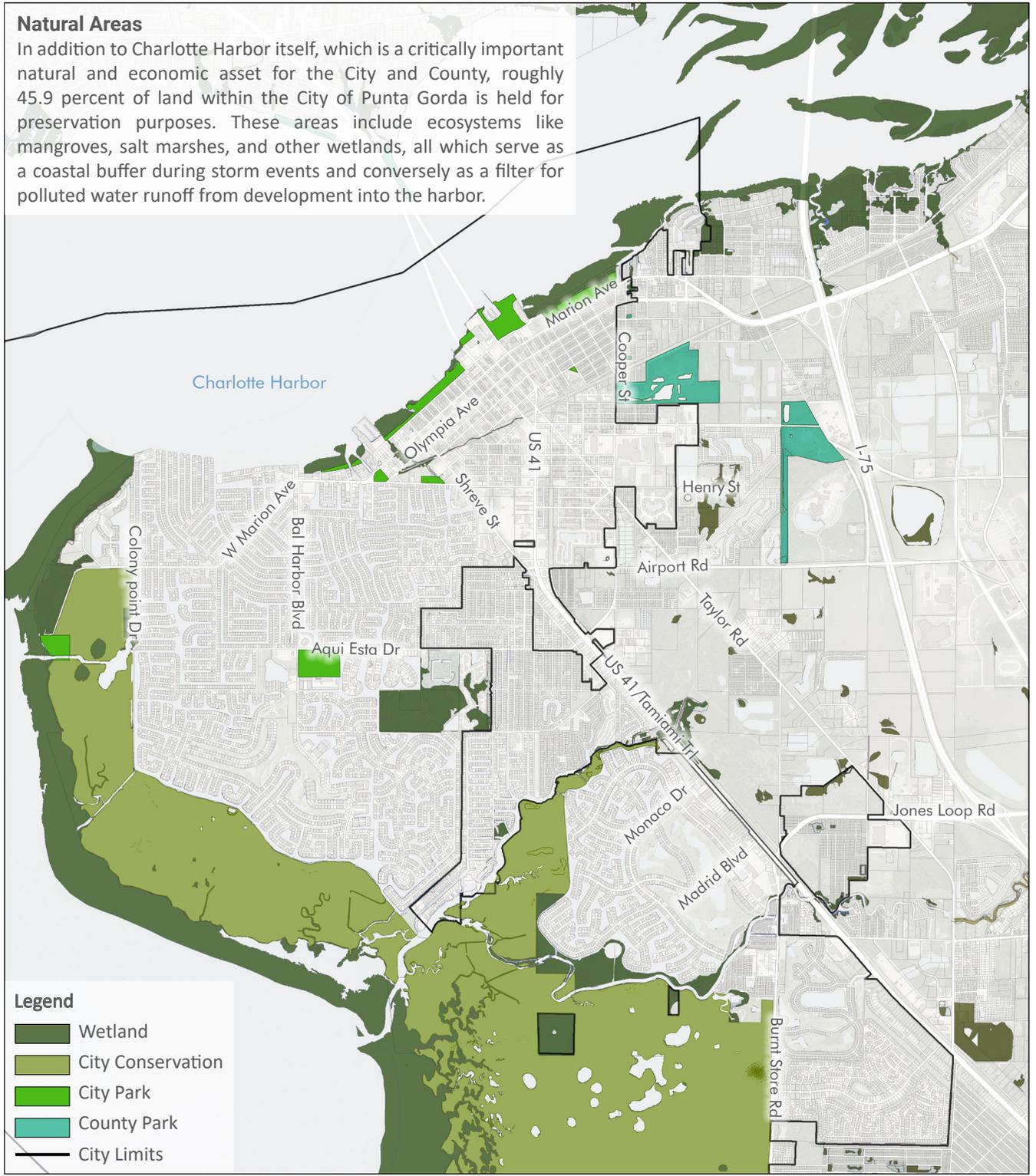


Figure 2.3: Parks, Wetlands, and Conservation Areas Map



## II. Existing Conditions & Key Issues

### Analysis Maps

Figure 2.4: Future Land Use Map (FLUM)

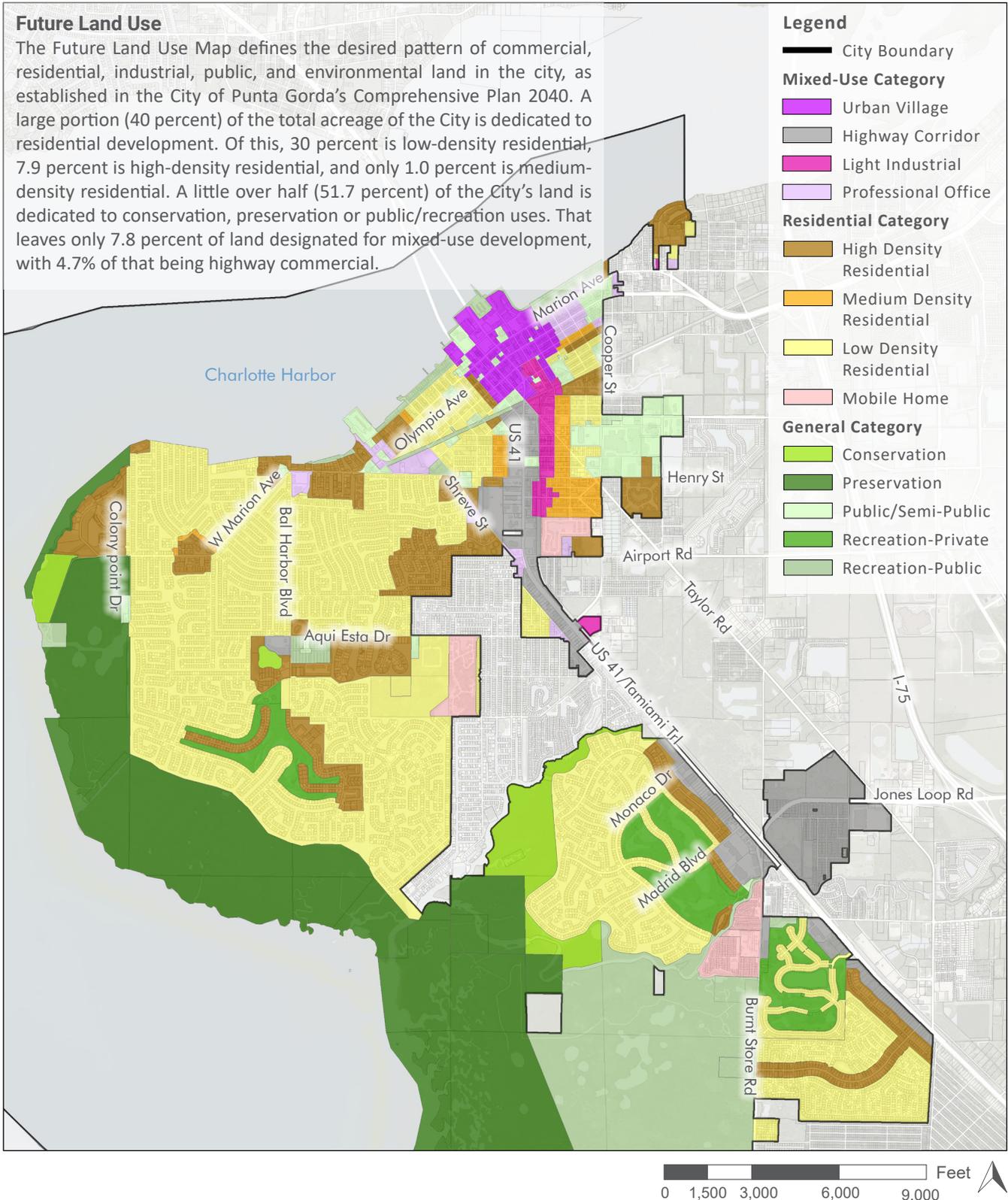
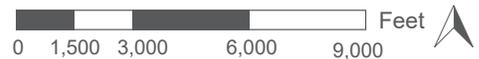
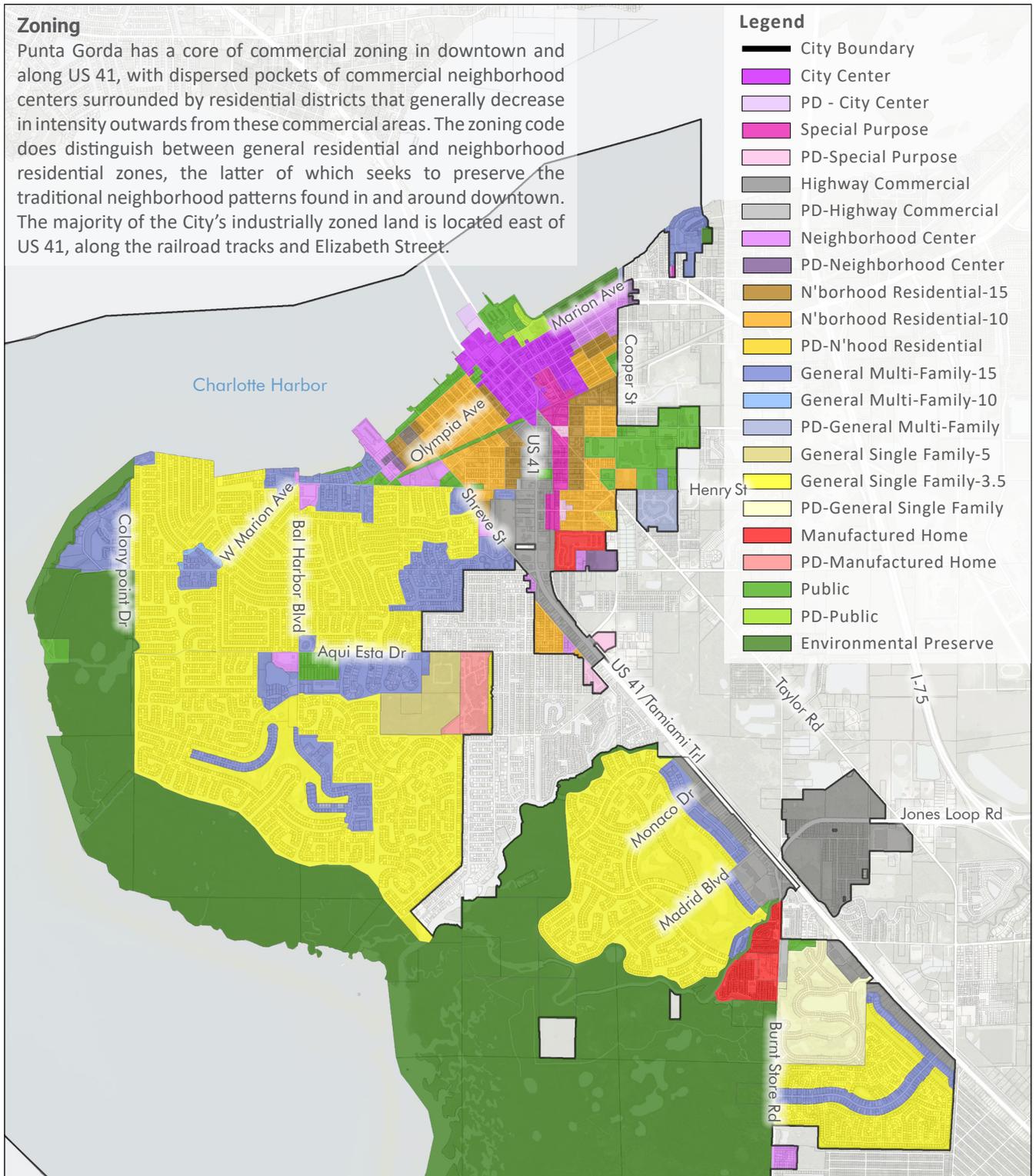


Figure 2.5: Zoning Map



## II. Existing Conditions & Key Issues

### Analysis Maps

Figure 2.6: Special Districts Map

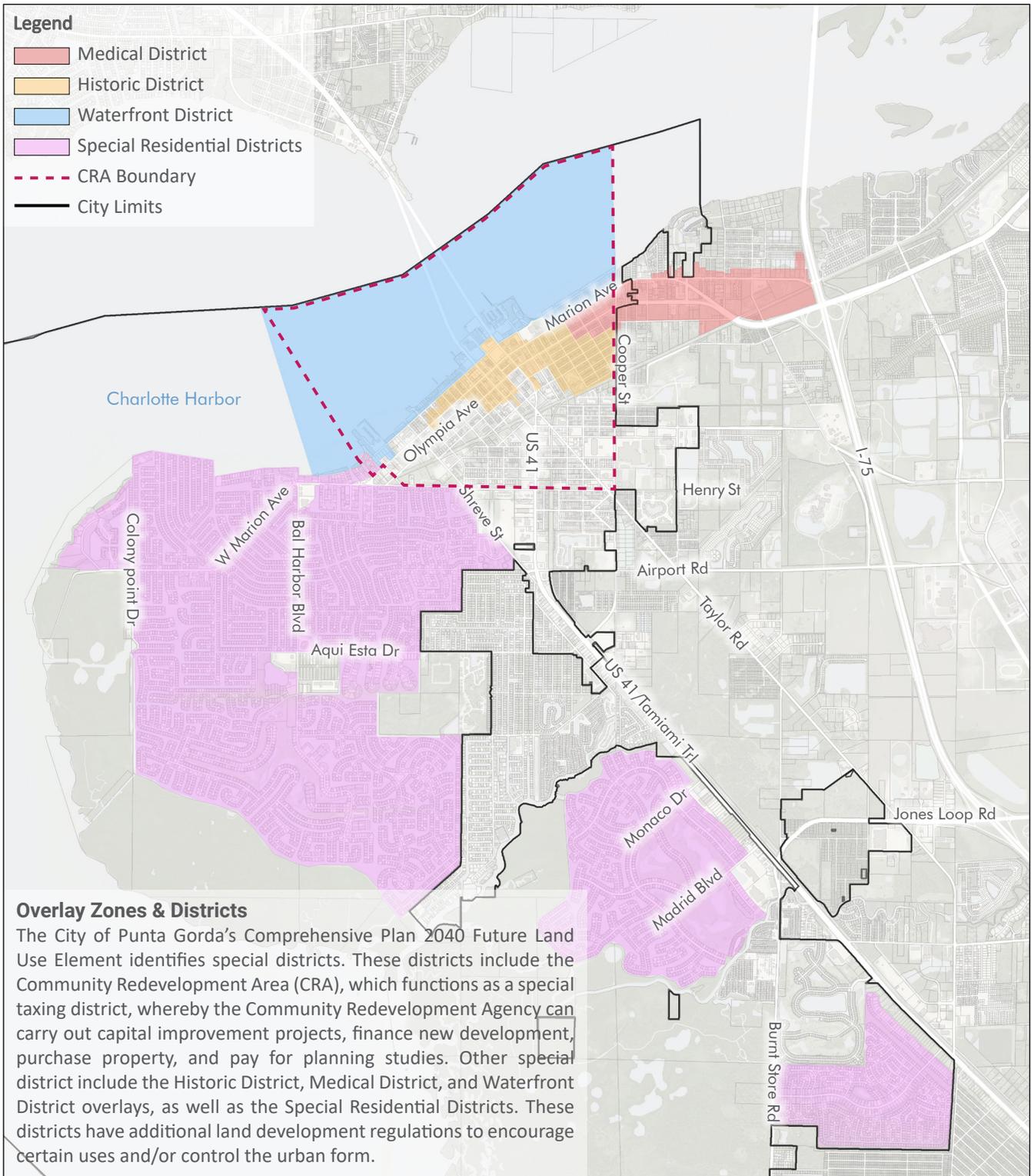
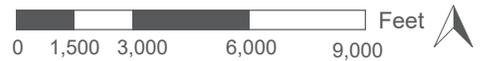
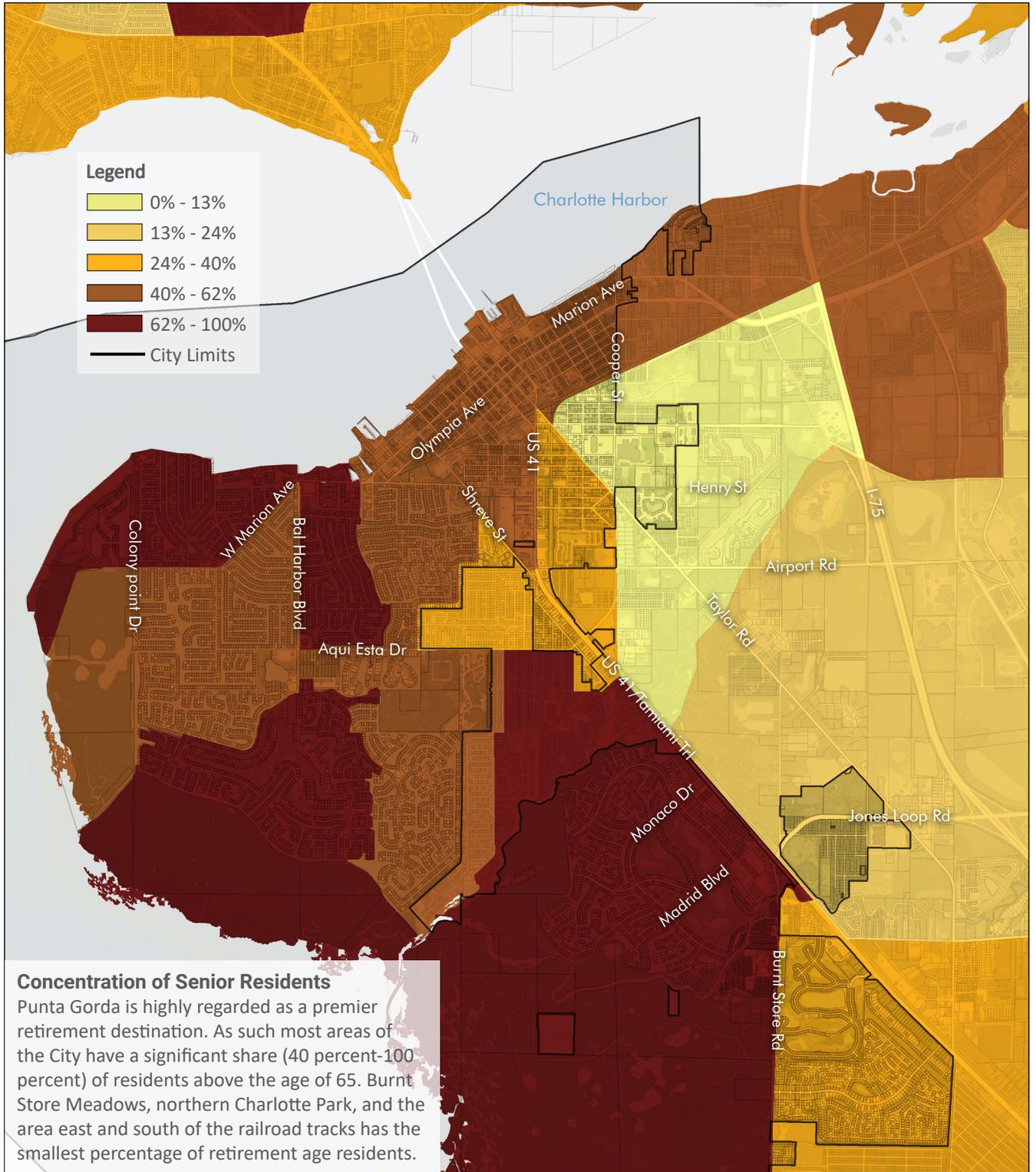


Figure 2.7: Percentage of People Aged 65 and Over Map



## II. Existing Conditions & Key Issues

### Analysis Maps

Figure 2.8: Existing and Proposed Bicycle Networks Map (2015)

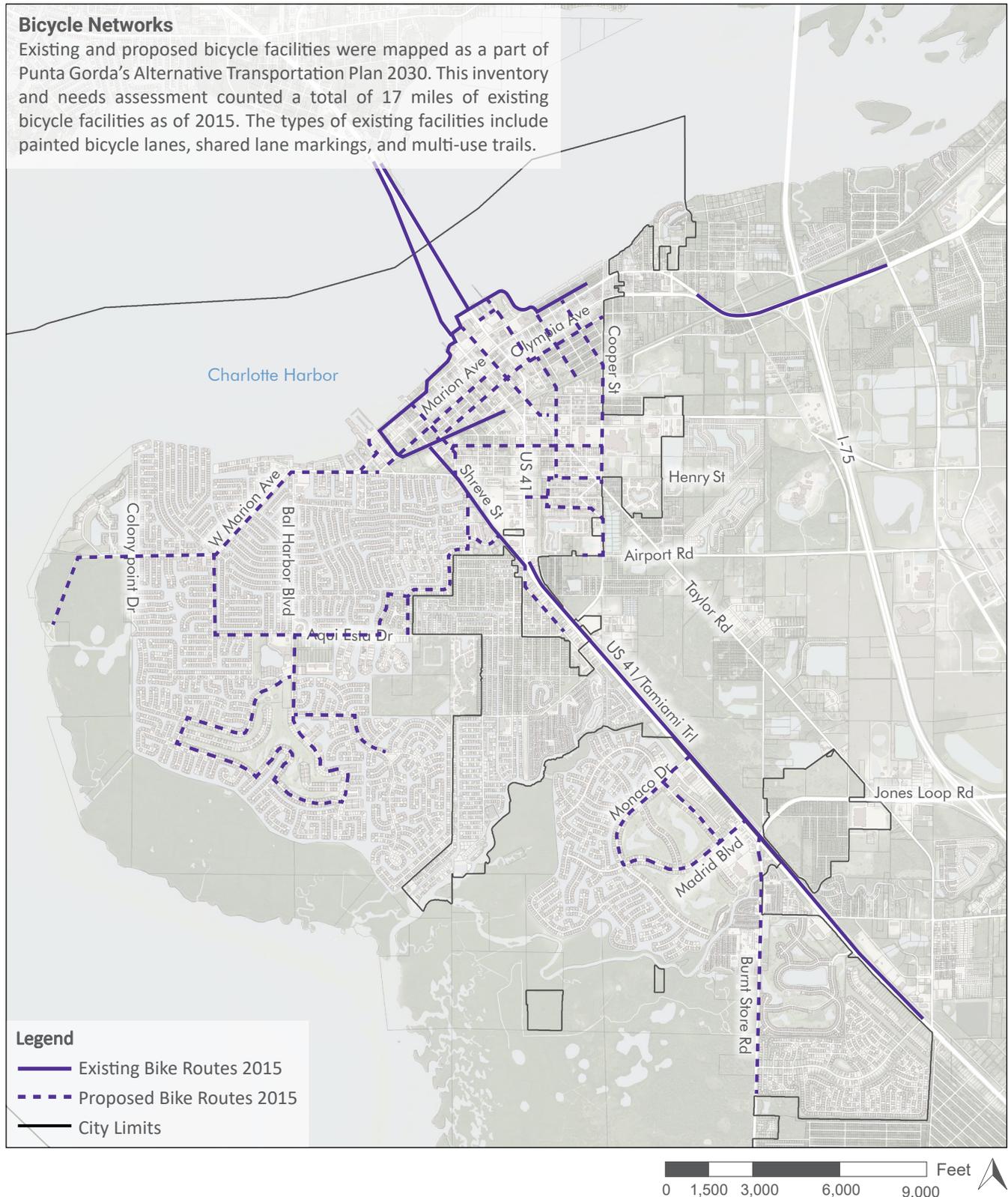
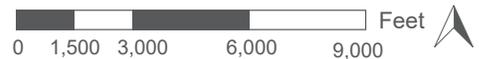
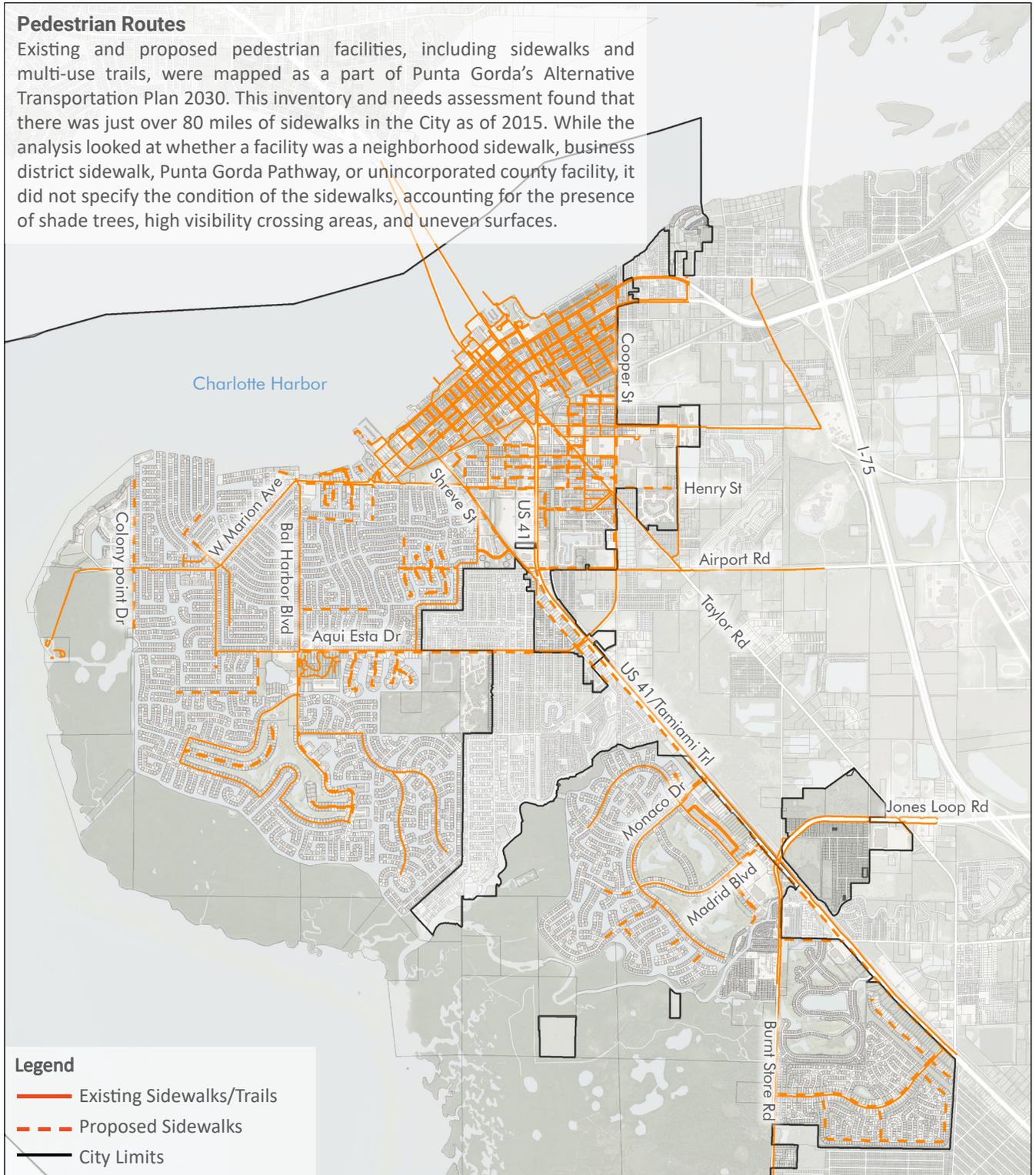


Figure 2.9: Existing and Proposed Pedestrian Routes Map (2015)



# SWOT ANALYSIS

The following analysis was prepared by Partners for Economic Solutions (PES) and Dover, Kohl & Partners to understand the many contributing factors of Punta Gorda that should be leveraged for the future.

## STRENGTHS

- Waterfront/Charlotte Harbor – Boating, fishing, Harbor Walk, water views
- Outdoor activities – walking, biking, parks, MUP network, Peace River Wildlife Center and wildlife refuges, birding
- Florida Gulf Coast location
- Accessibility – I-75, US 17, Punta Gorda Airport
- Hometown feeling – scale, history, charm, independent shops and restaurants
- Community feeling – Can-do spirit, engaged volunteers, extensive partnerships
- Retirement community
- Tourism – Fishermen’s Village, festivals and events
- Arts and culture – arts festivals, local symphony, opera, murals
- Low cost of living, less expensive housing than in Sarasota, Naples and Fort Myers.
- Great public-school system
- High quality of city services – dedicated police, fire, waste management, and canal maintenance

## WEAKNESSES

- Service-dominated economy with high share of low-wage jobs
- Seasonality challenges business success
- Limited size of downtown business base inhibits its ability to attract customers
- Few living-wage jobs, living opportunities and amenities for young people and young families
- Limited supply of market-rate, workforce and affordable housing
- Absence of any true class A office
- Labor force shortages
- Over-reliance on residential property taxes
- Excessive reliance on private automobiles, no fixed-route transit
- Traffic speed impacts on pedestrian environment and safety
- Limited nightlife for younger residents and visitors
- Anti-development history and anti-growth image
- Lack of predictability and certainty for prospective developers and businesses inhibits investment
- Incomplete network for pedestrians and bicycles
- Bayfront Health Hospital D rating

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Updates to land development regulations that encourage the redevelopment of vacant properties
- Development of City Marketplace to expand downtown business community, catalyze redevelopment Citywide, and attract more visitors
- Terracap/Loop Rd development
- Multiple infill development sites
- Expanding tourism base with Sunseeker Resort and Murdock Village
- Industrial/distribution development near the airport
- City branding, marketing
- Activities and attractions to extend the tourist season
- Enhancing synergy between Fishermen's Village & Downtown to help local businesses thrive
- Additional retirement amenities – independent and assisted living
- Performing arts center
- Boathouse/YMCA redevelopment
- Aviation education
- Pickleball complex
- Improvements and expansion of Bayfront Health Punta Gorda
- Leveraging investment in public education to help attract more young families

## THREATS

- Climate change, sea level rise
- High cost of infrastructure maintenance – drainage, seawall, water, sewer, reverse osmosis plant
- Without greater industrial/commercial development, residential property taxes may need to rise significantly
- Decrease in level of service from city
- Competition from newly developing communities and nearby attractions diverting visitors, customers and employees
- Generation X retirees may bypass Punta Gorda
- Long-term shifts in retirement preferences may undermine demand for Punta Gorda predominately single-family housing type
- Loss of historic district designation due to continuing infill development downtown
- Large investment in Bayfront Health Port Charlotte may pull more medical professionals there instead of Punta Gorda

# KEY FINDINGS

## KEY HOUSING ISSUES

- Dominance of single-family canal housing
- Retiree demand drives higher housing prices
- High prices are unattainable for young people and families
- Workers can't afford to live in town, only 9 percent of local workers live in town
- 22 percent of workers commute 25+ miles
- Hard to attract and retain young workers

## FISCAL IMPACTS

- Land use limits reduce potential revenues
- More efficient use of land increases city revenues
- Annexations would generate higher revenues but also higher costs

## CITY BUDGET ISSUES

- Budget reserves are too low
- New development offers the best potentials for higher city revenues
- Revenues are too dependent on residential property tax
- City employee salaries are not competitive
- Capital improvements have been constrained by lack of funding
- The tight budget constrains new initiatives

## MASTER PLAN IMPLICATIONS

### Housing

- Develop a greater variety of housing
- Increase the amount and density of multi-family development
- Build more housing in and near downtown

### Placemaking

- Use urban design and place-making to generate more activity and attract more businesses to the downtown and historic district

### Regulatory

- Revise the land development regulations and development approval process



### III. Embracing Positive Change

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#### Introduction





## Embracing Positive Change

# 3.

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*This section looks at how Punta Gorda has embraced change and overcome challenges over the years, as well as where and how it should think about growing and evolving in this next phase of its history and development.*

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### III. Embracing Positive Change

#### Brief History of Growth & Change

## PUNTA GORDA THROUGH TIME



Marion Ave changed throughout the decades as the economics and demographics changed the face of the City. Today Marion Ave still holds many mainstays of its classic architecture while the future of the north side of the street is discussed.

### Inception

Punta Gorda has been a city evolving since its founding. The small town in Charlotte Harbor first began when Isaac Trabue bought the land from James Madison Lanier and hired planner Kelly B. Harvey to plat out a new town named “Trabue.” Founded in the area where Ponce de Leon is believed to have received his fatal wound, Trabue started marketing the town for settlers with an eye toward the pineapple market. As the town grew Harvey referred to it as Punta Gorda and its citizens began referring to the town this way as well. In 1886, the Southern Railroad extended their tracks into Punta Gorda, at the time making it the southernmost point in the United States railway system. July of that same year, construction began on the luxurious Hotel Punta Gorda. The resort was regarded as a winter destination for affluent tourists seeking refuge from the harsh Northern weather; its first season the Hotel Punta Gorda served over three-thousand guests. The City was officially incorporated at Hector’s Billiards Parlor in 1887 and later officially became known as Punta Gorda.

### Early Boom

As trains brought more economic activity to Punta Gorda, lines soon connected the Railroad Wharf, opened in 1887, with existing tracks. This new infrastructure presented an opportunity for a vibrant commercial fishing industry to develop. Traces of this bustling economy are still apparent today in Punta Gorda’s lively recreational fishing community and small commercial crab industry. The connection to the US rail system was not only to the benefit of fishermen, however. Situated in a mineral rich region, Punta Gorda became one of the major shipping ports for phosphate, a valuable natural mineral commonly used in fertilizers and other goods. At one point being dubbed “the greatest phosphate shipping port in the world” by the Jacksonville newspaper, Florida Times-

Union. At one point it was also the pineapple capital of the U.S.

### Tin Can Travelers

Eventually due to considerable financial interests in Tampa, the railroad owner, Henry Plant, severed Punta Gorda's rail connection between the Deep Water Dock and the Railroad wharf. Consequently the commercial shipping industry and tourism moved away, and the City became self-dependent. When a road was proposed from Tampa to Miami, residents of Punta Gorda began a campaign to build a "great bridge" over Charlotte Harbor which would bring the Tamiami Trl to Punta Gorda. Their efforts were realized in the 1921 completion of the first Tamiami bridge. The City

had raised over \$200,000 and completed the project without pursuing state or federal funding.

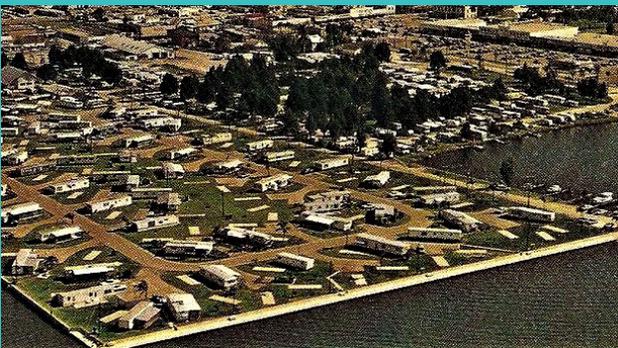
With the increased attention came visitors. Punta Gorda continued to upgrade its infrastructure to accommodate the towns growing needs. Marion Ave – Punta Gorda's main street – grew with more shops, a hotel, and amenities for the community. Marion Ave grew to accommodate the automobile, with two-way traffic and spaces for parking along the street. During this time, Punta Gorda remained a destination and vacation spot, accommodating mobile homes, RV parks, and other similar uses for travelers. As more people came to visit, more people also came to live and work in Punta Gorda, expanding housing needs.



Early photos of Punta Gorda show a village with a few blocks of developed area.



Beginning in the late 1950s, the natural area west of Punta Gorda was developed into PGI.



Punta Gorda as a vacation destination. Mobile homes are shown in what is now Laishley Park.



Hurricane Charley devastated Punta Gorda, but the community turned disaster into opportunity.

### III. Embracing Positive Change

#### Brief History of Growth & Change

#### Rise of the Suburban Neighborhood

Through time and hurricanes, Punta Gorda continued to change and adapt to the needs of the community. Beginning in 1958, the areas to the west and southwest of downtown Punta Gorda developed into single-family homes located along 55 miles of man-made canals with access to the local rivers and Charlotte Harbor. These communities became Punta Gorda Isles (PGI) and began to attract more residents from northern United States. Most of the new homeowners were recently retired and looking for a place to relax in warmer weather and enjoy the water. As more and more areas of the City were developed in a similar way to PGI, more residents moved into Punta Gorda. Eventually the demographics of the area changed to reflect a largely retiree population – a trend that continues to the present day.

#### Rebuilding the City with the Community

In 2004 Hurricane Charley struck Punta Gorda, leaving a wide path of devastation in its wake. In light of this natural disaster the community came together and was determined to transform the disaster into an opportunity for the City. The response in the City came in the form of several master plans, a park plan, bike infrastructure initiatives, economic studies, waterfront plans, and transportation plans. In 2005 two master

plans were presented to the City – the Citizens Master Plan, and the CRA Charrette report. The CRA Charrette report was part of a contract in 2004 specifically geared for a CRA plan update. After Hurricane Charley, Team Punta Gorda organized a master plan effort to establish the path forward after the hurricane. A result of the Citizens Master Plan was the adoption of new land development regulations for Punta Gorda.

#### A Plan for the Future

Throughout its life, the City of Punta Gorda has undergone several evolutions and transformations; from Trabue and later Punta Gorda – a Florida frontier town, to commercial fishing hub and health tourism destination, to vacation spot, to a sunny place to call home for retirees who love to boating and outdoor recreation. Each phase brought with it new ideas, new people, and a new shape of things. Now, nearly two decades into the twenty-first century, Punta Gorda is seeing new things again. Residents and visitors are looking for a mix of walkable places and charming family homes, along with more bike trails, more entertainment options, a more diverse selection of housing and residents, and a more vibrant village feel. Plan Punta Gorda is a proactive step that the city and its residents are taking as part of the City's next evolution.



Originally Hotel Punta Gorda, the hotel went through a period of decline in the 1920s and was purchased by Barron Collier in 1924. The property was remodeled and its name was changed to the Hotel Charlotte Harbor.



### III. Embracing Positive Change

#### Brief History of Growth & Change

## CHANGE FOR GOOD

Often it is difficult to notice change, because it is taking place over a long period of time. Punta Gorda is already experiencing change. Visible signs of this includes the trail network and TEAM Punta Gorda's free loaner bike program that have brought more people out and about in the City. The Budgetary and Economic Analysis also shows a different type of change. Punta Gorda has been very conscious of maintaining a tight budget each year – a benefit for the City. However, a high dependence on the residential tax rate means that in order to do this, the City must balance best practice fiscal recommendations against maintenance, capital improvements, and public employee compensation.

If the City follows its current trajectory, the change that could likely occur include a decrease in the City's coffers; deteriorated infrastructure such as streets, water, and sewer; or loss of highly qualified public professionals. This kind of change hurts the long-term sustainability of Punta Gorda as well as property values within the City and overall quality of life. Natural disasters such as hurricanes can exacerbate this financial challenge for Punta Gorda in the future.

The good news is that change can also be harnessed and put to use for the good of Punta Gorda. The best way to increase the coffers and free up more money for public improvements such as a Parks and Recreation Department, is to invite the right kind of development located in the right areas that aligns with as many community goals as possible. Based on existing conditions and the Budgetary and Economic Analysis, these areas are in places where there is currently existing infrastructure such as Downtown. The Opportunity Sites and Focus Areas Map, Figure 3.1, shows the parts of the City identified as areas for recommended growth. These locations are strategically selected to allow for no change in other areas of Punta Gorda while contributing to the look and feel of the City as well as financial stability. Many of these locations are located in areas that have vacant property.

Land that is vacant may be green and have trees, however it is important to note that the parcels that are privately owned may be developed by the owner by right. These locations can be the right areas to direct development energy to improve the appeal of Punta Gorda. Through incentives and assistance, the City can direct property owners toward good development.

The types of changes and development that would bring benefits to Punta Gorda would encourage a more diverse population, increase safety and health, improve property values, and bring more income to the City through a more diverse range of sources. Good development would:

- Build infill development
- Create compact development in downtown spaces
- Develop a mix of uses
- Establish a range of residential building types
- Improve the walkability and Bikeability of streets and trails
- Create good public spaces in the shape of plazas and parks
- Attract more visitors

## VACANT PARCELS

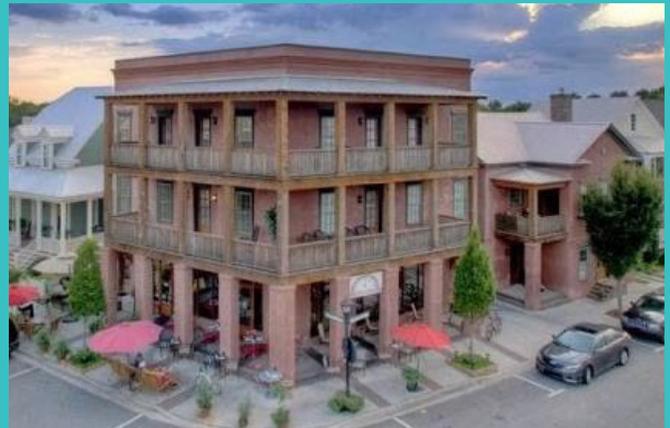
Vacant lots can be a challenge and an opportunity. When there are many vacant lots along a street, it creates what is sometimes referred to as “gap in the teeth.” Areas outside of a downtown will often have open spaces in the form of large lots, or in designated public park lands. When private lots downtown remain undeveloped, they can decrease property values, safety, and health while placing a strain on a municipality’s finances. When a parcel is left vacant and falls into disrepair, it is usually left to the city to undertake maintenance of the property. This could mean demolishing the building or maintaining the land to avoid hazards to public health. These services draw on the municipality’s financial resources for parcels that are not providing any revenue.

Vacant lots in Punta Gorda are an ideal opportunity for the right development to address some of the goals stated during the charrette. With an increase in allowable housing units at the right locations, a greater range of housing types can attract a more diverse population while increasing property values, improving community safety (“eyes on the street”), and helping to balance the City’s finances. Affordable homes could also provide places for workers with families to live. Larger lots can also unlock opportunities for new commercial development, including much needed class A offices, production, distribution, and repair (PDR) uses, and new neighborhood serving retail and professional services.

Building within these lots is also a more efficient way for Punta Gorda to provide services. Roads have already been built and other infrastructure is already in place. This also makes it possible to preserve the natural areas around Punta Gorda for people to enjoy. Larger greenfield parcels further out of downtown also present opportunities for new traditional neighborhoods and community farming or micro-agriculture. These are urban and suburban farms that typically use less than five acres of land and various sustainable techniques to achieve higher yields.



Vacant parcels in Downtown Punta Gorda



Hammond’s Ferry a traditional neighborhood development (TND) in North Augusta, SC



2,900-Home Planned Agrihood with 11 acres of community gardens in Orlando, FL; <https://www.mymetrocity.com/agrihood-planned-near-ucf/>

### III. Embracing Positive Change

#### Opportunity Sites & Plan Focus Areas

## GROWING INWARD - WHERE TO FOCUS ON GROWTH AND CHANGE

This Master Plan will focus its urban design and land use recommendations on a few key areas throughout the City of Punta Gorda. These areas present the biggest opportunities for growth and change that will help the City to reach its goals of making a vibrant downtown, celebrating the harbor and boating, diversifying housing types, embracing walking and biking, and encouraging strategic commercial development.

The focus areas have been selected based the amount of potential development sites present, proximity to downtown and other activity centers, and community feedback. With the exception of their local neighborhood centers, established residential areas, such as Punta Gorda Isles, Burnt Store Isles and Burnt Store Meadows are areas to be preserved much as they exist today.

## GROWING OUTWARD - POTENTIAL ANNEXATION AREAS

In 2016 the City of Punta Gorda prepared an Executive Annexation Summary Report that evaluated 14 annexation areas based on criteria such as projected density and population growth, average land value, proximity to city utilities, and economic potential. As a part of the Economic & Fiscal Analysis for the Citywide Master Plan, Partners for Economic Solutions quantified the potential fiscal impacts of these annexation areas.

Some areas would require higher capital investments and/or operating costs including new fire stations, expanded police staff, and additional public works

crews and equipment. Though areas like US 17 West, Edison College, and the Airport, would generate more costs than revenues to the City, other close in areas already covered by city services, like Charlotte Park, US 41/Burnt Store Rd, and Jones Loop could bring in new net revenues from \$240,000 to \$700,00 annually. Though annexation of all areas excluding 12 and 14 would generate a net loss to the city, it would shift the citywide tax split from 89 percent residential to 80 percent residential, allowing non-residential uses to bear a larger portion of the tax burden.

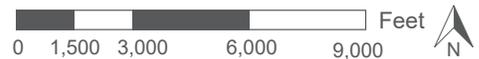
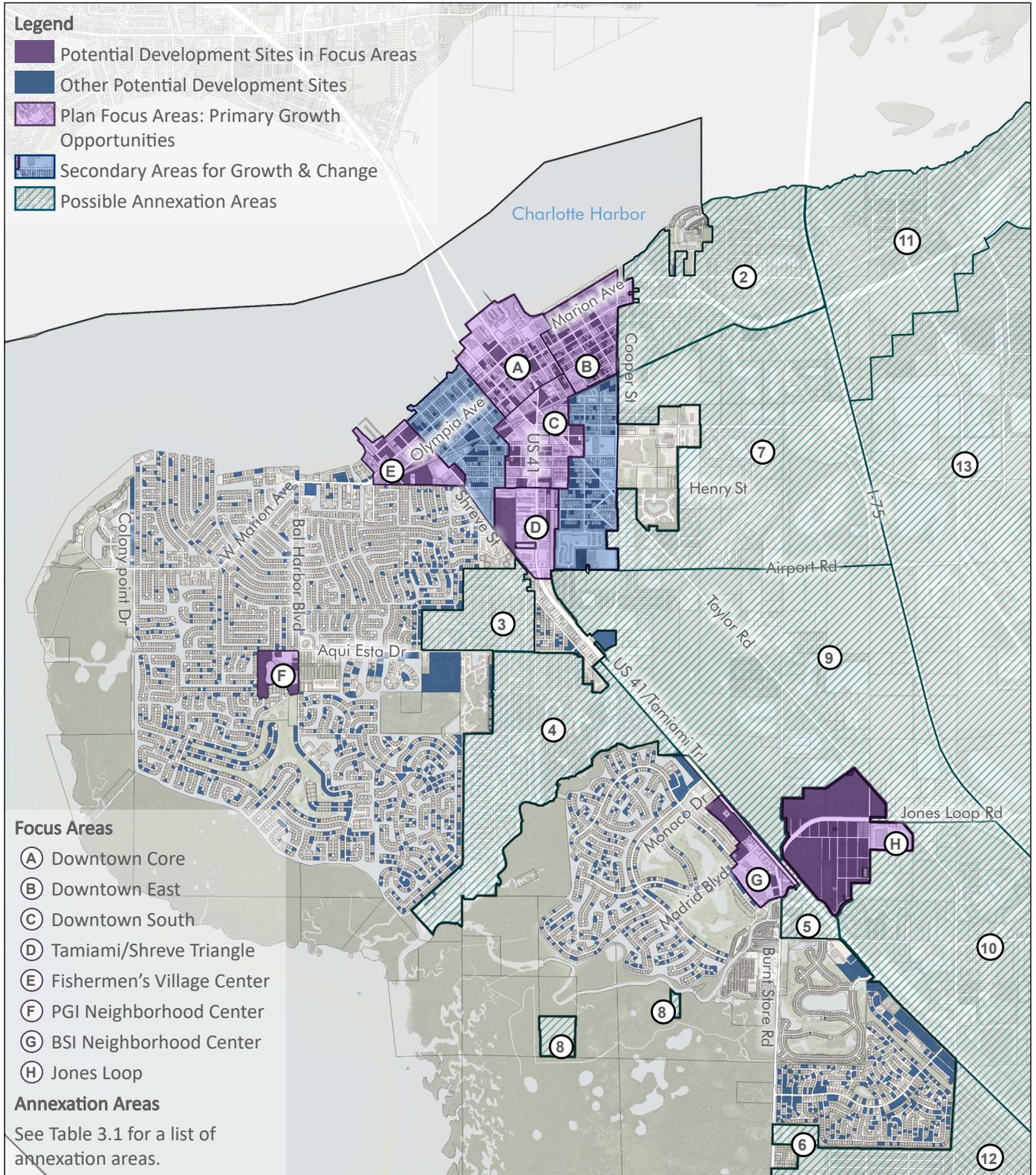
Table 3.1: Projected General Fund Revenues and Expenditures for Annexation Areas, 2030

Annexation Area	Gross Revenues	Expenditures	Net Revenues	Required Initial Capital
1 - US 14 Enclave	<i>Already Annexed</i>			
2 - US 17 West	\$578,400	\$1,167,633	(\$589,233)	\$2,737,000
3 - Charlotte Park North	\$241,700	\$0	\$241,700	\$0
4 - Charlotte Park South	\$993,100	\$556,734	\$436,366	\$300,000
5 - US 41/Burnt Store Rd	\$335,100	\$0	\$335,100	\$0
6 - Burnt Store Rd Enclave	\$1,900	\$0	\$1,900	\$0
7 - Edison College Area	\$482,800	\$1,244,234	(\$761,434)	\$2,737,000
8 - Environmental Enclaves	NA	NA	NA	NA
9 - Taylor Rd	\$493,400	\$614,668	(\$121,268)	\$600,000
10 - Jones Loop	\$1,011,400	\$307,501	\$703,899	\$0
11 - US 17 East	\$1,121,000	\$1,193,334	(\$72,334)	\$2,737,000
13 - Airport	\$417,600	\$1,227,667	(\$810,067)	\$3,037,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$5,676,400</b>	<b>\$6,311,772</b>	<b>(\$635,372)</b>	<b>\$12,148,000</b>
12 - Burnt Store Rd East*	\$738,300	\$665,667	\$72,633	\$2,137,000
14 - Burnt Store Rd West*†	\$1,015,800	\$665,667	\$350,133	\$2,137,000

\* Lies beyond the City's utility service area and is therefore unlikely to be annexed and not included in the total

† This area lies outside the visible extents of the map in Figure 3.1

Figure 3.1: Opportunity Sites and Focus Areas Map



## IV. Preserving Community Character

### Introduction

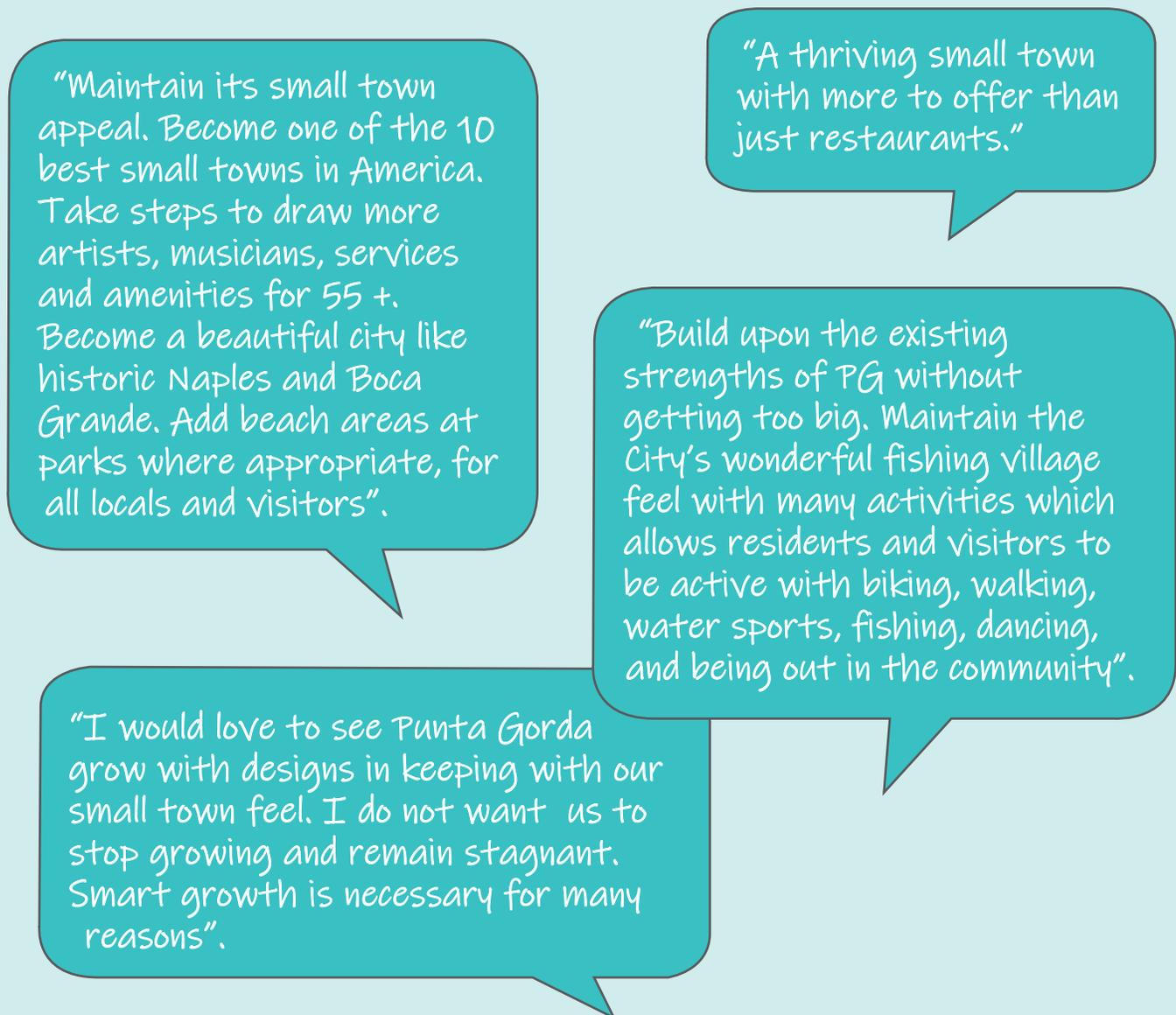


Figure 3.2: Online Responses from community members to the question: What is your vision for Punta Gorda?

# 4.

## Preserving Community Character

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*The two most discussed topics at the Public Design Charrette were economic development and community character. It became increasingly evident throughout the planning process that Punta Gorda residents are committed to preserving and enhancing the small town charm of the City, and that the success of this master plan lies precisely in finding the balance between economic realities and the need for growth with the desire to keep Punta Gorda small and beautiful.*

.....



## DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

Tools that Punta Gorda could utilize to encourage good development include:

- **Adopt a Form-Based Code.** Focusing on the shape that a building takes and the types of public spaces that it creates rather than just the uses of a building can bring more control to what development looks like in Punta Gorda.
- **Manage overlay districts downtown.** There are currently several overlay districts in the downtown area of Punta Gorda. Examine the regulations in place for these and evaluate their success in terms of how well they achieve their goals. Some districts such as the Historic District may need to be revised.
- **Establish architectural guidelines.** A form-based code sometimes incorporates architectural guidelines to codify what a community wants to see as land is developed. This helps reduce the guesswork that a developer needs to do and points development in a direction in which the community is happy.
- **Adopt incremental development-friendly policies.** One way to help maintain the small-town feel of Punta Gorda is to encourage development that is similar in size to what was historically achieved. Historic photos reveal that there were three story buildings and that development rarely took up an entire block. Encouraging incremental development can help preserve this heritage. It also encourages local residents to develop the land, employing more local people, and keeping more of the money in town. Methods to incentivize this type of development are expedited approvals and permitting, pre-approved building types, flexible permitting schedules, and financial

assistance.

- **Establish a local historic registry.** Establishing a local register of historic buildings will provide the City with stronger anti-demolition regulations than is typically possible with structure listed only on the National Register or on the Florida Master Site File. This will allow the City to preserve the important existing historic buildings and overall character of Punta Gorda.
- **Reduce parking requirements.** The appeal of living in downtown areas is the ability to walk or bike to destinations. There are currently reductions available in the “CC”<sup>1</sup> area, however this area is limited to the very core of downtown. Similar regulations could extend to East Downtown. Reducing the amount of parking required can bring down the cost of housing making it more attainable for young families.

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<sup>1</sup> City Center Zoning as per Zoning map.

## IV. Preserving Community Character

### Development Tools

## IMPLEMENT SMART GROWTH STRATEGIES

To provide a clear guide to the form, direction, and timing of future growth, this Master Plan contains two separate but related components. The first is a base map that defines distinct “Future Character Areas” for all of Punta Gorda. This Future Character Areas Map, Figure 4.1, defines six types of character areas that reflect the desired type and form of development in each part of the City. In addition to these base character areas, this map identifies the locations of neighborhood centers and crossroads as well as a campus overlay that defines key districts with unique characteristics that differentiate them from surrounding development patterns.

The second component is the Investment Sector Map, Figure 4.2. This map indicates areas where development should be encouraged, areas that should be preserved, and areas that are stable. The sectors define a prioritization of lands for development to maximize the public investment already made on roads, utilities, and services, as well as containing the amount of growth and change to key areas in order to preserve the beloved small town feel of Punta Gorda. These are not zoning maps, but are intended to guide local decisions concerning zoning, the subdivision of land, infrastructure investment, and the provision of services.

## CREATE A FRAMEWORK FOR IMPLEMENTING A FORM-BASED CODE

### What is a Form-Based Code?

A form-based code is a land development regulation that fosters predictable built results and a high-quality public realm by using physical form as the organizing principle for the code. Form-based codes address the relationship between building facades and the public realm, the form and mass of buildings in relation to one another, and the scale and type of streets and blocks.

A form-based code uses a regulating plan to designate transect zones, each with varying urban characteristics, calibrated to fit with the envisioned future context. Each transect zone is defined by particular characteristics that correspond with building placement, building form, and frontage standards, all of which influence the level of walkability and vibrancy in a particular place.

### A Framework for a Form-Based Code

The Future Character Area Map (Figure 4.1) establishes a framework in which to develop a form-based code. The desired type and form of

development in each part of the City as defined by the Future Character Areas corresponds with the intent of a form-based code to use physical form as opposed to use as the primary regulating tool. The Future Character Areas are more general in description and broader in coverage than an individual form-based code transect zone. However, each Future Character Area corresponds with at least one of a form-based code’s typical transect zones. This relationship is shown on the spread for each Future Character Area.

A form-based code can translate the intent of the comprehensive plan into zoning law. Because each character area is defined by the physical characteristics of the development within it, a form-based code is the natural land development regulation to implement the ideals of the comprehensive plan.

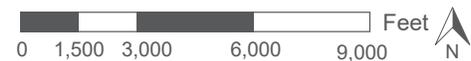
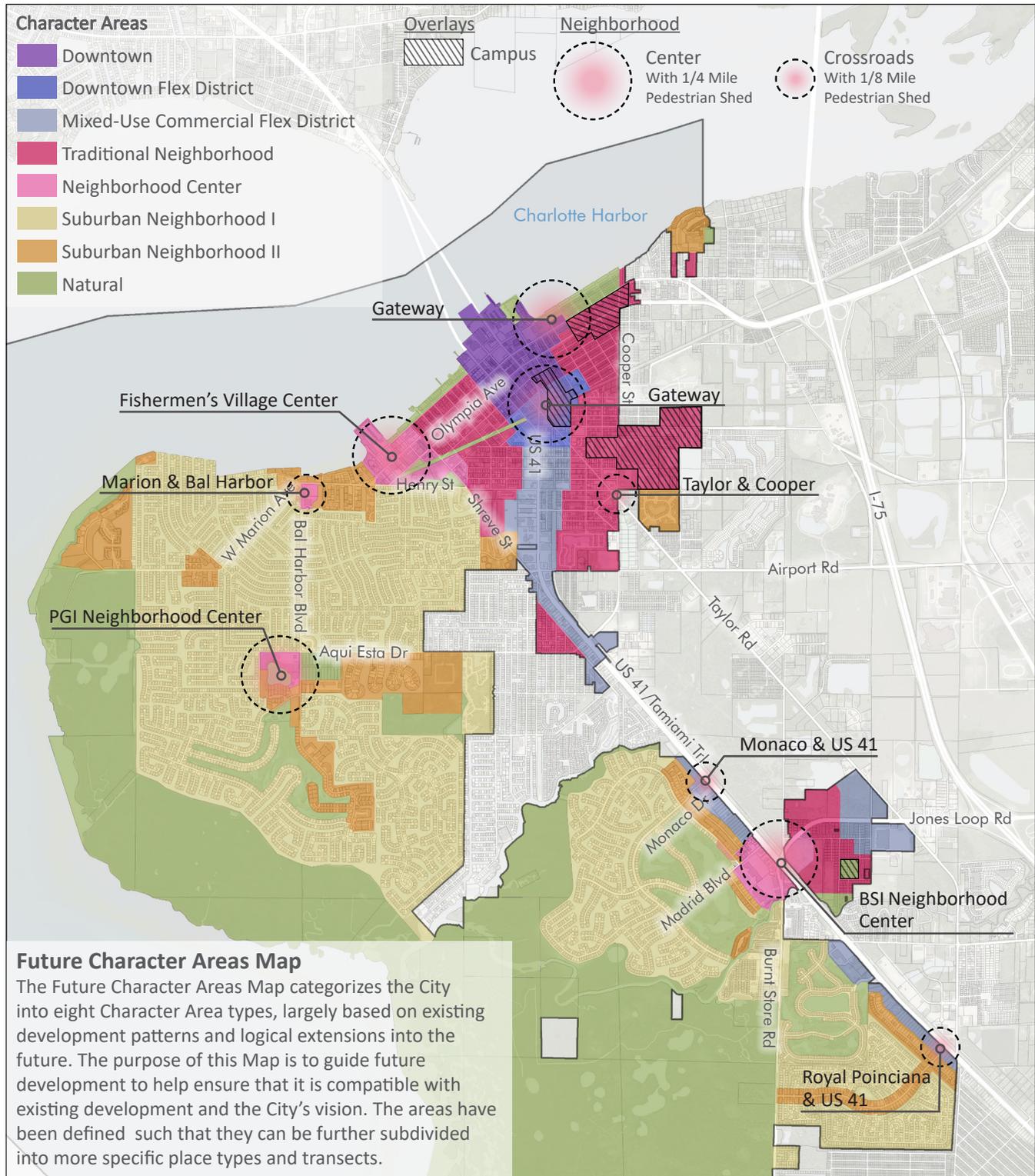




## IV. Preserving Community Character

### Future Character Areas

Figure 4.1: Future Character Areas Map



## NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS & CROSSROADS

Many of Punta Gorda’s neighborhoods have commercial uses dispersed within the predominantly residential areas. These commercial areas come in a variety of sizes from just one or two buildings to several blocks. The Future Character Areas Map (Figure 4.1) shows these as Neighborhood Centers and Neighborhood Crossroads. Reinvigorating these areas is a key focus of this plan as Neighborhood Crossroads and Centers promote community and are a vital element of walkable neighborhoods.

### Neighborhood Centers

Neighborhood Centers are larger, covering one or more blocks, with a 1/4-mile pedestrian shed. Buildings in the focal point are two to three stories in height and contain a mix of uses with active ground floor commercial spaces.

- Fishermen’s Village Center
- PGI Neighborhood Center
- BSI Neighborhood Center
- Downtown Gateway at Marion & Milus
- Downtown Gateway at US 41 & Taylor

### Neighborhood Crossroads

Neighborhood Crossroads are just one or two small buildings serving as a community hub at the intersection of two neighborhood streets. They are composed of a mix of uses including commercial shopfronts and live-work units that are typically one story in height.

- Marion & Bal Harbor
- Taylor & Cooper
- Monaco & US 41
- Royal Poinciana & US 41



Bayfront Health Hospital in Punta Gorda

## CAMPUS OVERLAY

Certain uses take a campus form and warrant special consideration based on their unique development patterns and special needs that differ considerably from the typical Character Areas in which they are located. These uses serve as economic drivers and catalysts for further growth and development that are vital to the City’s overall wellbeing. Overlay Districts are accordingly assigned to these uses to accommodate their unique uses, character, and form. The campus overlays include the following:

### Hospital & Medical Village

This district encompasses the area where Bayfront Health Punta Gorda and related health care facilities are located. These facilities require larger buildings and parking for employees, patients, and visitors. The district is large enough to include the hospital and its associated medical and health care related businesses.

### Schools

These are major activity centers for students, teachers, families, and staff. This district includes Sallie Jone’s Elementary, Charlotte High School, and the Charlotte County School Administration Center. This kind of district is comprised of large amounts of land with buildings dispersed amongst lawns, sports fields, and parking.

### Maker District

Maker districts are areas with a cluster of artisan, light manufacturing, light industrial, and production, repair, and distribution (PDR) uses. These district are becoming popular in cities across the world as they not only help to refill and revitalize old warehouse and industrial areas, but because they provide an authentic experience for customers and visitors that they no longer have in traditional or online retail. The other benefit to these areas is that they can be quickly built and expanded, as many of the structures are either adapted from existing buildings or built at a low cost.

### Community Agriculture

Given the large size of the Jones Loop Rd development there is a unique opportunity to set aside land there for urban and community agriculture.

## IV. Preserving Community Character

### Future Character Areas

#### ← Less Intense

	NATURAL	SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD I	SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD II	TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD
				
<b>INTENT STATEMENT</b>	<p>The Natural Future Character Area consists of protected land that is, for the most part, in a natural and unimproved state, though it can also include public parks and recreation areas. City regulations and policy decisions should help keep these lands in their natural state for drainage, natural habitat, and scenic protection. Hiking and biking may occur in this area. This area also features protected waterfront and wetland areas.</p>	<p>The Suburban Neighborhood I areas are generally the more recently developed portions of Punta Gorda. The design of these neighborhoods necessitates the use of automobiles as individual buildings are spread farther apart with few pedestrian facilities. These neighborhoods are defined by single-family houses and low-rise isolated apartments. Office, retail, and mixed-use buildings can be built at key intersections, at neighborhood centers, and along main corridors. Civic buildings should respect the character of a primarily residential neighborhood, but can also be used as landmarks.</p>	<p>The Suburban Neighborhood II areas are very similar to Suburban Neighborhood I, with the primary difference being the intensity of the buildings. While Area I predominately features single-family detached homes, Area II features mostly multi-level condo and apartment homes. This area also necessitates the use of automobiles, though investments in landscaping and shade trees, along with new bicycle infrastructure, will increasingly make these areas more pedestrian and bicycle friendly. Limited office, retail, and mixed-use buildings can be built at key intersections, and neighborhood centers.</p>	<p>These neighborhoods are typically older and primarily residential. They are defined by a unique mix of single-family and multi-family housing types such as duplexes, fourplexes, and small apartment buildings, the latter of which are designed to blend cohesively with smaller single-family homes. Some commercial and civic uses are mixed in, particularly in neighborhood gateways or nodes or in special overlay districts where conditions are slightly denser. Thoughtfully designed small office, retail, and mixed-use buildings can be built at key intersections and along main corridors to provide neighborhood amenities.</p>
<b>BUILDING FORM</b>	<b>Lot Width</b> Large	<b>Lot Width</b> Narrow-to-Medium	<b>Lot Width</b> Medium-to-Large	<b>Lot Width</b> Narrow-to-Medium
	<b>Footprint</b> NA	<b>Footprint</b> Small-to-Medium	<b>Footprint</b> Medium-to-Large	<b>Footprint</b> Small-to-Medium
	<b>Front / Side Setback</b> NA	<b>Front / Side Setback</b> 12 Feet Minimum	<b>Front / Side Setback</b> 20 Feet Minimum	<b>Front / Side Setback</b> 0-20 Feet
	<b>Height</b> 1 story (landscape elements)	<b>Height</b> 1-2 stories	<b>Height</b> 1-4 stories (up to 6 with bonus)	<b>Height</b> 1-3 stories
	<b>Frontages</b> NA	<b>Frontages</b> Dooryard, Porch, Terrace, Forecourt	<b>Frontages</b> Porch, Terrace, Forecourt	<b>Frontages</b> Dooryard, Stoop, Porch, Shopfront, Gallery, Arcade
	<b>Ground Floor</b> NA	<b>Ground Floor</b> Elevated	<b>Ground Floor</b> Elevated	<b>Ground Floor</b> Elevated (Residential); Flush with Sidewalk (Non-Res)
<b>USES</b>	Parks, playgrounds, agricultural, and nature preserve/environmental conservation	Primarily residential with some commercial and civic uses (library, day care, house of worship, community center)	Primarily residential with some commercial and civic uses (library, day care, house of worship, community center)	Primarily single-family detached, townhouses, duplexes, fourplexes, small apartments, and some shared office and mixed-use.





## PRIORITIZING INVESTMENT

The Investment Sector Map (Figure 4.2) defines a prioritization of lands for development that maximizes the public investment already made on roads, utilities and services. This map is not a zoning map, but is intended to guide local decisions concerning zoning, the subdivision of land, infrastructure investment, and the provision of services in coordination with the Future Character Areas Map (Figure 4.1). The sectors

identify prime locations for downtown development, infill development, new compact neighborhood centers and gateways, stable neighborhoods, and conservation zones. The type and form of the resulting development should be based on the underlying Future Character Area as defined in the Future Character Areas Map.

## A STRATEGY FOR GROWTH

Development should occur first where there has been significant public investment, where there is already a framework in place for walkable neighborhoods consisting of pedestrian-scaled lots, blocks, and streets, and where the citywide community can benefit the most (Downtown). The next level of priority should be placed where there has been substantial investment and where there is already a framework in place for walkable neighborhoods, but where there are still a lot of “missing teeth” in the urban and suburban fabric (Infill Development). These areas are concentrated in South and East Downtown. The third level of investment is for areas of the City where there are large development and retrofit opportunity sites, but there may or may not be the necessary level of public infrastructure already in place (New & Retrofit Development). These areas may be more difficult to develop due to the size of the parcels and the cost of extending and maintaining

infrastructure. Focusing too much on large greenfield development sites further away from Downtown can also lead to unwanted competition that draws people and investment away from the center and heart of the City.

In the Stable Neighborhoods, new development and redevelopment is welcome, yet the City should prioritize investments in infrastructure and services in the other areas to maintain the City’s compact form and character. Finally, development should be discouraged in some areas that perform important ecosystem services or could be beneficial for recreational purposes (Conservation Areas). By satisfying market needs with infill development, densities that could support vibrant neighborhood centers are expected in time while natural areas can be preserved.

## IV. Preserving Community Character

### Historic Assets & Preservation

## CAPITALIZING ON HISTORIC ASSETS



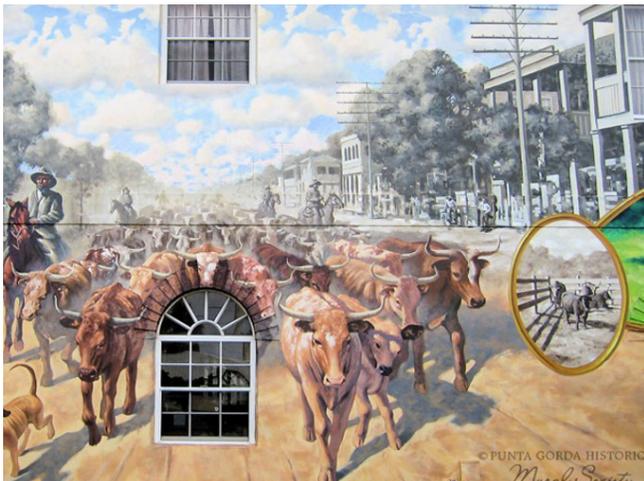
264 W Marion Ave; Commercial Vernacular Style 1909

Despite the Downtown National Register historic district, two local historic districts, the historic district overlay design guidelines, and dedicated groups like the Punta Gorda Historical Society, The Blanchard House Museum of African American History & Society, the Historic Preservation Advisory Board, the Punta Gorda History Center, and the Historic Mural Society, Punta Gorda has lost an estimated 97 structures of potential historic value or contributing historic value dating from as early as 1887 to 1958.

This loss of historic and cultural assets comes as a result of natural forces, but also a lack of stronger anti-demolition controls that stem from the fact that the City does not currently have a local register of historic places. Much of the rich and unique character of Punta Gorda



A.C. Freeman House; Queen Anne Style 1903



**Top Picture:** End of the Line, Artist: Richard Currier, 1997

**Bottom Picture:** Section from Cattle Drive Down Marion Ave, Artist: Michael Vires, 2007

come from its charming historic structures, making the need to preserve what is left all the more pressing and a vital piece of fulfilling community goals.

### Heritage Tourism

Cultural heritage tourism is on the rise. More and more tourists are rejecting the cookie-cutter vacations and seeking out more authentic places to visit and spend money. These kinds of travelers look for towns with a wide range of art galleries, theaters, museums, landmarks, historic sites, cultural events, and ethnic communities and neighborhoods. Punta Gorda already caters to these visitors with places like History Park and activities like the Historic Murals Walking Tours, but it has an opportunity to expand such offerings and a compelling economic incentive to more effectively preserve its existing the historic assets.

### Historic Murals of Punta Gorda

- Historic murals in Punta Gorda are located on various buildings and depict different eras of the City. Their locations can be seen on Figure 4.3.
- The murals are preserved and created by the Punta Gorda Historic Mural Society (PGHMS). The society was established in 1995 and is a non-profit 501c(3) organization managed by an all-volunteer Board of Directors.
- The PGHMS is critical for the promotion and preservation of the murals. The society also performs extensive research to ensure accurate depiction of local history. The murals help attract tourism to Punta Gorda and creates character surrounding the urban fabric of the murals.
- The murals feature small plaques with QR codes that visitors can use to learn about historic event/person depicted, as well as the artist. It also links to the PGHMS's website, which contains additional information.
- A walking map is available with locations of all murals in Punta Gorda. Expanding and promoting this map can create more interest for historical tours and tourism.

## IV. Preserving Community Character

### Historic Assets & Preservation

## MAP OF HISTORIC AND CULTURAL ASSETS

The City of Punta Gorda has a mix of architecture styles within the existing Historic District. However, many of the structures were not maintained, damaged by hurricanes or demolished, and the historic district is at risk of losing its title to protect the remaining structures and landmarks.

The City has updated a survey of historic assets and identified which of those assets can be used to create a local register of historic buildings and a local historic district, which will do more to further protect the architectural history of Punta Gorda.

The following is a list of architectural styles surveyed on the Draft City of Punta Gorda Historic Resources Survey 2016:

- Frame Vernacular: 1880-1930
- Masonry Vernacular: 1900s-1940s
- Ranch: 1930s
- Mid Century Modern: late 1940s-early 1970s
- Queen Anne: late 1800s
- Craftsman: 1900s-1930s
- Folk Victorian: 1880s-1930s
- Mission Revival: 1910s-1930s
- Commercial Vernacular: 1880s-1940s
- Neo-Classical Revival: 1900s-1920s
- Colonial/Georgian Revival: 1880s-1920s
- Modern Style: 1930s-1950s
- Minimal Traditional
- Art Deco
- Bungalow
- Gothic
- Prairie School
- I-House
- Victorian Gothic
- Modern-Art Deco
- Italian Renaissance

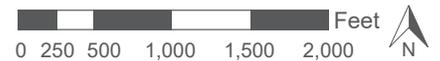
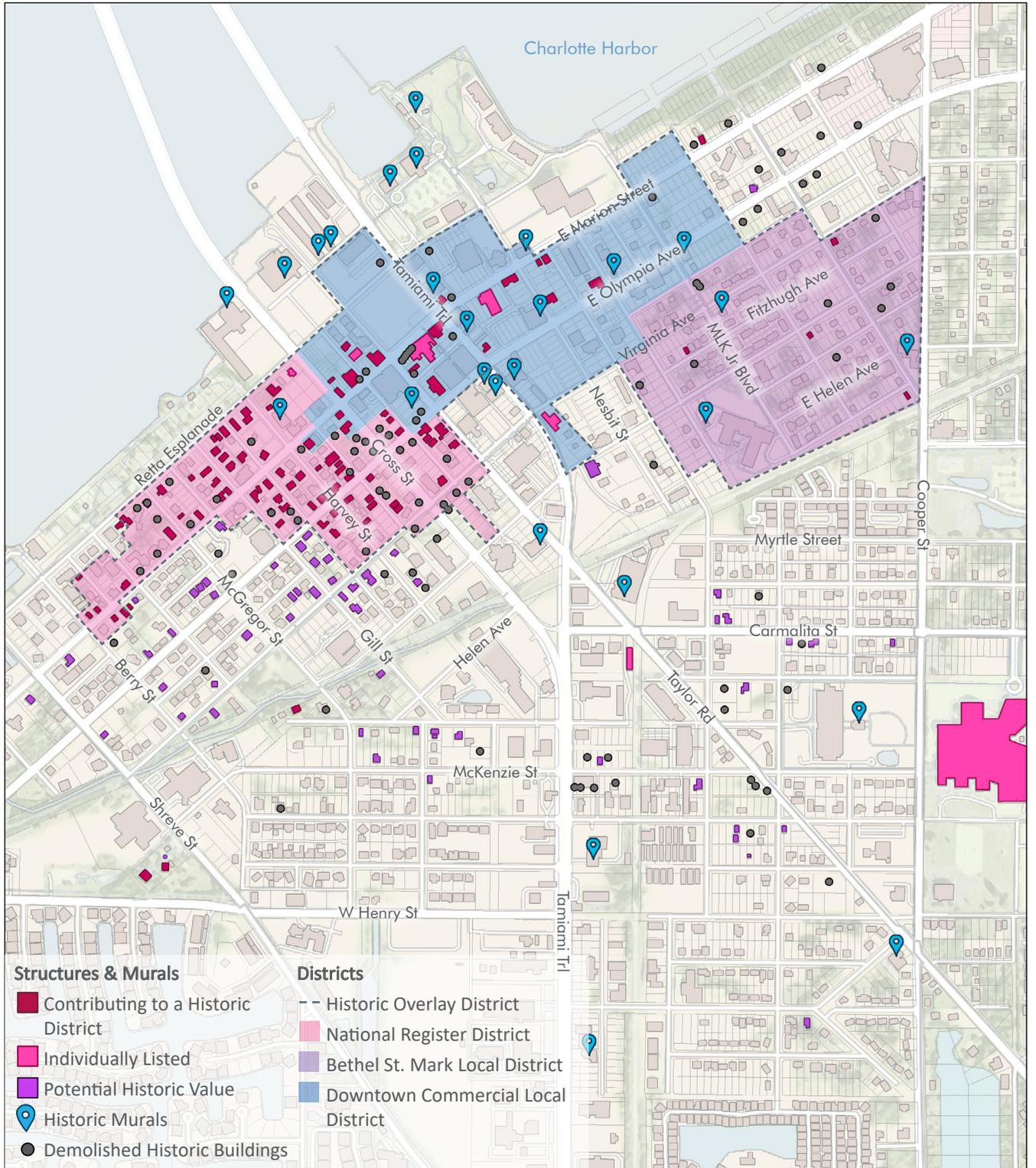


Smith Arcade; Mission Revival Style 1926

Existing historic structures and murals are mapped on the Existing Historic Assets and Districts Map (Figure 4.3). Structures are categorized by Contributing to a Historic District in red, Individually Listed in pink or Historic and Potential Historic Value in purple. Demolished Historic Buildings are also shown on the map as grey dots and Historic Murals are shown as blue markers. There are three historic districts, National Register District, Bethel St. Mark Local District and Downtown Commercial Local District in Punta Gorda that were implemented to protect the character and preserve the history of Downtown by enforcing the architectural standards. However, many Historic and Potential Historic Value structures are outside the boundaries of those districts and the preservation tool does not apply to Bethel St. Mark Local District.

The historic districts also protect many parcels and areas that do not have historic properties yet still require a certificate of appropriateness for any project, this requirement could be hindering new development where the conditions are appropriate and beneficial for development in Punta Gorda.

Figure 4.3: Existing Historic Assets and Districts Map



## IV. Preserving Community Character

### Historic Assets & Preservation

## HISTORIC DISTRICTS

To protect the existing historic structures and landmarks in Punta Gorda a local historic district and conservation district would help guide any restorations and protect against demolition.

### TYPES OF HISTORIC DESIGNATION

#### National Register Historic District

The National Park Service’s National Register of Historic Places is a part of a national program to coordinate and support efforts that identify, evaluate, and protect America’s historic resources. Besides a demolition delay and Historic Preservation Advisory Board review, there are no protections against demolition or alterations of structures, but there are some federal tax benefits and incentives associated with the National Register.

#### Locally Designated Historic District

Patterned after the National Register, a local historic designation ordinance seeks to preserve and protect properties that have special significance to Punta Gorda, the State of Florida, and the United States. There are protections against demolition or alterations as well as various local tax benefits and incentives for contributing structures within these districts.

#### Neighborhood Conservation District

A Conservation District is a more flexible way to protect a neighborhood than a Local Historic Designation. It can protect an area from inappropriate development by instituting regulations with regard to scale, character, massing, alterations, lot sizes, block sizes, and rights-of-way, as well as limited protection from demolition.

#### Recommended Local Register Historic Districts

The first of the two recommended local historic districts proposed in this plan consolidates and revises the current extents of the National Historic Register District and Downtown Commercial Historic District. This new district’s boundary focuses only on areas with large clusters of historic properties while avoiding any key development parcels. The goal is to protect contributing structures from demolition and apply architectural standards above and beyond those that would be required for the downtown as a whole,

Table 4.2: Historic Districts Benefits Matrix

	Local Historic District	Conservation District	National Historic District
Protection from Demolition & Alteration	Yes	Limited	No
Tax Benefits and Incentives	Local	No	Federal
Preserved Scale, Massing & Lot Size	Yes	Yes	No
Controlled Architectural Character	Yes	Yes	No
Protection from Federal Government Actions	No	No	Yes
Protection from Local Government Actions	Yes	Some	No

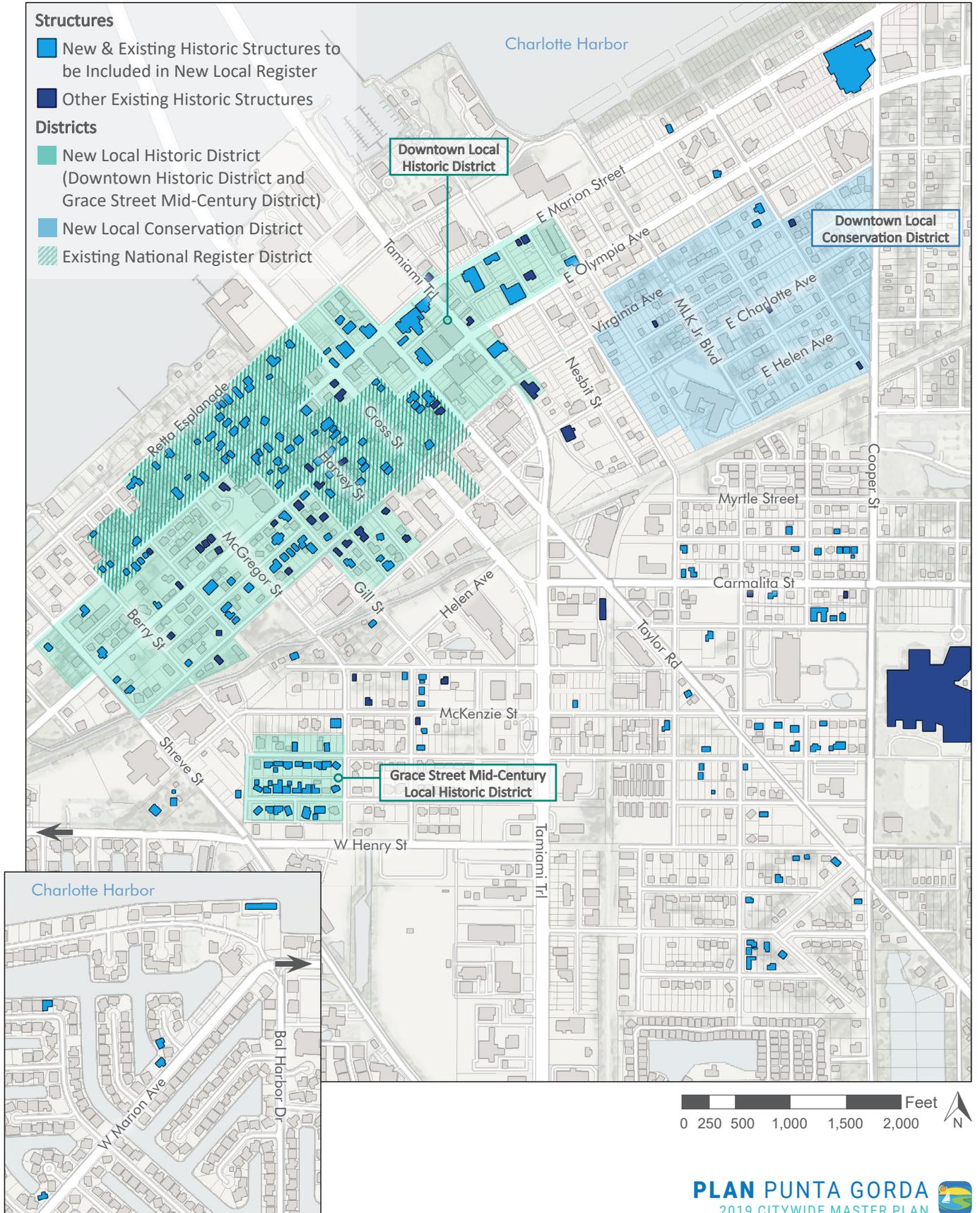
without placing additional regulatory burdens on critical redevelopment sites downtown.

The second local historic district, the Grace Street Mid-Century District, is located on Grace and Ann St, where there is a significant and well-preserved cluster of mid-century modern detached homes. Both these local districts are shown in green in Figure 4.4 to the right.

Another recommendation is to convert the existing Bethel St. Mark district into a new downtown local conservation district. This district has very few contributing structures, therefore designating a local historic district is not really necessary. A conservation district will help ensure buildings keep with the historic character of the district, without adding additional unnecessary requirements.

While this plan recommends revisions to Punta Gorda’s historic district boundaries and designation types, it does maintain that the city continue its marketing and branding around a unified downtown historic district, as has been the desire of downtown residents and Punta Gorda historians alike.

Figure 4.4: Proposed Local Register Structures and Local Historic Districts Map



## IV. Preserving Community Character

### Historic Assets & Preservation





## THE BIG IDEAS

# 5.

*Public input collected during the charrette led to the Plan's 5 big ideas. These, coupled with the principles for preserving community character discussed in the previous chapter, help to guide and inform the public improvements and land development recommendations in this master plan.*



**1. Make Downtown a vibrant and attractive place.**



**2. Celebrate Charlotte Harbor and welcome more boating.**



**3. Diversify housing types.**



**4. Fully Embrace walking and biking.**

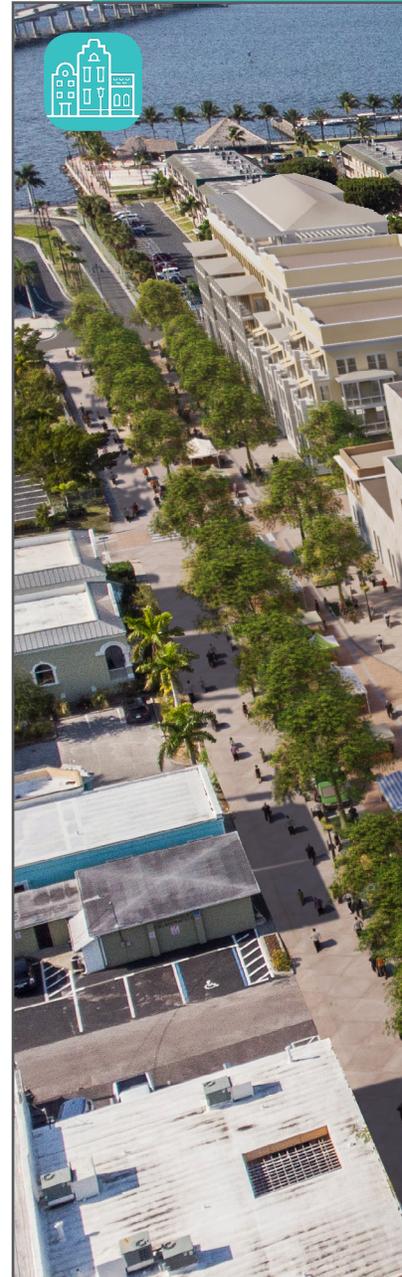


**5. Encourage strategic commercial development.**

# Make Downtown a vibrant and attractive place

*Central Idea: Fill in the missing gaps downtown to attract more residents and visitors and invest in street and public space improvements that increase safety and comfort for people of all ages and abilities walking, biking, and driving.*

BIG CHALLENGES	KEY CITY INVESTMENTS & POLICIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of housing and people living Downtown</li> <li>• Insufficient leasable commercial space to achieve a critical mass of restaurants, experiential retail, and office</li> <li>• Business owners struggling to attract and retain quality employees</li> <li>• Business owners struggling to keep up sales during low season</li> <li>• Large empty parcels, sitting vacant for years</li> <li>• Safety and comfort of people walking and biking downtown, particularly when crossing US 41</li> <li>• Loss of historic assets, threatening its national register designation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively encourage the development of large opportunity sites downtown</li> <li>• Revise zoning and land-use regulations to allow enough intensity and predictability to get realistic developments built and attract more residents</li> <li>• Consider the adoption of a development bonus program which grants additional development potential in exchange for community benefits</li> <li>• Reduce the number of lanes on US 41 Downtown to slow down vehicles and accommodate a two-way cycle track northbound, connecting to the harborwalk</li> <li>• Restore Marion and Olympia Ave to two-way traffic to improve traffic flow and reduce traffic speed</li> <li>• Transform Taylor St from Marion Ave to Harborside Ave into a shared festival street</li> <li>• Adopt a local register of historic properties and new local historic districts to prevent the loss of historic structures</li> <li>• Study and adopt parking strategies to manage and maximize parking options</li> </ul>



## RE-IMAGINED TAYLOR ST AND NEW DOWNTOWN PUBLIC SQUARE



*See the full transformation on pages 132-135.*

## V. The Big Ideas

Vibrant & Attractive Downtown

### MAXIMIZING RESIDENTIAL POTENTIAL DOWNTOWN

One of the key ways to attract and support more commercial, dining, and entertainment offerings downtown is to increase the number of people living there. In order to provide more housing options downtown, including apartments for active retirees and younger professionals, and create a more vibrant village feel, there needs to be the right amount of density, or homes per acre, in the right place. This may include two-story townhomes or four-story mixed-use apartment buildings with ground floor retail and residential above.

The following examples demonstrate how new compact and mixed-use developments provide new homes while blending in with the surroundings and without the need for big tall buildings.



#### COURTYARDS OF DELRAY

Delray Beach, Florida

The design was intended to encourage neighborhood interaction and opens to the surrounding neighborhood. The site is surrounded by office and retail on all sides to create a mix of uses. The project consists of 32 townhomes facing three interior courtyards creating a series of shared green spaces and an interior pedestrian network through the site. In addition to increasing

density, this project provided green space and connectivity within the neighborhood. The design typology—three-story units with rear garages in a courtyard configuration—has since been widely copied throughout south Florida by builders both large and small.

Special Features:

- Downtown housing
- Infill development
- Mid-income housing
- New residential construction
- Catalyst for downtown Delray Beach redevelopment
- First project for small development company

Details:

- 1.12 acres
- 32 three-story townhomes
- Residential density: 28.5 homes per acre gross

The Courtyards of Delray works in conjunction with a larger effort by the city to revitalize its downtown, which has drawn in a lot more retail tenants as well as new, mixed-use development.

#### BELMONT DAIRY REDEVELOPMENT

Portland, Oregon

This project is a mixed-use, urban infill project which spurred reinvestment in the Sunnyside neighborhood and created a strong anchor for a changing neighborhood. Market-rate live/work lofts were built above the renovated commercial space in the existing industrial building, while affordable units are incorporated in new construction. The buildings are oriented to the street to create a pedestrian-oriented streetscape, while the rowhouses feature a landscaped courtyard to create a more private garden area for residents.



Special Features:

- Urban infill
- Historic preservation/adaptive reuse
- Affordable housing
- Green development, using recycled materials
- Interior courtyard
- Mix of housing types

Details:

- 2.5 acres
- 66 subsidized apartments
- 19 market rate lofts
- 30 owner-occupied rowhouses
- 26,000 sf ground-level retail
- Residential density: 54 homes per acre net

## THE CROSSINGS

### Mountain View, California

The 18-acre site is bounded by commercial space on two sides (including a supermarket), a rail line and expressway on a third side, and condominiums on the fourth side, with a local school nearby. The project leveraged the existing retail as an asset for a diverse mix of housing types. The housing types range from a density of 11 homes per acre to 70 homes per acre, compared to 7-10 home per acre in the rest of the city. All homes are within a 5-min walk to all services, with retail and offices concentrated near the transit station. Apartments are organized around common courtyards, and two small parks are centrally located.



Special Features:

- Suburban reuse site
- Mix of housing types
- Walkable neighborhood

Details:

- 18 acres
- 102 single-family detached houses
- 129 rowhouses
- 128 condominiums
- Residential density: 30 homes per acre net

## V. The Big Ideas

### Vibrant & Attractive Downtown



**City Market Place Development Option 1:** Lower intensity mixed-use development without new public spaces



**City Market Place Development Option 2:** Higher intensity mixed-use development with new public spaces



**Former U-Save Development - View From US 41 N:** Mixed-use residential, townhomes, and a new public green



**Former U-Save Development - View From Nesbit St:** Mixed-use residential, townhomes, and a new public green



**Fishermen's Village Development - Looking South:** Mixed-use residential, townhomes, and a new public green



**Fishermen's Village Development - Looking North:** Mixed-use residential, townhomes, and a new public green

## TESTING GREATER DOWNTOWN SITES

Throughout the Citywide Master Plan process, the Dover-Kohl team held several interviews and meetings with local property owners, developers, and real estate professionals to understand the challenges to developing in Punta Gorda. The most often cited barriers were:

1. Insufficient development potential permitted to result in viable projects, particularly in the downtown where land values are naturally higher
2. Negative community response and push-back to new development projects

To understand how much development is feasible and still attractive to residents, four scenarios were tested on three different sites. These options, illustrated to the left and summarized in the table below, are meant to inform how the city might modify its land development regulations to help spur new development and investment downtown. While some base intensity measures, such as residential density, will have to be adjusted, the plan also recommends allowing additional development potential in exchange for community benefits like public greenspace, affordable housing, and arts and cultural spaces.

## BENEFITS OF COMPACT DEVELOPMENT

- Helps to create walkable and bikeable neighborhoods by mixing uses and supporting the viability of a wider range of businesses
- Helps to expand and support transportation options by putting more people and destination closer together; the more density the more likely the area is to be served by some form of transit
- Supports housing choice and affordability by leveraging a wider range of housing types
- Supports community fiscal health by reducing capital and operating costs of extending new infrastructure and municipal services and by bringing in more property tax revenue per acre than single-family suburban development can
- Improves security by creating more “eyes on the street” and prompting natural surveillance
- Helps protect the natural environment by confining growth to smaller areas, leaving more natural areas untouched and preserved

Table 5.1: Greater Downtown (Historic District & Fishermen’s Village) Development Scenarios

Development Program	City Market Place Option 1	City Market Place Option 2	Former U-Save Lot	Fishermen’s Village
<b>Apartments (Units)</b>	180	290	75	300
<b>Townhomes (Units)</b>	0	0	24	16
<b>ADUs (Units)</b>	0	0	10	10
<b>Live/Work (Units)</b>	4	4	0	0
<b>Retail/Neighborhood Commercial (Gross SF)</b>	34,000	32,000	10,000	20,000
<b>Office (Gross SF)</b>	18,000	25,000	0	0
<b>Public Open Space (SF)</b>	0	30,000	12,600	30,000
<b>Parking Spaces (Garage)</b>	240	310	0	380
<b>Parking Spaces (Mid-Block &amp; On-Street)</b>	170	110	140	0
<b>Project Size (Acres)</b>	6.2	6.2	4.2	7.2
<b>Density (Homes per Acre)</b>	30	48	26	45
<b>Building Height (Stories)</b>	2-4	2-6	2-4	2-5

Assumptions: 800 SF average apartment size; 80 percent gross to net square footage calculation for residential uses

## V. The Big Ideas

Vibrant & Attractive Downtown

# PROMOTING ART & CULTURE DOWNTOWN

Arts and culture not only reflect the spirit and soul of a place, facilitating a sense of belonging, but they are also an essential economic asset, attracting visitors and businesses alike. Punta Gorda's unique history and thriving local arts and festival scene could become as much of a calling card for visitors as its beautiful setting and outdoor recreation.

Downtown Punta Gorda and Fishermen's Village are home to the Blanchard House Museum of African American History, the Military Heritage Museum, the Visual Arts Center, 23 murals, several local galleries and artisan boutiques, and a number of festivals including the Sullivan Street Craft Festival, Taste of Punta Gorda, Arts in August, the Festival of Lights, and the Wine & Jazz Festival, to name a few. While there are a lot of cultural offerings in downtown there is an opportunity to encourage more artistic and cultural production.

### Promoting Creative Activity

Investing in the arts has positive impacts on society, health and wellbeing, the economy, and education. Through visual arts, culinary arts, and music, Punta Gorda has initiated ways to implement art into its culture and community. Incorporating public art into a community is valuable because it promotes:

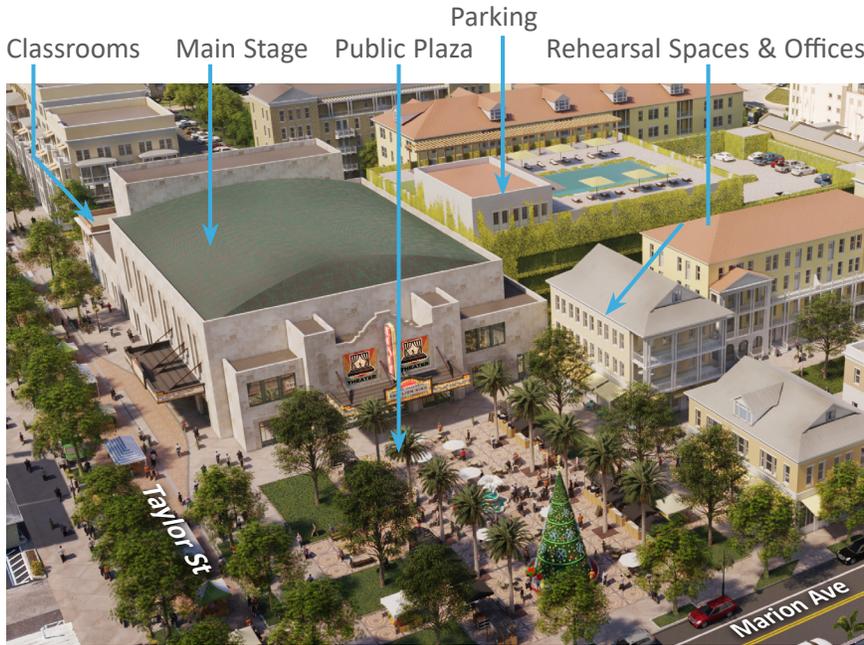
- Economic Growth & Sustainability
- Cultural Identity,
- Local Artist Involvement,
- Social Cohesion, and
- Health and Belonging

### New Community Arts Center

Starting in 2018 a new not-for-profit organization, the Harborside Center for the Arts (HCA), was created to promote arts in Punta Gorda and establish a new

### STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE & EXPAND ART DOWNTOWN

- Partner with local arts organizations, such as the Visual Arts Center and the Harborside Center for the Arts (HCA), to provide new programs and spaces for cultural production in Downtown
- Study the creation of a Cultural Space Management PDA, an independent entity tasked with leasing, developing, and purchasing spaces to cultural organizations and artists
- Create a distinctive experience for visitors entering downtown by including public art the two gateway development sites identified in Figure 5.3
- Transform Taylor St from Marion Ave to Harborside Ave into a shared / festival street
- Provide incentives for the redevelopment of City Market Place to include a signature public space at the corner of Marion Ave and Taylor St
- Adopt a public art ordinance to require a percentage of development budgets for projects of a certain size be earmarked for public art
- Continue to support the creation of murals
- Continue to support the anchor events and festivals that occur annually downtown
- Develop a sidewalk plaque program that identifies historic businesses that are no longer in Punta Gorda
- Create a decorative lighting plan and develop branded banners for main streets, giving preference to local artists in their conception and fabrication
- Conduct a review of downtown noise ordinances
- As part of a citywide development incentive program, include affordable art and culture spaces a public benefit provided in exchange for increased intensity
- Subsidize permit fees non-profit cultural organization and artists creating new cultural spaces
- Create a temporary occupancy permit to allow for pop-up arts and cultural uses in vacant downtown storefronts and lots



### WHAT COULD IT INCLUDE?

- Mid-sized theater for live performing arts (40,000-50,000 SF footprint)
- Ancillary mixed-use buildings that provide arts education, production, rehearsal and exhibition spaces
- Signature public space component that encourages community gathering and art
- Substantial guest and artist amenities
- Adequate loading, pick-up/drop-off, and parking spaces
- Transparent, street-oriented design that activates the neighborhood

Figure 5.1: Illustration of City Market Place with new Arts Center and Mixed-Use Development



#### Stephen Sondheim Theater in New York City

- 1,000 seats (25,000 SF footprint)
- No ancillary buildings
- Downtown urban location



#### South Miami Dade Cultural Arts Center

- 961 seat theater (40,000 SF footprint)
- Additional black box theater, concert lawn, classrooms, and dance studios

Community Arts Center that would not only house the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra and visiting theater and musical productions, but also serve the broader community with additional spaces for exhibition, cultural production, and arts education. This project has been conceived as a not-for-profit operated community arts center, established in partnership with the City of Punta Gorda, Charlotte County, and other local arts organizations. By providing a mix of cultural and art-related leasable commercial space, the project would generate a combination of earned, contributed, and endowment revenues.

While HCA is currently working on a feasibility analysis for a new community arts center, a process running in parallel to Plan Punta Gorda, the master plan has tested the potential to locate a downtown arts center at the City Market Place site. Shown above, this prime location leverages downtown’s existing cultural assets and activities and supports a walk-to, bike-to, and “uber-to” theater experience, as opposed to the conventional drive-to one. Other potential sites have been identified in or close to downtown, which can also accommodate the programmatic and space needs listed in the illustration above. These sites include:

1. U-Save Site (129 East Olympia): 130,000 SF of available land
2. Gateway Site (402 and 411-429 E Marion Ave): 175,000 SF of combined available land straddling E Marion Ave
3. Gateway Site (550 Tamiami Trl): 130,000 SF of available land
4. 2300 Shreve St Site: Up to 650,000 SF of available land



## V. The Big Ideas

### Vibrant & Attractive Downtown

## BALANCING COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL NEEDS DOWNTOWN

There is concern among some members of the community that adding more residents downtown would be at odds with the type of commercial development that is desired there (music venues, bars, and restaurants). They feel that apartments and townhomes should not be located where large events have taken place historically, such as at City Market Place, because this will lead to noise and parking conflicts that would be a detriment to Punta Gorda's well-attended events and downtown businesses.



Punta Gorda Funk Fest; Photo credit: Matthew Chase

Some community members believe that if the goal is to draw more people in, then the plan should focus on adding more jobs downtown and facilitating the movement of cars for people to drive to work, instead of building residential downtown with no jobs for people who are living there. Thus, commercial should be prioritized over residential development downtown.

### The Importance Attracting Downtown Residents

Adding more homes in Downtown Punta Gorda is a key recommendation of the Draft Master Plan and Economic Development and Budgetary Analysis (May 2019). The reality is that any new real-estate development project in the heart of downtown that does not include a residential component is difficult to justify financially.

Existing office rents of \$16 to \$18 per square foot limit the feasibility of developing a large Class A office building downtown, which would typically need rents of \$25 or more per square foot. That, coupled with low retail rents, even in the Downtown Core, suggest

that smaller-scale commercial buildings of 10,000 to 20,000 square feet would be more appropriate in areas with lower land values, like East Downtown, whereas larger mixed-use buildings that include retail and residential space would be more feasible for developers in the Downtown Core, where land is more expensive. Second-floor office above retail space would be attractive to some types of tenants, but they would require an elevator for accessibility, which is a cost that needs to be spread over a larger block of space, making it difficult financially.

The Economic Development and Budgetary Analysis suggests an additional 20,000 to 25,000 square feet of well-designed downtown retail space in order to round out the current offerings. This will be particularly important in helping downtown attract the many new visitors expected to stay at the Sunseeker Resort across the bridge in Port Charlotte. This amount of new retail can be easily accommodated in just a portion of ground floor spaces in the City Market Place site alone. This still leaves several development sites in the Downtown Core that can accommodate residential buildings as well as mixed-use commercial and residential projects.

The addition of new downtown housing is critical to the long-term health of downtown's small businesses, which are finding it difficult to remain profitable given the seasonality of the local economy and a dependence on drive-in business. A larger community of downtown residents who could walk over for a cup of coffee in the morning or a drink at night could help provide the extra business needed to achieve year-round profitability. This is consistent with input gathered from interviews and surveys conducted with downtown businesses.

### The Development of City Market Place

The options presented for City Market Place in this chapter are meant to illustrate the amount of development and potential uses that the site could support given different intensity regulations and potential future policies, including a development incentive or bonus program which allows additional development potential, in the form of added height,

## A CLOSER LOOK AT NOISE ORDINANCES

As more people move to Downtown Punta Gorda, it will be important to establish noise regulations that protect the health and wellbeing of residents while still promoting local businesses and special events. It is important to the future of downtown for local and small businesses that depend on live music and entertainment to thrive. These businesses contribute to the character of Punta Gorda, provide employment, promote local creativity, and keep downtown active.

Placing burdensome regulations on these businesses may hurt a growing, vibrant downtown. This should be balanced by the reasonable expectation of new residents downtown to not be bothered by noise at unreasonable times. Several cities have been working to address this issue and approach it in different ways.

- Nashville, Tennessee stipulates the locations and times of live entertainment and establishes a decibel level measured from 50 feet into the street that is acceptable during these times. Locations that violate these regulations are subject to fines of increasing severity depending on their violation.
- Austin, Texas is implementing an assistance program to help pay for sound mitigation in existing bars and music venues to reduce the amount of noise that gets transferred from a live venue to other locations.
- New York City requires all new construction to comply to a certain amount of sound mitigation to minimize the transfer of sound.

The most effective regulations are clear and specific. They should be consistently enforced, and quantitative rather than qualitative in how noise is measured. Places that have not established noise ordinances with these guidelines have seen regulations overturned with legal action. Punta Gorda should review its noise ordinance and make revisions with these points in mind.

floor area ratio (FAR), or density, in exchange for pre-defined community benefits.

While the Market Place Site is currently used as event parking and event space, with some residents expressing concerns over where this parking would go if the site is developed, this is a temporary use that the current property owner has permitted in the short term. It is by no means the highest and best use of this prime location. In response to concerns about parking, the plan recommends building structured parking in the Market Place block, as well as in front of the Event Center, accommodating both future visitors and residents alike.

This plan recommends including public open space as a community benefit, which could be provided in a development proposal in exchange for added height and density. This idea is illustrated in City Market Place Development Options 2 and 3, which both feature a new town square at Taylor and Marion. This new public space coupled with the transformation of Taylor St from Marion to Harborside Ave into a shared/festival street, creates a large and dedicated space downtown to host outdoor events, such as the annual Christmas tree lighting (as illustrated on page 131). This would replace the lost event space that was the empty Market Place property.

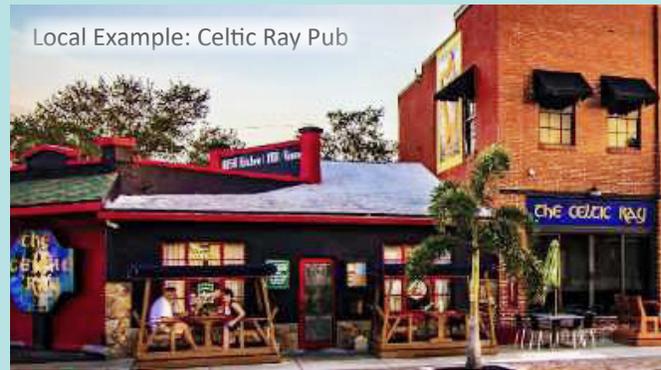
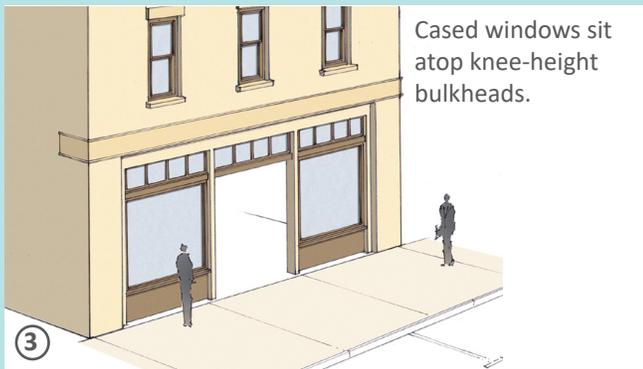
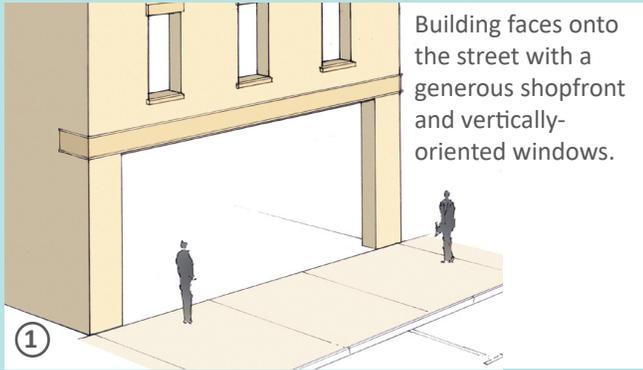
Concerns about where the car show would be held if the surface parking lot at the Events Center were redeveloped with a structured parking garage are valid. These concerns would have to be taken into consideration as part of any future proposal in that location. As is the case with City Market Place, the exact design and intensity of new development will depend on market forces, as well as adopted development controls implemented as part of a comprehensive plan and zoning update.



Punta Gorda 2018 Block Party; Photo credit: Air Shot Aces

## V. The Big Ideas

### Vibrant & Attractive Downtown



## A CHANGING RETAIL LANDSCAPE

Fishermen's Village and Downtown Punta Gorda are the City's strongest retail clusters, drawing heavily on tourists. High numbers of tourists coupled with a highly seasonal population means that local business is generally focused into three or four months of the year. Competing for visitors' dollars means offering a pleasant and authentic experience. Though downtown does not have enough shops to attract casual shoppers on its own, the many events and festivals held there give visitors and residents an occasion to make the trip. Expanding downtown retail offerings could strengthen its appeal and ability to compete for retail spending.

An additional 20,000 to 25,000 square feet of well-designed downtown retail space could round out existing offerings. This will be particularly important in helping downtown attract the many visitors expected to stay at the new Sunseeker Resort across the bridge.

With the rapid expansion of on-line shopping and the nation's over-supply of retail space, brick-and-mortar stores are facing big challenges. Those that are competing most successfully are those that can offer an experience not available on-line. Given the social aspects of eating out, restaurants are very good at pulling people out of their homes in spite of home delivery services. Small shops that provide personalized interaction with their customers offer a different experience than on-line outlets.

### Encourage Local Ownership

People want to visit and live in authentic places. We often choose independently owned establishments like breweries, barbers, bistros, and bike shops because of a connection we feel with the business owner or operator. We want to express our appreciation, get a glimpse of an expert doing what they are good at, hear their story, be part of it, and support their vision.

A locally-owned business is more likely to express a unique vision and less likely to adopt whatever uniform aesthetic is currently in vogue. Unlike corporate chains, small businesses retain control. Local owners are also more likely to get involved and help solve urban problems at their doorstep. Organizations like the Punta Gorda Chamber reinforce local businesses commitment to the city and to each other.

Beyond authenticity, micro-chain and family-operated businesses are key to the resilience of the local economy.

While chain and corporate establishments are the first to leave when economies slow, local businesses struggle through the economic ups and downs.

### Hold on to Gathering Spots

While not unique to Punta Gorda, offerings like local coffee shops, pubs, and ice cream parlors are authentic to all downtowns and help keep them economically competitive by attracting tourists, retirees, and a younger urban customer base. Certain special establishments, however, keep bringing people back and act as local gathering spots, such as The Celtic Ray, Copperfish Books, TT's Tiki Bar, and Fishermen's Village. If they serve coffee they probably provide inexpensive informal workspaces for the self-employed. If they serve beer they likely add to downtown's conviviality by sponsoring outdoor events.

Together with public gathering spaces, like the Gilchrist Park gazebo and Lashley Park's Wally Stage and pavilions, these anchor establishments provide opportunities for locals and visitors to interact. These are the City's third places; places that are neither home or work, that make people feel welcome. Though today many of Punta Gorda's gathering spots involve drinking, the City should look for opportunities to partner with the Downtown Merchants Association and organizations like the Friends of Gilchrist park to provide more under-21 friendly third spaces.



People lounging at TT's Tiki Bar

## ANATOMY OF A STOREFRONT

There is an economic advantage to creating unique one-of-a-kind environments such as main streets. Marion Ave, Olympia Ave, Retta Esplanade, Taylor St, and US 41 will all need new storefronts that welcome customers coming on foot or by bike. The diagrams to the left show the elements that help foster better building to street relationships.

## V. The Big Ideas

Vibrant & Attractive Downtown

### A SUCCESSFUL RETAIL ENVIRONMENT

Illustrated in the images on the right are a series of shopfront elements, many of which can be added incrementally to key downtown commercial streets like Marion Ave, Olympia Ave, Nesbit St, Taylor St, Sullivan St, and US 41. This sequence demonstrates how each component can positively contribute to the overall function and composition of the street.

Street lighting and trees are vertical elements that help to define the public realm while also making the pedestrian feel safer and more comfortable. Trees, even in winter, add a sculptural quality and interest to the streetscape.

On-street parking allows easy vehicular access to store fronts and also acts as a buffer from traffic that is moving within the roadway. Adding benches, trash/recycling bins and planters is a simple way to transform a street into a place; these components combine to prompt the pedestrian to linger next to the retail shops.

Providing space on the sidewalk for restaurant dining is another method for activating the public space. Extending sidewalk dining into the on-street parking zone, also known as a “parklet”, quickly and affordably maximizes retail opportunities.



Street-oriented architecture and wide sidewalks are essential “building blocks” of the streetspace. In addition, on-street parking or protected bike lanes can help to separate people walking from moving vehicles.



Awnings protect pedestrians from the weather.



Adding an outside display zone close to the street will increase retail visibility.



2

Canopy street trees provide shade and visually define the public space.



3

Street furniture helps to transform a sidewalk into a place.



5

Appropriately-scaled signage and adequate lighting contribute to the street composition.



6

Sidewalk dining activates the public space.



8

Parklets that extend into the on-street parking area are an easy way to gain more dining.



9

Street lamps allow social and commercial activity to continue into the night. In addition, the spill lighting from shop windows adds to the warmth and safety of the pedestrian zone.

### RECOMMENDED PARKING STRATEGIES

The first step to reducing excessive, inefficient, and unattractive surface parking in prime downtown locations is to address the root cause: reducing the need for and amount of un-managed surface parking. This can be done by re-balancing the city's mode split, or percentage of people walking versus biking and driving. Several strategies to improve walkability and bikeability are described across this plan, and are necessary steps towards an attractive and vibrant town.

Many in the planning and urban design communities are switching precisely to this approach of looking first at land use patterns and complete streets practices, before studying vehicular traffic improvements. While maximizing the way people are able to move in and around Downtown Punta Gorda is a critical first step towards controlling current and future parking demand, there are several other strategies that can be used to better manage parking behavior and supply.

While the City of Punta Gorda removed parking minimum requirements downtown, many developers nationwide still follow outdated and often excessive parking ratios, resulting in either more single-occupant car ownership and traffic on roadways or in unused and unattractive surface parking lots where there could be housing or productive commercial space.

The following principles should be considered by developers and city staff when looking for new parking solutions to apply downtown:

- Reduce reliance on free parking for single occupant vehicle trips
- Consider parking/traffic and congestion impacts to the entire transportation system
- Apply practices that are context-sensitive
- Maintain a predictable process
- Design solutions for all stakeholders

Some examples of measures that are used in place of increased parking and transportation capacity include:

- **Active Transportation Improvements.** Physical transportation network improvements that encourage people to walk and/or ride a bicycle to community destinations, including sidewalks, bike

lanes, and better roadway crossings. These projects are good candidates for in-lieu fee funds.

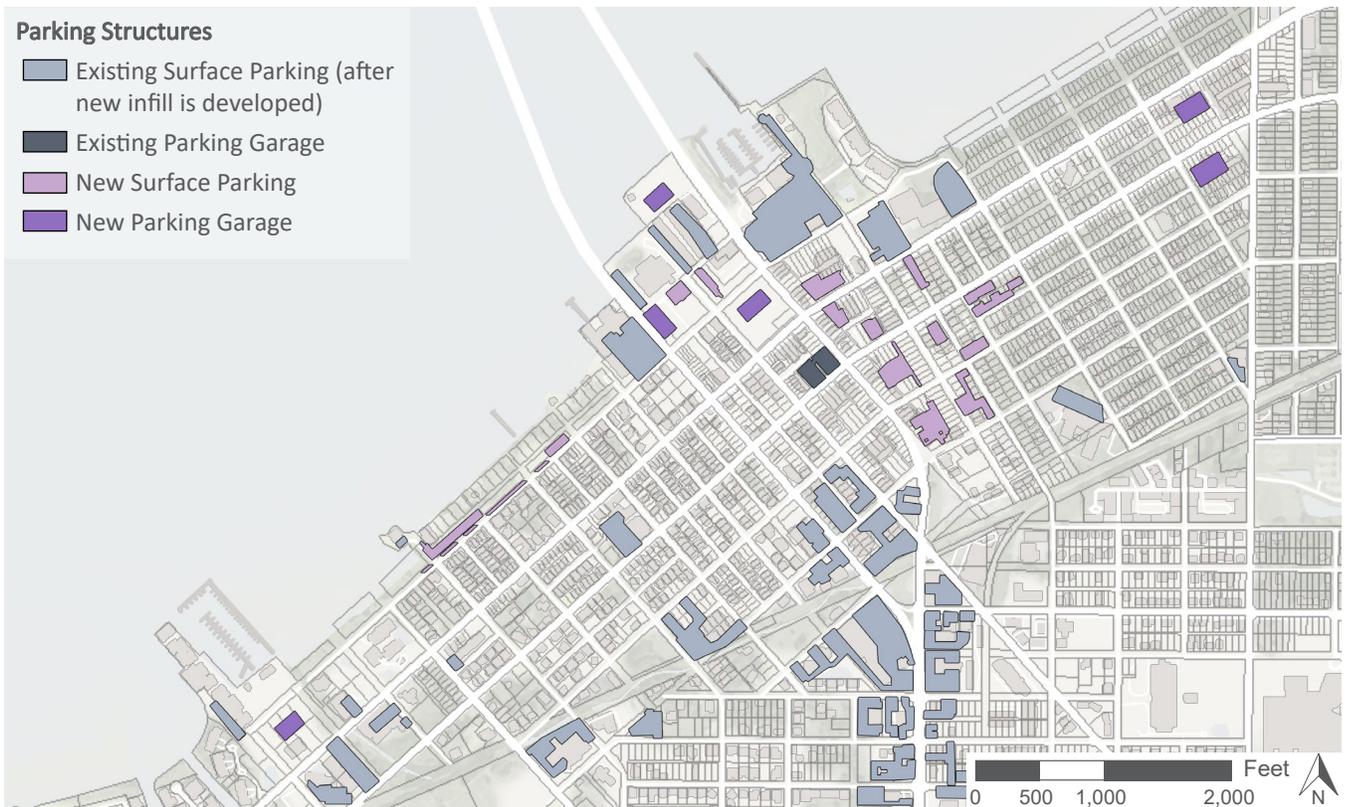
- **Carpooling and Ridesharing.** Development-based ridesharing subsidies, shuttling, guaranteed ride home, and carpooling programs to support reduced vehicle ownership.
- **Education, Marketing, and Information.** Developers contribute funds to the City's non-automotive education programs to educate users and the surrounding community of the benefits of using non-vehicular means on transportation.
- **Shared Valet Program.** Business owners, together with the city and any local BIDs or Merchants Associations can provide a shared valet, whereby visitors can drop-off and pick-up their cars in any of the available valet stands in a certain area.
- **Time Limited Parking.** Rules that limit the amount of time a car can stay parked on the street. This helps to keep on-street parking spaces available.
- **Centralized Shared Parking.** In place of on-site parking, development can pay into a fee-in-lieu program to promote more centralized parking and reduce the number of surface spaces spread throughout the city, which helps to preserve more pleasant walks and better views.
- **Progressive Parking Prices.** Though the City of Punta Gorda does not currently charge for any kind of parking, the testing and gradual implementation of progressive pricing for downtown parking could help ensure that existing and future spaces get fully utilized, while at the same time encouraging people to take different modes of transportation. Progressive pricing works by charging more in places where there is more demand, like on-street parking, and charging less (or not at all) in places that often go underutilized, like city garages.

As the City updates its zoning codes, ordinances and parking policies, these modern mitigation and management concepts can be evaluated to further reduce the reliance on the personal automobile in downtown and in the surrounding communities.

Figure 5.2: Maps of Existing vs. Proposed Parking in Greater Downtown



Existing Parking Structures



Proposed Parking Structures



# V. The Big Ideas

## Vibrant & Attractive Downtown

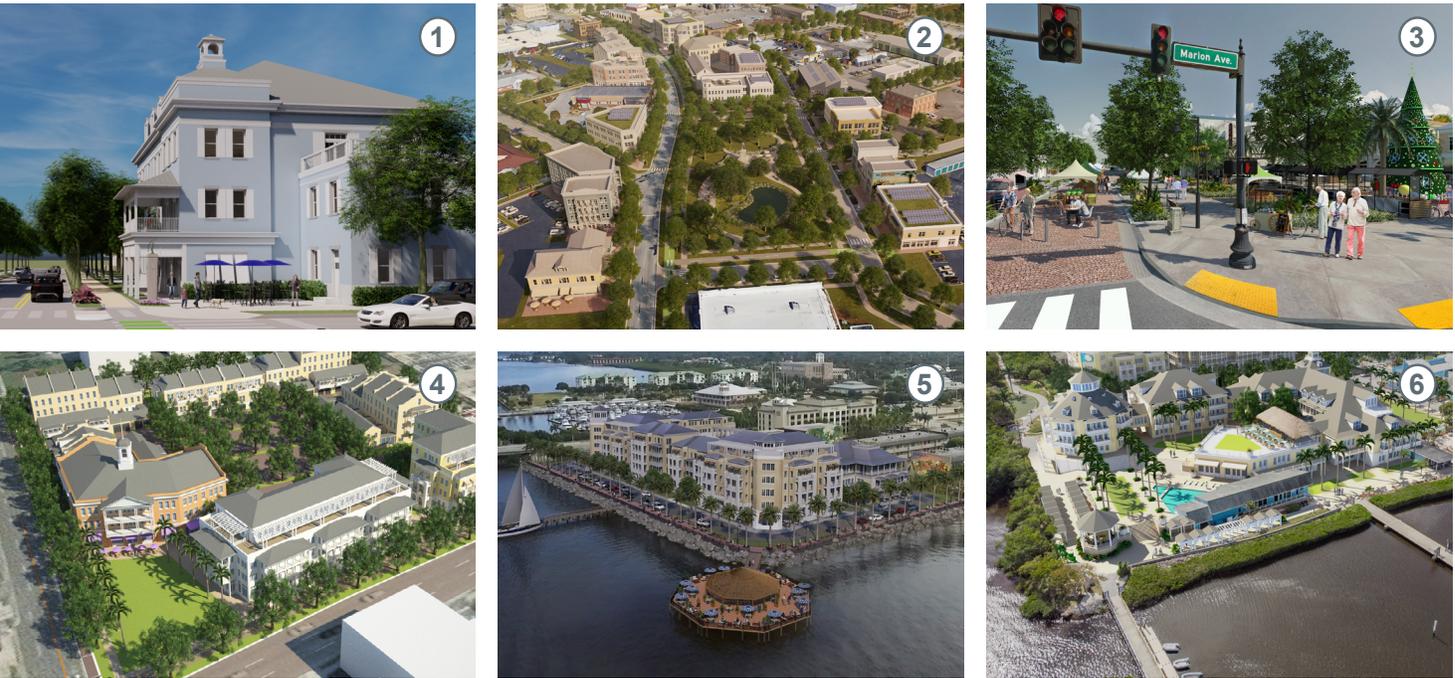
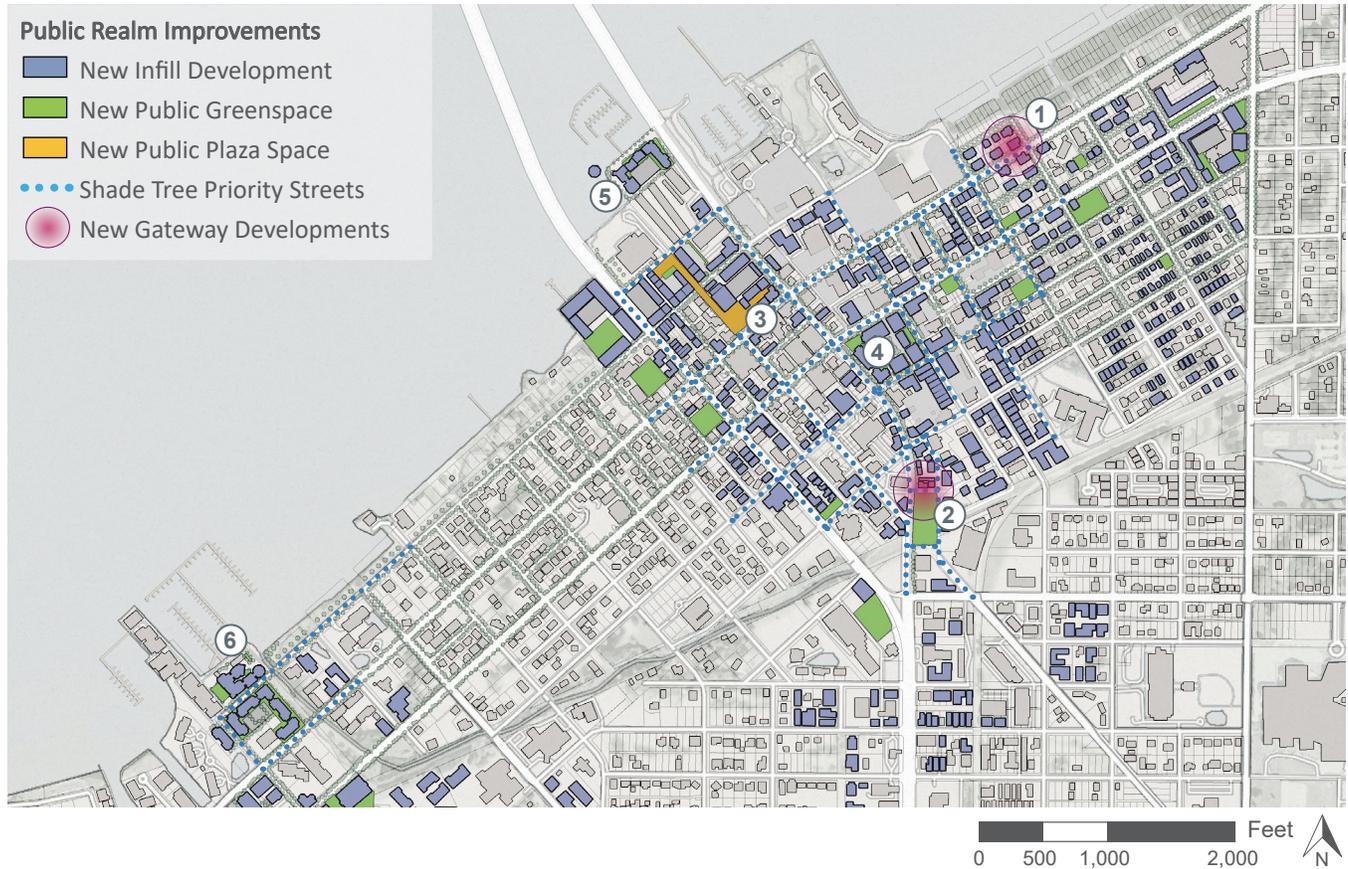


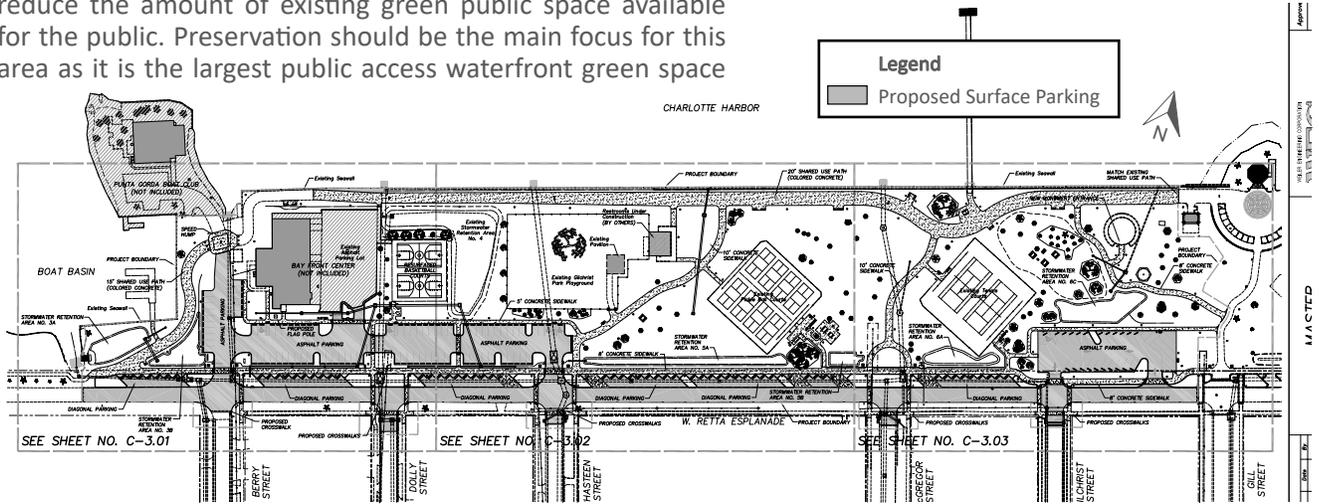
Figure 5.3: Public Realm Improvements Map



# PRESERVING PUBLIC GREEN SPACE IN GILCHRIST PARK

There are projects being proposed in Gilchrist Park that reduce the amount of existing green public space available for the public. Preservation should be the main focus for this area as it is the largest public access waterfront green space

Figure 5.4: Proposed Paved Parking Projects

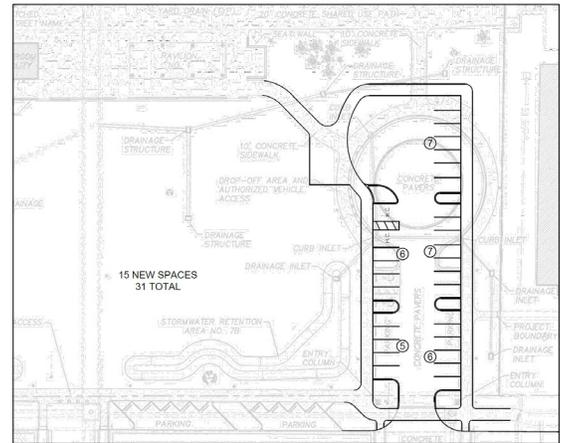


in the city and it serves as the main link between the two most active areas in Punta Gorda, Fishermen’s Village and the downtown core.

The planning team strongly recommends rethinking the concept plans shown on this page, both of which dramatically increase the amount of paved parking in the Gilchrist Park, as they do not match up with the master plan’s goals to celebrate the waterfront and create an active and vibrant downtown.

If the city cannot find alternate parking solutions, the team recommends reducing the overall amount of parking and/or seeking out alternative materials for paving, including permeable and natural surfaces that preserve the soft and green characteristics of the park, handle water runoff, and help filter stormwater. Because these materials are typically more expensive and costly to maintain, the city would have to dedicate more funds to park maintenance or find local community partners willing and able to assist in maintenance.

One of the proposed alternatives to accommodate more parking in the eastern area of Gilchrist Park.



## PAVING MATERIALS ALTERNATIVES



Grass concrete pavers



Open-joint clinkers



Gravel, stone chippings, shells



Woodchips, bark

# Celebrate Charlotte Harbor & Welcome More Boating

***Central Idea:** Partner with waterfront property owners, yacht clubs, and local boating advocates, to increase amenities for visiting and local boaters, protect the unique marine habitat of the harbor, and uphold Punta Gorda’s reputation as a world class sailing, boating, and fishing destination.*



BIG CHALLENGES	KEY CITY INVESTMENTS & POLICIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of upland facilities, boat slips, and day docks to accommodate the demand from local and visiting boaters</li> <li>• East mooring ball field is inaccessible to boats of a certain size due to the height restrictions of the US 41 bridges</li> <li>• Derelict and abandoned boats left along the harbor with insufficient enforcement of existing regulations from police</li> <li>• Dinghy docks at Gilchrist Park</li> <li>• Insufficient public funds and capacity to expand and operate additional public marinas and boating facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with Fishermen’s Village, the PG Waterfront Hotel, and the Sheraton Four Points to expand their marinas and provide upland facilities and additional day docks for visiting boaters</li> <li>• Invest in a western mooring ball field and adopt and enforce strict regulations for boaters using these mooring balls</li> <li>• With the addition of a new mooring field, consider relocating the dinghy docks at Gilchrist Park to the Charlotte Harbor Event Center, Fishermen’s Village, and the PG Waterfront Hotel.</li> <li>• Construct new kayak launches</li> <li>• Invest in new artistic lighting for the Gilchrist and Barron Collier bridges that can be programmed for special events only or for certain hours of the night</li> </ul>

## NEW MARINA & FLOATING TIKI BAR: SHERATON FOUR POINTS PHASE 2



*See the full transformation on page 144.*

## V. The Big Ideas

### Waterfront & Boating

Figure 5.5: Map of Proposed Waterfront and Boating Amenities



## RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE BOATERS ALLIANCE HARBOR MASTER PLAN

- Establish a western mooring ball field to promote boating tourism and provide a mechanism to manage and control anchorage off Gilchrist Park
- Adopt and enforce regulations for boats using mooring ball fields or anchoring in the harbor
- Work with Fishermen’s Village to expand their existing marina and provide upland facilities for visiting boaters including showers, bathrooms, and laundry
- Work with the Punta Gorda Waterfront Hotel (PGWH) to re-establish its marina and provide upland facilities for the west mooring field
- Work with the Sheraton Four Points to establish a marina and boating friendly environment
- Add additional dinghy and day docks behind the Charlotte Harbor Event Center, and at Fishermen’s Village, PGWH, and the Four Points
- Establish kayak launches at Ponce de Leon Park, East of US 41, and at the ends of Colony Point Drive in PGI
- Provide improved boat access to PGI boat owners by completing Buckley’s Pass “Bird Cut”
- Apply for permits to dredge deeper at Ponce Inlet for a depth of 6.5’ to 7’ and also work with the county to deepen Alligator Creek
- Partner with Sunseeker and Fishermen’s Village to study the feasibility of a future water taxi
- Work with Chamber of Commerce, Yacht Clubs, and Boating Organizations to expand existing water-related events and develop large boating events like Sail-In’s and Trawler Fest
- Work with the County Chamber and Tourism Bureau to establish an enhanced and ongoing city marketing campaign targeting boating and fishing tourists, as well as sailing, kayaking, and paddleboarding enthusiasts.

## COMPROMISE AT GILCHRIST PARK

While the Boaters Alliance Harbor Master Plan (2018) recommends maintaining dinghy docks at Gilchrist Park and constructing a breakwater there, the Master Plan recommends removing the existing docks at Gilchrist as part of a future agreement to construct a new western mooring field and provide new and expanded facilities at Fishermen’s Village, the Punta Gorda Waterfront Hotel (PGWH), and The Sheraton Four Points. The Downtown Historic District residents, particularly those adjacent to Gilchrist Park, have expressed deep frustrations regarding activities in the park, particularly the derelict boats that sit across from their homes. These frustrations are compounded by the controversy surrounding pickleball, though the city has completed noise abatement measures including reducing the number of courts and installing an AcoustiFence.

As a result, the proposal to add a western mooring field and maintain boater amenities in Gilchrist Park, effectively making the park a point of entry into and out of the city for moored boaters, have been largely rejected by the neighborhood. This plan's recommendation is to allow the construction of a western mooring field in exchange for the relocation of dinghy docks and any additional boating amenities from Gilchrist to the PGWH and Fishermen’s Village. Another recommendation to restore goodwill between the city, boaters, and the Historic District HOA would be to establish an oversight committee to ensure proper compliance with boating ordinances and to review and update those ordinances on an ongoing basis as necessary.



Sunset at the Lashley Municipal Marina

## CHARLOTTE HARBOR AND BOATING IN CONTEXT

To better understand the recommendations to expand boating and waterfront facilities, it is important to first comprehend the vital role that boating plays in supporting local economies, both in Florida as a whole and in Charlotte County. Equally important is understanding some of the history behind state and local regulations around navigation, anchorage, mooring, and live-aboards, some of which have been shifting significantly in the last ten to fifteen years.

### REGIONAL & LOCAL ECONOMICS OF BOATING

Recreational boating is an important economic driver for the state of Florida, attracting full time and part time residents to the region, as well as millions of tourists and thousands of boating related businesses. Florida continues to lead the nation in boating, with 950,740 registered vessels as of 2018 and an estimated one million additional unregistered ones.<sup>1</sup>

A 2007 study by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) concluded that the 20 million plus boat trips taken every year in Florida, and any related commercial activities and spending, contributed \$17.6 billion to the state's economy that year. According to a National Marine Manufacturer's Association (NMMA) report, that number has grown to \$23.3 billion in 2018. Of that total economic impact, \$2.9 billion came from annual retail sales of new boats, parts, and marine accessories in Florida. The recreational boating industry also supports 64,178 direct jobs and an 28,033 indirect jobs.<sup>2</sup>

At the regional level, Florida District 17, which includes all of Charlotte County, as well as DeSoto, Hardee, and parts of Glades, Highlands, and

Okeechobee County, saw an annual economic impact of \$583 million from recreational boating. District 17 also recorded 55,679 registered vessel's in 2018 and 3,734 direct and indirect jobs from the boating industry.<sup>3</sup>

Having been named one of the top places to sail in the country by *Sail Magazine*, there is no denying the importance of Charlotte Harbor as a natural and economic asset to the City of Punta Gorda.

### PLANNING FOR FUTURE DEMAND

It is difficult to project the future demand for boats and boating amenities because of how closely boating is tied to macro-economic indicators including the price of fuel and disposable income. That being said, a 2012 study by the Florida Sea Grant (FSG) College Program used the assumption that observed cycles and past trends will repeat themselves in the future with regularity to build a model of future boating needs in Charlotte County through 2050.<sup>4</sup>

The number of pleasure boats predicted for Charlotte County by 2050 is 28,125.<sup>5</sup> This represents roughly a 25 percent increase from 2018, which had 22,407 registered non-commercial boats.<sup>6</sup> On average this translates to roughly 178 additional pleasure boats each year until 2050, which is slightly less than the 194 boats per year that study predicted when using 2010 data as the baseline year for comparison. Overall the study predicts that Charlotte County's percentage of Florida's

1 2018 Boating Accident Statistical Report, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, <https://myfwc.com/media/20585/2018-introduction.pdf>

2 NMMA 2018 Boating Economic Impact Study, National Marine Manufacturers Association, <https://www.nmma.org/statistics/publications/economic-impact-infographics>

3 NMMA 2018 Boating Economic Impact Study, <https://www.nmma.org/statistics/publications/economic-impact-infographics>

4 Swett, Robert, Timothy Fik, Thomas Rupert, Garin Davidson, Corina Guevara and Betty Staugler. "Planning for the Future of Recreational Boating Access to Charlotte County Waterways 2010-2050" (October 2012). Florida Sea Grant College Program, [https://www.flseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/tp186\\_charlotte\\_marine\\_access\\_study1.pdf](https://www.flseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/tp186_charlotte_marine_access_study1.pdf). pg. 5

5 *Ibid.*, pg. 10

6 2018 Alphabetical Vessel Statistics by County, Florida Department of Highway Safety and Moto Vehicles Statistics, <https://www.flhsmv.gov/pdf/vessels/vesselstats2018.pdf>

Table 5.2: Projected Resident & Non-Resident Demand for Marina Wet and Dry Slips Located in Charlotte County

Vessel Length Class (Feet)	Estimated 2010		Projected 2020		Projected 2030		Projected 2040		Projected 2050	
	78%	100%	78%	100%	78%	100%	78%	100%	78%	100%
Less than 12'	389	498	435	558	448	575	482	618	515	660
12' < 16'	395	507	422	541	416	533	381	488	346	444
16' < 26'	1,579	2,024	1,917	2,458	2,108	2,703	2,191	2,810	2,276	2,917
26' < 40'	311	399	352	451	366	469	389	499	413	529
40' < 65'	46	59	50	64	51	65	54	69	57	73
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,720</b>	<b>3,487</b>	<b>3,176</b>	<b>4,072</b>	<b>3,389</b>	<b>4,345</b>	<b>3,497</b>	<b>4,484</b>	<b>3,607</b>	<b>4,623</b>

Note: Demand projections were made for for the active boater segment (78% of total) and for the active and occasional boater segment (100%) Source: Swett, Robert, et al. [https://www.flseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/tp186\\_charlotte\\_marine\\_access\\_study1.pdf](https://www.flseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/tp186_charlotte_marine_access_study1.pdf). pg. 33

total number of pleasure boats will stay fairly stable, though growth in the County will be slightly slower than the State as a whole. One reason for this could be the fact that the number of pleasure vessels per capita in Charlotte County is already two-and-a-half to three times higher than the it is for Florida as a whole.<sup>7</sup>

According to the study, a 2011 survey of facilities found that Charlotte County had an existing capacity of 2,997 wet and dry slips in 21 marinas (including the 42 moorings at Laishley Park). This means that, assuming marina capacity remains constant, the projected demand for boat slips will exceed supply by as early as 2020. By 2050 demand for slips for active boaters (78% of total boaters) will exceed demand by 610 slips and by 1,627 slips for all boaters.<sup>8</sup> Even the estimated 200 slips to be provided at the Sunseeker Resort’s anticipated marina will not be enough to mitigate this deficit in wet and dry slips long term.

The FSG study also looked at saltwater boat ramp capacity. For the Lower Peace River Region, which includes Punta Gorda, there are a total of seven lanes: Spring Lake Park (1), Port Charlotte Beach Complex (2), Laishley Park (2), and Ponce de Leon Park (2). This region accounted for

7 Swett, Robert, et al. [https://www.flseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/tp186\\_charlotte\\_marine\\_access\\_study1.pdf](https://www.flseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/tp186_charlotte_marine_access_study1.pdf). pg. 10

8 Ibid., pg. 33

Table 5.3: Projected Residents & Non-Residents Using Saltwater Ramps Located in Charlotte County

Vessel Length Class (Feet)	Est. 2010	Proj. 2020	Proj. 2030	Proj. 2040	Proj. 2050
Less than 12'	937	1,090	1,123	1,206	1,290
12' < 16'	990	1,056	1,041	954	867
16' < 26'	3,953	4,799	5,278	5,487	5,697
26' < 40'	780	885	916	979	1,034
40' < 65'	114	126	127	135	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,810</b>	<b>7,956</b>	<b>8,485</b>	<b>8,760</b>	<b>9,031</b>

Source: Swett, Robert, et al. [https://www.flseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/tp186\\_charlotte\\_marine\\_access\\_study1.pdf](https://www.flseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/tp186_charlotte_marine_access_study1.pdf). pg. 38

an estimated 39% of the recorded boat trips using ramps in Charlotte County in 2010. Assuming it takes an average of 20 minutes to launch and

***Assuming marina capacity remains constant, the projected demand for boat slips will exceed supply by as early as 2020.***

retrieve boats, the demand for ramps in 2010 never exceeded capacity. However, assuming 30 to 40 minutes for boat launch/retrieval, demand exceeded supply on most weekend mornings.<sup>9</sup>

Looking out to future demand and capacity, the study found that, assuming an average launch/

9 Ibid., pg. 45

## V. The Big Ideas

### Waterfront & Boating

Table 5.4: Potential Mooring Field Sites in Charlotte County

Map Location	Seagrass Bed	OFW*	Aquatic Preserve	Class II Waters	Manatee Protection Zone	Small Tooth Sawfish Habitat	Nearest Marinas	No. of Amenities
A	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Isle Yacht Club	4
B**	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Fishermen's Village Yacht Basin	8
C	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Fishermen's Village Yacht Basin & Laishley Park	11
D	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Charlotte Harbor Yacht Club	5
E	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Charlotte Harbor Yacht Club & Seas Horse Marina	8
F	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Laishley Park	3
G	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Harbor at Lemon Bay & Englewood Bait House	9
H	Partially	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Englewood Bait House	4
I	Partially	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Stump Pass Marina	6
J	Partially	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Eldred's & Gasparilla Marinas	7

\*In OFW means in 'Outstanding Florida Waters'

\*\*Site B corresponds closely with the western mooring field location recommended by the Boater's Alliance and this Master Plan Source: Swett, Robert, et al. [https://www.flseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/tp186\\_charlotte\\_marine\\_access\\_study1.pdf](https://www.flseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/tp186_charlotte_marine_access_study1.pdf). pg. 82

retrieval time of 20 minutes, the Lower Peace River region will need an eighth ramp lane by 2020 and ninth lane by 2050. Assuming an average launch/retrieval time of 40 minutes, the same region will likely need an additional eight ramp lanes by 2020 and an additional ten ramp lanes by 2050.<sup>10</sup>

### FINDING SITES TO EXPAND BOATING FACILITIES

Having established the need to expand boating facilities, the Florida Sea Grant (FSG) study conducted an in depth assessment of potential sites for new saltwater access points (marinas and boat ramps) as well as new mooring field sites. Based on development criteria including water access, water depth, water service line availability, central sewer service availability, road access, vacant adjacent parcel (VAP), and acreage of VAP, as well as environmental criteria including aquatic preserves, bathymetry, central sewer



Manual boat launch ramp in Gilchrist Park, Punta Gorda

service, manatee protection areas, navigation channels, seagrass, sea level rise, wetlands, shellfish harvesting areas, and small tooth sawfish habitats, the study found 33 potential parcels to accommodate new saltwater access points.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Swett, Robert, et al. [https://www.flseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/tp186\\_charlotte\\_marine\\_access\\_study1.pdf](https://www.flseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/tp186_charlotte_marine_access_study1.pdf). pg. 47-48

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pg. 56-57, 75

All of the 33 parcels identified as possible future saltwater access points are located outside of Punta Gorda, in Port Charlotte and Gulf Cove.

A similar assessment was conducted to determine potential sites for new mooring fields in the County. This assessment first excluded any areas that were not feasible according to the analysis done in the Charlotte County Marine Regulatory Study (2011). With this framework the authors assessed regulatory and legal criteria including environmental characteristics, federally-restricted zones, and navigation channel rights-of-ways, among other things. The assessment found ten possible locations for new/expanded mooring fields. Of these ten, six sites are located within the Lower Peace River region (A-F) and four sites are located in Punta Gorda (A, B, C and F).<sup>12</sup>

The 2012 FSG study provides very valuable information for Punta Gorda to adequately plan for investments and partnerships that will help the City meet future boating demand. As mentioned in the study, the projections for boating demand through 2020 are reasonable, while projections beyond 2020 become less reliable. Already in 2020, though, the study shows a deficit in capacity for dry and wet boat slips in Charlotte County.

With the positive economic impact that the recreational boating industry brings, accommodating future demand of resident and visiting boaters should be a key part of the City and County's larger economic development strategy. While the study identified no practical locations for new saltwater marinas and boat ramps in the City of Punta Gorda, it did locate four new/expanded mooring sites there. The western mooring field recommended by the Boaters Alliance Harbor Master Plan (2018) and this Citywide Master Plan corresponds with site B in the FSG study.

## FLORIDA ANCHORAGE REGULATIONS

The balance between protecting natural resources, reducing public nuisance, and maintaining the

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., pg. 76-78, 83

economic viability of the multi-billion dollar boating industry has created two decades worth of contentious public debate in the state of Florida. With an increase in high-end waterfront homes and a number of damaging hurricanes, the question of anchorage and mooring rights has led lawmakers and code enforcers at the municipal and state level to test a number of solutions. This section provides a summary of these regulatory changes.

In 1959 the Florida Legislature passed Statute Chapter 371, later codified as Chapter 327 in



Laishlaey Municipal Marina, Punta Gorda

1981. This chapter was prompted by the Federal Boating Act of 1958, which required states to register all vessels. The legislature also added regulations to ensure boating and water safety.<sup>13</sup> The first regulation limiting anchorage was passed in 1963 as Fla. Stat. 327.44, which stated that anchoring under bridges or in heavily trafficked channels would constitute as interference.<sup>14</sup> From that moment until about 15 years ago, anchorage laws in Florida remained simple enough: any cruising boater could drop their anchors overnight in a secure spot sufficiently out-of-the-way of a mooring field or channel.

As local municipalities faced growing and legitimate pressure to resolve issues with improperly stored,

<sup>13</sup> King, Melanie, Tom Ankerson and Thomas Ruppert. "A Legislative History of Florida Statutes Chapter 327" (April 28, 2008), University of Florida College of Law, [https://www.law.ufl.edu/\\_pdf/academics/centers-clinics/clinics/conservation/resources/legislativehistory.pdf](https://www.law.ufl.edu/_pdf/academics/centers-clinics/clinics/conservation/resources/legislativehistory.pdf), pg. 5-6

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pg. 8

## V. The Big Ideas

### Waterfront & Boating

derelict, and abandoned boats, as well as complaints from waterfront homeowners about bad-behavior of nearby anchored boats, they began to exercise their right, pursuant Fla. Stat. Chapter 327, to pass local ordinances limiting anchorage. The result of this was a hodgepodge of regulations all along the coast of Florida, which greatly frustrated cruising boaters who found it impossible to keep up with where they were and weren't allowed to anchor.

These issues came to a head in 2006 when Miami Beach passed a local ordinance limiting boats to seven days at anchor. They were followed by Sarasota, Marco Island, and Fort Lauderdale, who passed similar regulations for boaters anchoring along their coast and waterways. With some boaters taking legal action and a number of boating advocacy groups contesting the increasing and piecemeal regulations, lawmakers in Tallahassee passed new statutes to Chapter 327 which limited local governments authority to regulate anchorage outside of marked mooring fields. The changes did allow local authorities, however, to enact and enforce regulations for floating structures and live aboard vessels, defined by new laws as vessels used solely as a residence and not for navigation.<sup>15</sup>

Looking to appease waterfront homeowners as well, the state legislature tasked the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), the state agency that regulates boating and waterways, and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to develop an Anchorage and Mooring Pilot Program. This program selected five locations around the state: St. Augustine, St. Petersburg, Sarasota, Monroe County in partnership with Marathon and Key West, and Martin County in partnership with Stuart. These local governments were exempt from the new regulatory limitations and tasked with testing new local policies to limit and manage anchorage outside of marked public mooring fields.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Lydecker, Ryck, "Will Florida Finally Settle Its Anchoring Issues?" *BoatUS Magazine* (November 2016), <https://www.boatus.com/magazine/2016/december/florida-anchoring-issues.asp>

<sup>16</sup> "Anchoring and Mooring Pilot Program: Report of Findings and Recommendations" (December 21, 2016), Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, <https://www.monroecounty->

### RECOMMENDATIONS FROM FWC ANCHORING & MOORING PILOT PROGRAM REPORT

- Protect the safety of mooring field users by establishing a 300 foot buffer beyond mooring field, within which anchoring is prohibited.
- Maintain the State's sole authority to regulate the anchoring of vessels on State waters outside of marked public mooring fields.
- Local governments should not be allowed to restrict all anchoring within the area authorized for them to regulate, and an exemption should be created to provide relief should mooring field capacity be met.
- If the State chooses to grant such authority to local governments, it should be granted to counties only.
- Document the economic and environmental benefits of mooring fields.
- Establish a statewide prohibition against allowing an anchored vessel to come within 150 feet of any marina, boat ramp or other vessel launching and loading facility, with some safe harbor exceptions, such as bad weather.
- Place a "hold" on titles of vessels deemed derelict when requested by law enforcement.
- Limit who may renew a vessel registration to only the owner(s) of record or a person in possession of a power of attorney from the owner.
- Increase penalties for repeat violations of expired vessel registrations.
- Waive the requirement for the owner of a derelict vessel to be notified via certified mail, if the owner has received face-to-face notification by a law enforcement officer.
- Add an "inoperability" condition for vessels to be designated at risk of becoming derelict, which for most vessels means they are not equipped with a functioning motor, controls, and steering system.
- Prohibit a vessel or floating structure from being moored to unauthorized moorings.

Source: "Anchoring and Mooring Pilot Program: Report of Findings and Recommendations", pg. 2-4

The goal of the pilot program, which lasted until January 2017, was to find which local regulations proved to be the most successful and adapt them as statewide regulations. Within that goal, the program looked to answer more specific questions including what the most reasonable anchorage setbacks should be from waterfront properties, launch areas, and sensitive marine habitats, as well as how to prevent anchored boats from falling into disrepair. The latter of these objectives led directly to the FWC's establishment of the At-Risk Vessel Program in 2010. An update to this program was later codified as Fla. Stat. 327.4107, taking effect in July of 2016.<sup>17</sup>

So where are we today? After July 1, 2017 the authority to regulate anchorage outside of public mooring fields that had been given to the five pilot locations expired. In May 2017, the State Legislature also adopted new laws as a part of Fla. Stat. Chapter 327, which were based closely on the results found in FWC's Anchoring and Mooring Pilot Program Report (December 21, 2016). These new laws effect boating anchorage until present day as follows:

- No anchorage or mooring within 150 feet of any marina, boat ramp, boat yard, or other vessel launching or loading facility
- No anchorage within 300 feet of a facility that services or repairs a yacht with a water line of 120 feet or more in length
- No anchorage within 100 feet from the marked boundary of a public mooring field, unless the owner or operator has a lawful right to do so by contractual agreement or other business arrangement
- No anchorage, mooring, tie, or other fastening of a vessel to an unpermitted,

unauthorized, or otherwise unlawful object that is on or affixed to the bottom of the waters of this state

- No anchorage or mooring of a vessel that is at risk of becoming derelict (taking on water with no means to dewater, spaces on vessel that are designed to be enclosed are incapable of being sealed, vessel has broken loose or is in danger of breaking loose from anchor, left aground, sunk or partially sunk)

The end of the FWC Anchorage and Mooring Pilot Program meant that no local governments could legally regulate anchorage outside of designated and marked public mooring fields, which is how it still stands today. There are, however, three exceptions worth noting. In 2016 representatives from Miami-Dade and Broward County were able to get a bill passed at the state level that banned overnight anchorage in Sunset Lake and Venetian Causeway in Miami Beach and in Middle River, Fort Lauderdale.

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[fl.gov/DocumentCenter/View/15885/Final-FWC-Pilot-Program-Report-and-Recommendations\\_Dec-21-2016](http://fl.gov/DocumentCenter/View/15885/Final-FWC-Pilot-Program-Report-and-Recommendations_Dec-21-2016), pg. 1-2

<sup>17</sup> "At Risk Vessels" Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Website, <https://myfwc.com/boating/waterway/derelict-vessels/at-risk-vessels/#targetText=A%20person%20who%20anchors%20or,punishable%20as%20provided%20in%20s>.

## V. The Big Ideas

### Waterfront & Boating

## MANAGED ANCHORAGE & MOORING FIELD (MAMF) - BEST PRACTICES

A well planned and executed Managed Anchorage and Mooring Field (MAMF) can be beneficial to residents, boaters and the local government by encouraging tourism and providing for the efficient use of waterfront resources to enhance public access to the marine environment.

A properly managed western mooring field in Punta Gorda will not only help to attract more visiting boaters, but it is also the best tool available for local governments to control anchorage. With a MAMF, the City of Punta Gorda would have the authority to limit the length of stay, collect transient, live-aboard and facilities fees, and prohibit nuisance activities such as rowdy conduct and hanging laundry for boaters mooring or anchored in the boundary of the MAMF. As mentioned in the previous section, a western mooring field would also prohibit free anchorage within 150 feet of the MAMF boundary.



Vero Beach Municipal Mooring Field

### VERO BEACH - MUNICIPAL MAMF

#### Vero Beach, Florida

The City of Vero Beach Mooring Field was established in 1988 and expanded in 1997. There are plans to expand the field even further north. They do not accept power vessels over 50 feet in length on a mooring because they create heavier wind loads in bad weather. In order to

accommodate more boaters during peak season they raft up to three boats per mooring, depending on the size and type of vessel.

#### Special Features:

- 57 Long-term & transient moorings
- Fees vary by length of stay: \$324 per month (long-term), plus \$48.70 per month live-aboard fee, and \$16.25 per day (transient)
- Fees support facilities including fueling and pump-out station (\$5 per use) and restrooms
- Employees include a harbormaster, assistant harbor master and part-time employees
- Harbormaster resides at the anchorage
- Established an advisory board to help manage anchorage
- Established an Enterprise Fund, which means that any money collected goes back to support the anchorage and harbor

### SARASOTA BAY - CONCESSION MAMF

#### Sarasota, Florida

In 2012, after more than three decades of negotiations, failed starts, and cost over-runs, the City of Sarasota, in partnership with the Marina Jacks group, opened the Sarasota Bay Mooring Field. Up until 2012 the free anchorage had been the source of many complaints and political debates. Community concerns about illegal dumping in the bay, derelict vessels, and shipwrecked boats after major storms finally led the city to take action to finance the \$1 million project, a portion of which was paid for with grant money.

#### Special Features:

- 85 permanent engineered moorings
- Designed for vessels up to 80 feet in length
- Full-time staff



Sarasota Bay Mooring Field and Marina Jacks Marina

- Fees depend on length of stay and vessel size: \$28 per day and between \$263-\$362 per month
- Included in fees are the engineered moorings, showers and restroom facilities, secured dinghy docks, potable water, complimentary Wi-Fi, complimentary pump-out service, and daily field monitoring
- Additional amenities include laundry access and garbage disposal
- A private marina, Marina Jacks, manages and operated the mooring field under concession from the City of Sarasota

## GRANT FINANCING OPTIONS

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has \$24.7 million in federal funds from fuel taxes to contribute through their Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) program for the sole purpose of expanding transient and recreational boating facilities in communities big and small across the country. The previous 2019 grant cycle saw \$20.6 million for 56 projects.

Additional grants may be available through the Florida, Boating Improvement Program (FBIP), the Derelict Vessel Removal Grant Program, and the Boating Safety and Education Program. For a complete list of boating-related grants, visit: <https://myfwc.com/boating/grants-programs/>

## TECHNICAL & LEGAL PROCESS TO ESTABLISH A MANAGED ANCHORAGE & MOORING FIELD

1. Confirm the ownership of submerged lands and relevant political jurisdiction
2. Review the local Comprehensive Plans to determine whether a MAMF is consistent
3. Collect permit application information, including: biological, navigational, water quality, and hydrology studies (may require a coastal engineering consultant)
4. Establish signage and permit requirements, including federal and state permits
5. Initiate drafting of the proposed ordinance
6. Select administration options, including: Government (municipal), Concession (agreement between local government and concessionaire), and Nonprofit Organization
7. Consult with resource agencies, including the FWS, FWC, and any others
8. Obtain authorizations, including: Submerged Lands Lease, Environmental Resource Permit (DEP), Boating restriction area (FWC), Obstructions to Navigation (Section 10, Rivers & Harbor Act USACOE), Special Anchorage Area Designation (U.S. Coast Guard)
9. Have the City consult with its own attorney
10. Prepare rules for boaters that would be appended to use agreement, including:
  - Compliance with U.S. Coast Guard regulations and safety standards
  - Vessel must be in good operational conditions, capable or maneuvering under its own power
  - Vessel must have current registration, acceptable documentation, and liability insurance coverage
  - Vessel must contain a U.S. Coast Guard approved marine sanitation device

Source: Staugler, Betty, Byron Flagg, Andy Stevens and Tom Ankerson, "A Guide for Local Communities that are Considering Creating a Managed Mooring Field" (2015), <https://data.charlottecountyfl.gov/Agenda/20150122/1.pdf>

## V. The Big Ideas

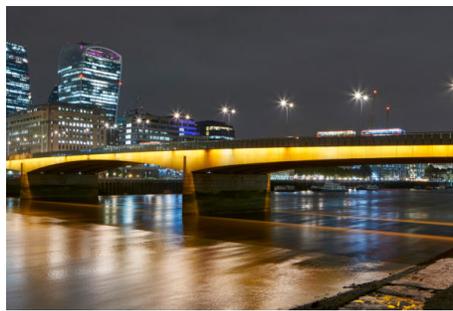
### Waterfront & Boating

## BRIDGE LIGHTS RENDERING – PHOTO SIMULATION

### It's a celebration!

As an enhancement to the city for locals and visitors alike, the US 41 bridge can incorporate decorative lighting that can be used on occasion, either for certain hours of the night or for special celebrations. Lighting options will be temporary and can be controlled for time and intensity, minimizing any potential effects on the marine life and the natural ecosystem.

Here, we show two possible lighting options that the bridge can have and can serve as a landmark, a point of interest or tourist attraction.



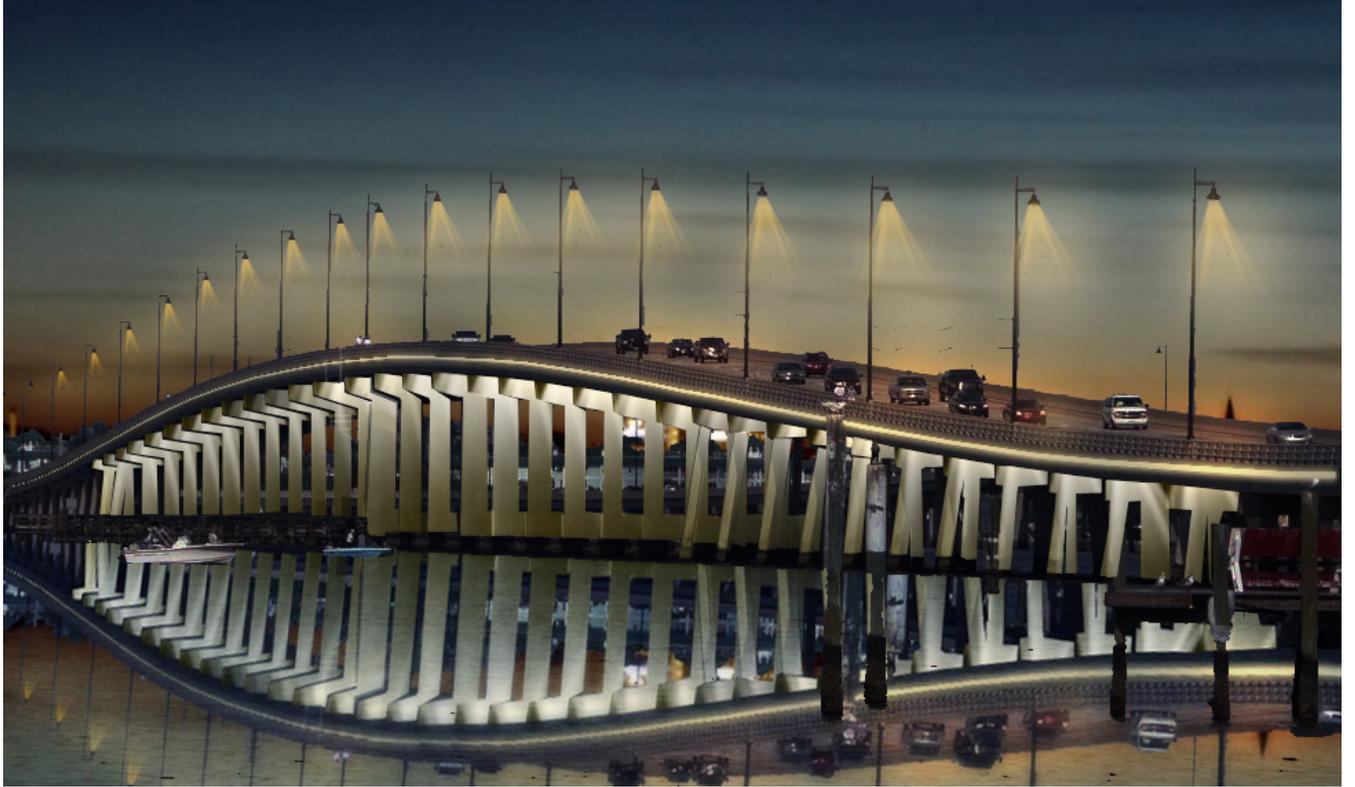
### London Bridge Gets an Artistic Makeover

Four of London's most iconic bridges are being lit up this year as part of an ambitious new art commission to illuminate the Thames River.

The artwork will be in place for ten years and lights will be turned off every night at 2am. The images on the right show two color options for the London Bridge designed by artist Leo Villareal.



Gilchrist Bridge Existing Daytime Conditions



Gilchrist Bridge Lit Up with Soft White/Amber LED Lighting



Gilchrist Bridge Lit Up with Rainbow LED Lighting for a Special Event

# Diversify Housing Types

***Central Idea:** New multi-family and compact residential development fills in the missing teeth around Punta Gorda, attracting young families and a wide variety of service workers and professionals all while promoting walkability and Bikeability.*



BIG CHALLENGES	KEY CITY INVESTMENTS & POLICIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little to no housing, particularly annual rentals, are being built in the downtown core</li> <li>• Lack of diverse and affordable housing options, including small rental apartments, cottages, townhomes, duplexes subsidized housing, and assisted and independent living developments</li> <li>• Retiree demand has long been driving up housing prices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively encourage the development of large opportunity sites downtown</li> <li>• Revise zoning and land-use regulations to allow for enough intensity and predictability to get realistic developments built and attract more residents</li> <li>• Ensure that residential density controls are calibrated to allow for missing middle housing types including townhouses, duplexes, fourplexes, cottage courts, and small apartment buildings</li> <li>• Consider the adoption of a development bonus program which grants additional development potential in exchange for community benefits, like affordable housing units</li> <li>• Support the creation of a community land trust to encourage affordable infill development</li> </ul>

## MULTI-GENERATIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD AT FISHERMEN'S VILLAGE



*See the full transformation on page 160.*

## V. The Big Ideas

### Diverse Housing Types

## EXISTING HOUSING TYPES

Housing stock in Punta Gorda is diverse in age, condition and occupancy. Significant portion of housing is seasonal occupied. Home ownership is comparatively high in Punta Gorda. After the Great Recession owner-occupied households now represent 82.6 percent of all Punta Gorda households. However, the home ownership among young households headed by an individual aged 24 to 34 is only 23 percent.



Source: Victor Dover, taken during Punta Gorda site tour



Source: <https://www.apartments.com/old-school-house-apts-punta-gorda-fl/n9ymqqm/>



Source: <https://www.gulfbreezeapts.net/>



Source: <http://www.theoaksonhenry.net/index.html>

### Single Family Detached House

The Punta Gorda housing stock is dominated by single-family detached homes (57.5 percent of all units in 2016). While single family housing should be remained as one of the major housing choices, single family zoning limits the supply and can drive up housing prices.

### Multi-family Building

Multifamily buildings have a less prominent presence in Punta Gorda. 9.4 percent were in duplexes, triplexes or quadplexes. Only 8.7 percent of units were in structures with 20 or more units.

### Affordable Housing

The Punta Gorda Housing Authority's (PGHA) public housing programs provides the federally subsidized rental properties to low-income families of Charlotte County. The PGHA manages 180 public housing apartments located in the City of Punta Gorda.

### Compact Villas

Compact villas are composed of small scale detached houses laid out in a compact manner. Recent development in Punta Gorda such as Taylor Row, also known as Henry St Villas is an example of this type of development.

## KEY FINDINGS ON HOUSING FROM THE ECONOMIC & FISCAL ANALYSIS REPORT

### Develop a Greater Variety of Housing Types

Development of new housing of different sizes at a range of rent and price levels would help diversify the city's housing stock, allowing more local employees to live in the city and reduce their commutes while providing a larger year-round population to support local businesses.

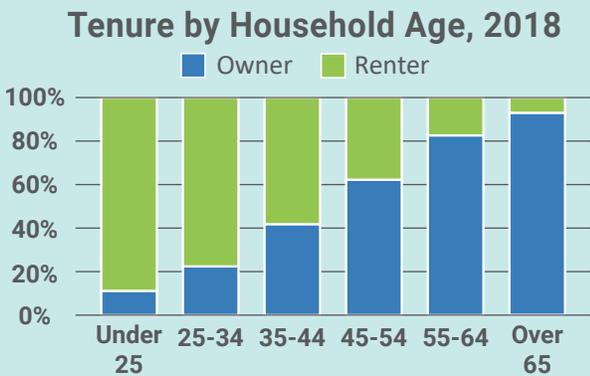
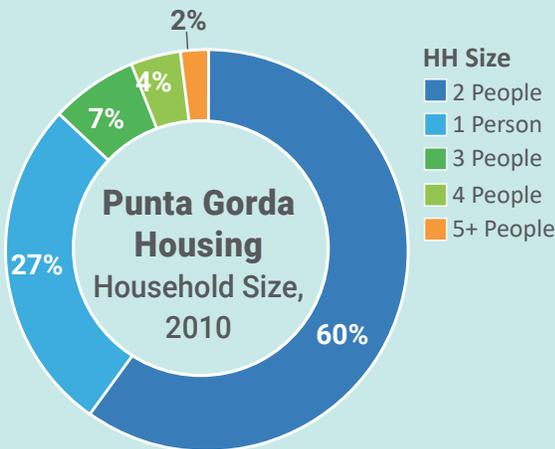
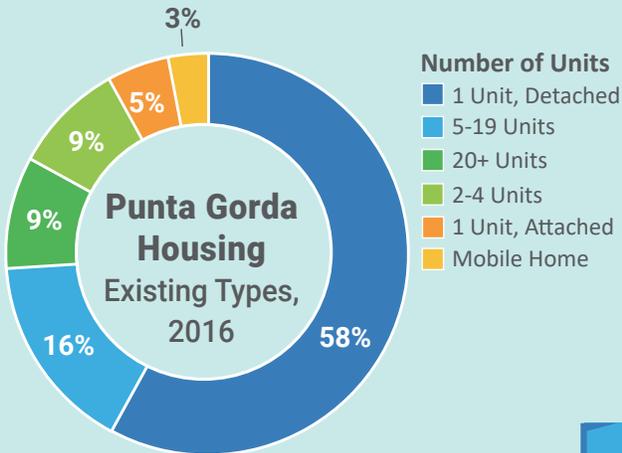
### Increase the Amount and Density of Multi-family Development

Increasing zoning limits from 15 units per acre would allow better use of the land and reduce the costs of building new housing.

### Build More Housing in and Near Downtown

The downtown businesses need more customers who can walk to the cafes, restaurants and stores, providing a more reliable source of demand.

# PUNTA GORDA HOUSING FACT SHEET



\*Data referenced from: <https://htaindex.cnt.org/fact-sheets/>

## HOUSING COST\*



**\$1,634**

AVERAGE MONTHLY HOUSING COST



**\$ 811**

MEDIAN GROSS MONTHLY RENT



**17%**

PERCENT RENTER OCCUPIED HOUSING

**68%**  
HOUSING +  
TRANSPORTATION  
COST % OF INCOME\*

US Dep. of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) defines a household as "cost burdened" whenever the it spends more than 30 percent of its gross income on total housing costs.

## TRANSPORTATION COST\*



**\$11,550**

ANNUAL TRANSPORTATION COSTS



**1.62**

AUTOS PER HOUSEHOLD



**19,447**

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED (VMT)

## GENERATIONAL BREAKDOWN



**GEN Z**

Born 1995-2015

Age 4-24



**MILLENNIAL**

Born 1980-1994

Age 25-39



**GEN X**

Born 1965-1979

Age 40-54



**BABY BOOMER**

Born 1944-1964

Age 55-75

Illustration source: <https://www.kasasa.com/articles/generations/gen-x-gen-y-gen-z>

Figure 5.6: Housing fact sheet

## V. The Big Ideas

### Diverse Housing Types

## “MISSING MIDDLE” HOUSING



Illustration © 2015 Opticos Design, Inc.

There is a growing demand for alternative housing types and walkable neighborhoods throughout the United States. The term “Missing Middle” was conceived by Daniel Parolek of Opticos Design, Inc. to define a range of multi-unit or clustered housing types compatible in scale with single-family homes that help meet the growing demand for walkable urban living, often lacking in conventional suburban subdivisions. The following missing middle housing characteristics are excerpted from [missingmiddlehousing.com](http://missingmiddlehousing.com):

“House-scale buildings with multiple units in walkable neighborhoods.”

**Walkable Context:** Missing Middle housing types are best located in a walkable context. Buyers and renters of these housing types are often trading square footage for proximity to services and amenities.

**Small-Footprint Buildings:** These housing types typically have small- to medium-sized footprints, similar to nearby single-family homes. This allows a range of Missing Middle types with varying densities to blend into a neighborhood.

**Lower Perceived Density:** Due to the small footprint of the building types and the fact that they are usually mixed with a variety of building types within the neighborhood, the perceived density of these types is usually quite low. But, the actual measured densities can meet established thresholds for supporting transit and neighborhood-serving main streets.

**Fewer Off-street Parking Spaces:** A balance must be sought between providing necessary car storage, and the expense and impact on community design of too much parking. Since they are built in walkable neighborhoods with proximity to transportation options and commercial amenities, Missing Middle housing types typically do not provide more than one parking space per unit.

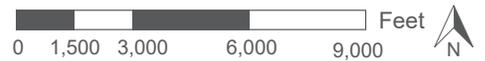
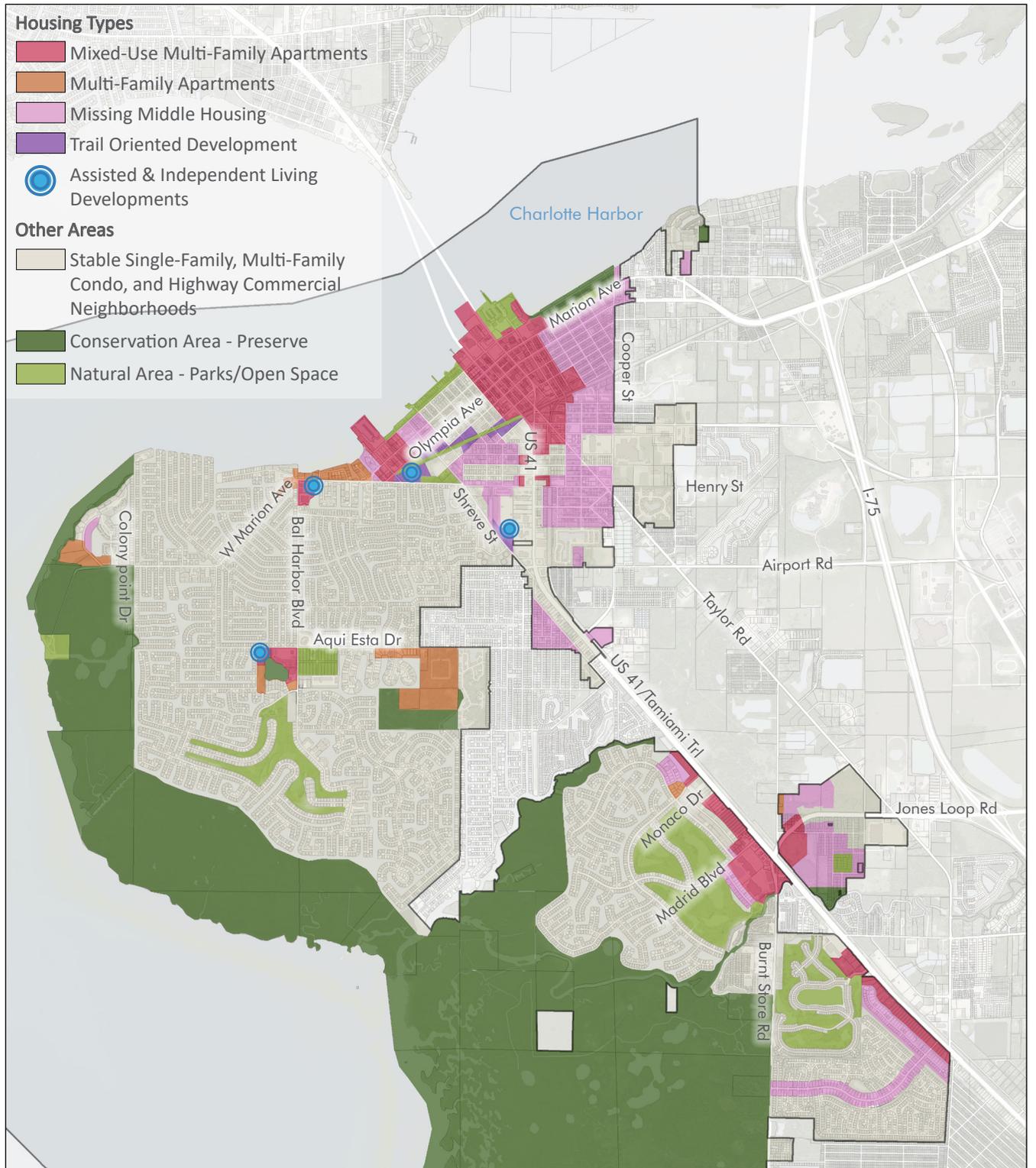
**Smaller, Well-Designed Units:** Most Missing Middle housing types have smaller unit sizes, which can help developers keep their costs down and attract a different market of buyers and renters, who do not have such options in many communities.

**Simple Construction:** Missing Middle housing types can be simply constructed, which makes them an attractive alternative for developers to achieve good densities without the added financing challenges and risk of more complex construction types. This aspect can also increase affordability when units are sold or rented.

**Creates Community:** Missing Middle housing creates community through the integration of shared community spaces within the building type (for example, bungalow courts), or simply from being located within a vibrant neighborhood with places to eat and socialize.

**Marketable:** Because of the increasing demand from baby boomers and millennials, as well as shifting household demographics, the market is demanding more vibrant, sustainable, walkable places to live. Missing Middle housing types respond directly to this demand.

Figure 5.7: Diverse Housing Development Opportunity Areas Map



## V. The Big Ideas

### Diverse Housing Types

## NEW HOUSING TYPES

Future housing in Punta Gorda should prioritize infill locations, capitalizing on existing infrastructure to reduce suburban sprawl, offering smaller, less costly homes, and taking advantage of affordable housing incentives to maximize development potential. According to the Economic and Fiscal Analysis projections, 35 percent of new homes should be built as multi-family rental homes to better accommodate the local workforce. Broadening the mix of housing options to include more multi-family and rental homes will not only attract and allow more workers to live in Punta Gorda, shortening commute times, but it will also generate more tax revenue per acre for the city.

“New housing types can fit seamlessly into low-rise neighborhoods and support walkability.”



### Townhomes

A small-sized to medium-sized structure, typically consisting of two to eight attached single-family homes placed side by side. Homes are typically accessed by car through a rear alley.



### Duplex

Small to medium sized structure that consists of two attached homes, with both entries facing the street.



### Fourplex (Quadplex)

A medium sized structure that consists of four attached homes: typically two on the ground floor and two above with one shared entry.



### Cottage courts

Cottage courts consist of a series of small detached homes facing onto a shared court rather than a series of private yards. The court is typically oriented perpendicular to the main street front.



### Compact villas

Compact villas are a type of development that arranges small footprint and typically taller homes in a compact form with an alley or shared court access. These developments feature both attached and detached home variations.



### Small scale apartments

A medium structure that consists of 5 to 10 side by side or stacked apartments, usually with one shared entry. Buildings sometimes wrap around a small court.

## NEW DEVELOPMENT TYPES

### Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND)

TND is a type of development that creates a complete neighborhood using traditional town planning principles centered on walkability, vibrant public spaces and mixed-use developments. TND provides a variety of housing types allowing people with different ages and incomes to live in the same neighborhood.



#### Case Study: Baldwin Park, FL

Baldwin Park is a large mixed-use TND. It is located within the city of Orlando, 2 miles east of downtown. Car traffic is kept slow through narrow streets and parallel parking and dispersed into a well-connected grid of streets. Land uses are flexible not segregated. Daily amenities such as a grocery store are within walking distance.

### Trail Oriented Development

Bike trails, bike lanes, bike-share systems, and other forms of active transportation infrastructure are helping spur a new generation of “trail-oriented development”. The development is characterized by compact, mixed-use, residential, and commercial development. The trend reflects people’s desire to live in places with diverse choices of safe, convenient, and affordable transportation.



#### Case Study: West Orange Trail, FL

Trail-oriented development can occur in small towns such as Winter Garden, Florida. The picture shows development along West Orange Trail, 22-mile multi-use suburban trail, in Winter Garden. The trail has created a destination for visitors and residents and ignite redevelopment.

### Assisted living

The Assisted Living Federation of America (ALFA) defines such a residence as a combination of housing, personalized supportive services, and health care designed to meet the residents’ needs daily living activities such as getting dressed, bathing and medications.



#### Case Study: Brightview Catonsville, MD

Brightview of Catonsville assisted living is a 90 bed, middle-income assisted living facility located in a western suburb of Baltimore. The project reserved much of the wooded site and the facility’s design reflects the architectural character of the site’s historic structures.

### Independent living

Independent living communities are for seniors who are comfortable taking care of themselves. The community offer help with some daily activities but overall the residents were living independently in their home. Senior living facilities often provided both assisted living and independent living in one development offering different level of care.



#### Case Study: Baldwin Park, FL

Westminster, a senior living apartment provides an active and integrated living experience. The community is located within Baldwin Park. The residents can enjoy the amenities and services in Baldwin Park such as dining, shopping, art galleries, and medical care within walking distance.

## V. The Big Ideas

### Diverse Housing Types

## POSSIBLE HOUSING CONFIGURATIONS

The following configurations shows how density could be increased while retaining a relatively small scale neighborhood character.



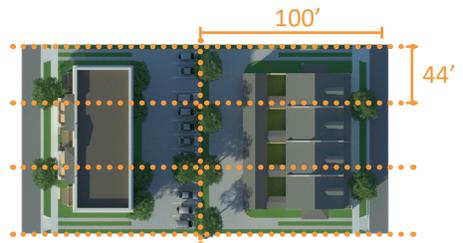
### Larger Building Footprint

**House Types:**

Small apartment, Townhouse

**Total Units: 16**

**Density: 26 homes/acre**



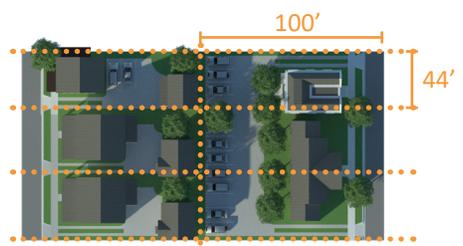
### Medium Building Footprint

**House Types:**

Duplex with ADU, Live-work with ADU, Small apartments

**Total Units: 14**

**Density: 23 homes/acre**



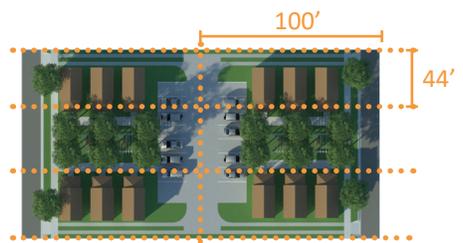
### Smaller Building Footprint

**House Types:**

Cottage court

**Total Units: 12**

**Density: 20 homes/acre**



## ENCOURAGE MORE HOMES PER ACRE WITH POLICY

Zoning ordinance plays an important role in increasing residential density, or the allowable number of homes per acre, in town development. Attracting quality development consists of streamlining and expediting the approval process for developments that meet city housing goals. Financing, partnerships and shared equity models also facilitate higher density development. The matrix below outlines some policies that encourage density.

ZONING & PLANNING		FINANCING	PARTNERSHIPS	SHARED EQUITY
State Override of Local Zoning	Density Bonuses (Height / FAR)	Assessment Districts (BID or TRID)	Annually track Progress and Assess Goals	Public Lands for Housing
Rezoning Res-1 Districts to Allow 2 Units	Micro-Units and Design Incentives	Vacancy Tax on Vacant Homes	Public-Private Partnerships	Community Land Trust
Parking Reductions	Allow Accessory Dwelling Units	Reduce taxes on new affordable housing	Funding for Infrastructure & Open Space	Housing Cooperatives
Townhome Exemption Standards	Reduce Minimum Lot Size	Wealth Building Home Loans	Land Control & Equity	Rental Equity
Transparent Approval process		CDFI Program	Joint Development	Shared Equity Ownership

# Fully Embrace Walking and Biking

*Central Idea: Investments in expanded and upgraded transportation facilities that make walking and biking safe, convenient, and attractive, while also spurring private investment in key growth areas.*



BIG CHALLENGES	KEY CITY INVESTMENTS & POLICIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People with little or no experience who perceive biking as a dangerous activity</li> <li>• Gaps in the trail network means that people riding bikes must sometimes take less safe routes on high speed thoroughfares to connect</li> <li>• High vehicle speeds on US 41 north and south bound, and the lack of high visibility crosswalks make it less comfortable to walk and bike downtown</li> <li>• Lack of shade trees, particularly in suburban and highway commercial areas, make it less comfortable to walk and bike in Punta Gorda</li> <li>• Narrow suburban streets without paved shoulders and with drainage swales on either side make it difficult to construct new bike facilities along them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise regulations to enact the Complete Streets Resolution adopted in 2013 to guide street design in the future</li> <li>• Approve and construct a low-stress minimum grid network of trails and bicycle facilities and study the long-term construction of a complete bicycle vision network as recommended in this section of the master plan</li> <li>• Work with FDOT to adopt the City’s recommended Context Classification Map (Figure 5.8)</li> <li>• Reduce car speeds Downtown and improve circulation by restoring Marion &amp; Olympia Ave to two-way traffic and by implementing road diets for US 41 Downtown and Marion &amp; Olympia between US 41 N and Cooper St</li> </ul>

**SEPARATED BICYCLE TRACK ON A REDUCED, TWO-WAY MARION AVE**



*See the full transformation on page 155.*

## V. The Big Ideas

### Walkability & Bikeability

## FRAMEWORK FOR DESIGNING STREETS THAT ACCOMMODATE EVERYONE

The ability to bike and walk safely in Punta Gorda is a clear priority to residents, business owners, and stakeholders. The public participation process revealed that access to multi-use trails is a major draw for visitors and residents and that there are several gaps in the existing network that should be addressed to improve safety and ensure that people of all ages and abilities are able to benefit from bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the city.

### Context Sensitive Street Design

A new way to ensure that streets, including County and State roads, enhance the character of the community and support biking and walking in desired neighborhoods, is to have the Florida Department of Transportation to adopt a Context Classification Map (Figure 5.8). The map to the right displays the City’s recommended classification areas.

The function of context-based design is to balance the multiple and sometimes competing demands placed on streets. Context describes the physical form and characteristics of a place, interpreted on a block-by-block basis. What happens within the bounds of the right-of-way should largely be determined by the setting of private development laying outside of the right-of-way lines. The Future Character Areas Map (Figure 4.1), in conjunction with the Context Classification Map (Figure 5.8), provides a vision for what each area of the city should be like in the future in terms of development patterns, land uses and street types.

These maps inform which places are intended to be walkable urban, and which to be drivable-suburban. The design of streets should thus reflect the Future

Character Area in which it is located. In those areas that are envisioned as walkable urban places, streets should prioritize pedestrians and bicyclists. In those areas envisioned as drivable suburban, streets should be designed for all users, although an emphasis may be placed on the motorist.

To achieve the City’s multiple goals of vibrant nodes of commercial and community, revitalization, and walkability, the City will need to adopt new street standards with the following features:

- Lower target speed;
- Shorter curb radii;
- On-street parking; and,
- Narrower travel lane widths.

Arterial roads should become urban main streets as they enter urban areas or neighborhood centers. High-speed roads should transform to low-speed designs in traditional neighborhoods to slow traffic to pedestrian-friendly speeds of 20 miles per hour or less.

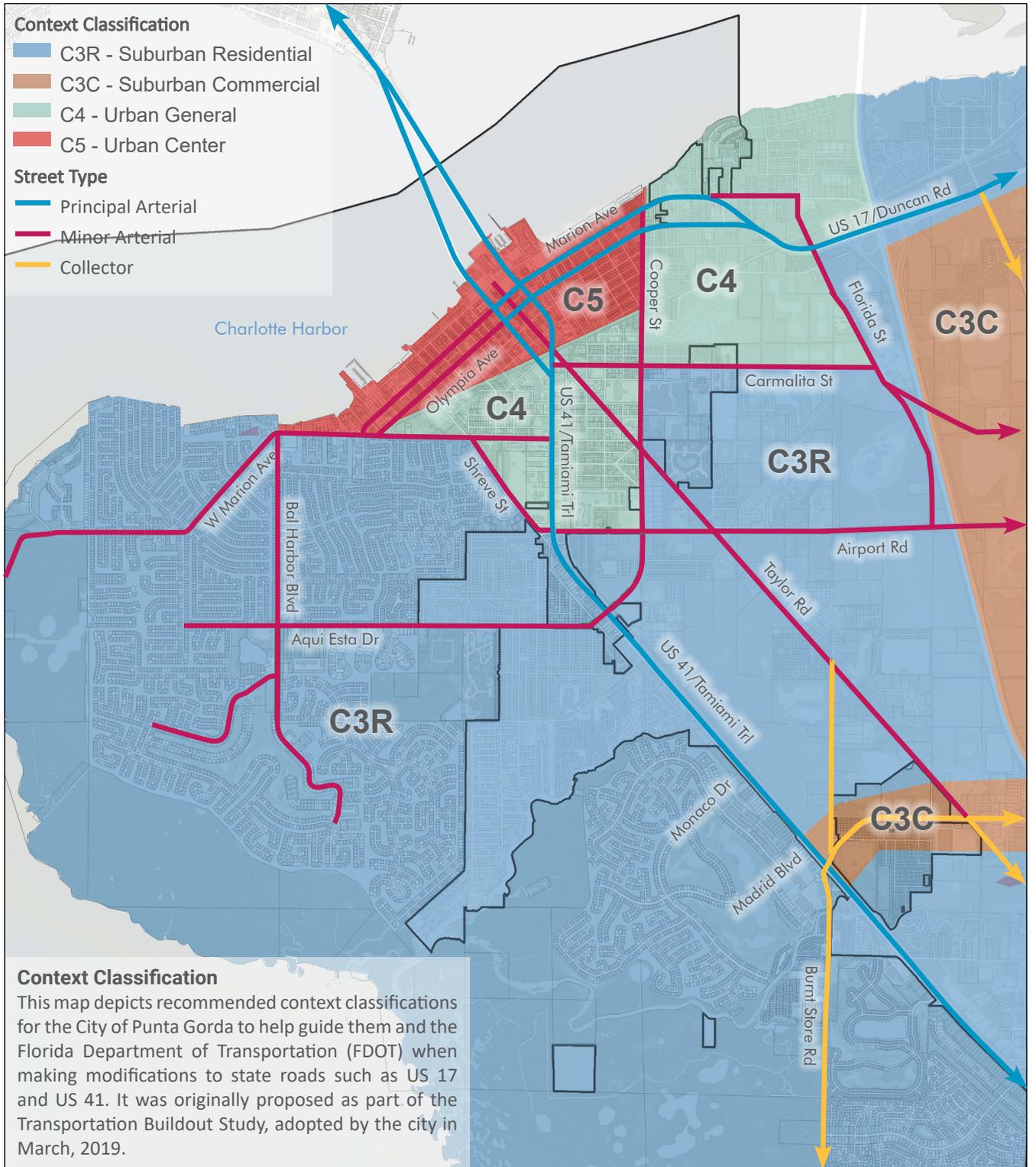
Widening roads to accommodate through-traffic decreases local livability and should be avoided. New road capacity created through widening is quickly absorbed by drivers who previously avoided the congested road. This is known as “induced traffic” and explains the failure of newer, wider roads to reduce traffic congestion. Every increase in roadway capacity leads to increases in vehicle miles travelled. To reduce congestion, public transit, bikeways, sidewalks and mixed-use zoning and land use patterns that allow people to walk between destinations rather than drive should be explored.

Table 5.5: Context Classification Area Characteristics

Context Classification	Speed Range (Arterials & Collector)	Minimum Lane Widths (ft)	Sidewalk Width (ft)	Minimum Tree Spacing
C3 - Suburban	30-45 mph	10' (25-35 mph), 11' (40-45 mph)	6'	24'-40'
C4 - Urban General	25-35 mph	10' (25-35 mph)	10'	25'-30'
C5 - Urban Center	25-30 mph	10' (25-35 mph)	12'	25'

Data for this table comes from the FDOT Design Manual, Topic #625-000-002

Figure 5.8: Recommended FDOT Context Classification Map



## STRATEGIES TO EXPAND WALKABILITY

Towns and cities throughout the country are in the process of restoring old neighborhoods and creating new neighborhoods that are both walkable and accessible. Strategies that make Punta Gorda easier to navigate on foot or by bicycle, will also make the city more livable and attractive. Most transportation corridors should be more than just roadways for cars. Corridors can be designed and classified to reflect a balance between many modes of transportation and the surrounding land uses.

This is particularly the case for smaller cities where many destinations are within walking and biking distance of residential areas, but poor or incomplete pedestrian and bicycling facilities make it uncomfortable or dangerous for people to choose those options for getting around.

### Block Size & Grid Patterns

With respect to street design, walkable communities are best supported by street grids where the block length is 300 to 400 feet. Much of the existing Downtown Historic District, generally the older parts of Punta Gorda, meet or come close to this ideal condition, with typical blocks measuring about 220 by 450 feet. In the newer suburban parts of the city, such as PGI and BSI, the traditional street grid takes up a tree-like configuration with most streets and lots branching off of just a few main roads. While these areas have maximized canal access for boaters, this has resulted in longer distances for people walking or biking. The addition of a few key pedestrian bridges in these areas could improve connectivity, so long as they do not interfere with the passage of boats.

### Complete Streets

“Complete Streets” is a concept for streets designed to enable safe access and mobility for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Where gaps in the bicycle and pedestrian networks exist, effective and safe circulation is hindered. In key locations, including downtown and neighborhood centers, schools, and parks, a well-connected network is especially important. While the City of Punta Gorda passed a Complete Streets Resolution in 2013, it should move to adopt policies and

standards to implement that resolution. Streets within the Downtown and Traditional Future Character Areas, as well as Neighborhood Centers, should be prioritized for complete streets treatments.

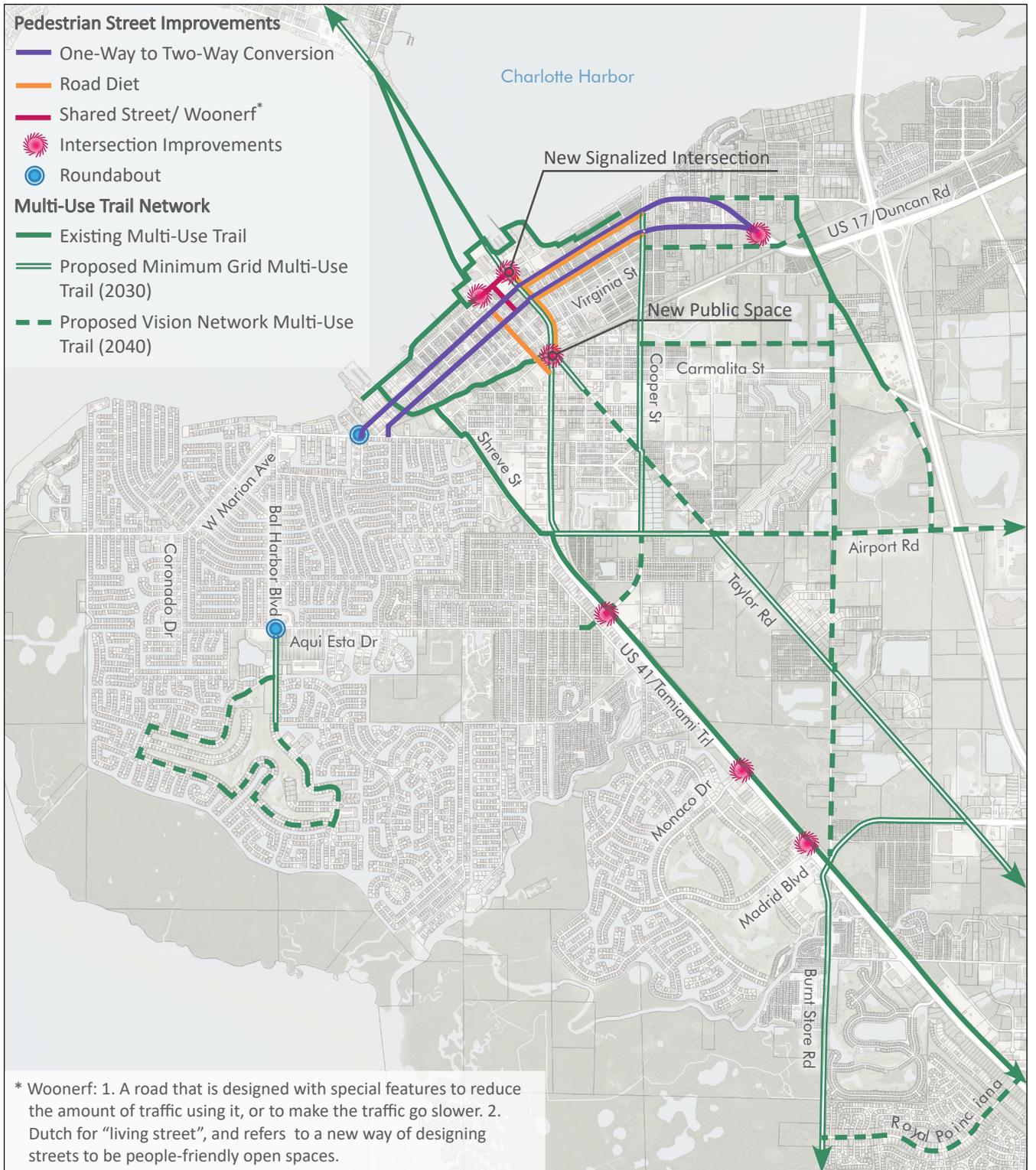
### Right-Sizing

One technique for creating Complete Streets is implementing road diets, or right-sizing streets to balance the amount of road space for all people (pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and drivers). In the compact urban context, slow moving vehicles and shared space guides street design. In suburban settings, with higher vehicle speeds, design relies more on signal timing and separate dedicated spaces to dictate how people move through and use the roadway. When there are desired context changes, as have been suggested in the Context Classification Map (Figure 5.8), these changes should be documented as justification for right-sizing existing roads. Road diets based on economic revival, like the revitalization of East Downtown Punta Gorda, have the greatest chance of success.

The Recommended Pedestrian Improvements Map (Figure 5.9) to the right shows four recommended road diets for Downtown Punta Gorda. E Marion Ave and E Olympia Ave between Cooper St and US 41 Northbound are reduced to two lanes, one in each direction, in order to slow down cars coming into downtown and accommodate a separated bike facility, westbound on Marion Ave and eastbound on Olympia Ave.

US 41 N from Carmalita to the bridge, and US 41 S from Marion Ave to Carmalita are also reduced to two-lanes. Because both bridges are currently two-lanes, maintaining that number of lanes through Downtown will discourage dangerous speeding from cars coming off Gilchrist Bridge or entering onto Barron Collier Bridge. Traffic counts support the reduction along this corridor, except between Marion Ave and Retta Esplanade; due mostly to the fact that there is only one way in and out of Downtown. By restoring Marion and Olympia to two-way movement, traffic will be better dispersed throughout the Downtown to help mitigate any potential congestion.

Figure 5.9: Recommended Pedestrian Improvements Map



\* Woonerf: 1. A road that is designed with special features to reduce the amount of traffic using it, or to make the traffic go slower. 2. Dutch for "living street", and refers to a new way of designing streets to be people-friendly open spaces.



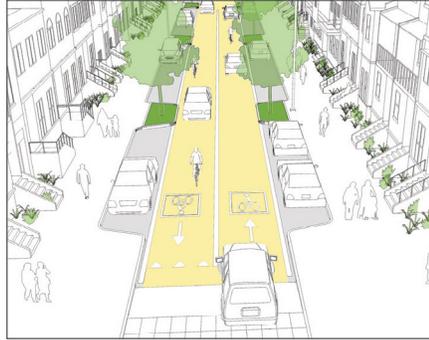
## V. The Big Ideas

### Walkability & Bikeability

Graphics from [globaldesigningcities.org](http://globaldesigningcities.org)



1. Trees and Street-Oriented Buildings



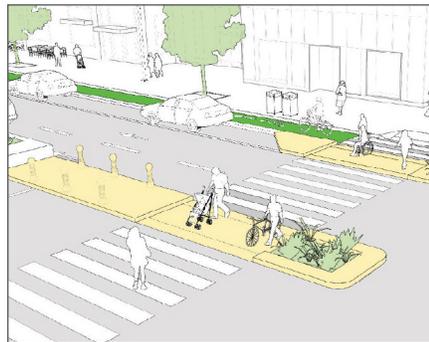
2. Two-Way Street, Narrowed Lanes



3. Shared Street Design



4. Reduced Turning Radius



5. Pedestrian Refuges



6. Pinchpoints & Mid-Block Crossings



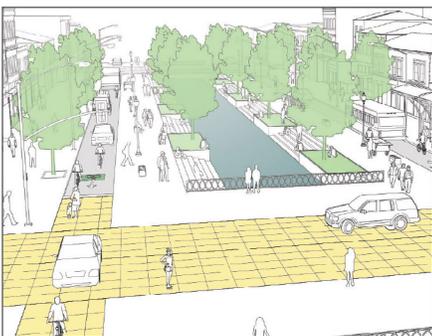
7. Speed Hump & Speed Cushions



8. Speed Tables/Elevated Crosswalks



9. Mini Roundabouts



10. Pavement Materials & Appearance

### TEN TOOLS FOR TRAFFIC CALMING

In areas of the city where we want people walking, biking, eating, and interacting safely, these ten street design tools can be used to reduce car speeds and increase both driver and pedestrian awareness. These tools can be broken into two main buckets: design intent and design additions. Design intent describes how the street looks and feels. Are there active storefronts with on-street parking and shade trees? Do I have to slow down to make a right turn? Is there rough pavement? The second set of tools are elements that are typically added as a low-cost solution for dangerous streets, such as speed bumps, mini roundabouts, and pedestrian refuges.

Current best practices, which are shaping local ordinances throughout the country, include the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) and the Congress for the New Urbanism/Institute of Transportation Engineers Manual (CNU/ITE Manual). These references recommend adjustments to street dimensions that are required for a road diet (e.g. narrowed lane widths and parking space dimensions, wider sidewalks, minimum size of bike lanes, etc.). On existing four-lane streets with less than 25,000 (ADT), transportation experts around the country are recommending road diets as a priority.

Benefits of road diets include:

- Overall crash reduction of 19 to 47 percent;
- Reduction of rear-end and left-turn crashes through the use of a dedicated left-turn lane;
- Fewer lanes for pedestrians to cross and an opportunity to install pedestrian refuge islands;
- The opportunity to install bike facilities when the cross-section width is reallocated;
- Reduced right-angle crashes as side street motorists must cross only two lanes of traffic instead of three;
- Traffic calming and reduced speed differential, which can decrease the number of crashes and reduce the severity of crashes if they occur;
- The opportunity to allocate the extra roadway width for other purposes, such as on-street parking, landscaping, street trees, and bike or pedestrian enhancements;
- Complete Streets environment with places for people, not only cars;
- Simplifying road scanning and gap selection for motorists (especially older and younger drivers), making left turns from or onto the mainline.



Road Diet, part of the Indianapolis Cultural Trail, Indiana

## Speed Management

Another important aspect of walkability and public safety involves reduced traffic speeds and the use of traffic calming devices. The speed of vehicles is a critical component to pedestrian safety and comfort. A pedestrian involved in a collision with a vehicle has a 95 percent chance of survival if the car is traveling at 20 miles per hour; there is a 10 percent chance of pedestrian survival if the car is traveling at 40 miles per hour. Pedestrian-friendly speeds are typically 20-25 miles per hour, and are no more than 30 miles per hour.

Furthermore, many of the key design criteria for streets that are safe and comfortable for pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as for streets that are beautiful, such as lane widths, tree placement and curb radii, are dimensions stipulated in the design manuals as factors of speed. With slower speeds, acceptable lane widths decrease and the space between street tree and curb is reduced. Designing for slower speeds is critical for creating streets that actually encourage motorists to travel at lower speeds rather than relying on signage and posted speed limits alone. The geometry of the street has a much greater affect on motorist behavior.

## Sidewalks

For walking to become a regular, acceptable and dignified means of transportation in Punta Gorda, the City should embark on a process of adding sidewalks where they are currently missing. A comprehensive sidewalk plan should be implemented which prioritizes sidewalk investments and ensures those investments result in a connected network. Emphasis should be placed on connecting Neighborhood Centers and Crossroads to their surrounding communities, especially along routes used by the estimated 4,000 kids and teens studying in Punta Gorda, and along corridors with both high pedestrian and high automobile demand.

Sidewalks must also be comfortable places. In south Florida's hot and humid climate, shade is needed to make walking an inviting means of getting around. Sidewalks should be lined with street trees that have shade-providing canopies. Street trees should be planted between the sidewalk and edge of pavement to provide a buffer between cars and pedestrians.

## V. The Big Ideas

### Walkability & Bikeability

## ONE-WAY TO TWO-WAY CONVERSIONS

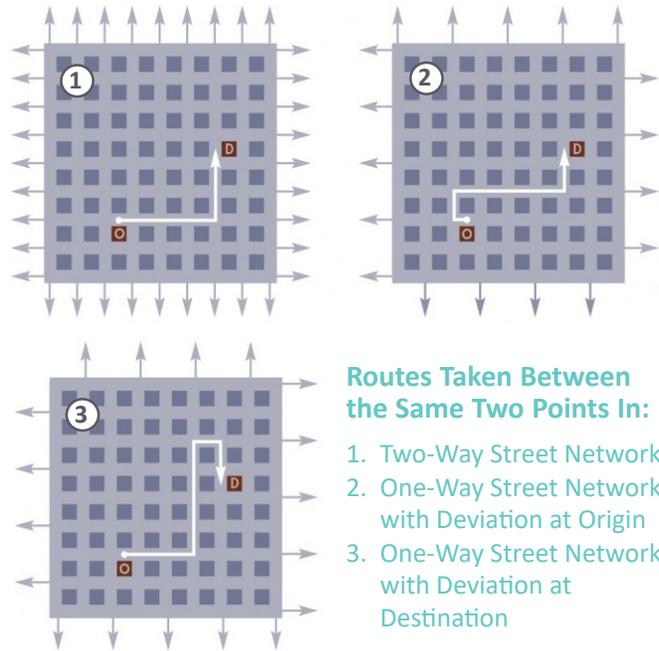
Cities around the country are eagerly embracing what is known as the Vision Zero plan for safety-focused streets. According to the National Complete Streets Coalition, more than 47,500 people in the U.S. died while walking on the street, from 2003 and 2012. With increasing public pressure, politicians have started to take action to rethink the design of their cities to save lives. In addition to right-sizing roads, another important design consideration is restoring one-way streets back to two-way movement.

### Traffic and Accessibility

Two-way streets provide a more direct connection when traveling from origin to destination. Direct connections therefore result in a reduction in vehicle miles travelled (VMT), which has compounding impacts on environmental sustainability, community health, and traffic efficiency. The increase in the miles traveled and increased congestion results in an increase in the expenditure of fossil fuels and an overall decrease in quality of life. Any increase in time spent in motor vehicles also increases the chance of an accident. Safety issues are further compounded by higher peak period speeds on one-way streets. Two-way streets are a traffic calming method that have proven effective in reducing speeds and overall travel times.

### Economic Activity

High vehicle speeds typical on multi-lane, one-way streets like US 41, Marion Ave, and Olympia Ave result in uncomfortable walking environment which can also effect economic activity in downtown areas. Two-way streets are because they naturally reduce vehicle speeds, increase driver and pedestrian awareness, and increase traffic signaling. This serves local businesses who rely on foot traffic from onlookers and visitors who would have otherwise been put off by the confusion of one-way connections. A one-way network can actually prevent people, particularly visitors and tourists unfamiliar with the local streets, from reaching their destination in the most logical and efficient way possible. Two-way streets conversions can help revitalize commercial areas by encouraging slower circulation through those areas instead of a rapid pass through.



### Routes Taken Between the Same Two Points In:

1. Two-Way Street Network
2. One-Way Street Network with Deviation at Origin
3. One-Way Street Network with Deviation at Destination

Figure Source: accessmagazine.org



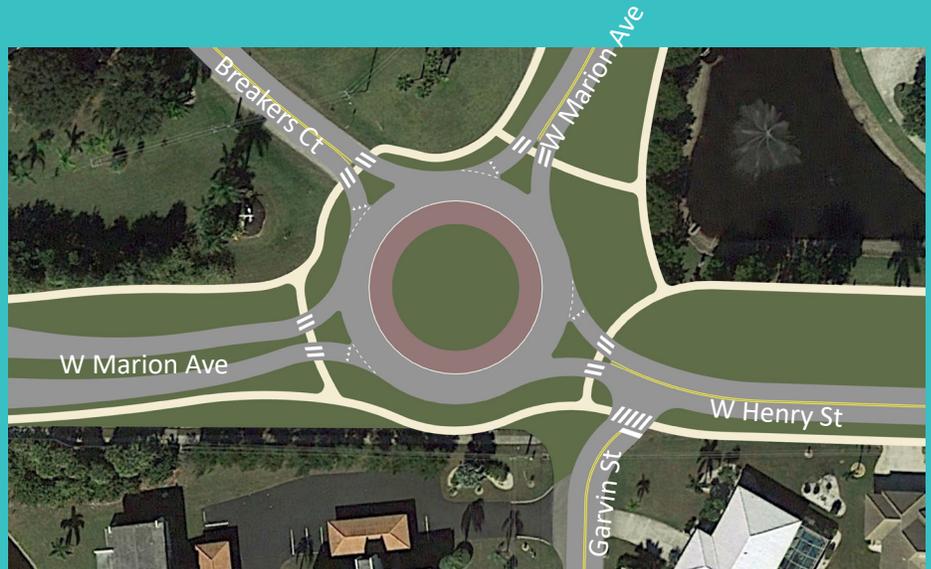
Driver going in the wrong direction on US 41 / Tamiami Trl Northbound.

## TRANSITIONING SEAMLESSLY FROM ONE-WAY TO TWO-WAY TRAVEL

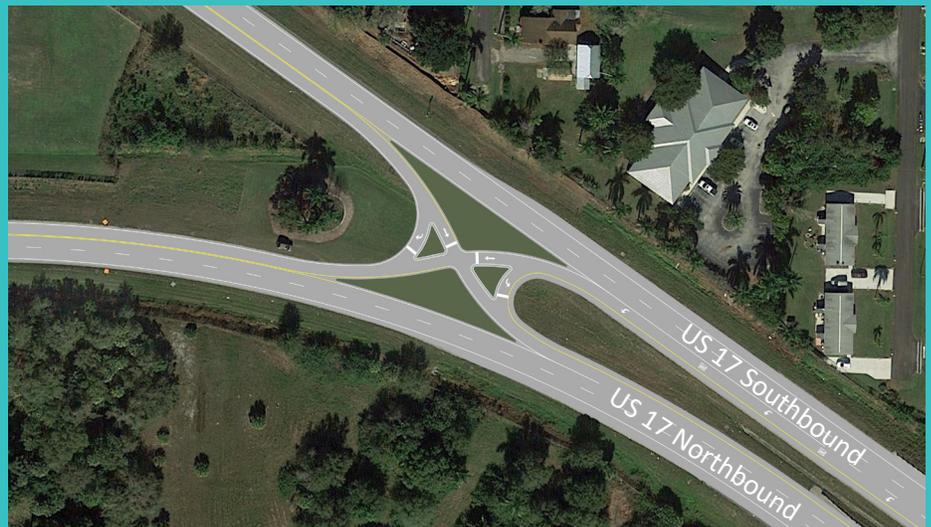
### Implementing One-Way to Two-Way Conversions on Marion and Olympia Ave

Though the restoration of both Marion and Olympia to two-way traffic is simple to accomplish given the available right-of-way for each street, the question of how these streets transition at either end, on W Henry St and at US 17, is more complex.

The following plan illustrations display the two different strategies for safely and efficiently transitioning both Marion and Olympia at each end. A roundabout terminates Marion at W Henry St, slowing down cars as they reach or come off the bridge to PGI without stopping traffic altogether. At the eastern both Marion and Olympia drop their relevant contra flow lanes with a left- or right-turn only lanes. This new intersection can either have a signalized intersection or a four way stop sign with a stop warning light.



At the western end where W Marion Ave meets W Henry St a single-lane roundabout can accommodate the additional movements introduced with two-way travel on W Marion Ave.



At the eastern end a simple signalized crossing transitions between two-way and one-way travel prior to the US 17 bridge over the railroad.

## V. The Big Ideas

### Walkability & Bikeability

## PUNTA GORDA BIKING CULTURE

Bicycling has become increasingly popular in Punta Gorda, attracting both visitors and new residents in the process. With a Free Loaner Bike Program run by TEAM Punta Gorda, popular multi-use pathways including the Harborwalk, Linear Park, and US 41 (SUN Trail) Pathway, and an additional four on-street shared routes ranging from 17 to 30 miles long, it is no surprise that people have chosen to explore the city on two wheels.

While hot and humid weather may deter some from using bicycles in the summer, planting shade trees along key bikeways will go along way to getting more people outside year-round. To continue the growth of “bicycle culture” in Punta Gorda, it is also

important to address safety for riders of all-abilities and continue filling in gaps in the existing bicycle and trail network. Riding a bicycle or crossing a street should not require bravery. Separated, buffered bike facilities, improved intersections, secure bicycle parking, and ADA compliant sidewalks are all ways to address these common concerns.

### Four Guideposts for Bikeability

1. Reallocate pavement from motorized vehicles to reduce traffic speed
2. Add protected bike lanes
3. Expand regional bike share
4. Introduction of covered bike parking



People Biking in the Laishley Park Marina



Person Biking Along Punta Gorda's Linear Park

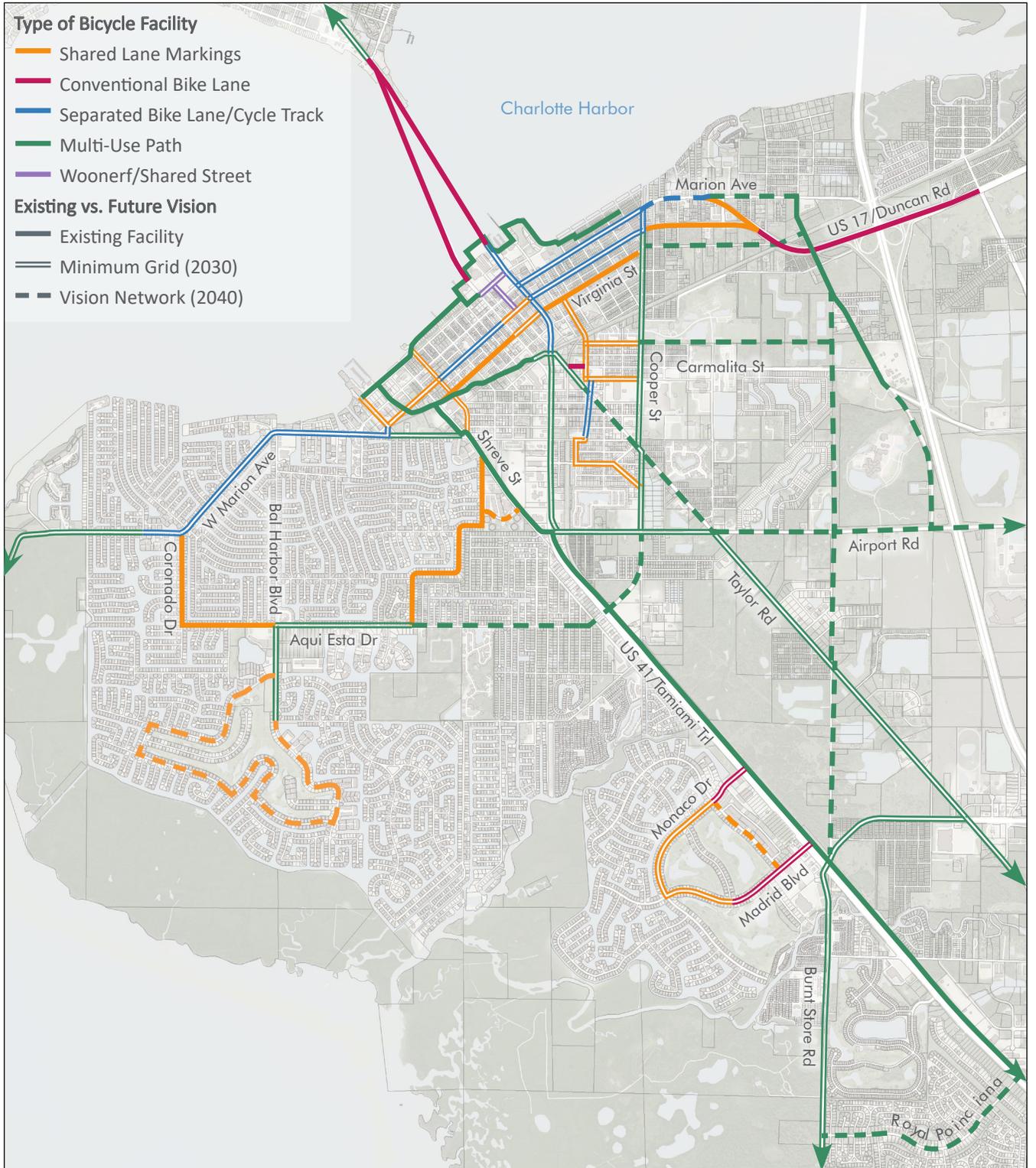
## Expanding and Enhancing the Network

Designing and implementing a bikeway network that is appropriate for the surrounding context should be strongly correlated to land use characteristics and to the desired development or preservation goals for each neighborhood in Punta Gorda as outlined by the Future Character Areas (Figure 4.1). The proposed network should be further fine-tuned at the scale of the block. This can occur through a Bicycle Master Plan that incorporates existing Punta Gorda multi-use trails, proposed bikeways and the latest advancements in bicycle planning.

As planning for trails and pathways continues, alternate routes may be easier to implement or may better meet the needs and concerns of the community. The Recommended Bicycle Network Map (Figure 5.10) on the right recommends a minimum grid and vision bicycle network, based on previous city and county transportation studies and on recommendations established in the Citywide Master Plan.

In addition to a bikeway network, numerous design countermeasures may be applied to streets to increase the visibility and safety of existing and proposed bikeways. These include bicycle boxes, bicycle detection and signal heads, wayfinding and informational signs, bicycle refuge islands, and ongoing bicycle safety campaigns.

Figure 5.10: Recommended Bicycle Network Map



## RECOMMENDED BICYCLE FACILITIES



### Shared Lane Markings

Shared routes are typically located in compact or urban areas, at the center of a neighborhood, town, or city. They are often marked with a sharrow, a marking indicating that the travel lane is to be shared by cars and bikes.

Shared routes work best on streets with low design speeds, where car traffic moves slowly and parallel parking lines each side of the street. Travel lanes are typically narrow in this setting (10 feet) and street trees help provide a sense of enclosure. Cyclists and pedestrians have the priority while motorists are also permitted to travel.



### Bike Lanes

A typical bike lane is a portion of the roadway which has been set aside for the exclusive or preferential use of cyclists. It is usually designated by adding a stripe, signage, and pavement markings. Bike lanes allow cyclists to ride at their own speed without interfering with motorists.

Conventional bike lanes run along the curb sides of the roadway, or adjacent to parked cars when on-street parking is present. Cyclists usually travel in the same direction as traffic. These unprotected bike lanes work best on streets where the posted speed is less than 35 mph and should ideally be 6 feet in width, although 5 feet is also possible.



### Buffered Bike Lanes

Like typical bike lanes, buffered bike lanes run along the curbs of the roadway or adjacent to on-street parking. However, they offer additional protection from moving traffic in the form of a buffer space between the edge of the bike lane and the edge of the vehicular travel lane. Adding a buffer encourages more cyclists to use the facility.

If the buffer is 3 feet or wider the interior should have diagonal cross hatching or chevron markings. Narrower buffers can be marked with two solid white lines, which also helps discourage crossing. Buffered bike lanes are strongly preferred to typical bike lanes in areas with greater traffic volume and higher travel speeds.



### Separated or Raised Bike Lanes

Raised cycle tracks are bike facilities that are vertically separated from the roadway. Sometimes they occur at the plane of the sidewalk, often with a furnishing zone or planting strip between the cycle track and the roadway, and sometimes they are placed at an intermediate height between the road and the sidewalk. At intersections they may be dropped and merged with the street or continue on the sidewalk, where they cross with pedestrians.

Raised cycle tracks are more attractive to a wider variety of cyclists and work best along higher speed streets with few driveways and interruptions.



### Two-Way Cycle Track

Two-way cycle tracks are physically separated cycle tracks that allow bicycle travel in both directions on one side of the road. They can be designed as a protected cycle track, at the street level with a parking lane or other barriers between bikes and vehicles, or as a raised cycle track with the track separated vertically from the roadway.

The benefits of a two-way cycle track are that they are attractive to a wide range of cyclists, they reduce the risk and fear of collisions, they allow for contra-flow bike travel on one-way streets, and they can have lower implementation costs. They work best on streets with fewer driveways and cross-streets on one side.



### Shared-Use Path

Shared-use paths are a type of trail designed to provide off-road routes for many different users including cyclists, runners, pedestrians, and manual or motorized wheelchair users. While similar to other recreational trails, these paths are part of a larger transportation system and serve as a supplement to on-street bike lanes, shared roads, and paved shoulders.



### Trail

A trail is a path designed for outdoor recreational use instead of mobility. Since they are not configured with transportation in mind, they are not usually adjacent to any roadway and they do not connect elements, spaces, or facilities within a site. They are mostly built for pedestrians and others to experience the outdoors and to provide a healthier lifestyle for community members.

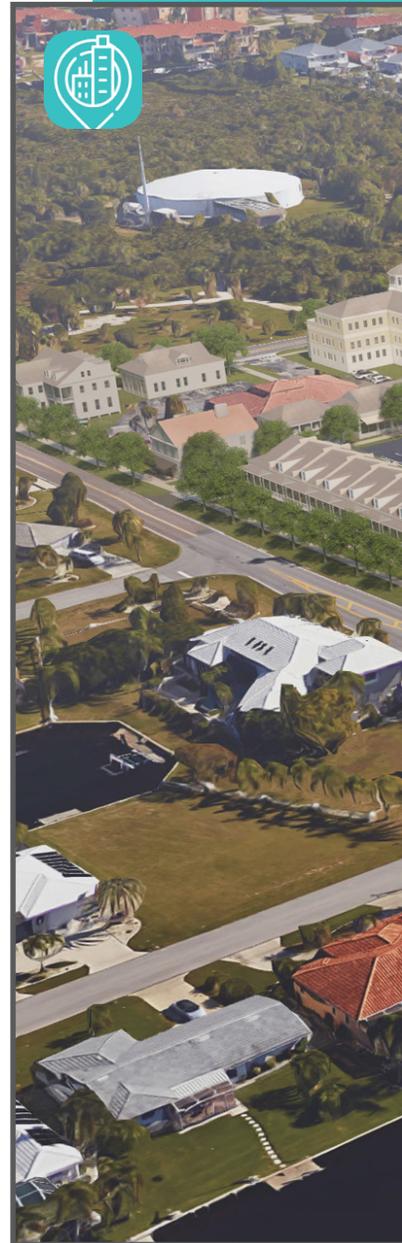


### Woonerfs and Shared Streets

A Woonerf or bicycle street, is a concept made popular in The Netherlands. It is a street where bikes, pedestrians, and cars coexist, but that are designed first and foremost with bicycles and pedestrians in mind. While cars can pass through, they do so with the feeling that they are entering a different kind of public space, one where they must slow down and be attentive to other users. This kind of street design can be applied on Taylor St between Marion Ave and Harborside Ave, which the plan envisions as a shared festival street.

# Encourage Strategic Commercial Development

***Central Idea:** Commercial development incentives and revised zoning and land-use regulations, as well as marketing and economic development efforts, attract new businesses to come to Punta Gorda, helping to balance the City’s tax base and diversify its residents.*



BIG CHALLENGES	KEY CITY INVESTMENTS & POLICIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited supply of Class A office space</li> <li>• Limited availability of leasable commercial space means prospective small business owners and large employers must build their spaces from scratch or look somewhere else</li> <li>• Low rents make commercial development projects more difficult to pencil</li> <li>• Highly seasonal nature of Punta Gorda makes it difficult for businesses to thrive and grow</li> <li>• Small amount of city revenues coming from limited commercial properties means residents must carry the tax burden themselves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively encourage the development of large opportunity sites downtown</li> <li>• Revise zoning and land-use regulations to allow for enough intensity and predictability to get realistic developments built and attract more residents</li> <li>• Incentivize the construction of commercial projects by providing additional development potential and expedited review for developments that adhere to the master plan’s principles</li> <li>• Work closely with Charlotte County Economic Development to attract more small and mid-sized PDR (Production, Distribution, &amp; Repairs) and health-related businesses</li> </ul>

## NEW PUNTA GORDA ISLES NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER



*See the full transformation on page 180.*

## V. The Big Ideas

### Strategic Commercial Infill

## STRATEGIC INFILL DEVELOPMENT

Attracting commercial growth in Punta Gorda has been a challenge since Hurricane Charley in 2004, but filling in the empty parcels around the city with new commercial development will not only help to balance the tax base, but it will also help to diversify the population and create more jobs. Potential actions to encourage strategic commercial infill include:

- Set tiered impact fees and adopt flexible codes
- Reduce any regulatory barriers to building viable commercial and mixed-use projects
- Offer height and density bonuses for commercial infill projects
- Identify and partner with key anchor institutions
- Create a local developer capacity building program
- Enact a targeted property tax rebate program for commercial infill projects
- Create a business improvement district and encourage community development corporations
- Implement a land banking program
- Adopt a land value tax, discouraging people from sitting on land



### Waterfront Entertainment, Dining, & Boutique Retail

These uses center on creating authentic experiences for locals and visitors alike and includes everything from art galleries, to restaurants, to bookshops, to boat tours.



### Neighborhood Serving Commercial & Boutique Office

Occurring mostly in neighborhood centers and TNDs, these areas cater to local residents and include spaces for small professional offices, pharmacies, cafes, athletic studios, corner stores, etc.



### Class A Office & Mixed-Use Commercial

Class A office refers to larger footprint office spaces that may or may not be provided in a mixed-use building. These should be focused in South Downtown and along Jones Loop Road.



### Medical Office

Medical office sites are located around in the medical overlay district and feature opportunities for health related or hospital-serving businesses.



### Creative Office, Artisan, & Light Manufacturing

Clustering together light manufacturing and creative uses, including maker spaces, artist studios, auto repair, etc., can create a thriving commercial district.

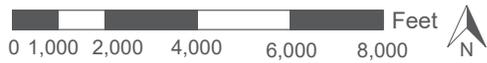
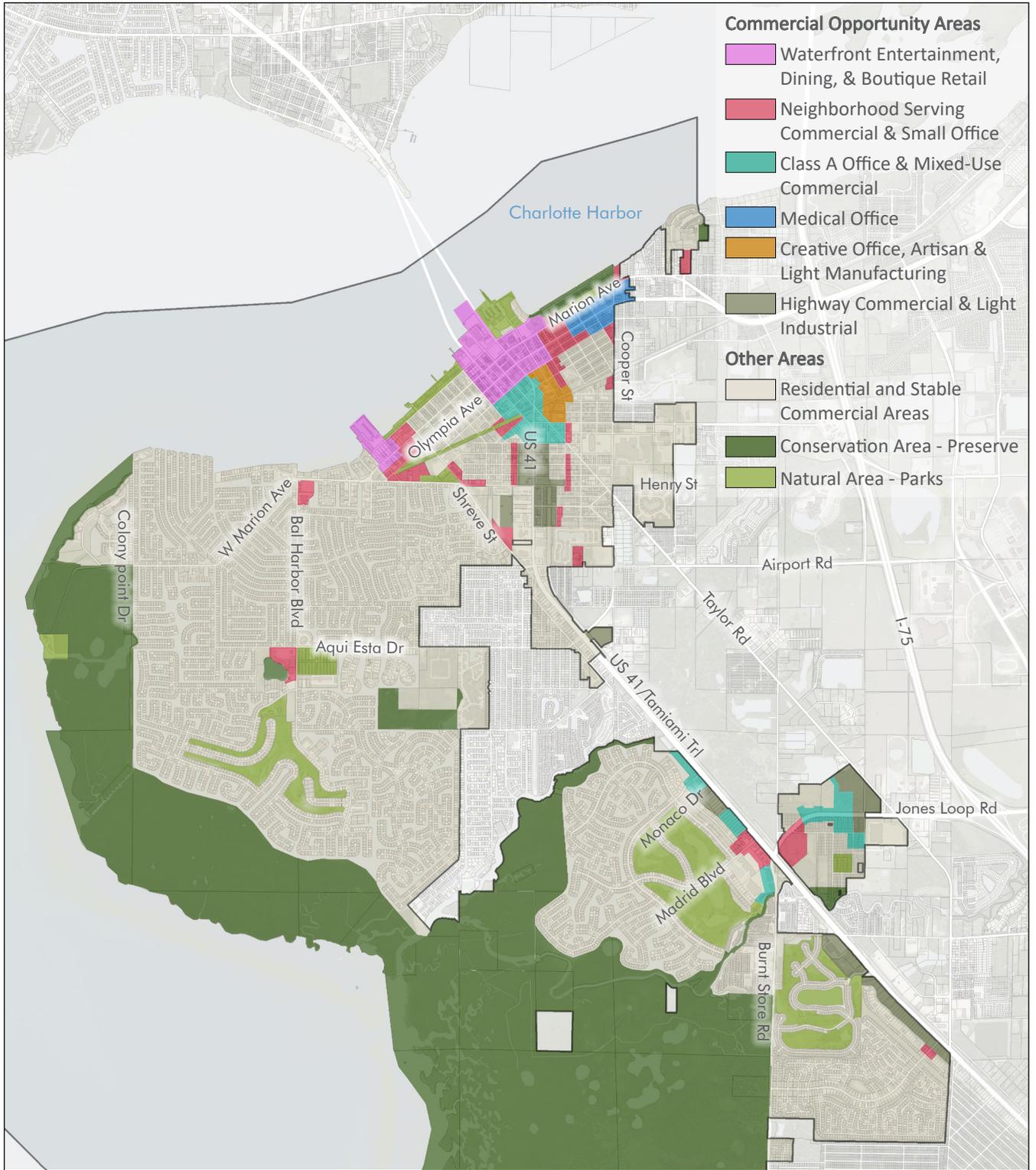


### Highway/Strip Commercial & Light Industrial

These areas are centered entirely along major thoroughfares and feature both typical drive-to commercial uses and more street-oriented mixed-used projects.

“We need growth with high paying jobs around the airport and I-75, more infill of local business downtown, and the development of city marketplace.”

Figure 5.11: Strategic Commercial Development Opportunity Areas Map



## MARKET DEMAND FOR NEW COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

According to the Economic Development and Budgetary Analysis (May 2019), which included a model projection of future development given current trends and planned development in the region, the market in Punta Gorda could support anywhere from 150,000 to 250,000 square feet of new office and 100,000 to 150,000 square feet of retail space by 2030. At the same time, the housing market could support anywhere from 580 to 930 single-family detached and attached houses, 320 to 420 new multifamily rental homes, and 300 to 750 new condominium apartment homes by 2030.



Herald Court Centre; Photo credit: City of Punta Gorda

These market projections reflect historic development trends, the area's limited labor force, the economy's seasonality, the extent of new competition (e.g., Sunseeker Resort) and the city's reputation as anti-development. The emphasis on additional residential development responds to the limited supply of housing for the workforce employed in the city and the importance of walk-in customers for downtown businesses. One of the strengths of mixed-use development is the potential to attract more customers from nearby housing on a more frequent basis.

### Fiscal Impact of Projected Development

The projected development would not improve the overall balance between the residential and nonresidential property tax rolls. If Punta Gorda grows and develops as projected, the residential share of total taxable value would increase from 88.7 percent in 2018 to 89.0 percent by 2030. If commercial development were to be blocked, the shift would be more severe

with the residential share of taxable value growing as high as 96.7 percent by 2030.

Commercial development projections are closely related to the job market. While the previous pages in this section recommended policies to incentivize more commercial development, the success of these strategies is limited by what the realistic demand for office/commercial space is in Punta Gorda today and what it will likely be in the future. One solution is to continue working with the County's Economic Development Department and outside partners to attract more businesses to the city. Improving the overall quality of life for residents with better parks, more mobility options, high quality schools, and diverse and affordable housing options also helps to attract more businesses and professionals to the area. Another possible solution is to annex areas that are already predominately commercial, such as the area by the Airport. This strategy, however, could come at a high cost to the City, as described more in the section below.

### Is Annexation the Solution?

Throughout the planning process, a number of citizens expressed the opinion that the only way to meaningfully improve the 89/11 tax split in Punta Gorda is by developing more commercial properties and annexing areas just outside of the city limits, where some amount of commercial and industrial development is already happening. Given the aforementioned market cap on the amount of commercial development that is reasonably expected in Punta Gorda, the question of annexation becomes even more important.

The Economic Development and Budgetary Analysis (May 2019) studied the fiscal impacts of annexing new areas into the city. While Partners for Economic Solutions did not calculate how annexation could impact the 89/11 tax split specifically, they did include estimates of existing development and projected development for the annexation areas. Table 4 in their report shows that in all of the annexation areas combined there is currently 4,499 residential units (not including 3,807 mobile homes), 326,910 square feet of

## STEPS FOR PREPARING A SMART GROWTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Many small and mid-sized American towns that have historically depended on a single or limited economic sector, such as manufacturing, agriculture, or even tourism, now find themselves on unstable economic footing. Rather than just recruiting major employers to replace lost jobs, a smart growth economic development strategy uses place-based tools to create new jobs and build long-term value. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed the following approach to economic development for small towns:

- Identify and build on existing assets
- Engage all members of the community to plan for the future
- Take advantage of outside funding
- Create incentives for redevelopment and encourage investment in the community
- Encourage cooperation within the community and across the region
- Support a clean and healthy environment

office, 401,344 square feet of retail, and 1.5 million square feet of industrial space.

Projections for 2030 include anywhere from 740 to 1,220 residential units and 245,000 to 430,000 square feet of commercial/industrial development. Combined, the annexation areas do have a higher ratio of existing and potential commercial development relative to residential when compared to City of Punta today and in the future.

While annexation could, therefore, help to improve the current tax split, it also comes at a high cost to the City. As described in the Budgetary Analysis Table 5—which looks at annual expenditures, revenues, and required initial capital investments for each annexation area—many of the areas will generate net revenue losses to the City on an annual basis. This is especially true of commercial-heavy areas, including the airport, Taylor Rd, and US 17 East.

Combined, these three areas would result in a net revenue loss of \$1 million annually and would require \$6.4 million in initial capital investments. Based on the findings described in the Economic Development and Budgetary Analysis, it will be up to City Council to weigh the costs and benefits of annexation and decide whether or not to prioritize balancing the tax base through annexation, even if it represents an overall loss in net revenues to the City.



Punta Gorda Airport (currently outside of City limits); Photo credit: Charlotte Sun

## VI. Key Focus Areas

### Introduction





## KEY FOCUS AREAS

# 6.

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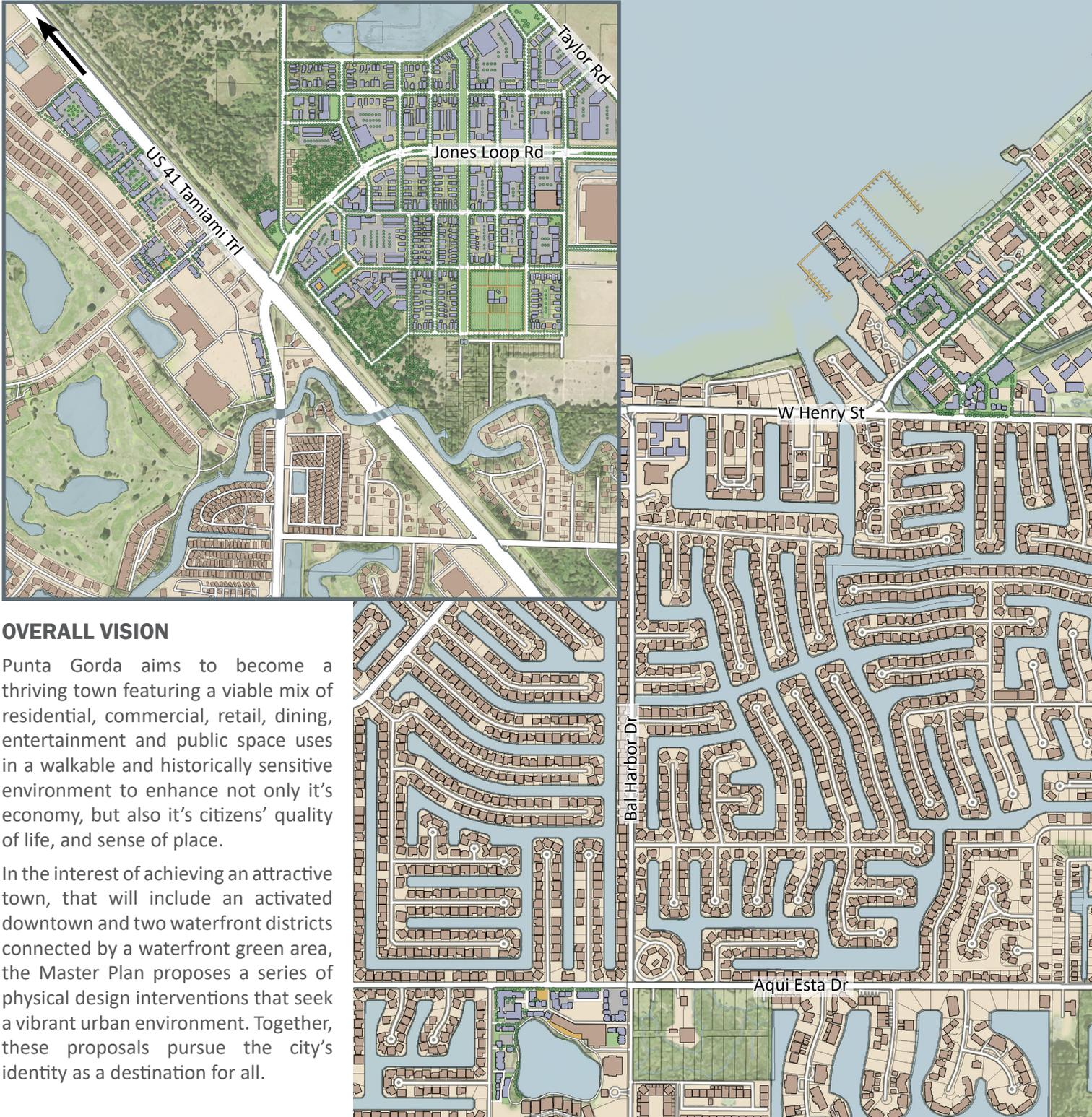
*This chapter looks at the overall vision for Punta Gorda and then zooms in to take a closer look at design recommendations for the Plan's key focus areas for growth and change. These are the areas where both public and private investment should focus on for the next 10-20 years.*

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## VI. Key Focus Areas

Overall Vision

### ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN



#### OVERALL VISION

Punta Gorda aims to become a thriving town featuring a viable mix of residential, commercial, retail, dining, entertainment and public space uses in a walkable and historically sensitive environment to enhance not only its economy, but also its citizens' quality of life, and sense of place.

In the interest of achieving an attractive town, that will include an activated downtown and two waterfront districts connected by a waterfront green area, the Master Plan proposes a series of physical design interventions that seek a vibrant urban environment. Together, these proposals pursue the city's identity as a destination for all.



Figure 6.1: General Illustrative Plan

## VI. Key Focus Areas

### Downtown Core

## DOWNTOWN CORE

The Master Plan assesses infill development-related issues in potential sites, evaluates the lack of overall leasable commercial space and provides focused solutions for development of businesses, housing and mixed-uses that will attract a diverse range of people to live and visit.

At the center of the downtown is the City Market Place. It includes a public square that is surrounded by pedestrian-oriented retail and commercial uses, such as restaurants with outdoor seating. The public square becomes the focal point of downtown, accommodating public events that draw both locals and visitors.

The two-block area of the City Market Place is extended north along Taylor St to the new Four Points Sheraton expansion area and the waterfront. The buildings within the new Market Place are developed in a traditional mixed-use setting with taller first-story retail and mixed-uses along the street in buildings with large display windows, awnings, and activated facades, with the intention of attracting more people to live in the Downtown.

This, and the inclusion of street trees along the sidewalk, also improves the character of the main pair of street corridors comprised of Marion and Olympia Avenues.

Pedestrian-oriented uses planned for Downtown can act as regional draws that will help assure a year-long activation of the streets in the area. Ground floor uses include retail, restaurant, and pedestrian-oriented commercial. Marion St is re-envisioned with mixed-use and retail buildings of comparable scale to the existing and historic buildings along the street. Also, wider sidewalks and narrower curb-to-curb distance

accommodate the expected flow of automobile traffic, while assuring an enjoyable street experience for pedestrians.

In order to foster a thriving Downtown, the Master Plan seeks to augment the urban design of the area and transform the urban realm. The plan on the right shows how streetscaping and strategic infill development, can change the character of the streets from auto-oriented roads to diverse, exciting, active mixed-use corridors.

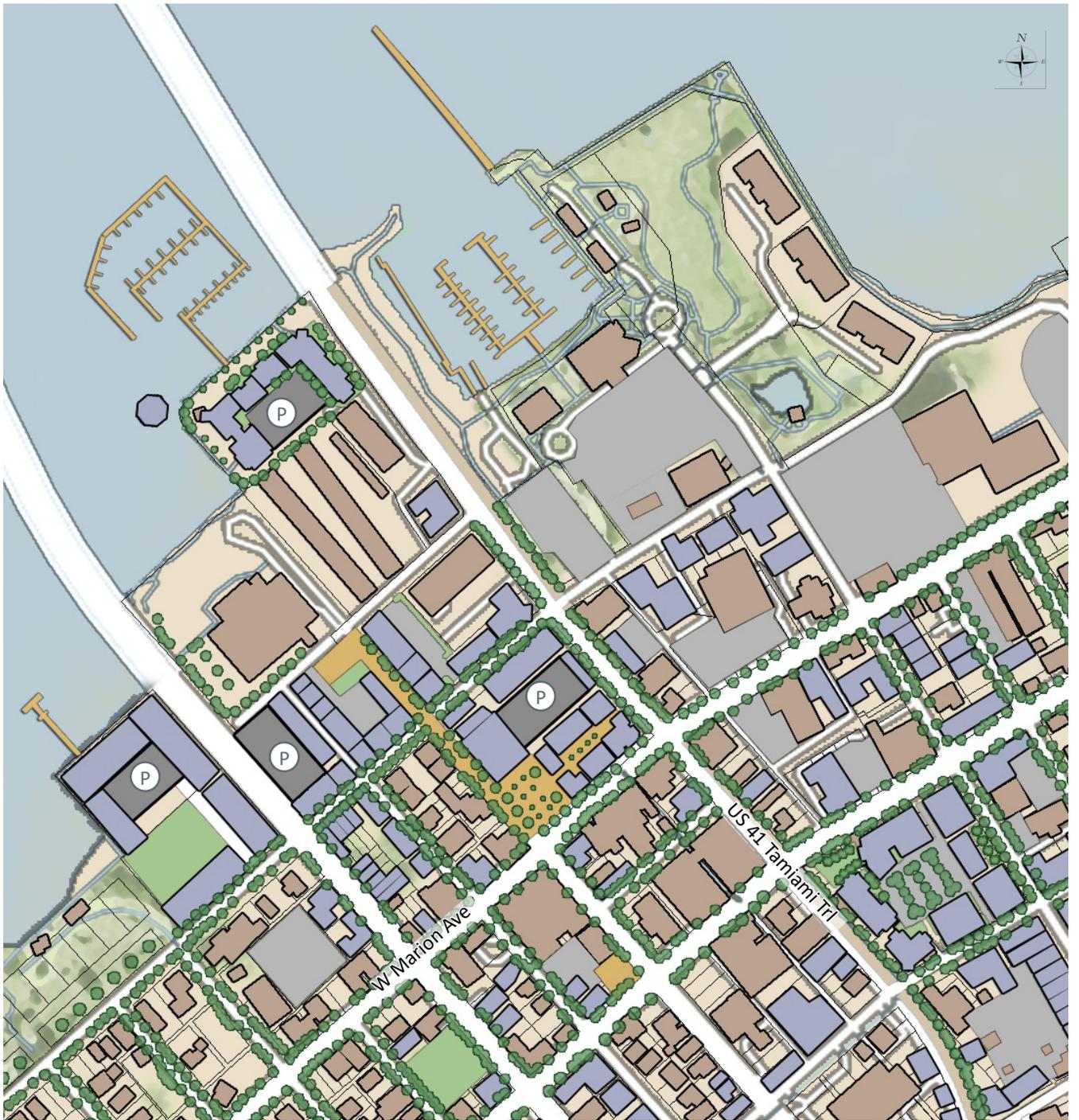
### Streetscape:

The right-of-way and sidewalks are redesigned to make crossing easier. Parallel street parking, which pairs with vibrant retail activity, is added to both sides of Marion and Taylor streets. Crosswalk redesign can enhance safety of people walking, reduce vehicular travel speeds and even add delight to the urban environment. Finally, trees are added to both sides of the main corridors to gain shade and natural canopy.

### Infill Development:

A pleasant street edge is also created through the infill of human-scaled retail and mixed-use buildings. Large windows, awnings, hanging signs, and outdoor dining create a fluid indoor-outdoor dialog that draws people to utilize the street as an interactive public space. Architectural styles are sensitive to the historic character of the existing buildings of Punta Gorda.

Figure 6.2: Downtown Illustrative Plan



**Legend**

-  Existing Building
-  New Building
-  New Plaza
-  New Greenspace
-  New Parking Garage
-  Street Trees

## VI. Key Focus Areas

### Downtown Core

## CITY MARKET PLACE AREA

As the heart of the downtown, this area is centered around the new Town Square. The Square, is created by providing extra homes per acre and/or building height would be granted as a incentive to provide civic space. Community events are welcome at the Square. Pedestrian-oriented retail, restaurant, and mixed-use buildings surround the square and adjacent blocks, maintaining lower building heights on Marion St to preserve it's historic nature. The new Square is one of the most important areas of the downtown as it creates a central gathering place, a heart and focal point.

In **Option 1**, the building height is kept at 2 to 3 story or 50' as the existing code requires. Density is increased, however, to 30 homes per Acre which is double of what is permitted at the moment. This conditions encourage small and affordable apartments resulting in more homes per acre. Option 1 doesn't show a public square.

**Option 2** suggests increasing the building height up to 6 stories or 75' max. This will increase density to 50 DU per Acre, which will give the opportunity to attract more people to live in downtown and support making it a vibrant and active place. This option includes the Town Square and pedestrian promenade for a total of 30,000 SF of pedestrian space. Lower building heights are still kept on Marion St.

**Option 3**, similar to option 2, increases the building height up to 6 stories or 75' max. However, density rises to only 40 DU per Acre, because a Performing Arts Center is proposed. It will also help to make the downtown a vibrant and active place, while maintaining lower building heights on Marion St.



Existing conditions

# OPTION 1

\* This is double the current permitted density of 15 DU/Acre, though lower density could be achieved by providing larger apartments

## INTENSITY:

- 1. Height: 2 to 3-Story, 50' Max
- 2. Density: 30 DU/Acre\*
- 3. Apartments range from 650 – 1,400 SF
- 4. No Public Space



Vibrant Downtown



Walking and Biking



Strategic Commercial Development

## DESIGN FEATURES:

- 1. Parking Garage Lined with Shallow Live/Work Buildings
- 2. Lower Heights Along Marion Ave
- 3. Shared/Festival Street on Taylor Between Marion and Harborside Ave
- 4. Parking Garage with Amenity Deck
- 5. Mid Block Surface Parking

## VI. Key Focus Areas

Downtown Core

### OPTION 2

#### INTENSITY:

- Height: 2 to 6-Story, 75' Max
- Density: 48 DUA
- Apartments range from 650 – 1,400 SF
- Public Square and Pedestrian Promenade (30,000 SF)
- Lower building heights maintained on Marion



Vibrant  
Downtown



Walking and  
Biking



Strategic  
Commercial  
Development

#### DESIGN FEATURES:

1. Parking Garage Lined with Shallow Live/Work Buildings
2. Lower Heights Along Marion Ave
3. Shared/Festival Street on Taylor Between Marion and Harborside Ave
4. Parking Garage with Amenity Deck

5. Taller Buildings Closer to the Water
6. Town Square & Pedestrian Promenade

# OPTION 3



**INTENSITY:**

- Height: 2 to 6-Story, 75' Max
- Density: 40 DUA
- Apartments range from 650 – 1,400 SF
- Public Square and Pedestrian Promenade (30,000 SF)
- Performing Arts Center
- Lower building heights maintained on Marion



Vibrant Downtown



Walking and Biking



Strategic Commercial Development

**DESIGN FEATURES:**

1. Parking Garage Lined with Shallow Live/Work Buildings
2. Lower Heights Along Marion Ave
3. Shared/Festival Street on Taylor Between Marion and Harborside Ave
4. Parking Garage with Amenity Deck

5. Taller Buildings Closer to the Water
6. Town Square & Pedestrian Promenade
7. Community Arts Center & Theater

## VI. Key Focus Areas

### Downtown Core

## RETTA AND US 41 SIGNALIZED INTERSECTION

This intersection is one of the locations where different modes of transportation come together and must address the basic needs of users, such as safety, convenience to access and comfortable for everyone, and minimal delay, as users should not be unnecessarily delayed when moving through.

In the future this intersection is functional and easy to navigate, designed with intuitive geometry and including clear wayfinding instructions through signage, pavement markings and color differentiation, and signalization. Also, the updated design reflects users' desired travel paths in a seamless way regardless of the mode of transportation.

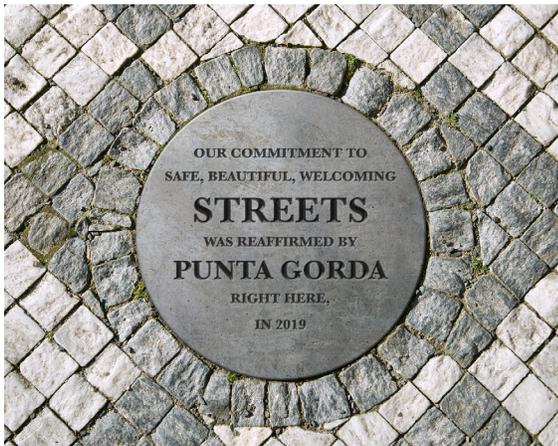
The future mixed-use development of City Market Place development gives the area a pleasant environment, meeting places, and attractive storefronts that draw people to the streets. The designed crosswalks are of

high visibility to facilitate the crossing of all ages and as safely as possible. Also, it encourages vehicle traffic to be aware of other modes.

The intersection is signalized and timed to work in parallel with the Marion St traffic light, avoiding unnecessary delays as mentioned above. The street was redesigned to accommodate two lanes of traffic on one side of the street, eliminating the left-turn only lane and making space for a two-way cycle track on the opposite of the street.

## US 41 NORTHBOUND LANE DROP AND BIKE FACILITIES – PLAN DRAWING





Vibrant  
Downtown



Walking and  
Biking

Existing conditions

New City Market  
Place Mixed-Use  
Development

High Visibility  
Crosswalks

Signalized Intersection,  
Timed to Work in Parallel  
with the Marion Light

Two-Lanes  
(Dropped Left-  
Turn Only)

Two-Way  
Cycle Track



Proposed Intersection

## VI. Key Focus Areas

### Downtown Core

## OLYMPIA & MARION ONE-WAY TO TWO-WAY CONVERSION



Converting one-way streets with excess capacity to two-way is an important part of the Complete Streets approach. Marion and Olympia Avenues have been identified as a priority streets for conversion from one-way to two-way travel.

Traffic engineering handbooks estimate that one-way streets provide a 10-20 percent increase in vehicle capacity. This is accomplished, in part, by allowing higher vehicle speeds. Reduced side friction, fewer potential intersection conflicts, simplified signage, and in some cases synchronized traffic signals all allow higher vehicle speeds. Vehicle speed through an intersection has serious consequences for pedestrian safety. The higher vehicle speeds induced by one way road designs increase the likelihood of serious injuries and fatalities in crashes involving people walking or bicycling. A major

goal of this plan is to reduce vehicle speeds, making the conversion to two-way operation an important strategy for downtown Punta Gorda.

Conversion of one-way to two-way operation helps to:

- Keep travel speeds to a pedestrian-comfortable 25 mph
- Improve bicycle, transit, and pedestrian circulation
- Decrease Vehicle Miles Traveled due to drivers circling to reach their destination
- Reduce confusion for visitors
- Increased visibility for businesses
- Increased sales
- Increased rents for building owners



Transportation Engineer Rick Hall Measuring Vehicle Speeds on US 41 in Downtown



Historic Photo of Two-Way Traffic on Marion Ave

## VI. Key Focus Areas

### Downtown Core



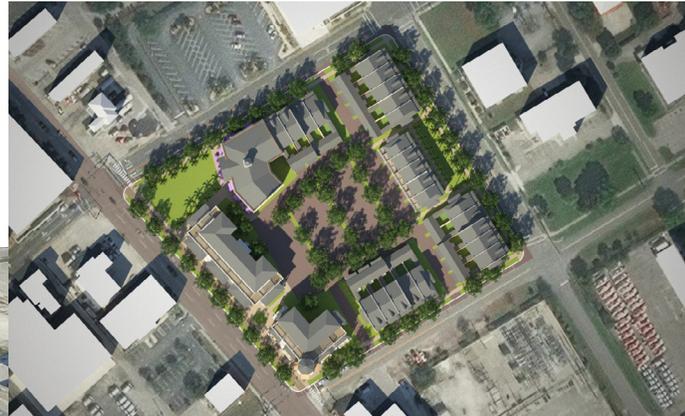
Existing conditions



Phase 1



Phase 2



Proposed Phase 3 - Plan View



Vibrant  
Downtown



Diverse  
Housing Types



Walking and  
Biking



Strategic  
Commercial  
Development



#### FEATURES:

1. 2 and 3-story Townhouses
2. Mid-Block Parking
3. Mixed-Use Offices
4. Apartments with Ground Floor Retail
5. Public Greenspace

## U-SAVE SITE DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS

Similar to the City Marketplace, this development site includes pedestrian-oriented retail and commercial uses on the ground floors. It carries also, 2 and 3-story townhouses, mid-block parking lot so it is away from the view from the surrounding streets, mixed-use leasable office space and public greenspace around the block and in a small urban park on the corner of US 41 and Olympia Ave.



Phase 3 - Proposed Conditions

## VI. Key Focus Areas

Downtown Core

### TAYLOR ST SHARED/FESTIVAL STREET

With the redevelopment of the City Market Place property, there is an opportunity to provide a signature town square on the corner of Marion and Taylor and create a festival street that can accommodate special events and serve to capture spillover activity from the new town square.

A shared street is a public space designed for all users and modes of transportation. These streets are implemented where a vibrant and pedestrian-friendly environment is desired. Taylor St between Marion Ave and Harborside Ave is a great candidate for such a red-design. It has long served as an important gathering space in Punta Gorda. The weekly Downtown Farmer's Market, Charlotte High's Homecoming, and the annual Christmas, Fourth of July, and Veteran's Day Parades all make use of Taylor St.

The street is re-imagined to allow for vehicular traffic and parking when needed. During special events and/or weekends the street can be closed off to cars with retractable bollards and filled with movable tables, chairs, and market stands.

One notable feature of the design is that it is curbsless. The lack of raised curbs allows flexibility when programming the space for different needs, as well as reducing barriers for users of different ages and abilities. Along with shade trees, generous planting areas, cobble pavers, and narrower car lanes, the curbsless design make the street feel more like a plaza, safe enough for people to bike and cross anywhere.



Taylor St and Marion Ave - Proposed Shared Street



Vibrant  
Downtown



Strategic  
Commercial  
Development



Taylor St and Marion Ave - Existing Condition



7

**FEATURES:**

1. Curbless street design
2. Ramp-up to street
3. Valley gutters
4. Tactile pavers to indicate roadway edges and intersections
5. Shade trees and generous landscaping
6. Retractable Bollards
7. Smooth sidewalk pavement

## VI. Key Focus Areas

Downtown Core

### SHERATON EXPANSION AND WATERFRONT

Punta Gorda has an opportunity to provide an expansion to the Four Points Sheraton hotel on the water as part of the revitalization of downtown, mostly taking advantage of its location with easy access off US 41 and in close proximity to the downtown core with retail and dining. There are existing entitlements beforehand for this project via a Planned Development that was approved prior and that this plan has taken into account. The hotel will also be a source for visitors to the downtown, from outside of the immediate area, or visitors to nearby amenities like the conference center next to the hotel. The new hotel expansion linked to a cluster of urban activation spots like the City Marketplace, would also increase the potential draw of visitors to the region. Also, the extension of the Marina will bring boating related activities that will activate the waterfront. The homes included as part of the hotel expansion,

will allow the neighborhood to grow and develop as more people will be moving in becoming another focus point of activation for the area. A new parking garage with an amenity deck completes the expansion resolving the expected increase in car traffic to the neighborhood. The amenity deck will be an extra layer that will help to maintain the parking garage out of sight from the street and surrounding buildings.

Finally, the new Tiki Bar projected out over the water provides another point of attraction for locals and visitors alike. The new Club House & Marina with Restaurant will provide visitors with another meeting place that ties with the dining options found in the surrounding downtown blocks. And new murals will give the area a cultural character which will bring to the waterfront diversity of options for entertainment.



Vibrant  
Downtown



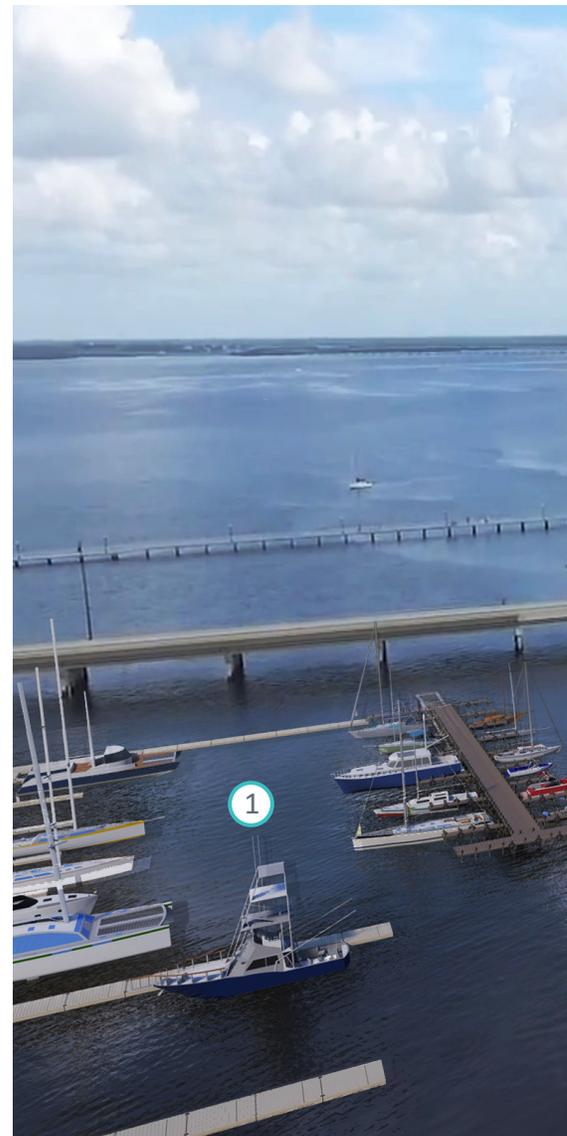
Celebrate  
Charlotte Harbor



Diverse  
Housing Types



Strategic  
Commercial  
Development



Proposed Conditions

**FEATURES:**

1. Marina
2. Ground Floor Restaurant
3. Hotel & Condos
4. Parking Garage With Amenity Deck
5. New Tiki Bar
6. Club House & Marina With Restaurant
7. New Murals



Existing conditions



Existing Conditions



## VI. Key Focus Areas

### East Downtown

## EAST DOWNTOWN

East Downtown hosts the medical district centered around Bayfront Punta Gorda Hospital campus with many adjacent blocks of housing of all types, including existing single & multi-family. The intersection between Cooper St and Marion and Olympia Avenues. It also has a great opportunity for urban infill in the many vacant lots that exist here. Other potential uses include medical oriented mixed-uses due to the hospital expansion. A network of proposed green spaces, pocket parks and streets trees will not only, increase the canopy on the streets, but also will connect the area with the Downtown Core. This new connection will increase the flow of people between these two areas of the city. At the head of Cooper St, the hospital and its expansion act as landmark buildings that anchor the east ends of Marion and Olympia Avenues.

Residential infill on vacant lots can provide a wide range of housing types. A new parking garage as part of

the hospital expansion will also serve the multifamily development around the medical district.

A medical district is an economic advantage to any city, large or small. Though it is a major undertaking to build, not limited to constructing a single hospital or urgent care, but a conglomerate of health care facilities, it is a sustainable source of profit. It can also serve as a one-stop shop for medical services for the people of Punta Gorda and for the surrounding area. Punta Gorda has the opportunity to expand on its existing Bayfront Health Punta Gorda Hospital to make medical services a large sector of their economy. Quality healthcare is a vital part of any community particularly one with a higher proportion of older adults (+65), or one that requires medical attention. Not only are Medical Districts proven to add value and attract people to the area, they create an economic backbone for the community.

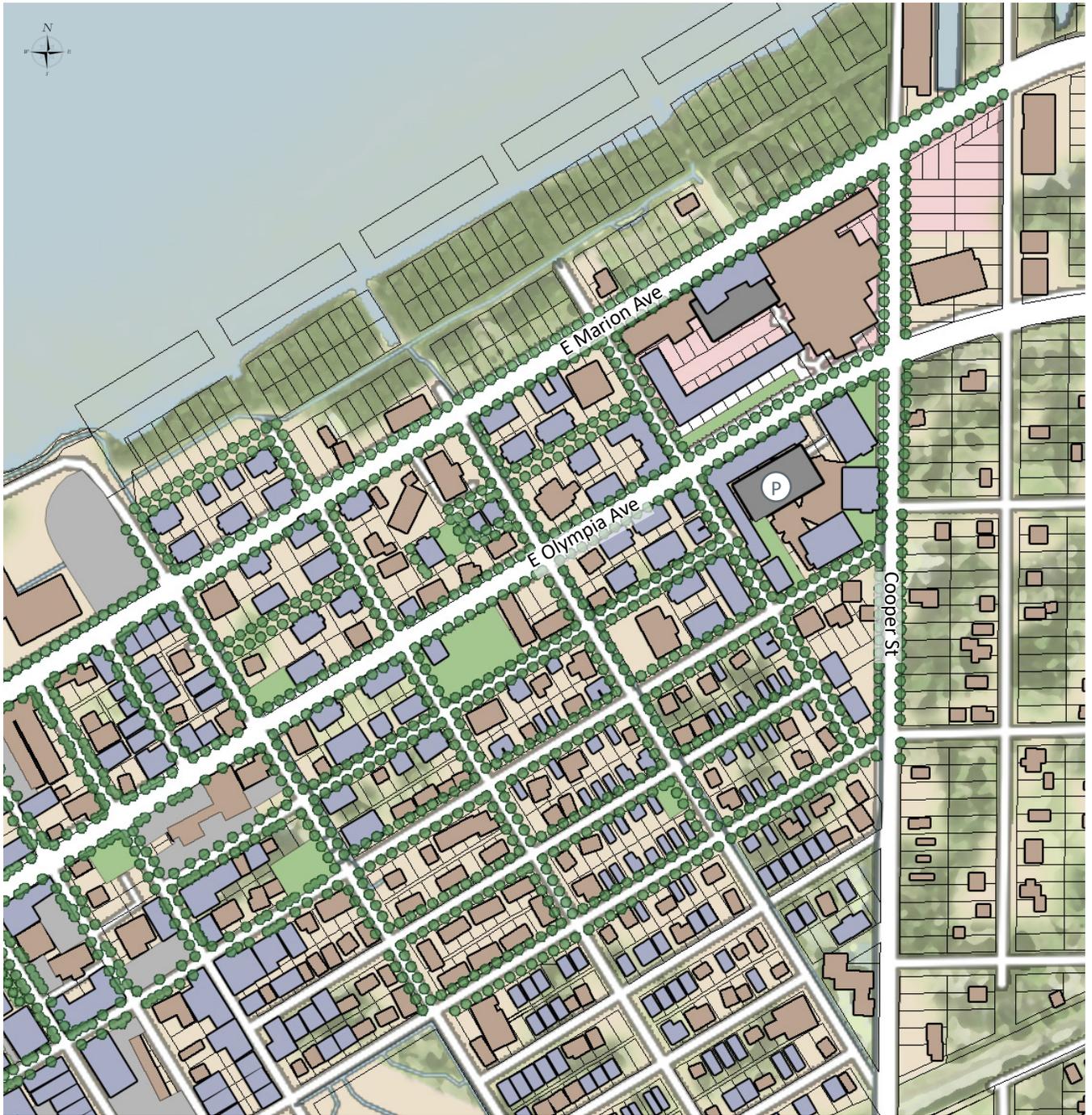


New Operation Cooper St, Inc.



Bayfront Health Punta Gorda

Figure 6.3: East Downtown Illustrative Plan



**Legend**

-  Existing Building
-  New Building
-  New Plaza
-  New Greenspace
-  New Parking Garage
-  Street Trees

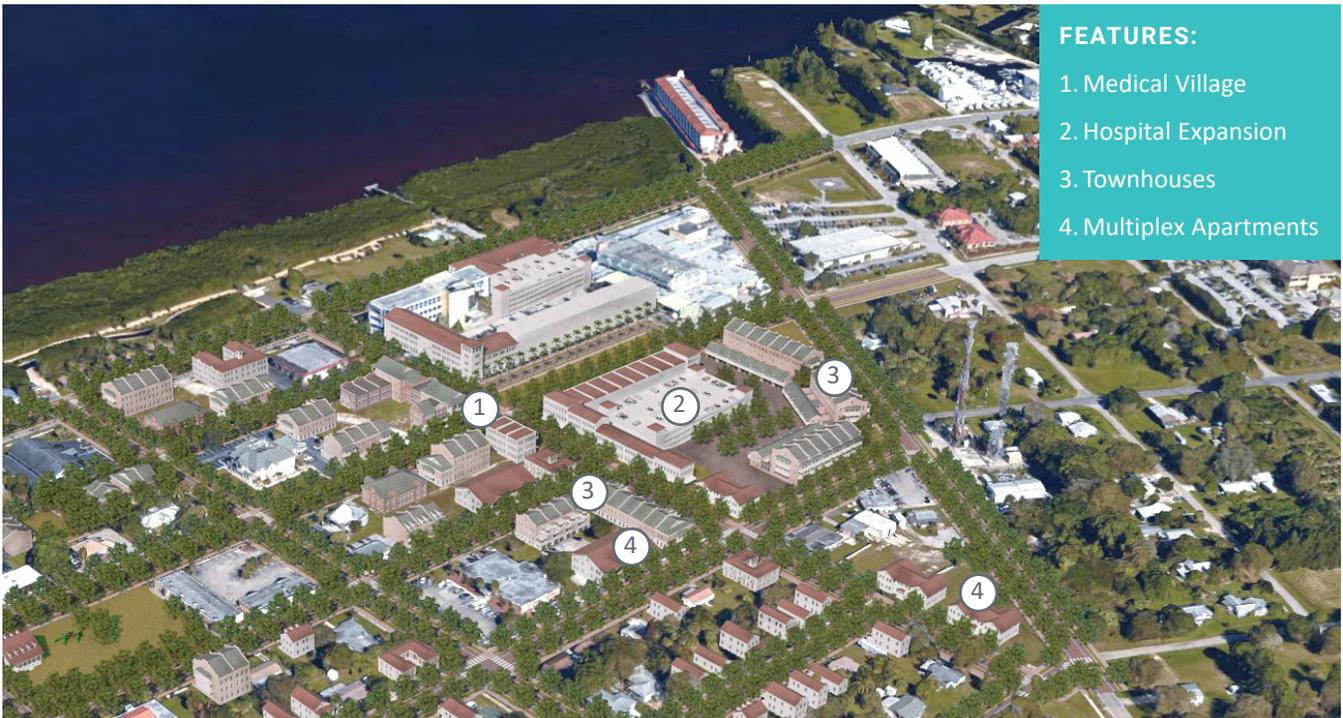
## VI. Key Focus Areas

East Downtown

### EAST DOWNTOWN (MEDICAL DISTRICT)



Existing Conditions



#### FEATURES:

1. Medical Village
2. Hospital Expansion
3. Townhouses
4. Multiplex Apartments

Proposed Conditions - Phase 3

Hospitals attract medical practitioners and employ large number of existing residents in service positions at their facilities. Zoning for medical districts and its supporting businesses with special district ordinances has brought up a positive economic impact in other small towns, such as Barnstable, MA and Daly City, CA. The City of Punta Gorda has a medical overlay district in this area. Providing ADA compliant sidewalk and ramp services, ample ADA parking, as the ADA building code requires, and encouraging a wider variety of housing types in the area, the medical centers have the opportunity to expand and create a more pleasant experience for both doctors and patients alike.

According to the economic analysis, the health and social assistance sector has experienced 17.5 percent job growth, excluding the 25 percent of employees in the area that already work in hospitals. Southwest Florida has already added over 30,000 jobs to its workforce in the Educational and Health Services sector. The addition of a new medical district is estimated to add 200,000 square feet in medical office space and a steady increase of 10.3 percent of health care jobs by 2030.

Small town medical districts in North Dakota and North Carolina are said to create a sense of security and don't compromise the slower-paced, budget-friendly small town atmosphere for health care. Venice, FL, a comparable town to Punta Gorda, has expanded their medical district to accommodate the in-retirement communities. Despite the lack of an academic institution to fuel their medical industry, their district has been lucrative and brought professionals to the Sarasota and Venice Beach area. Medical centers also provide the priceless luxury of peace of mind for people who are at risk of a medical emergency and are convenient for those who frequent doctor's offices, surgery centers, and other medical facilities.



Vibrant  
Downtown



Diverse  
Housing Types



Walking and  
Biking



Rendering for new Lee Health Village in Coconut Point, Estero, FL (Flad Architects)

## HEALTH VILLAGES

The concept of Health Districts and Villages is gaining traction across the country as medical professionals and institutions focus more and more on preventative care and value-based outcomes.

Designers are looking at ways to retrofit existing hospital campuses and design new ones so that they integrate with the surrounding neighborhood and support healthier lifestyles that encourage physical activity. Lee Health in Fort Myers is developing a new Health Village in Coconut Point to improve health management for its retirement community.

Phase 1 of this project is a 163,000 square foot campus that includes a lifestyle clinic with 70 exam rooms, an outpatient surgery center, and emergency center. It's connected to the neighborhood with comfortable walking and biking paths.

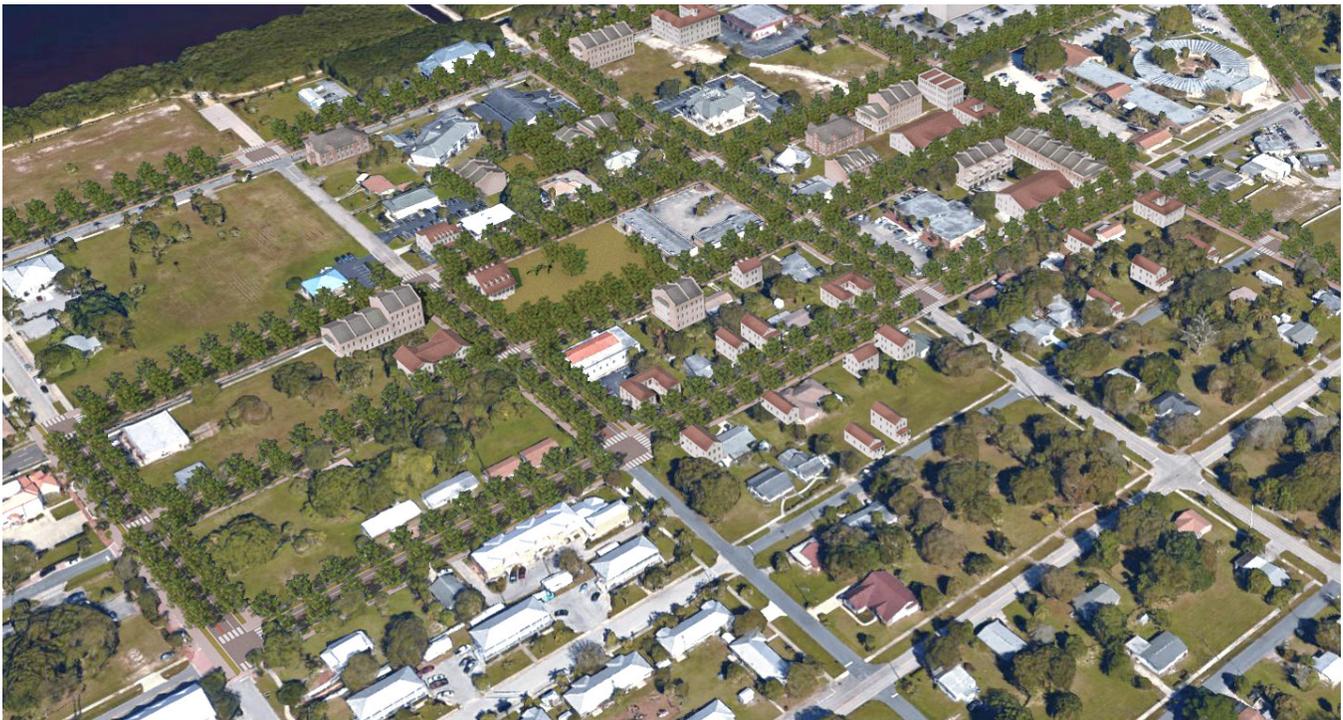
## VI. Key Focus Areas

East Downtown

### RESIDENTIAL INFILL OVER TIME – AERIAL RENDERING



Existing Conditions



Phase 1



Vibrant  
Downtown



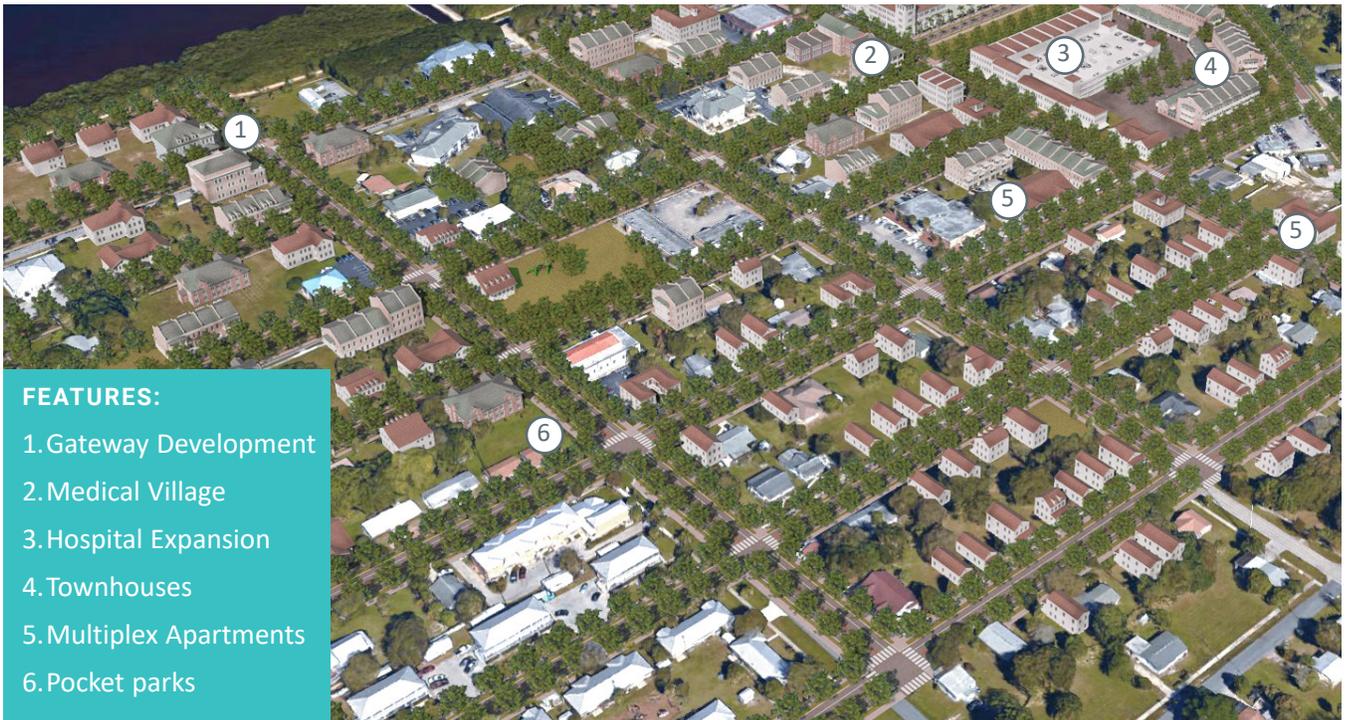
Diverse  
Housing Types



Walking and  
Biking



Phase 2



**FEATURES:**

- 1. Gateway Development
- 2. Medical Village
- 3. Hospital Expansion
- 4. Townhouses
- 5. Multiplex Apartments
- 6. Pocket parks

Proposed Conditions - Phase 3

## VI. Key Focus Areas

East Downtown

### DIVERSE RANGE HOMES – STREET LEVEL RENDERING

In this area we can find sites for major gateway development. Gateways play an important role in defining the look and feel of this part of the city. As Punta Gorda looks to revive its downtown area and attract both residents and visitors, it is essential for the city to be proactive in defining its gateways to the downtown and the water.

Buildings, framed vistas, trees, lighting, and landscaping all act as elements that will bring a friendly, walkable

environment to the area. These renderings illustrate the concepts for two streets that contain the elements mentioned above and show the larger space given to pedestrians. Balconies and ground floor windows, wide walkways, and on street parking provide an indoor-outdoor connection and improve safety.



Key map



Picture 1 - Potential Mixed-Use Medical Village Development - Olympia Ave



Existing conditions - Milus St



Picture 2 - Potential Infill and New Mid-Block Street - Milus St

## VI. Key Focus Areas

### East Downtown

## GATEWAY DEVELOPMENT AT MARION AND MILUS

Residents of Punta Gorda expressed a need to mark entry into the city. Key aspects were that it be noticeable, welcoming, and a signature moment for people arriving and leaving. The open available land at the corner of Marion Ave and Milus St make this a good candidate for a gateway intersection.

One possible gateway solution may be to harness and direct development energy in East Downtown at this intersection. At this gateway, buildings are allowed to come closer to the street and be slightly taller as long as a colonnade is provided along Marion Ave, and a plaza is included facing the intersection.

The colonnades make use of architectural features to create a visual pinch-point when looking down Marion Ave, creating a visual destination and also adding an interesting street feature for pedestrians further adding to the gateway. Different architectural styles can also add to the interest of the intersection.

The plazas on either side of Marion Ave will provide a contrast with the tree-lined street by creating a place where more light comes into the street, creating a moment of pause while travelling down Marion Ave. Tables with umbrellas would continue to provide shade and protection in this open area. The benefit to this approach is that Punta Gorda would not need to spend additional funds to purchase lots on either side of Marion Ave to produce a gateway that welcomes people while providing public gathering places and adding architectural interest.

Using incentives such as eliminated setbacks with slightly increased density and height to encourage development to occur at this intersection. These incentives, which are in place by the existing City Center (CC) District can also be used to direct the creation of the gateway and the general form of the buildings that create it.

Other key features of this visualization include:

- Conversion of Marion Ave to a two-way street
- Adding parallel parking to Marion and Milus St
- New separated bike track along Marion Ave
- Planting shade trees along Marion Ave

While this approach can create a successful gateway into Punta Gorda by establishing public spaces, it does need development pressure in order to achieve it. In anticipation of this gateway, the city can create a monument at the north corner of Marion Ave and Milus St to create an initial gateway that later gets incorporated into the plaza.

It is important to note that this does not only apply to this location. Other gateways can be created in Punta Gorda using this approach and that this gateway may be in a different location in the future.



Armillary Sphere in Savannah, GA

As development is attracted to East Downtown Punta Gorda, the city can construct a monument signifying the gateway into the city. The picture above shows the Armillary Sphere Sculpture located in Troup Square in Savannah, GA. The city can engage local artists and historians to imagine a piece of public art that is uniquely Punta Gorda.

# GATEWAY DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

The gateway to Punta Gorda could be designed to have several features including:

1. Monument
2. Plazas with street furniture with umbrellas
3. Gallery
4. Tower feature
5. Separated bike track
6. Parallel parking
7. Cafe / Shop

-  Vibrant Downtown
-  Diverse Housing Types
-  Walking and Biking



Key map



Existing conditions - Marion Ave



Potential Gateway Development - Marion Ave

## VI. Key Focus Areas

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### Fishermen's Village Center

## FISHERMEN'S VILLAGE CENTER

Fishermen's Village Center is an activated, walkable, and integrated, mixed-use development that is organized around a clearly identifiable and energized public realm where citizens can gather, enjoy the urban environment, and welcome visitors while strengthening their community.

It is based in retail, dining, and leisure uses, as well as in a diversity of residential uses and types, such as multi generational housing with independent and assisted living facilities. Over time, Fishermen's Village Center will evolve into a denser, more compact, and more diverse part of the city, with strong connections to its surroundings and the Downtown particularly.

The shift in population of the area, suggests that different development solutions are needed to meet contemporary needs, such as a range of housing types to accommodate all lifestyles at different life-cycle stages.

The intention is to recreate the sense of community and connectedness, dimmed as areas grew and sprawled so quickly in the past, by maintaining a small, compact and walkable development pattern which will bring the amenities of a more traditional small town urban lifestyle.

The different housing types and increased density, plus the diversity of uses create an enduring and memorable public realm in the neighborhood. The integration of multiple uses balances flexibility of the built environment with a long-term vision for the area. The new development captures the benefits of the area, encourages more housing and connects the public spaces to the community.

Figure 6.4: Fishermen's Village Illustrative Plan



**Legend**

- Existing Building
- New Building
- New Plaza
- New Greenspace
- New Parking Garage
- Street Trees

## VI. Key Focus Areas

### Fishermen's Village Center

## FISHERMEN'S VILLAGE CENTER

### Looking to the Future

Fishermen's Village, with its waterfront dining and diverse casual shopping offerings, is one of Punta Gorda's most popular attractions. In the future, steps can be taken to even further improve the facility and its environs. In particular, a great deal of the property is currently utilized for low-yield surface parking. This valuable land could be utilized more creatively to diversify and improve the site's offerings, while still providing adequate parking.

A first opportunity site is the portion of the surface parking field abutting the marina waterfront. If for example this parking were capped with a deck, uses

such as a mixed-use hotel could be built above it to maximize valuable water views and shape a greatly improved waterfront esplanade.

In the future as land values continue to rise, additional surface parking could be consolidated in structures to make room for a diverse range of new street-oriented uses such as housing, workplaces, live-work units and shopping.



Existing conditions



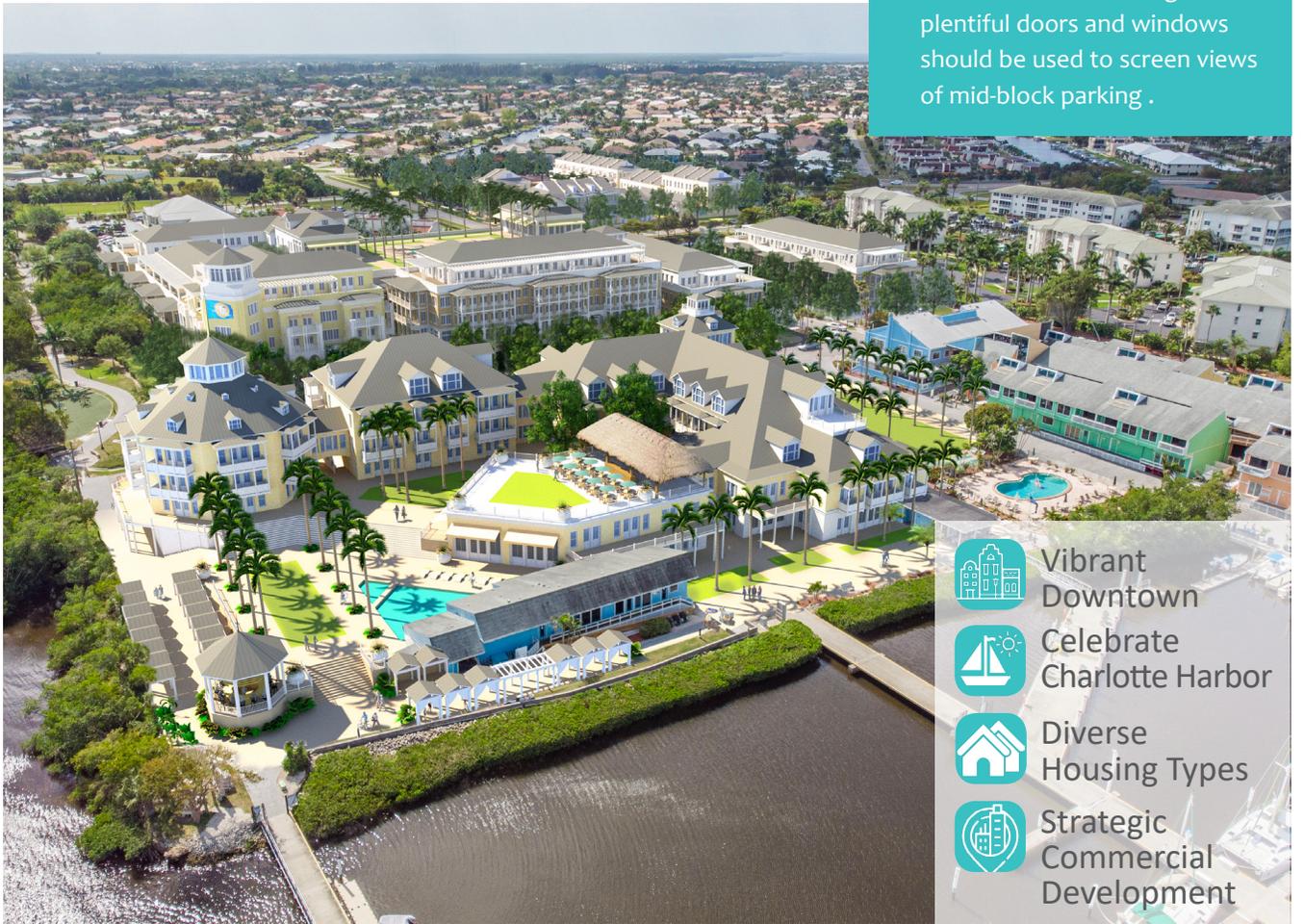
1. Waterfront hotel



2. Parking garage and mixed-use infill

### DESIGNER'S NOTES

- When designing new structures, promote architecture that reinforces the breezy, tropical maritime character associated with Fishermen's Village.
- Utilize climate-responsive shade features such as porches, balconies, awnings pergolas and canopies.
- Street-oriented buildings with plentiful doors and windows should be used to screen views of mid-block parking .



3. Long term prospects.

-  Vibrant Downtown
-  Celebrate Charlotte Harbor
-  Diverse Housing Types
-  Strategic Commercial Development

## VI. Key Focus Areas

### Fishermen's Village Center

## MULTI-GENERATIONAL HOUSING

Multi-generational housing is popularizing in America because it is a fiscally responsible and socially conscious response to our large aging population. Oftentimes, the elderly are not in need of a full-time care facility or cannot be placed in one if they or their children have modest incomes. Alternatively, multi-generational housing gives the ability to existing community members to age in place by providing more flexible and supportive housing types. Multi-generational housing has also proven to provide social benefits for the younger generations as they learn to care for and learn from their elders. This has resulted in lower rates of emotional and behavioral problems.

Shell Point Community, in Fort Myers, is an example of the vision for this area. A luxury independent to skilled

nursing care retirement community with an authentic connection to the City rather than a separate or enclosed neighborhood. Another example is Grand Prairie, Texas, a city with an aging population that has incorporated a multi-generational housing initiative into their master plan that provides high-quality housing types and ordinances that encourage accessory dwelling units.

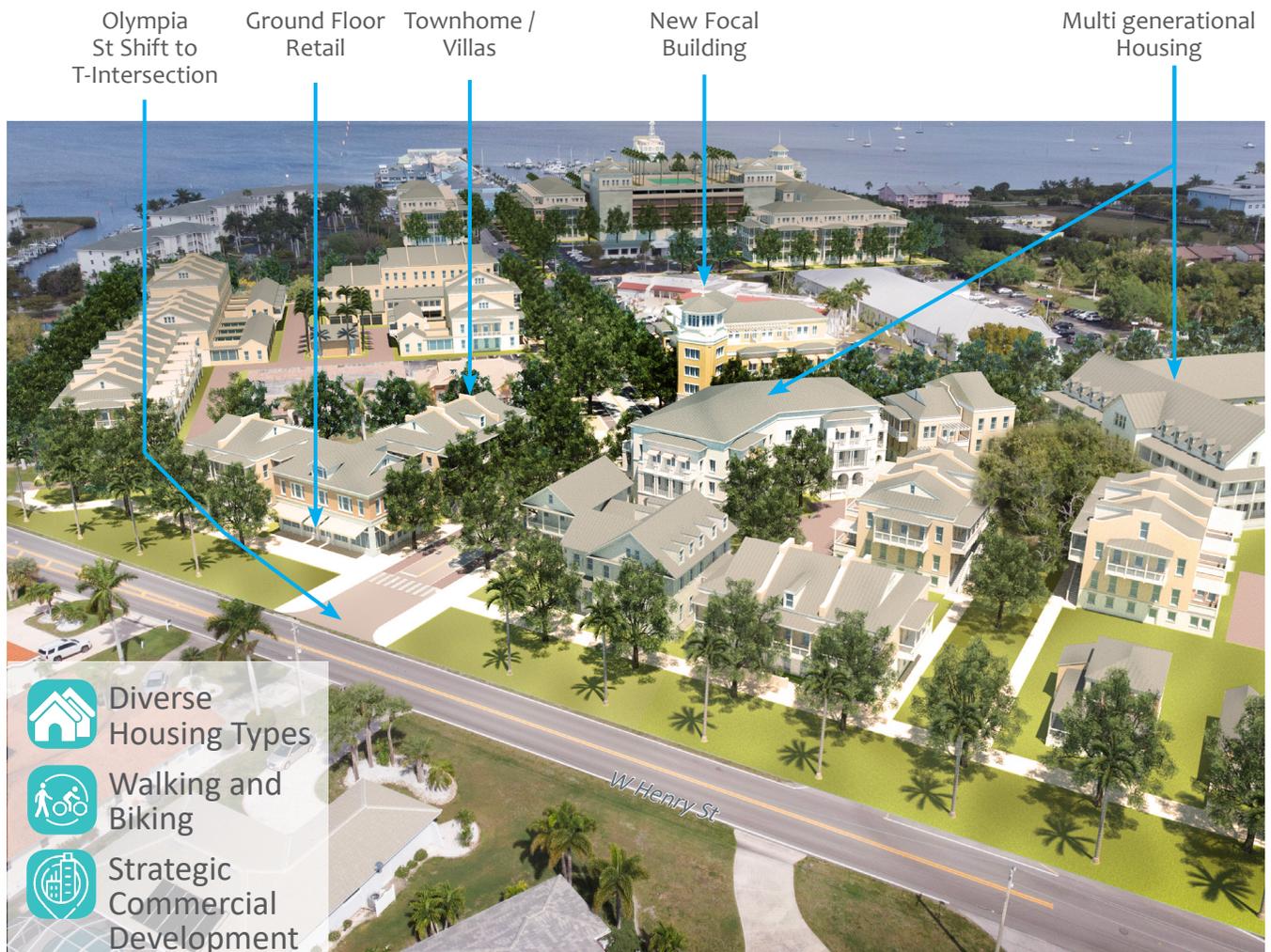
Additionally, multi-generational living uses smart growth principles through creating safe and pedestrian-oriented communities that promote healthier lifestyles. Other communities, such as Bloomington, Huntington, and Martindale-Brightwood in Indiana have used social programming in their community centers to create another network for the elderly, proving to facilitate better relationships in the multi-generational home.



Existing conditions

They have also incorporated public transportation that serves as a link between neighborhoods with a high concentration of seniors to their “Main Streets” and community centers. Other measures can be taken to ensure the construction of multi generational homes and accessory dwelling units. Ann Arbor, Michigan has experimented with zoning law and requiring accessory dwelling units in new construction. Pardee Homes, a developer in California and Nevada has adopted a new housing type, the GenSmart Suite that is a modular accessory dwelling unit that seamlessly integrates into the central home. These units are

becoming the norm and have a minimum requirement in planned unit developments in cities such as Santa Barbara and Ventura. In towns with a high percentage of retired individuals, this zoning law geared toward adding bedrooms with separate entrances has been increasingly effective. Multi-generational housing is an important component of social and health conscious development.



Proposed Conditions

## VI. Key Focus Areas

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### South Downtown

## SOUTH DOWNTOWN

The South Downtown area has the opportunity for a Maker District due to the existence of different land uses of light industrial nature like warehouses and storage facilities. These existing buildings provide the opportunity to be retrofitted into shops and studios

Also, new development can include not only these spaces, but also commercial and dining options. These will contribute to activate and define the characteristics of the area generating strong connections with the surrounding community and mixed use opportunities that will attract locals to live in the neighborhood.

Taylor St is being re-worked to improve connectivity and enhance the new public green space as the gateway to the Downtown. Other new streets are added to handle vehicular and pedestrian traffic through the Maker District and around the new public green space. Sidewalks, walkways, and bike trails are also key components that support to connect this area to the surrounding neighborhoods.

As Taylor St is the traditional Parade Route of the city, the route can continue going thru the public green space if its final design contemplates the space, or the route can change to go around it. The public green space will actually encourage variety of new temporary uses adjacent to the parades and more spectator areas.

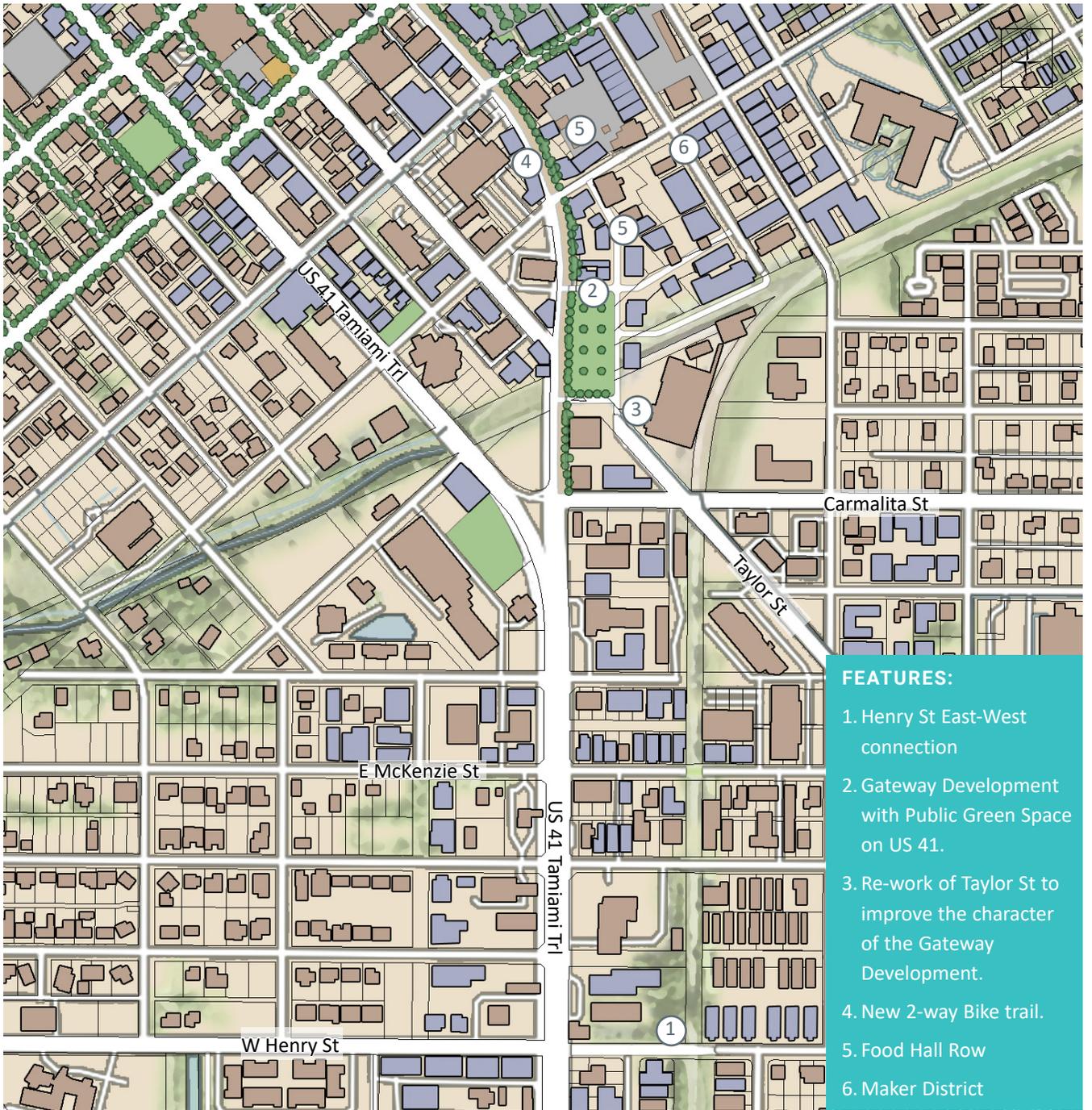
The intention of the commercial uses in the area is to work together with the Maker District and form a unified area of local shops to make, repair and buy articles that can be easily accessible for people on foot making it effective in generation a compact urban area.

The northbound leg of US 41 is reduced to 2 lanes of vehicular traffic to accommodate a 2-way bike lane on the east side of the street. This is intended to continue the US 41 Multi-Use Trail that stretches along US 41 and today ends a few blocks south of the area. This new bike trail will bring both bicycle and pedestrian traffic to the downtown as an element of its activation.

Henry St is being reconnected by implementing a railroad crossing east of US 41 and continuing the street from east to west. Henry St is one of the most important streets in the city that connects multiple areas from east to west. It will be of even more importance in the future as the area east of Education Ave gets developed and an extra connection to US 41 will be significant.

Additionally, the section between Tamiami Trl & King St can be categorized as a Food Hall Row as it has clustered in this three block stretch more than eight food establishments and its location is convenient for the development of the downtown.

Figure 6.5: South Downtown Illustrative Plan



**FEATURES:**

1. Henry St East-West connection
2. Gateway Development with Public Green Space on US 41.
3. Re-work of Taylor St to improve the character of the Gateway Development.
4. New 2-way Bike trail.
5. Food Hall Row
6. Maker District

- Legend**
- Existing Building
  - New Building
  - New Plaza
  - New Greenspace
  - New Parking Garage
  - Street Trees

## VI. Key Focus Areas

### South Downtown



Existing conditions



Proposed Intersection

## SOUTH DOWNTOWN

### A New Gateway

Gateway developments typically have a distinctive public space and a retail and commercial component that is place based. High volumes of pedestrian traffic and a great sidewalk experience are critical to the success of these uses. The new public green space brings an opportunity to enjoy the city and provides a space for multiple temporary uses. The sidewalk environment is an element that can bring a pleasant experience to pedestrians. With enough width, sidewalks offer opportunities to accommodate small parks, fountains, cafés, and resting areas. Along with clear sight lines into the public and adjacent retail spaces, these components make the sidewalks extremely effective in supporting a sense of place, a sense of ownership and expanding the experience of walking through the development.



#### FEATURES:

1. New Public Green Space
2. Development of Maker District
3. Re-direction of Taylor St to accommodate the new public green space
4. New two-way cycle track along US 41 in place of an existing car lane
5. New mixed-use commercial buildings



Vibrant  
Downtown



Diverse  
Housing Types



Walking and  
Biking



Strategic  
Commercial  
Development

## VI. Key Focus Areas

### South Downtown

## MAKER DISTRICT

The area between Virginia Ave and the railroad west of Tamiami Trail is an opportunity for a Maker District. The Ice House Pub serves as an anchor for this district as it attracts people with the many shops and dining options. This district is currently comprised of light industrial and some retail land uses.

There are opportunities for new development and rehabilitation of existing buildings that could provide spaces for local maker and artisanal shops and workshops. The City of Lowell, MA encountered a similar economic opportunity and with new zoning regulations and strategies crafters and makers were welcomed into their neighborhoods.<sup>1</sup>

Maker districts contribute to the local economy and expands the workforce for residents. Small-scale manufacturing can also activate an unforgotten neighborhood and attract housing development nearby.

### Additional programs to help launch a Maker District:

- New land use and real estate policies that allow small-manufacturing uses
- Support system for emerging entrepreneurs to educate and train small businesses best practices
- Workforce training programs to train local residents and students that are interested in crafting
- Private and public partnership to expand training programs to schools and community centers
- Shared kitchen spaces where small catering and food businesses can prepare food
- Workforce and affordable housing to house local entrepreneurs
- Grants and financial sponsors to expand and promote programs for makers

1 Tapping local partnerships for small-scale manufacturing success; Smart Growth America, February 2019

- Food Hall Row, present in the area can benefit from food truck events as well.
- Floor Area Ratio/height bonuses and incentives like streamlined permitting for the adaptive reuse and preservation of production buildings
- Requirement for new development in certain areas to dedicate percentage of ground floor to crafters and makers

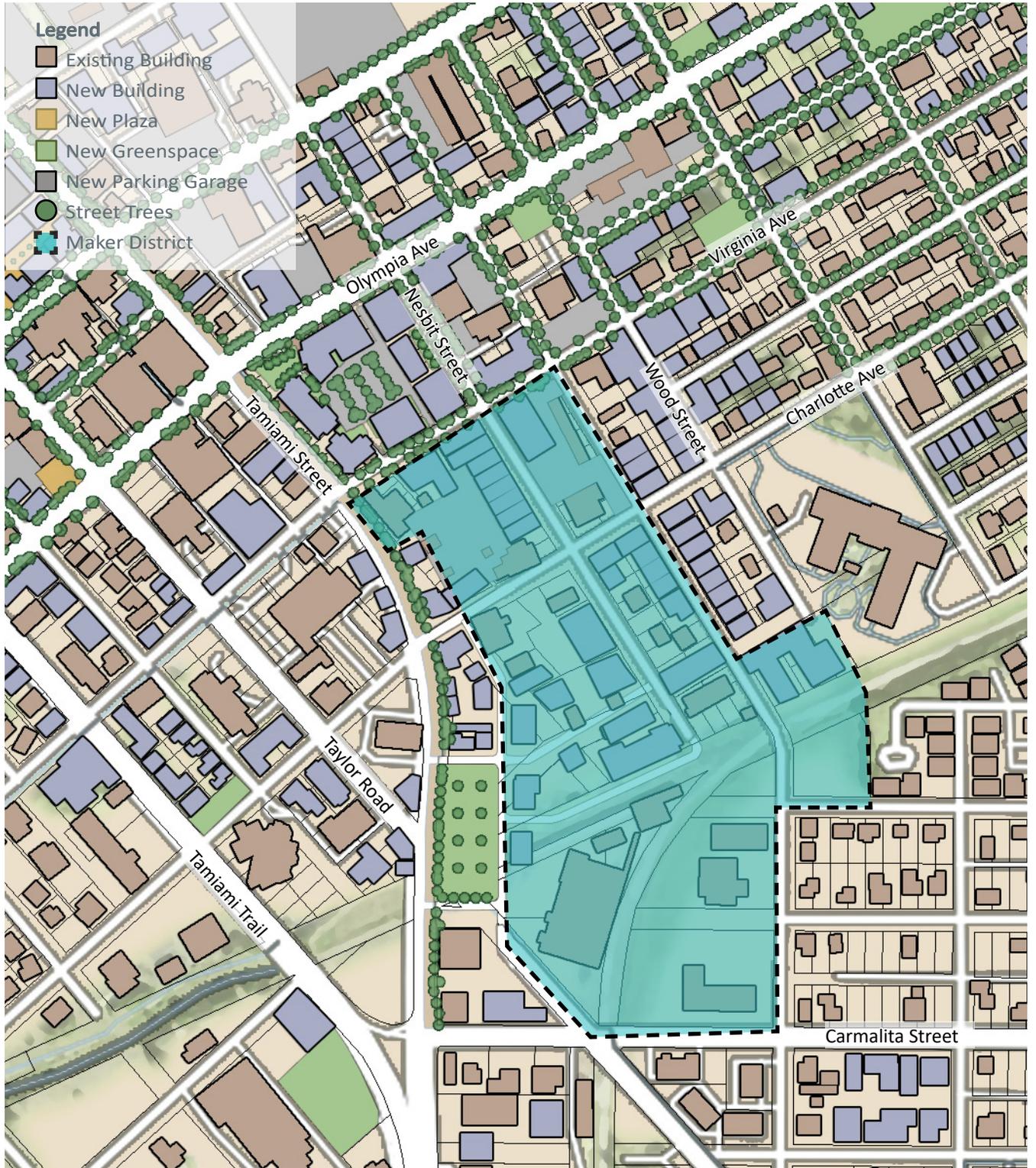


STEAMhouse fabrication center, part of Birmingham City University in Birmingham, UK



Prefabricated shed building, designed as a flexible space that could accommodate a market hall, small brewery, and events (Lincoln Lighthill Architect)

Figure 6.6: Maker District Illustrative Plan



## VI. Key Focus Areas

Tamiami/Shreve Triangle

### TAMIAMI/SHREVE TRIANGLE

Trail-oriented development is another component that can help create a healthier, more sustainable community that responds to the need for less auto-oriented traffic and more pedestrian-friendly infrastructure. In the case of Punta Gorda, it is also a way to contribute to the success of the existing Punta Gorda Pathways system, as it will encourage more housing types and increase the amount of people in the area providing visible economic and taxable benefits that will support the system build out.

Building a community that embraces bicycling and walking is not limited to the construction of trails citywide, but requires active transportation resources, such as bike lanes, a bike-sharing system, bike racks, and transportation facilities. Active transportation systems have increased property values and improved the quality of life in cities such as West Ashley, SC and Winter Garden, FL.

In addition, direct and indirect medical costs, on average, sharply decrease in communities that implement a master plan for greenways and trails that accommodate bicycling and walking. West Ashley's bikeway and greenway has added beauty and implemented a design that allows universal access and is entirely ADA compliant, just as the Punta Gorda Pathways system. Planned trails use wayfinding as a means of communication and to mitigate danger from automobiles.

Wayfinding is also an important method to educate the local population about the history and ecology of their city through educational signage. The City has a limited universe of Wayfinding already on the Pathways system. It includes map signs, point of interest directional signs and interpretive panels with ecological information. Expansion of the system to cover all areas, as well as historical interpretive panels is a great addition to take into consideration.

Safety and comfort elements such as lighting, handrails, and seating increase the appeal and overall experience. The aesthetic of the trail design and surrounding infrastructure strengthens, builds community identity

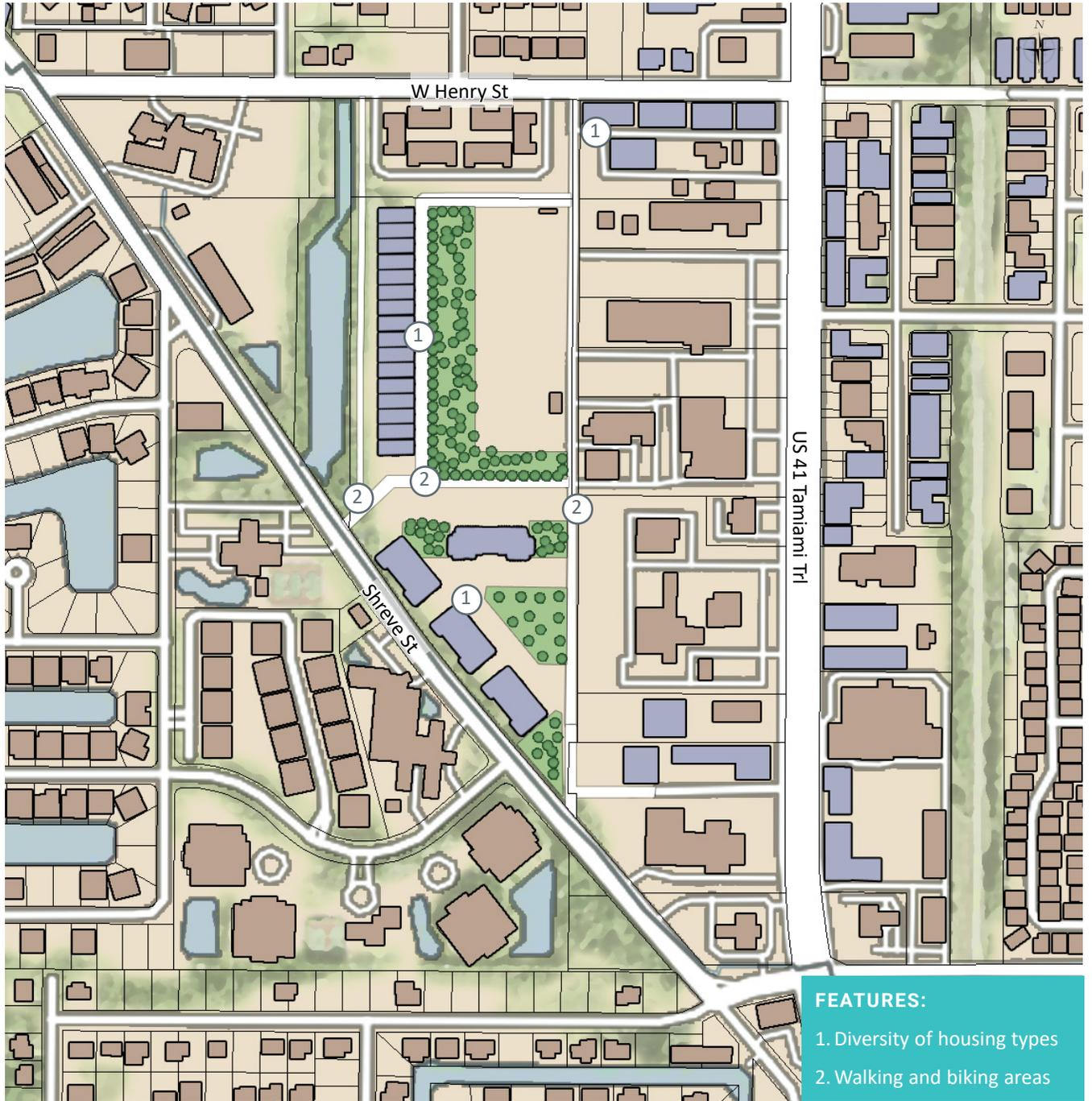
and is in accordance with the style of the town at large. Just as West Ashley has benefitted from their trail-oriented development, the people of Punta Gorda, both locals and visitors, can collectively benefit from implementing a trail system that increases land value, community health, and overall quality of life.

This part of the city contains a really large undeveloped area behind the commercial strip along US 41. It is used by the Gettel dealership group as vehicle inventory storage. The development proposed will be a more economically productive use of this land at a point in time in the future. The area will face to the back a new trail and a creek that provide attractive views for residential development. New townhomes are located facing the creek and accessed by a new alley that connects the development with the commercial area. Towards the south, new multifamily development is located along Shreve St and facing the new green areas.

The parking lot for car inventory storage located at the back of the commercial area is reduced in size but big enough to hold the parking needed. The new green buffer keeps the new townhomes from the view of the parking lot but with direct access through the new alley.

In addition, a new walking trail is added to the rear of this area and next to the creek, giving the townhomes an opportunity to access other points within the neighborhood. The east side of US 41 gets infilled with multi-use buildings providing a more compact and walkable spaces.

Figure 6.7: Tamiami/Shreve Illustrative Plan



**Legend**

- Existing Building
- New Building
- New Plaza
- New Greenspace
- New Parking Garage
- Street Trees

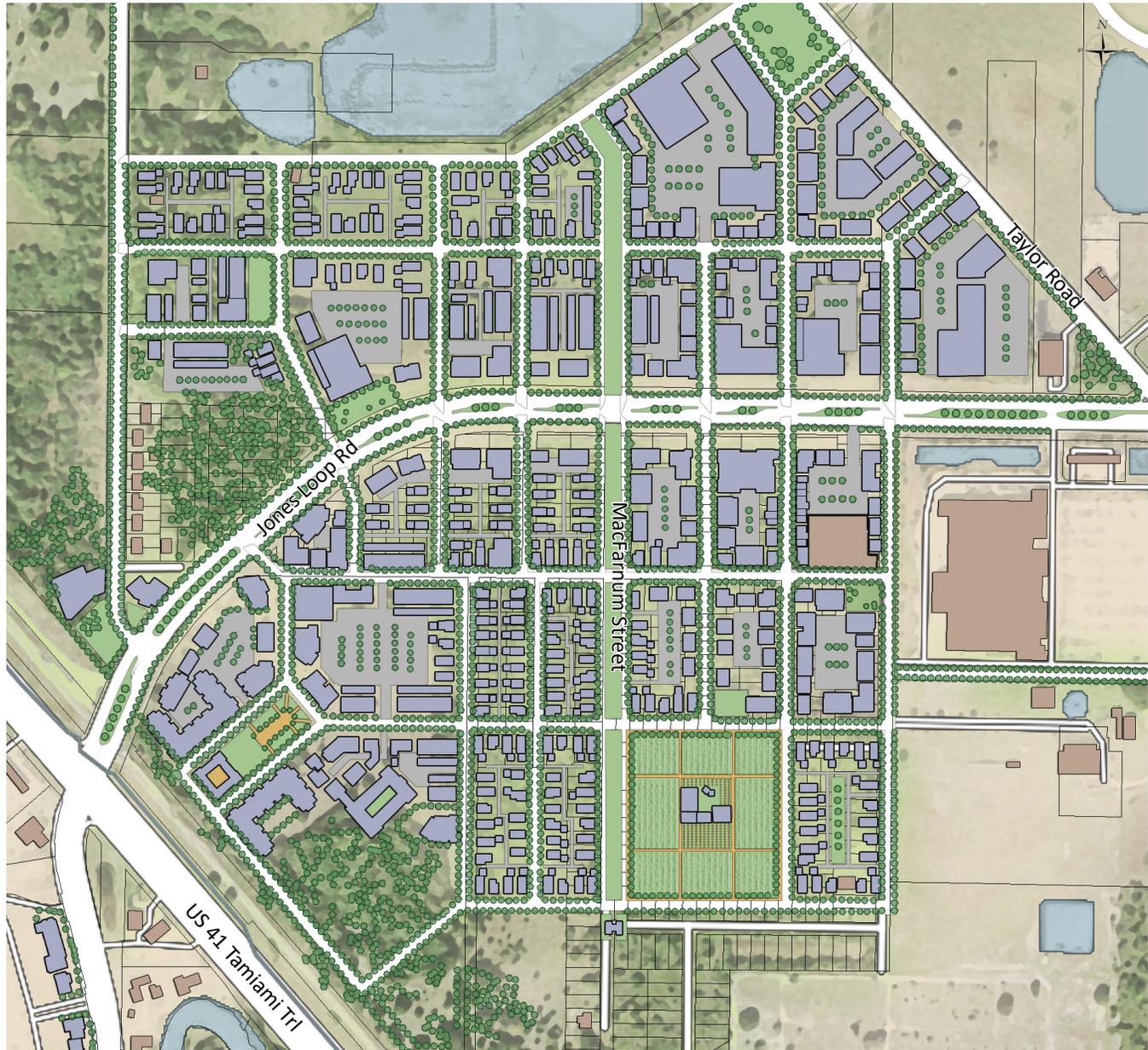
**FEATURES:**

1. Diversity of housing types
2. Walking and biking areas

## VI. Key Focus Areas

### Jones Loop Road

Figure 6.8: Jones Loop Rd Illustrative Plan - Option 1: More Commercial



#### Legend

-  Existing Building
-  New Building
-  New Plaza
-  New Greenspace
-  New Community Garden
-  New Surface Parking
-  Street Trees

## JONES LOOP ROAD

The area between Taylor Rd and US 41 along Jones Loop Rd has the opportunity to grow the existing street network and facilitate commercial, residential, and mixed use development to create a compact, connected, and cohesive neighborhood. Future facilities to improve comfort and safety for people on bikes and on foot will make the neighborhood pedestrian friendly.

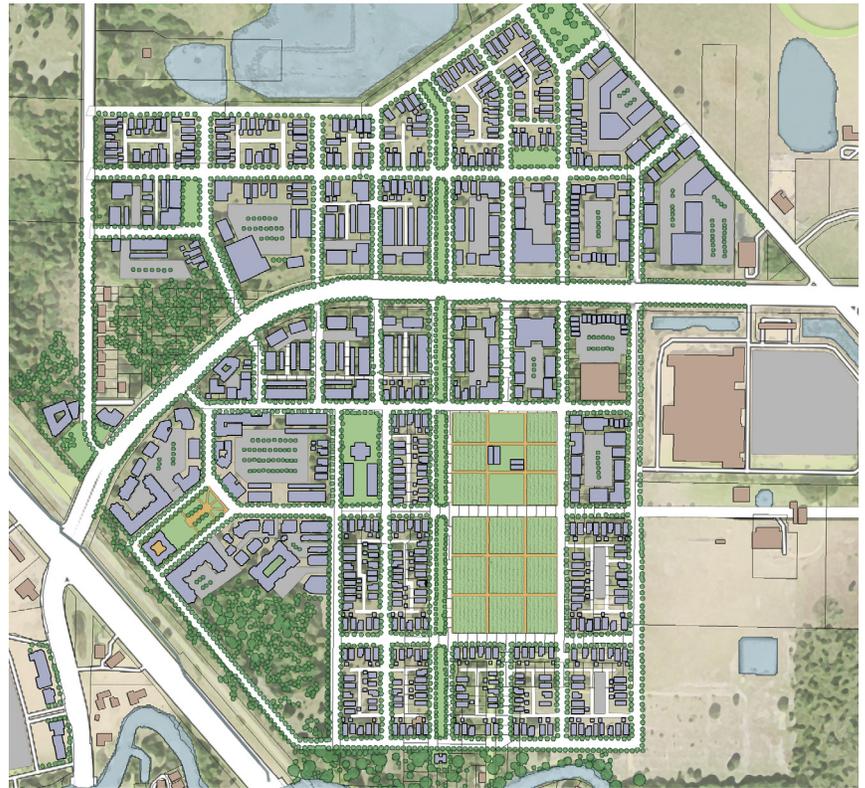
The blocks west of MacFarnum St and the parcels surrounding the community farm are primarily residential. This area will be developed with a diverse range of uses and housing types. Green spaces, a public square, and pocket parks improve the quality of life for residents, giving them space to gather and enjoy the outdoors together.

This portion of the neighborhood also features a neighborhood center at the northeast corner of the Jones Loop Rd and US 41 intersection. The neighborhood center includes a distinctive public space surrounded by retail and commercial uses that will activate the area. An enjoyable pedestrian experience is critical to the success of not only the square, but also the mixed-use developments surrounding it. The housing types include a limited number of townhomes and small apartment buildings around the neighborhood center and along Jones Loop Rd, as well as several modest single family homes.

The blocks east of MacFarnum St and along Jones Loop and Taylor Rd are primarily commercial. Consistent with the existing development pattern, the blocks closest to Taylor Rd feature more traditional highway commercial uses, with larger building footprints and larger block sizes. The other blocks feature a variety of mixed-use and commercial buildings. Here, the building footprints are still larger, but the building to street relationship is improved and the parking is pushed to the center of the block creating a more walkable environment.

This part of the neighborhood is ideal for new Class A office developments, as well as flexible commercial

Figure 6.9: Jones Loop Rd Illustrative Plan - Option 2: More Residential



and possibly even light industrial uses. Agricultural uses have also been included in the form of a community farm. The large amount of developable land in this area opens the door for small scale community farming, which could be a catalyst for economic development, agritourism, and community building.

Helping to manage the transition of small single-family homes to larger commercial and mixed-use buildings is the design of MacFarnum St. The street has been designed as a linear park, with plenty of room in the planted medium to grow large shade trees. These trees will not only help soften the transition in scale between largely-commercial to largely-residential buildings, but they will also provide a comfortable space for the local community to bike, walk their dogs, and host events.

Given that the demand for commercial uses may be limited, as outlined in the Economic and Budgetary Analysis, a second vision for the Jones Loop area has been illustrated above and on the following pages, which focuses more on traditional residential and mixed-use development.

## VI. Key Focus Areas

### Jones Loop Road

## JONES LOOP ROAD AREA

Jones Loop Road is an important connection in southern Punta Gorda, featuring major junctions with both US 41/ Tamiami Trl and with I-75 further to the east. Its importance to the regional transportation network makes it a powerful attractor for new growth.

Conventional big-box commercial uses have begun to appear near the intersection with I-75. Looking to a future with a reduced reliance on the automobile for all trips, it would be useful to incorporate features of walkability in this area as development occurs. The existing street network should be augmented with new streets to form a fine-grained, interconnected, and walkable grid.

Diversity of uses and housing types, along with a vibrant office and commercial district between MacFarnum St and Taylor Rd, should guide new development in this area. Sustainability could be further enhanced with the inclusion of agricultural uses, such as community gardens and small scale suburban farms.

#### FEATURES:

1. Neighborhood Center
2. Public Square
3. Public Green Space
4. Big Box Retail
5. Mixed-Use Commercial
6. Small Apartment Buildings
7. Townhomes
8. Single Family Houses
9. Community Agriculture



What If? Option 1: More Big Box and Flexible Commercial Uses

-  Diverse Housing Types
-  Walking and Biking
-  Strategic Commercial Development



Existing conditions

- FEATURES:**
1. Neighborhood Center
  2. Public Square
  3. Public Green Space
  4. Big Box Retail
  5. Mixed-Use Commercial
  6. Small Apartment Buildings
  7. Townhomes
  8. Single Family Houses
  9. Community Agriculture



What if? Option 2: More Traditional Residential Uses

## VI. Key Focus Areas

### BSI Neighborhood Center

## BURNT STORE ISLES NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

Neighborhood Centers are small walkable, pedestrian-friendly mixed-use clusters with businesses, shops, retail, restaurants and other amenities within residential neighborhoods that serve the day-to-day service needs of local residents, visitors and foster community interaction.

A mixture of uses is one of the most important qualities defining the BSI neighborhood center. The concept of concentrating living, working and shopping uses is integral to this center. Uses that create a vibrant environment which will be active during multiple hours of the day.

The BSI neighborhood center is envisioned as a place-based enhancement to the existing stable residential neighborhood and associated shopping area. A sense of place is generated and functions as an anchor; it helps distinguish a town, village or, in this case, the neighborhood center from the rest of the area which has a typical single-use development. The integration of multiple uses with a network of increased levels of connected streets and walkways, helps create a memorable environment for pedestrians, bikes and motorized vehicles.

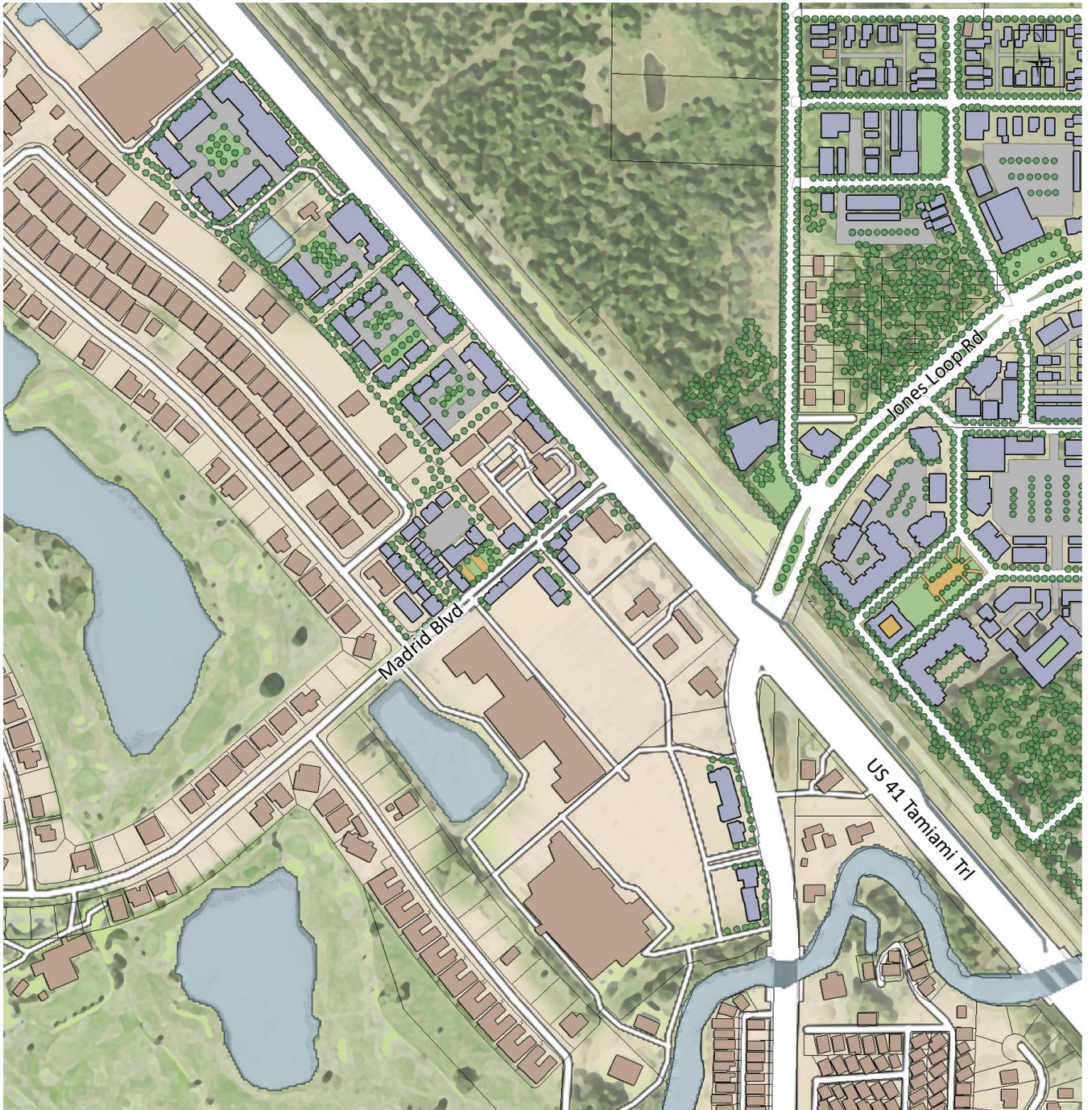
Close attention is paid to all these elements in order to make the neighborhood center successful. Integrating uses helps moderate the balance between different flows of traffic by generating a variety of activities throughout the day and week. Some uses, like residential, help keep the retail and commercial uses busy in the evenings, while office uses help generate activity during the day. Both attract people to the street in different amounts at different times of the day.

The area, as a neighborhood center, connects with people at a level where it can be perceived by the community as belonging to it. The integration of multiple uses creates the vibrant character that people identify with and enjoy. The mixed-use character of the area form a neighborhood or district environment that will appeal to the public and be sustained by it. In addition, the neighborhood center is conceived as a lasting development that holds its value and becomes a landmark and an asset to the community.

A village square has been added to increase the sense of belonging and importance to the neighborhood. Locating the major scale buildings around, including a civic use building that anchors the area as the focal point of the development. The streets surrounding this space, the new connections created and the buildings located on the empty areas of the commercial lots along Madrid Blvd, provide and enhanced level of street frontage that is pleasing for walking and activating the street environment.

The new mixed-use development comes with parking lots that will fulfill the need of the new flow of vehicles. These parking lots are located inside the blocks to keep them out of the sight from the streets, and are lined around with the buildings that form the blocks. The parking lots can be accessed from the secondary streets that connect to US 41 and face the back of the buildings. Also, the creation of new streets to connect the existing network increases accessibility to the area.

Figure 6.10: Burnt Store Isles Illustrative Plan



**Legend**

-  Existing Building
-  New Building
-  New Plaza
-  New Greenspace
-  Street Trees

## VI. Key Focus Areas

### BSI Neighborhood Center

## BURNT STORE ISLES NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

This area has been developed with walkability and integration of uses in mind. New buildings with street frontage that enhance the street experience for pedestrians have been planned along Madrid Blvd, not only as a strategy to increase density along the street, but also as a gateway to the New town square. The street frontage of the buildings is complemented with street trees on the sidewalks to attract pedestrians and activate the area. In addition, multi-family residential along Madrid Blvd has been added in order to keep the character of the neighborhood as a diverse development.

The new town square serves as an anchor for the area. It is located at the center of the neighborhood and contains the major public uses for the community.

Civic and public use buildings surround the town square. Another public space added to the area is the neighborhood park with playground located right where the new mixed-used development and the existing single-family homes converge. This area can also house community and family-oriented events.

Finally, along US 41 the new mixed-use development connects the area to the major road connection of the city. It lines a series of mixed use buildings that leave the parking lots strategically located behind so they will not be easily seen from the street. These parking lots will be conveniently accessible through the street network, which includes a new access road that will connect Monaco Dr to the neighborhood center.



Existing conditions



Diverse Housing Types



Walking and Biking



Strategic Commercial Development

New buildings w/  
street frontage

Multi-Family  
Residential

Town  
square

New buildings w/  
street frontage

Neighborhood  
park with  
playground

Mixed-use  
development

New road  
access to  
Monaco Drive



What if?

## VI. Key Focus Areas

### PGI Neighborhood Center

## PGI NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

The PGI Neighborhood Center is an important piece that will help to achieve the community-wide goals of increased walkability, reduced vehicular traffic, improved human health, and encourage neighborhood connections and resiliency.

In addition, the PGI Neighborhood Center has the opportunity for public spaces and waterfront development due to the existence of a lake as the main natural feature in the area. The new infill development, will be located around the main roads that form the focal point of the neighborhood. New retail and commercial uses will bring economic development and will increase foot traffic around the streets.

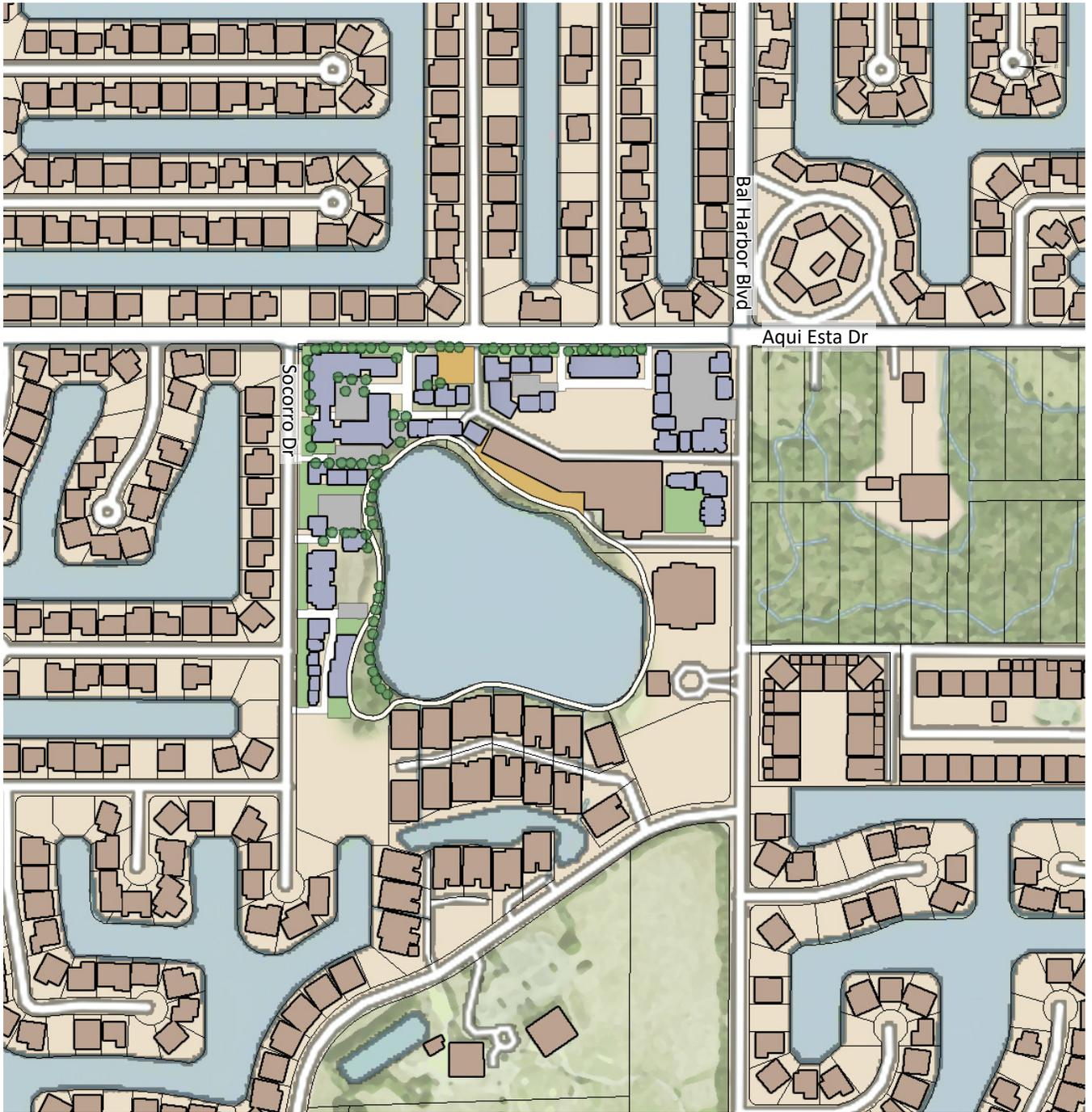
The density permitted under the existing zoning for residential uses, will also bring more people to live in the area and become a great source of activation of the public realm. Parking lots hidden from the main views and lined with buildings with their frontage to the streets, will hold the amount of parking required. Trees will also be added, not only to streets, but also to the green areas as a buffer with the spaces that can be used for outdoor activities.

On the east side of the neighborhood center area, a wider variety of housing types will be located to increase density and have the opportunity to activate this location. A new assisted living development facing Aqui Esta Dr will be one of the anchors of the neighborhood. Such a development will bring residents and employees alike enhancing the vibrancy of this neighborhood center.

Housing targeted to highly skilled medical professionals of the assisted living facility will also be added to the mix of housing types. In addition, a new Lakefront Promenade will become a part of the outdoor and community amenities. This promenade will have retail and commercial uses facing it that will also contribute to make the PGI neighborhood center a pleasant and engaging place to visit.

Also, at the center of the neighborhood there will be a Public Square which will give the area an opportunity to gather and foster community. It will be surrounded with commercial and retail uses to keep foot traffic on the streets and activate the area.

Figure 6.11: PGI Center Illustrative Plan



**Legend**

- Existing Building
- New Building
- New Plaza
- New Greenspace
- New Parking Garage
- Street Trees

## VI. Key Focus Areas

### PGI Neighborhood Center



Existing conditions



Phase 1



Phase 2

-  Diverse Housing Types
-  Walking and Biking
-  Strategic Commercial Development



Phase 3 - Proposed Conditions

## PGI NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

Mixed-use development, as already permitted by the existing zoning, will be located in the neighborhood center to accommodate new housing types, retail spaces and shops. It will encourage build out of the center located next to the existing commercial area. The vision is to complement the uses and use the land more efficiently.

Townhouses is one of the residential types being added to the area. This type of housing increases the number of units without occupying large amounts of land. It

also helps to line the parking lot and hide it from the main street to maintain its walkable character and pedestrian-friendly environment that is envisioned for the area.

Finally, the new roundabout at the crossing of Bal Harbor and Aqui Esta Dr will not only calm vehicular traffic, but also will make the traffic flow smoother thru the intersection and the area.

### FEATURES:

1. Multi-Family Residential
2. Housing For Assisted Living Employees
3. Street-Oriented Assisted Living Development
4. Retail Facing Lakefront Promenade
5. Public Square
6. Neighborhood Center Commercial
7. Expanded Neighborhood Center Mixed-Use
8. Townhouses
9. Roundabout at Bal Harbor



## VI. Key Focus Areas

### PGI Neighborhood Center

## PGI NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

The Public Square offers multiple possibilities of activation and community building within the neighborhood. One of the main features is that the mixed-used buildings face Aquí Esta Dr with their active uses to attract foot traffic and provide a pleasant experience to pedestrians.

Surrounding the public square, mixed use buildings, & townhouses provide a wider array of housing types within PGI. This diversity of housing types can allow for more residents to age in place as household needs

change over the live of their retirement. In addition, ground floor retail and commercial uses provide additional destinations to area residents. These new destinations could reduce daily trips outside of the neighborhood reducing vehicle dependency.

The Public Square provides bike share and bike parking as a way to promote cycling among residents and visitors. High visibility crosswalks offer a sense of safety and accessibility to the neighborhood.



Proposed Town Square – Aquí Esta Drive at Cimarron Drive

**FEATURES:**

1. Active Uses facing Aqui Esta Dr
2. High visibility crosswalks
3. New Mixed-Use
4. Bike share & bike parking
5. Public Square



Existing Condition – Aqui Esta Drive at Cimarron Drive



## VI. Key Focus Areas

PGI Neighborhood Center

# ROUNABOUT ON AQUI ESTA AND BAL HARBOR

### Modern Roundabouts

A modern roundabout accommodates traffic flow and capacity while creating a greater sense of place and allowing safer conditions for pedestrians. Walkability at a roundabout is increased because traffic speeds are lower as vehicles approach and exit the roundabout, and pedestrians have fewer lanes of traffic to cross at one time. Roundabouts provide a greater sense of place because of their distinctive design and greater opportunities for urban design. A statuary, public art, or landscaping can be placed in the center of the roundabout, although care must be taken to preserve adequate sight lines.

### Pedestrians

Roundabouts are designed to achieve a consistent, low vehicle speed (15 to 25 mph) to minimize crash potential; this by nature renders them pedestrian-friendly. When traffic volumes are light, many gaps are available for pedestrian crossing. When vehicle volumes are high, more vehicles pause at the yield line, allowing pedestrians to cross safely behind the first vehicle. The pedestrian crosswalk should occur one car length back (approximately 20 feet) from the yield line to place the pedestrian safely in view of the second waiting vehicle's driver. Again, an appropriately low speed is the key pedestrian safety element of roundabout design.

### Bicyclists

Bicyclists are sometimes concerned about travel through a roundabout, especially if they have experience with the much larger and faster traffic circles found in New England. In fact, modern roundabout intersections are much safer for bicyclists than traffic signals. This is due to the slower traffic speeds found in a roundabout. Entering and circulating at 25 mph or less, automobiles can easily share space with bicycles traveling through a roundabout. To traverse the roundabout, the cyclist simply travels through in the vehicle lane just like an automobile. Cyclists who are uncomfortable sharing the road with automobiles may, alternatively, go around the roundabout using the sidewalk system as if a pedestrian.

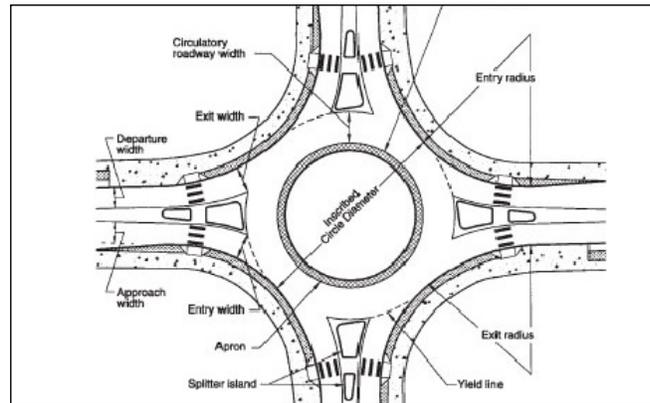
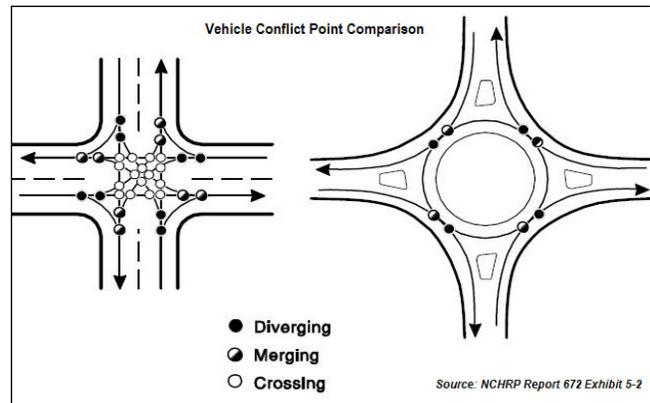


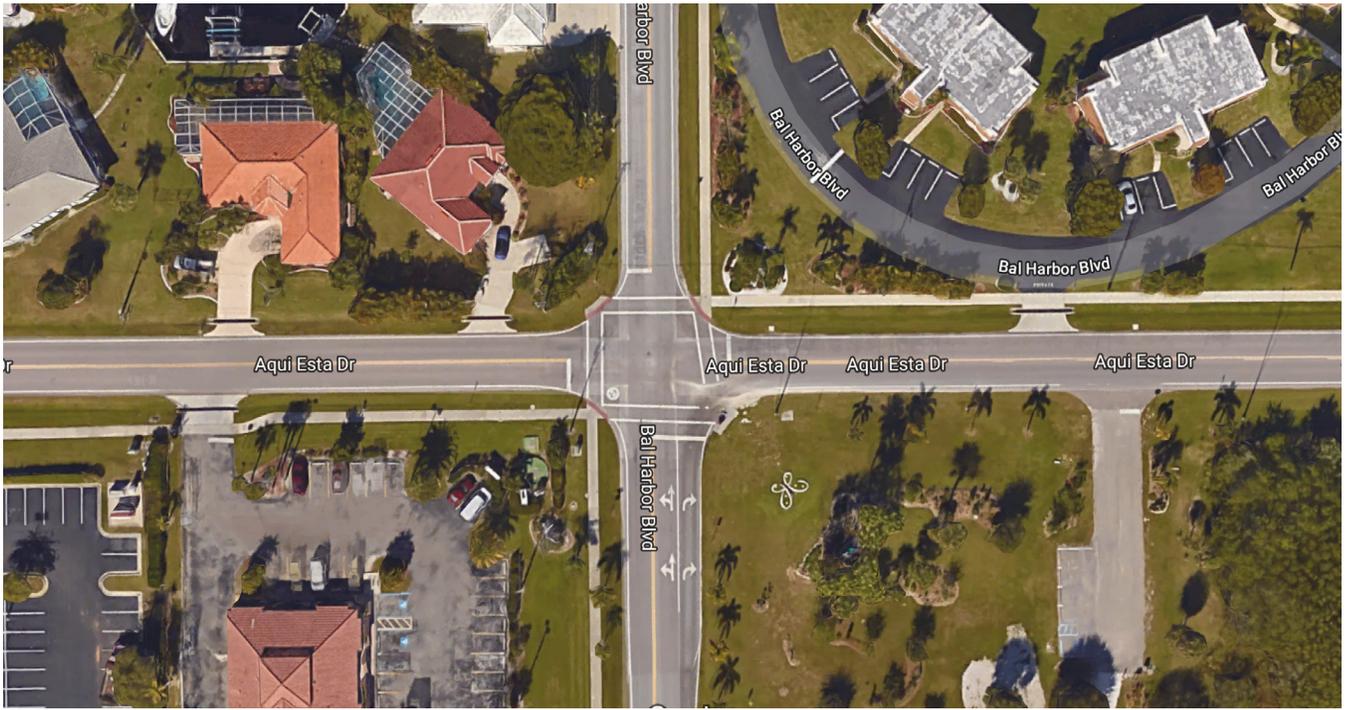
Figure 6.12: The basic features of modern roundabouts. Displayed in this drawing from the FHWA document "Roundabouts: An Informational Guide" (FHWA RD-00-067)



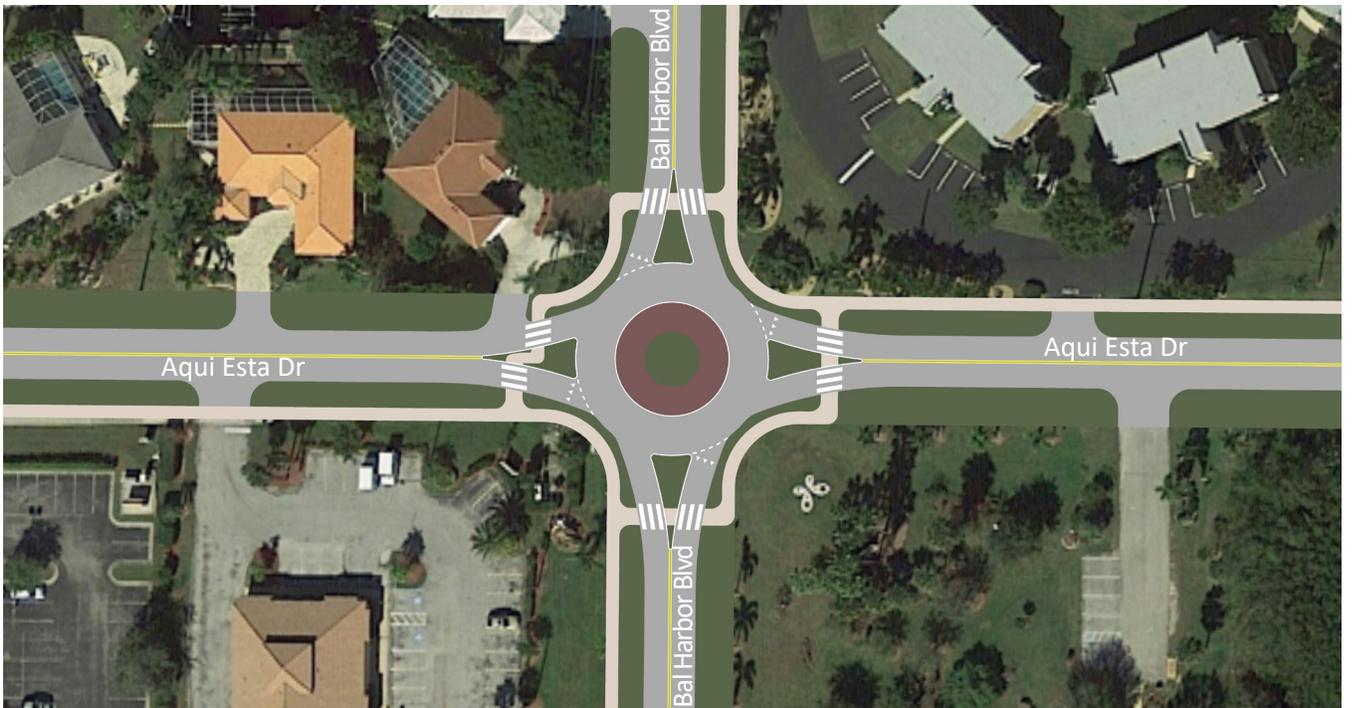
32 Vehicle conflicts  
24 Pedestrian Conflicts

8 vehicle conflicts  
8 Pedestrian Conflicts

Figure 6.13: Number of conflict points at junctions and roundabouts



Existing Condition at Aquí Esta Drive and Bal Harbor Boulevard



Proposed Roundabout

## VII. Implementation & Engagement

### Introduction





# 7 Implementation & Ongoing Engagement

The Implementation & Ongoing Engagement chapter lays out specific activities which the City of Punta Gorda can undertake in the coming years to address community concerns and priorities. This includes activities, programs, ordinances, and administrative systems to be put in place to implement the plan. This section also recommends future strategies to keep the community involved and ensure success after the plan has been adopted.

The following implementation matrix organizes strategies and actions by the five plan goals. Each action is accompanied with additional information.

**Action:** Description of policy, program or action that should be taken

**Timeframe:** Describes the anticipated timeframe and/or duration for implementation for each action item, defined as:

- Immediate: within the first year following plan adoption
- Ongoing: immediate / continuous
- Near-Term: 1 to 5 following plan adoption
- Long-Term: 5 years or longer

**Lead Agency:** Lists the responsible parties for implementing the activity

**Potential Partners:** Describes any potential partner agencies, city departments, or organizations as identified by key stakeholders and the community that can help implement each action item.

**Estimated (Est.) Cost:** The estimated cost for implementing an activity, defined by:

- \$\$\$ +\$250,000
- \$\$ \$100,000 – 250,000
- \$ < \$100,000
- - No City borne costs

**Funding Source:** Describes the possible funding sources and mechanisms for each action (operating funds, impact fees, grants, capital improvement monies, etc.)

**Type:** Categorizes actions by: City Policy / Regulations, Capital Improvements, City Programs / Services, and Planning Studies

## VII. Implementation & Engagement

### Implementation Priorities

#### FOCUSING ON WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT

The Implementation & Ongoing Engagement chapter provides over 100 comprehensive action items to help the City of Punta Gorda and its partners reach the goals and objectives set forth in this Citywide Master Plan. While each action item described will help the City achieve desirable outcomes, the team understands that the City faces challenging financial, staffing, and political constraints and has, in response, created a list of top ten priority items. The goal of this list is to help focus the energy and resources of city staff, elected officials, and community groups on the few policies, programs, and capital improvements that will yield the most significant outcomes. The items listed on the right represent a summary of the action items that we believe will provide the most lasting and far-reaching impacts for Punta Gorda. Some of these priority items span several plan goals and accomplish multiple objectives at the same time, while others represent more focused infrastructure improvements that alone should have significant and positive ripple effects.

# TOP 10 PRIORITIES:

- 1.** Update and revise the city's comprehensive plan and land development regulations in order to encourage infill development and allow more diverse and affordable housing types.  
*Goal 1: Actions 1.1, 1.3, 1.5; Goal 3, Actions 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4; Goal 5, Actions 1.1, 1.2*
- 2.** Consider the adoption of a form-based code and updated architectural guidelines for key areas in Punta Gorda that will ensure future development corresponds closely with the qualities and intent of the Future Character Areas detailed in Chapter 2 of this Master Plan.  
*Goal 1, Actions 1.2, 6.1, 6.2*
- 3.** Study and adopt an intensity bonus program which grants additional development potential, in the form of height, FAR, or density, in exchange for pre-defined community benefits including affordable housing, cultural and arts-related uses, and public open space.  
*Goal 1, Action 1.6; Goal 5, Action 1.3*
- 4.** Improve the safety for all people walking, riding bikes, and driving Downtown by reducing the number of lanes on US 41 as it passes through Downtown Punta Gorda, implementing intersection improvements at Retta Esplanade and US 41, and having FDOT adopt the City's proposed Context Classification Map (Figure 5.8).  
*Goal 1, Action 2.2, 2.3, Goal 4, Actions 1.4, 1.5, 1.6*
- 5.** Create a new Community Affairs Division within the City of Punta Gorda, with one or two new full-time positions to help manage recreational, arts, and cultural programming for the city and to conduct public outreach.  
*Goal 1, Action 3.1*
- 6.** Preserve Punta Gorda's historic assets by adopting a local register of historic properties, as well as creating two new local historic districts and replacing the Bethel-St. Mark Historic District with a new local conservation district.  
*Goal 1, Actions 6.4, 6.5*
- 7.** Attract more visiting boaters to Punta Gorda by studying the creation of a new western mooring ball field in Charlotte Harbor and by partnering with the City's waterfront hotels to expand existing and construct new marinas and upland facilities.  
*Goal 2, Actions 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4*
- 8.** Improve walkability by re-writing the city's street standards in accordance with the Complete Streets Resolution of 2014, filling in any gaps in the existing sidewalk network, and establishing a Street Tree Program to provide much needed shade along sidewalks.  
*Goal 4, Actions 1.1, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9*
- 9.** Approve and construct a low-stress minimum grid network of trails and bicycle facilities, as defined in the Recommended Bicycle Network Map (Figure 5.10) of this Master Plan.  
*Goal 4, Action 3.1*
- 10.** Encourage more commercial development by establishing a Business Improvement District (BID), supporting the creation of Community Development Corporations (CDCs), and adopting tiered impact fees and a property tax rebate program for commercial infill projects.  
*Goal 5, Actions 1.5, 1.6, 1.7*

## VII. Implementation & Engagement

### Implementation Matrix

## GOAL 1 - Make Downtown a vibrant and attractive place.

STRATEGY / ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD AGENCY	
<b>Strategy 1: Actively encourage the development of large opportunity sites downtown.</b>			
Action 1.1: Revise the Comprehensive Plan to permit zoning/land development regulation changes that will allow reasonable intensity, density, and predictability.	Immediate	Urban Design, Zoning & Code Compliance	
Action 1.2: Consider the adoption of a form-based code in key areas and along key corridors where development and investment is likely and desirable. The regulations within this code should conform to the qualities and intent of the Future Character Areas as detailed in Chapter 2 of the Master Plan. Policies regarding development criteria found throughout the plan should be taken into account and incorporated into the new regulations whenever possible.	Immediate	Urban Design, Zoning & Code Compliance	
Action 1.3: Evaluate and revise Downtown's overlay districts to ensure they are compatible with the Citywide Master Plan goals and with any zoning and regulatory changes.	Immediate	Urban Design, Zoning & Code Compliance	
Action 1.4: Adopt the Investment Sector Map (Figure 4.2) to inform public and private investment priorities, as well as stable areas that should be preserved.	Immediate	Urban Design	
Action 1.5: Ensure that local historic district designations do not impose additional development barriers to key development opportunity sites.	Immediate	Urban Design	
Action 1.6: Study and adopt an intensity bonus program which grants additional bonus development in exchange for a pre-defined set of community benefits such as affordable housing, cultural and arts-related space, and public open space.	Immediate	Urban Design, Zoning & Code Compliance	
<b>Strategy 2: Ensure that downtown is comfortable and accessible for all people walking, biking, and driving.</b>			
Action 2.1: Restore Marion Ave and Olympia Ave to two-way traffic to help slow down traffic and reduce confusion for new residents and visitors.	Near-Term	Public Works, Urban Design	
Action 2.2: Slow down traffic and enhance safety downtown by reducing the number of lanes on US 41 as it passes through Downtown Punta Gorda.	Near-Term	Public Works, Urban Design	
Action 2.3: Implement intersection improvements at Retta Esplanade and US 41 to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety.	Near-Term	Public Works, Urban Design	



	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COSTS	POTENTIAL FUNDING	TYPE	ADDITIONAL GOALS
		\$	General Fund	City Policy / Regulation	Goal 3, Goal 5
	TEAM Punta Gorda, Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association, Smart Growth Punta Gorda, Historic District HOA	\$\$	General Fund	City Policy / Regulation	Goal 3, Goal 5
		\$	General Fund	City Policy / Regulation	Goal 3, Goal 5
		-		City Policy / Regulation	Goal 3, Goal 5
	Historic District HOA	-		City Policy / Regulation	Goal 3, Goal 5
	Punta Gorda Housing Authority, Charlotte County Housing Services, Gulf Coast Partnership, Habitat for Humanity, Harborside Center for the Arts (HCA)	\$	General Fund	City Policy / Regulation	Goal 3, Goal 5
	FDOT, Charlotte County Transportation Engineering	\$\$\$	Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Funding (e.g. Bond Financing, Impact Fees, General Fund, State & Federal Grants, Special Revenue Funds, Special Taxing Districts), Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax, State & Federal Transportation Grants	Capital Improvement Project	Goal 4
	FDOT, Charlotte County Transportation Engineering	\$\$\$	CIP Funding, Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax, State & Federal Transportation Grants	Capital Improvement Project	Goal 4
	FDOT, Charlotte County Transportation Engineering	\$\$\$	CIP Funding, Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax, State & Federal Transportation Grants	Capital Improvement Project	Goal 4

## VII. Implementation & Engagement

### Implementation Matrix

## GOAL 1 - Make Downtown a vibrant and attractive place.

STRATEGY / ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD AGENCY	
Action 2.4: Transform Taylor Street from Marion Ave to Harborside Ave into a shared, festival street.	Near-Term	Public Works, Urban Design	
Action 2.5: Update street design standards downtown to include updated landscaping, lighting, and furnishing guidelines.	Immediate	Urban Design, Public Works	
<b>Strategy 3: Establish Downtown Punta Gorda as an arts, culture, and entertainment hub.</b>			
Action 3.1: Create a new Community Affairs Division within the City of Punta Gorda, with one or two new full-time positions. Responsibilities would include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting community groups in managing arts, culture, housing, employment, and economic development programs;</li> <li>Implementing outreach programs;</li> <li>Working with local groups to organize and publicize events; and</li> <li>Managing recreational use and programming in City Parks.</li> </ul>	Immediate to Near-Term	City Manager, City Council	
Action 3.2: Adopt a public art ordinance for Downtown Punta Gorda that requires a percentage of new development budgets for projects of a certain size be earmarked for public art.	Near-Term	Urban Design, Zoning & Code Compliance	
Action 3.3: Continue to support the creation of murals downtown.	Ongoing	Community Affairs, Urban Design	
Action 3.4: Continue to support events and festivals in Downtown Punta Gorda.	Ongoing	Community Affairs, Public Works, Fire & Police Department	
Action 3.5: Create a decorative lighting plan for downtown and develop branded banners for main streets, giving preference to local artists in the conception and fabrication of these new design elements.	Near-Term	Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), Urban Design, Public Works	
Action 3.6: Revise the existing noise ordinance to establish: 1) A quantitative, rather than qualitative, method for establishing acceptable noise levels and 2) Permitted noise levels at specific times for different areas of the city.	Immediate	Zoning & Code Compliance, Police Department	
Action 3.7: Provide permit/impact fee rebates for new projects containing nonprofit, cultural, and artist production, exhibition, and rehearsal spaces.	Ongoing	Zoning & Code Compliance, Building	
Action 3.8: Revise the existing Temporary Conditional Use (TCU) Permit to allow for pop-up arts, entertainment, and retail uses in vacant downtown storefronts and lots.	Immediate	Zoning & Code Compliance, Building	
Action 3.9: Incentivize or require new residential construction downtown to incorporate details that minimize sound transfer into and out of units.	Immediate	Zoning & Code Compliance, Building	



	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COSTS	POTENTIAL FUNDING	TYPE	ADDITIONAL GOALS
	PG Chamber, County Chamber, Historic District HOA, TEAM Punta Gorda, PG Isles Civic Association	\$\$\$	CIP Funding, Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax	Capital Improvement Project	Goal 4
	PG Chamber, Historic District HOA, TEAM Punta Gorda	\$	General Fund	City Planning Study	Goal 4
		\$\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	Goal 3, Goal 5
		\$\$	General Fund	City Policy / Regulation	
	Punta Gorda Historic Mural Society (PGHMS), Visual Arts Center, Harborside Center for the Arts (HCA)	\$\$	General Fund, Private Donation	City Program / Service	
	TEAM Punta Gorda, PG Isles Civic Association, PG Chamber, County Chamber, Tourism Bureau	\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	Goal 5
	TEAM Punta Gorda, PG Isles Civic Association, Tourism Bureau, Visual Arts Center, Harborside Center for the Arts (HCA)	\$\$	General Fund, CRA Fund, Private Donation	City Planning Study	Goal 5
	PG Chamber, Historic District HOA	\$	General Fund	City Policy / Regulation	Goal 5
		\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	Goal 5
	PG Chamber, Historic District HOA	-		City Policy / Regulation	Goal 5
		-		City Policy / Regulation	Goal 5

## VII. Implementation & Engagement

### Implementation Matrix

## GOAL 1 - Make Downtown a vibrant and attractive place.

STRATEGY / ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD AGENCY	
Action 3.10: Partner with local arts organizations to provide new programs and spaces for cultural production in Downtown Punta Gorda.	Ongoing	Community Affairs	
Action 3.11: Study the creation of a Cultural Space Management PDA, an independent entity tasked with leasing, developing, purchasing, and subleasing spaces to cultural organizations and artists.	Near-Term	Community Affairs	
Action 3.12: Invest in new artistic lighting for the Gilchrist and Barron Collier bridges that can be programed for special events or certain hours of the night.	Near-Term	Urban Design, Public Works	
<b>Strategy 4: Explore parking management and transportation solutions that enhance downtown.</b>			
Action 4.1: Partner with local businesses downtown to establish a shared valet service that allows patrons to drop-off and pick-up their car at any valet location.	Ongoing	Community Affairs, CRA	
Action 4.2: Adopt and enforce a time limited parking rule for on-street spaces along key retail and commercial streets downtown.	Immediate	Public Works, Police Department	
Action 4.3: Explore a residential parking permit in the downtown historic district to help manage on-street parking spaces.	Near-Term	Public Works, Police Department	
Action 4.4: Study the establishment of a parking program that would allow developers to pay into a fee-in-lieu fund for the construction of new centralized garages instead of providing parking on site.	Near-Term	Finance, Zoning & Code Compliance	
Action 4.5: Revise existing bicycle parking requirements to establish standard short- and long-term parking ratios for all new non-residential and multi-family residential projects and to incentivize the addition of covered bicycle parking and employer based shower and locker facilities.	Immediate	Urban Design, Zoning & Code Compliance	
Action 4.6: Expand existing and create new educational and public information campaigns to educate residents about alternative transportation options, such as small electric shuttles, bicycle safety, and car sharing services.	Ongoing	City Communications, Information Technology	
Action 4.7: Study the feasibility of a progressive pricing model for downtown parking in the long-term to incentivize better utilization of all parking options.	Long-Term	Finance, Urban Design	
<b>Strategy 5: Improve the quality of life by investing in high quality public spaces that are sustainable and resilient.</b>			
Action 5.1: Construct new public spaces downtown, identified in the Public Realm Improvements Map (Figure 5.3).	Near-Term to Long-Term	Urban Design, Public Works	



	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COSTS	POTENTIAL FUNDING	TYPE	ADDITIONAL GOALS
	TEAM Punta Gorda, Charlotte Community Foundation, Visual Arts Center, HCA, PGHMS, Center for Performing Arts, Arts & Humanities Council of Charlotte County, County Cultural Center Charlotte County	\$\$\$	General Fund, Private Donation, State and Federal Grants	City Program / Service	Goal 5
	TEAM Punta Gorda, PG Isles Civic Association, Visual Arts Center, HCA	\$	General Fund	City Planning Study	Goal 5
	Fishermen's Village, Sheraton Four Points, Sunseeker Resort, PG Isles Civic Association, Tourism Bureau	\$\$\$	CIP Funding, Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax, Private Donation	Capital Improvement Project	Goal 2
	PG Isles Civic Association, PG Chamber	\$\$-	General Fund, CRA Fund	City Program / Service	Goal 5
	PG Isles Civic Association, PG Chamber, Historic District HOA	\$	General Fund	City Policy / Regulation	Goal 5
	Historic District HOA	\$	General Fund	City Policy / Regulation	Goal 3
		\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	
		-		City Policy / Regulation	Goal 4
	TEAM Punta Gorda, Peace River Riders, Coastal Cruisers, Acme Bicycle Shop	\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	Goal 4
	PG Isles Civic Association, PG Chamber, Historic District HOA	\$\$-	General Fund	City Planning Study	
	Private Developers	\$\$\$	CIP Funding, Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax, Private Donation	Capital Improvement Project	Goal 4

## VII. Implementation & Engagement

### Implementation Matrix

## GOAL 1 - Make Downtown a vibrant and attractive place.

STRATEGY / ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD AGENCY	
Action 5.2: Work with advocacy groups to provide more youth programming in and around downtown Punta Gorda.	Immediate	Community Affairs	
Action 5.3: Develop a green infrastructure program for new capital projects that sets new standards for impervious versus pervious surface areas, sustainable building materials, xeriscaping, and low impact stormwater management.	Near-Term	Urban Design, Public Works, Buildings	
Action 5.4: Continue to implement the recommendations of the Punta Gorda Climate Action Plan (updated February 2019), including the protection and restoration of shoreline habitats, installation of check valves, and elevation and floodproofing of critical infrastructure.	Ongoing	Public Works, Utilities	
Action 5.5: Adopt adaptation guidelines for new capital projects and private developments in the Downtown Adaptation Focus Area identified in the Punta Gorda Climate Action Plan (updated February 2019). Adaptation measures include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elevating critical infrastructure and building systems above base flood elevation;</li> <li>• Wet floodproofing non-habitable spaces with breakwalls or flood vents;</li> <li>• Dry floodproofing critical infrastructure that can't be elevated and habitable ground floor spaces like storefronts and restaurants;</li> <li>• Incorporating low impact development practices such as bioswales and rain gardens; and</li> <li>• Installing of wet wells or underground water catchment cisterns.</li> </ul>	Near-Term	Public Works, Utilities, Buildings, Zoning & Code Compliance	
Action 5.6: In partnership with local and regional agencies study and implement long-term adaptation strategies including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional shoreline protection measures;</li> <li>• Stormwater management tools like pump stations;</li> <li>• Larger capacity pipes, overflow storage tanks, and check valves; and</li> <li>• Raised streets and heightened sea walls.</li> </ul>	Long-Term	Public Works, Utilities	
<b>Strategy 6: Preserve the character of Punta Gorda and ensure that new development adds to its unique charm.</b>			
Action 6.1: Adopt the Future Character Areas Map (Figure 4.1) as a way to ensure that all zoning and land-use regulation revisions serve to implement the desired future character of the city.	Immediate	Urban Design, Zoning & Code Compliance	
Action 6.2: As a part of a new form-based code or revised overlay districts, establish and new architectural and site-design guidelines, as well as new frontage and street design standards.	Immediate	Urban Design, Zoning & Code Compliance, Building	



	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COSTS	POTENTIAL FUNDING	TYPE	ADDITIONAL GOALS
	TEAM Punta Gorda, Charlotte Community Foundation, United Way of Charlotte County, New Operation Cooper Street, Friends of Gilchrist Park, YMCA, Historic District HOA	\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	
	Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center, Peace River Charlotte Harbor Environmental Awareness (PReaCH)	\$-\$\$	General Fund, CIP Funding, Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax	City Program / Service	Goal 2
	Florida Office of Resilience & Coastal Protection, Historic District HOA	\$\$\$	National Coastlines Resilience Fund, General Fund, CIP Funding, Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax	Capital Improvement Project	Goal 2
	Florida Office of Resilience & Coastal Protection, Historic District HOA	\$	General Fund	City Policy / Regulation	
	Charlotte County Community Development, Charlotte County MPO, Charlotte County Public Works & Utilities, FDOT, Florida Office of Resilience & Coastal Protection	\$\$\$	Florida Resilient Coastlines Program, General Fund, CIP Funding, Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax State & Federal Grants	City Planning Study, Capital Improvement Project	
	TEAM Punta Gorda, Smart Growth Punta Gorda, Historic District HOA	-		City Policy / Regulation	Goal 3, Goal 5
	TEAM Punta Gorda, Smart Growth Punta Gorda, Historic District HOA	\$-\$\$	General Fund	City Policy / Regulation	

## VII. Implementation & Engagement

### Implementation Matrix

## GOAL 1 - Make Downtown a vibrant and attractive place.

STRATEGY / ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD AGENCY	
Action 6.4: Adopt a local register of historic properties and create two new local historic districts, the Downtown Historic District and Grace Street Mid-Century District (Figure 4.4).	Immediate	Urban Design, Zoning & Code Compliance	
Action 6.5: Replace the Bethel-St. Mark Historic District with a new local conservation district (Figure 4.4), as part of the revisions to the City's Land Development Regulations.	Immediate	Urban Design, Zoning & Code Compliance	
Action 6.6: Establish a long-term relocation and adaptation strategy for historic properties in areas vulnerable to sea level rise as identified in the Punta Gorda Climate Plan (updated February 2019).	Near-Term	Urban Design, Building	
Action 6.7: Develop a sidewalk plaque program that identifies historic businesses that are no longer in Punta Gorda, but played an important role in its growth and development.	Near-Term	CRA, Urban Design	
Action 6.8: Preserve existing greenspace in city parks, particularly along the waterfront by limiting the amount of permitted paved surfaces.	Ongoing	Urban Design, Public Works	



	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COSTS	POTENTIAL FUNDING	TYPE	ADDITIONAL GOALS
	Punta Gorda Historical Society, History Park, Charlotte County Historical Center Society (CCHC). Blanchard House Museum, Historic District HOA	\$	General Fund	City Planning Study	
	Punta Gorda Historical Society, History Park, CCHC, Blanchard House Museum, Historic District HOA	\$	General Fund	City Policy / Regulation	
	Punta Gorda Historical Society, History Park, CCHC, Blanchard House Museum, Historic District HOA	\$\$-\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	
	Punta Gorda Historical Society, History Park, CCHC, Blanchard House Museum, Historic District HOA	\$\$	CRA Fund, Private Donation	City Program / Service	
	Historic District HOA	-		City Policy / Regulation	Goal 2

## VII. Implementation & Engagement

### Implementation Matrix

## GOAL 2 - Celebrate Charlotte Harbor and welcome more boating.

STRATEGY / ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD AGENCY	
<b>Strategy 1: Celebrate and protect Charlotte Harbor.</b>			
Action 1.1: Invest in new artistic lighting for the Gilchrist and Barron Collier bridges that can be programed for special events only or for certain hours of the night.	Near-Term	Urban Design, Public Works	
Action 1.2: Continue to preserve the city's existing shoreline parks and conservation areas through proper maintenance and appropriate land development and zoning regulations.	Ongoing	Public Works, Urban Design	
Action 1.3: Continue and expand existing efforts to install living shorelines offshore of existing waterfront parks and plant additional vegetation along the coastline to enhance the natural shoreline ecosystem and protect against storm events.	Ongoing	Public Works, Urban Design	
Action 1.4: Continue existing efforts to protect and restore the seagrass in Charlotte Harbor.	Ongoing	Public Works, Urban Design	
Action 1.5: Conduct an in depth study of the effects of adding new marinas, mooring ball fields, and breakwaters in Charlotte Harbor and work closely with property owners, environmental groups, and technical consultants to mitigate any potential impacts.	Near-Term	Public Works, Urban Design	
<b>Strategy 2: Encourage more visiting boaters and water-related activities in Punta Gorda.</b>			
Action 2.1: Partner with and support Fishermen's Village, the Punta Gorda Waterfront Hotel, and the Sheraton Four Points in the expansion, re-establishment, or construction of their marinas, as well as the creation of new upland facilities and additional day / dinghy docks on their properties for visiting boaters.	Near-Term	Urban Design	



	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COSTS	POTENTIAL FUNDING	TYPE	ADDITIONAL GOALS
	Fishermen's Village, Sheraton Four Points, Sunseeker Resort, PG Isles Civic Association, Tourism Bureau	\$\$\$	CIP Funding, Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax, Private Donation	Capital Improvement Project	Goal 1
	Charlotte County Natural Resources Division, Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center, PReaCH, Peace River Audubon Society, Florida Office of Resilience & Coastal Protection, TEAM Punta Gorda	-		City Policy / Regulation	Goal 1
	Charlotte County Natural Resources Division, Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center, PReaCH, Peace River Audubon Society, Florida Office of Resilience & Coastal Protection, TEAM Punta Gorda	\$\$\$	National Coastline Resilience Fund, General Fund, State and Federal Grants	City Program / Service	
	Charlotte County Natural Resources Division, Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center, PReaCH, Peace River Audubon Society, Florida Office of Resilience & Coastal Protection, TEAM Punta Gorda	\$\$	General Fund, State and Federal Grants	City Program / Service	
	Fishermen's Village, Sheraton Four Points, Punta Gorda Waterfront Hotel (PGWH), Punta Gorda Boaters Alliance, Punta Gorda Boat Club, Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center, PReaCH, Peace River Audubon Society, Historic District HOA	\$\$\$	General Fund, Private Investment, Federal & State Grants	City Planning Study	
	Fishermen's Village, Sheraton Four Points, Punta Gorda Waterfront Hotel (PGWH), Punta Gorda Boaters Alliance, Punta Gorda Boat Club, Historic District HOA	\$	General Fund, Private Investment, Federal & State Grants	City Program / Service	Goal 1

## VII. Implementation & Engagement

### Implementation Matrix

## GOAL 2 - Celebrate Charlotte Harbor and welcome more boating.

STRATEGY / ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD AGENCY	
Action 2.2: Consider the removal of dinghy docks in Gilchrist Park, while constructing new dinghy / day docks behind the Charlotte Harbor Event Center.	Immediate	Public Works, Urban Design	
Action 2.3: Invest in a western mooring ball field and provide a mechanism to manage and control anchorage off of Gilchrist Park.	Near-Term	Public Works, Zoning & Code Compliance	
Action 2.4: Adopt and enforce strict regulations for boaters using mooring ball fields and anchoring in Charlotte Harbor.	Immediate	Zoning & Code Compliance, Police Department	
Action 2.5: Construct new kayak launches at Ponce Park, at the end of Mary Street in Trabue Park, and at the ends of Colony Point Drive.	Immediate	Public Works	
Action 2.6: Complete the Buckley's Pass "bird cut" project to improve access for boater in Punta Gorda Isles.	Near-Term	Public Works	
Action 2.7: Apply for permits to dredge deeper at Ponce Inlet for a total depth of between 6.5 to 7 feet.	Near-Term	Public Works	
Action 2.8: Work with the county to deepen Alligator Creek.	Near-Term	Public Works (Charlotte County to lead)	
Action 2.9: Partner with Sunseeker and Fishermen's Village to study the feasibility of a water taxi service in the long-term.	Near-Term	Finance	
Action 2.10: Work with the Chamber of Commerce, Yacht Clubs, and local boating organizations to expand existing water-related events and develop large boating events like Sail In's and Traveler Fest.	Ongoing	Community Affairs, Police and Fire Department	
Action 2.11: Expand and improve city marketing aimed specifically at boating and fishing tourists, as well as sailing, kayaking, and paddle boarding enthusiasts.	Ongoing	Community Affairs, City Communications, Information Technology	



	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COSTS	POTENTIAL FUNDING	TYPE	ADDITIONAL GOALS
	Charlotte County Community Development, Charlotte County Public Works, Punta Gorda Boaters Alliance, Punta Gorda Boat Club, Historic District HOA	\$\$	CIP Funding, Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax	Capital Improvement Project	Goal 1
	Fishermen's Village, Punta Gorda Boaters Alliance, Punta Gorda Boat Club, Historic District HOA, Charlotte County Community Development, Charlotte County Public Works	\$\$\$	CIP Funding, Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax, Federal & State Grants	Capital Improvement Project	Goal 1
	Punta Gorda Boaters Alliance, Punta Gorda Boat Club, Historic District HOA, Charlotte County Community Development, Charlotte County Public Works	\$	General Fund	Capital Improvement Project	
	Charlotte County Public Works	\$\$-\$	CIP Funding, Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax	Capital Improvement Project	
	Punta Gorda Boaters Alliance, Punta Gorda Boat Club, Charlotte County Public Works	\$\$-\$\$\$	One-time Tax Assessment District, CIP Funding	Capital Improvement Project	
	Punta Gorda Boaters Alliance, Punta Gorda Boat Club, Charlotte County Public Works	\$	General Fund, CIP Funding, Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax	Capital Improvement Project	
	Charlotte County Alligator Creek Waterway Unit, Punta Gorda Boaters Alliance, Punta Gorda Boat Club	\$\$-\$\$\$	Charlotte County Alligator Creek Waterway Unit (MSBU/MSTU) Funds	Capital Improvement Project	
	Fishermen's Village, Sunseeker Resort, County Tourism Bureau, Charlotte County Public Works, Charlotte County Community Development, Charlotte County Public Works	\$	General Fund, Private Investment	City Planning Study	Goal 1
	Fishermen's Village, Sunseeker Resort, County Tourism Bureau,	\$	General Fund, Federal & State Grants	City Program / Service	
	County Chamber, Punta Gorda Chamber, County Tourism Bureau, Punta Gorda Boaters Alliance, Punta Gorda Boat Club, Local Yacht Clubs	\$	General Fund, Federal & State Grants	City Program / Service	

## VII. Implementation & Engagement

### Implementation Matrix

## GOAL 3 - Diversify housing types.

STRATEGY / ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD AGENCY	
<b>Strategy 1: Encourage new and diverse housing types to serve a broader range of current and future residents.</b>			
Action 1.1: Ensure that residential density controls and land uses are calibrated to allow for missing middle housing types including townhomes, duplexes, fourplexes, cottage courts, and small apartment buildings.	Immediate	Urban Design, Zoning & Code Compliance	
Action 1.2: Reduce minimum lot widths and remove replatting fees in Traditional Neighborhood areas, identified in the Future Character Areas Map (Figure 4.1), to encourage smaller housing types, including townhomes and duplexes.	Immediate	Urban Design, Zoning & Code Compliance	
Action 1.3: Reduce parking requirements outside the CC zone, particularly in the Downtown, Downtown Flex, Traditional Neighborhood, and Neighborhood Center character areas defined in Future Character Areas Map (Figure 4.1) and study the possibility	Immediate	Urban Design, Zoning & Code Compliance	
Action 1.4: Revise zoning and land development regulations to permit more affordable micro units and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in all residential zones and study the possibility of revising single-family zones to allow two homes per lot.	Immediate	Urban Design, Zoning & Code Compliance	
Action 1.5: Develop more assisted living as part of a larger Continuing Care Retirement Communities Program. In partnership with local non-profits, the city can encourage the creation of various types of senior housing or help subsidize the cost of home improvements.	Near-Term	Community Affairs	
<b>Strategy 2: Support the creation of new affordable and workforce housing.</b>			
Action 2.1: Provide a tax/fee rebate program for residential projects that include a certain number of affordable and workforce housing units.	Immediate	Finance, Building	
Action 2.2: Support the creation of affordable infill development by helping local organizations to better utilize all development models including Community Land Trusts, Community Housing Development Organizations, Housing Finance Agencies, and Public Housing Authorities.	Ongoing	Community Affairs, Finance	
Action 2.3: Expand support for nonprofit housing programs, such as SF Florida Goodwill Housing and Habitat for Humanity.	Ongoing	Community Affairs	
Action 2.4: Work with Charlotte County to develop a digital "housing referral" list for residents and service providers that aggregates all available affordable and workforce housing options, and well as rental assistance and homeless services.	Ongoing	Community Affairs, Information Technology	



	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COSTS	POTENTIAL FUNDING	TYPE	ADDITIONAL GOALS
	Historic District HOA, Smart Growth Punta Gorda, Gulf Coast Partnership	-		City Policy / Regulation	Goal 1
	Historic District HOA, Smart Growth Punta Gorda	-		City Policy / Regulation	Goal 1
	Historic District HOA, PG Chamber, Smart Growth Punta Gorda, PG Isles Civic Association	\$	General Fund	City Policy / Regulation	Goal 1
	Historic District HOA, Smart Growth Punta Gorda, Gulf Coast Partnership	\$	General Fund	City Policy / Regulation	Goal 1
	Punta Gorda Housing Authority, Charlotte County Housing Services, Gulf Coast Partnership, Habitat for Humanity, SW Florida Goodwill Housing, Volunteers of America	\$\$\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	
		\$-\$	General Fund	City Policy / Regulation	
	Punta Gorda Housing Authority, Charlotte County Housing Services, Gulf Coast Partnership, Habitat for Humanity, SW Florida Goodwill Housing, Volunteers of America	\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	
	Punta Gorda Housing Authority, Charlotte County Housing Services, Gulf Coast Partnership, Habitat for Humanity, SW Florida Goodwill Housing, Volunteers of America	\$\$\$	Developer Impact Fee, Property Tax, Tax Incremental District	City Program / Service	
	Punta Gorda Housing Authority, Charlotte County Housing Services, Gulf Coast Partnership, Habitat for Humanity, SW Florida Goodwill Housing, Volunteers of America	\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	

## VII. Implementation & Engagement

### Implementation Matrix

## GOAL 3 - Diversify housing types.

STRATEGY / ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD AGENCY	
Action 2.5: Contribute to a Local Housing Assistance Trust Fund.	Ongoing	Finance	
Action 2.6: Study the creation of a sales tax project, or an alternate source of funding, to adequately fund the development of affordable and workforce housing. Investments could include land assembly and acquisition, site remediation, and infrastructure investments.	Near-Term	Finance	
Action 2.7: Establish a Housing Task Force to initiate a citywide Land Bank and facilitate vacant land disposition and transfer for affordable housing projects.	Near-Term	Community Affairs	
Action 2.8: Adopt a policy to prioritize affordable and workforce housing projects as a local preference when seeking funding and housing credits from the Florida Housing Finance Corporation.	Immediate	City Council	



	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COSTS	POTENTIAL FUNDING	TYPE	ADDITIONAL GOALS
	Punta Gorda Housing Authority, Charlotte County Housing Services	\$\$-\$\$\$	Developer Impact Fee, Property Tax, Tax Increment District	City Program / Service	
	Punta Gorda Housing Authority, Charlotte County Housing Services	\$	Sales Tax, Tax Increment District	City Program / Service	
	Punta Gorda Housing Authority	\$\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	
		-		City Policy / Regulation	

## VII. Implementation & Engagement

### Implementation Matrix

## GOAL 4 - Fully Embrace walking and biking.

STRATEGY / ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD AGENCY	
<b>Strategy 1: Create an accessible, safe, and inviting network of streets for users of all ages and abilities.</b>			
Action 1.1: In accordance with the City's Complete Streets Resolution of 2013, rewrite the Street Standards contained in Chapter 20: Streets & Sidewalks and Chapter 20a: Subdivisions of the Code of Ordinances.	Immediate	Urban Design	
Action 1.2: Work with FDOT to adopt the City's recommended Context Classification Map (Figure 5.8).	Immediate	Public Works, Urban Design	
Action 1.3: Restore Marion Ave and Olympia Ave to two-way traffic from W Henry St to US 17, as shown in the Recommended Pedestrian Improvements Map (Figure 5.9), creating transitions on either end with a new roundabout on W Marion Ave and W Henry St and signalized transition at E Marion/Olympia and US 17.	Near-Term	Public Works, Urban Design	
Action 1.4: In accordance with the City's proposed Context Classification Map (Figure 5.8), reduce the speed limit and number of lanes on US 41, Marion Ave, and Olympia Ave as they pass through downtown, as shown in the Recommended Pedestrian Improvements Map (Figure 5.8).	Near-Term	Public Works, Urban Design	
Action 1.5: Implement intersection improvements shown in the Recommended Pedestrian Improvements Map (Figure 5.9), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roundabout on Aqui Esta Dr and Bal Harbor Blvd;</li> <li>• New signalized intersection at Retta Esplanade and US 41 Northbound;</li> <li>• New high visibility crosswalks and stop sign and/or pedestrian activated signal at Retta Esplanade and US 41 Southbound;</li> <li>• New high-visibility crosswalks, pedestrian crossing signals, and median/refuge islands on US 41 and Aqui Esta Dr, Monaco Dr, and Madrid Blvd; and</li> <li>• New public space and offset intersection at Taylor Rd and US 41.</li> </ul>	Near-Term	Public Works, Urban Design	
Action 1.6: Implement traffic calming tools as needed and in addition to narrowing streets and converting them to two-way travel, in areas with higher speed traffic and pedestrian activity. Tools include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing turning radii;</li> <li>• Adding in pedestrian refuges, medians, pinch points, bulbouts, midblock crossings, speed humps / bumps, speed tables, elevated crosswalks, and mini roundabouts;</li> <li>• Constructing shared streets; and</li> <li>• Re-paving streets with rougher and slower pavers.</li> </ul>	Near-Term	Public Works, Urban Design	
Action 1.7: Continue to fill in any gaps in the city's existing sidewalk network, prioritizing sidewalks in the Downtown, Downtown Flex, Traditional Neighborhood, and Neighborhood Center character areas defined in Future Character Areas Map (Figure 4.1).	Near-Term and Ongoing	Public Works	



	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COSTS	POTENTIAL FUNDING	TYPE	ADDITIONAL GOALS
	Charlotte County Transportation Engineering, TEAM Punta Gorda, Nickel Ride, Peace River Riders, Coastal Cruisers	\$	General Fund	City Policy / Regulation	Goal 1
	FDOT, Charlotte County Transportation Engineering	-		City Policy / Regulation	Goal 1
	FDOT, Charlotte County Transportation Engineering	\$\$\$	CIP Fund, Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax, FDOT State & Federal Grants	Capital Improvement Project	Goal 1
	FDOT, Charlotte County Transportation Engineering	\$\$\$	CIP Fund, Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax, FDOT State & Federal Grants	Capital Improvement Project	Goal 1
	FDOT, Charlotte County Transportation Engineering	\$\$\$	CIP Fund, Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax, FDOT State & Federal Grants	Capital Improvement Project	
	FDOT, Charlotte County Transportation Engineering	\$\$\$	CIP Fund, Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax	Capital Improvement Project	
		\$\$\$	CIP Fund, Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax	Capital Improvement Project	Goal 1

## VII. Implementation & Engagement

### Implementation Matrix

## GOAL 4 - Fully Embrace walking and biking.

STRATEGY / ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD AGENCY	
Action 1.8: Implement the remaining ADA capital improvement projects identified in the City of Punta Gorda ADA Transition Plan (November 2018).	Near-Term	Public Works, Urban Design	
Action 1.9: Establish a Street Tree Program that allows individual citizens, developers, business owners, and community groups to contribute to Punta Gorda's urban canopy by purchasing new trees and their initial mulch, while the city commits to maintaining and watering the trees.	Immediate	Public Works, Urban Design	
<b>Strategy 2: Encourage more residents and visitors to pick alternative transportation options.</b>			
Action 2.1: Invest in a public information campaign aimed at supporting existing and future "last-mile" transportation solutions such as small electric shuttle services and TEAM Punta Gorda's Bike Share Program.	Ongoing	Community Affairs, City Communications, Information Technology	
Action 2.2: Promote Charlotte County's existing Curb-to-Curb service on the city website and in city communications and public information campaigns.	Ongoing	City Communications, Information Technology	
Action 2.3: Advocate for and support the full implementation of the Charlotte County Transit Development Plan, which includes plans for an Airport Express and Downtown Punta Gorda circulator trolley / bus service.	Ongoing	City Council, City Manager	
<b>Strategy 3: Invest in new high quality bicycle infrastructure.</b>			
Action 3.1: Approve and construct a low-stress minimum grid network of trails and bicycle facilities, as defined in the Recommended Bicycle Network Map (Figure 5.10).	Near-Term	Public Works, Urban Design	
Action 3.2: Study the feasibility of a long-term vision network of trails and bicycle facilities, as defined in the Recommended Bicycle Network Map (Figure 5.10).	Long-Term	Public Works, Urban Design	
Action 3.3: Revise existing bicycle parking requirements to establish standard short- and long-term parking ratios for all new non-residential and multi-family residential projects and to incentivize the addition of covered bicycle parking and employer based shower and locker facilities.	Immediate	Urban Design, Zoning & Code Compliance	



	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COSTS	POTENTIAL FUNDING	TYPE	ADDITIONAL GOALS
		\$\$\$	CIP Fund, Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax	Capital Improvement Project	Goal 1
	TEAM Punta Gorda, Charlotte Community Foundation, Punta Gorda Garden Club	\$\$-\$\$\$	CIP Fund, Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax	Capital Improvement Project	Goal 1
	TEAM Punta Gorda, Charlotte Community Foundation, Nickel Ride, Peace River Riders, Coastal Cruisers, Acme Bicycle Shop	\$\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	Goal 1
	Charlotte County Human Services	\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	
	FDOT, Charlotte County Transportation Engineering	-		City Program / Service	
	TEAM Punta Gorda, Nickel Ride, Peace River Riders, Coastal Cruisers, Acme Bicycle Shop	\$\$\$	CIP Fund, Optional 1% Sales Sur Tax	Capital Improvement Project	Goal 1
	TEAM Punta Gorda, Nickel Ride, Peace River Riders, Coastal Cruisers, Acme Bicycle Shop	\$\$-\$\$\$	General Fund	City Planning Study	
		-		City Policy / Regulation	Goal 1

## VII. Implementation & Engagement

### Implementation Matrix

## GOAL 5 - Encourage strategic commercial development.

STRATEGY / ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD AGENCY	
<b>Strategy 1: Encourage the development of new commercial space.</b>			
Action 1.1: Ensure that updates to the zoning code and land development regulations remove any regulatory barriers to building viable commercial and mixed-use projects.	Immediate	Urban Design, Zoning & Code Compliance	
Action 1.2: Adopt a flexible code for areas where commercial development is recommended.	Immediate	Urban Design, Zoning & Code Compliance	
Action 1.3: As part of a citywide Intensity Bonus Program, designate commercial and office space as a community benefit in strategic areas identified in both the Investment Sector Map (Figure 4.2) and the Strategic Commercial Development Opportunities Areas Map (Figure 5.11), to be included in exchange for additional development potential.	Immediate	Urban Design, Zoning & Code Compliance	
Action 1.4: Establish a new maker district in South Downtown (Figure 6.6) with specific land use regulations that permit and incentivize a wide range of light industrial and arts-related uses.	Near-Term	Urban Design, Zoning & Code Compliance	
Action 1.5: Adopt tiered impact fees for commercial projects.	Immediate	Zoning & Code Compliance, Finance	
Action 1.6: Enact a targeted property tax rebate program for commercial infill projects.	Immediate	Finance, Zoning & Code Compliance	
Action 1.7: Establish a Business Improvement District (BID) and support the creation of Community Development Corporations (CDCs) in areas where targeted commercial growth is desired and recommended.	Near-Term	Finance, Community Affairs	
Action 1.8: Implement a land banking program to facilitate the development of new commercial retail, office, entertainment and production, distribution and repair (PDR) spaces.	Near-Term	Finance	
Action 1.9: Adopt a land value tax to discourage property owners from sitting on empty land.	Immediate	Finance	
Action 1.10: Create a local developer capacity building program.	Near-Term	Community Affairs, Building	
Action 1.11: Establish a Climate Adaptation Assistance Program for new and existing commercial developments to help identify grants and subsidize a portion of construction costs associated with climate adaptation measures.	Near-Term	Community Affairs, Building	



	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COSTS	POTENTIAL FUNDING	TYPE	ADDITIONAL GOALS
				City Policy / Regulation	
				City Policy / Regulation	Goal 1
				City Policy / Regulation	Goal 1
	Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association, PG Chamber, Charlotte County Chamber, Economic Development Partnership, Charlotte County Economic Development	\$\$	General Fund	City Policy / Regulation	Goal 1
				City Policy / Regulation	Goal 1
		\$\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	Goal 1
	TEAM Punta Gorda, Charlotte Community Foundation, Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association, PG Chamber, Economic Development Partnership	\$\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	Goal 1
	TEAM Punta Gorda, Charlotte Community Foundation, Economic Development Partnership	\$\$-\$\$\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	Goal 1
				City Policy / Regulation	Goal 1, Goal 3
	TEAM Punta Gorda, Charlotte Community Foundation, Economic Development Partnership, PG Chamber	\$\$	General Fund, Private Donation	City Program / Service	
	TEAM Punta Gorda, Charlotte Community Foundation, Florida Office of Resilience & Coastal Protection	\$\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	Goal 1

## VII. Implementation & Engagement

### Implementation Matrix

## GOAL 5 - Encourage strategic commercial development.

STRATEGY / ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME	LEAD AGENCY	
<b>Strategy 2: Expand economic development and local training programs.</b>			
Action 2.1: Work with the Charlotte County Economic Development Office to attract more small and mid-sized PDR (production, distribution, and repair), aviation, and health-related businesses to Punta Gorda.	Ongoing	City Manager, Community Affairs	
Action 2.2: Create targets and outreach plans for both potential future business and residents.	Ongoing	City Manager, Community Affairs	
Action 2.3: Create and maintain a local employment tool online where businesses and the city can post jobs and residents can apply (potentially as part of a structured program).	Near-Term	City Communications, Information Technology	
Action 2.4: Establish working groups for small businesses, entrepreneurs, light manufacturing and distribution businesses, and others (as needed) to bring together relevant stakeholders into marketing functions for the City of Punta Gorda and Charlotte County.	Immediate	Community Affairs	
Action 2.5: Provide opportunities for tourism and business events that link to trade and specialty training programs.	Ongoing	Community Affairs, City Communications	
<b>Strategy 3: Support local businesses to preserve Punta Gorda's authentic and hometown feel.</b>			
Action 3.1: Create a façade improvement program to help local businesses make improvements to their storefronts in accordance with new architectural and frontage standards.	Near-Term	Building	
Action 3.2: Identify and partner with key anchor institutions to support and expand existing local businesses, as well as the events and programming that help to sustain them.	Ongoing	Community Affairs	
Action 3.3: Enhance Punta Gorda's food and entertainment businesses with unified branding, marketing, and event campaigns, as well as supporting the development emerging districts, such as the mini-retaurants row along Tamiami Trl and King St in the proposed maker district area (Figure 6.6).	Near-Term	CRA, Urban Design, Community Affairs	
Action 3.4: Incentivize the creation of more youth friendly businesses in Downtown Punta Gorda.	Immediate	Community Affairs, Zoning & Code Compliance, Finance	
Action 3.5: Revise the existing Temporary Conditional Use (TCU) Permit to allow for pop-up arts, entertainment, and retail uses in vacant downtown storefronts and lots.	Immediate	Zoning & Code Compliance, Building	



	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	COSTS	POTENTIAL FUNDING	TYPE	ADDITIONAL GOALS
	Economic Development Partnership, Charlotte County Economic Development	\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	Goal 1
	Economic Development Partnership, PG Chamber, Charlotte County Economic Development, Charlotte County Chamber	\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	Goal 1
	Charlotte Community Foundation, United Way of Charlotte County	\$\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	Goal 1
	Economic Development Partnership, PG Chamber, Charlotte County Economic Development, Charlotte County Chamber, Cheney Brothers Inc, Gettel Automotive Group, Blue Turtle & FM Dons, Fishermen's Village	\$\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	Goal 1
	Economic Development Partnership, PG Chamber, Charlotte County Economic Development, Charlotte County Chamber, Charlotte County Tourism Bureau	\$\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	
	TEAM Punta Gorda, Charlotte Community Foundation, Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association	\$\$\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	Goal 1
	PG Isles Civic Association, PG Chamber, Blue Turtle & FM Dons, Fishermen's Village	\$\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	Goal 1
	PG Chamber	\$\$	CRA Fund, General Fund, Private Investment	City Program / Service	Goal 1
	TEAM Punta Gorda, Charlotte Community Foundation, PG Civic Association, PG Chamber, United Way of Charlotte County	\$	General Fund	City Program / Service	Goal 1
		-		City Policy / Regulation	Goal 1

# ONGOING ENGAGEMENT

## AFTER THE PLAN IS ADOPTED, CAN I STILL PARTICIPATE IN CITYWIDE PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING?

In order to foster public trust the City of Punta Gorda, like most cities in Florida, operates in strict compliance with governmental transparency standards, providing several opportunities for the public to attend meetings and provide comments. Ways to stay involved in the civic process are outlined below.

### 1. Attend & Speak On Record at City Council Meetings

City Council meetings are open to the public. Residents can view the Agendas prior to each Council Meeting and choose whether or not to attend and speak. Those who wish can speak on record for up to three minutes for each agenda item. Time shall be provided at the end for public comment on non-agenda items as well.

The Council meets every first and third Wednesday of the month at 9:00 AM in the City Hall Council Chambers.

### 2. Attend Planning Commission Meetings

The Planning Commission makes recommendations to City Council with regard to the physical development of the city, specifically to amending, extending, or adding to the City's Comprehensive Plan and adopting and amending zoning ordinances.

They meet every fourth Monday of the month at 2:00 PM in the City Hall Council Chambers.

### 3. Attend the Historic Preservation Advisory Board (HPAB) Meetings

The purpose of the HPAB is to identify structures of historic significance and provide policy

recommendations for the protection of historic assets and recommendation regarding certificates of appropriateness for any demolition, variance, sign, or relocation.

HPAB meets every fourth Thursday of the month at 8:30 AM in the City Hall Council Chambers.

### 4. Meet & Talk With City Staff

The City operates with a very open-door policy. Feel free to schedule a meeting, write an email, or call staff with any question or concern.

### 5. Attend the Annual Citizens Academy

Every year the City of Punta Gorda hosts a Citizens Academy. This free eight session interactive course gives interested residents an up-close look at how government works and shapes the community.

Visit: [www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/residents/citizens-academy](http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/residents/citizens-academy)

### 6. Serve on City Advisory Boards

The City has several advisory boards that are tasked with reviewing and providing recommendation to council regarding all matters of city planning, construction, and development regulations. Interest or expertise in these areas is recommended or required, along with residency, to serve. These advisory boards include:

- Board of Zoning Appeals
- Building Board
- Code Enforcement Board
- Historic Preservation Advisory Board
- Utility Advisory Board

### 7. Serve on City Council Service Boards & Committees

In addition to the Advisory Boards listed above there are a number of committees focusing on a wide range of special causes from affordable housing,

to arts advocacy, to economic development, to environmental protection. A few of these advisory boards include:

- Arts & Humanities Council
- Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center
- Community Action Agency Advisory Board
- Economic Development Task Force
- Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Punta Gorda Housing Authority
- Southwest Florida League of Cities
- Tourist Development Council

To learn more about these boards, when they meet, and hope to become a member visit: [www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/government/boards-committees](http://www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/government/boards-committees)



Punta Gorda City Hall



Plan Punta Gorda Hands-On Design Session Attendee

# PLAN PUNTA GORDA

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