

# Hillsborough County Florida

May 20–25, 2012



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Enabling Sustainable Economic Prosperity

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# About the Urban Land Institute

**THE MISSION OF THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE** is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. ULI is committed to

- Bringing together leaders from across the fields of real estate and land use policy to exchange best practices and serve community needs;
- Fostering collaboration within and beyond ULI's membership through mentoring, dialogue, and problem solving;
- Exploring issues of urbanization, conservation, regeneration, land use, capital formation, and sustainable development;
- Advancing land use policies and design practices that respect the uniqueness of both built and natural environments;

- Sharing knowledge through education, applied research, publishing, and electronic media; and
- Sustaining a diverse global network of local practice and advisory efforts that address current and future challenges.

Established in 1936, the Institute today has nearly 30,000 members worldwide, representing the entire spectrum of the land use and development disciplines. ULI relies heavily on the experience of its members. It is through member involvement and information resources that ULI has been able to set standards of excellence in development practice. The Institute has long been recognized as one of the world's most respected and widely quoted sources of objective information on urban planning, growth, and development.

Cover photos: Courtesy of Hillsborough County.

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# About ULI Advisory Services

**THE GOAL OF ULI'S** Advisory Services Program is to bring the finest expertise in the real estate field to bear on complex land use planning and development projects, programs, and policies. Since 1947, this program has assembled well over 400 ULI-member teams to help sponsors find creative, practical solutions for issues such as downtown redevelopment, land management strategies, evaluation of development potential, growth management, community revitalization, brownfields redevelopment, military base reuse, provision of low-cost and affordable housing, and asset management strategies, among other matters. A wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit organizations have contracted for ULI's Advisory Services.

Each panel team is composed of highly qualified professionals who volunteer their time to ULI. They are chosen for their knowledge of the panel topic and screened to ensure their objectivity. ULI's interdisciplinary panel teams provide a holistic look at development problems. A respected ULI member who has previous panel experience chairs each panel.

The agenda for a five-day panel assignment is intensive. It includes an in-depth briefing day composed of a tour of the site and meetings with sponsor representatives; a day of hour-long interviews of typically 50 to 75 key community representatives; and two days of formulating recommendations. Long nights of discussion precede the panel's conclusions. On the final day on site, the panel makes an oral presentation of its findings and conclusions to the sponsor. A written report is prepared and published.

Because the sponsoring entities are responsible for significant preparation before the panel's visit, including sending extensive briefing materials to each member and arranging for the panel to meet with key local community members and stakeholders in the project under consideration, participants in ULI's five-day panel assignments are able to make

accurate assessments of a sponsor's issues and to provide recommendations in a compressed amount of time.

A major strength of the program is ULI's unique ability to draw on the knowledge and expertise of its members, including land developers and owners, public officials, academics, representatives of financial institutions, and others. In fulfillment of the mission of the Urban Land Institute, this Advisory Services panel report is intended to provide objective advice that will promote the responsible use of land to enhance the environment.

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The panel also thanks the more than 90 county, city, and Planning Commission staff, elected and appointed officials, property and business owners, and residents for sharing their valuable time to participate in the interview process. The interview process is one of the key features of a ULI Advisory Services panel, and the input and observations from these individuals were instrumental in formulating the panel's recommendations.

In addition, the panel thanks Susan Jezek and James Moore of ULI Tampa Bay for their invaluable insights and assistance.

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# Foreword: The Study Area and the Panel's Assignment

**HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY IS LOCATED** on Florida's west coast and includes three municipalities within its borders: Tampa, Plant City, and Temple Terrace. Founded in 1834, Hillsborough's 1,266 square miles make it one of the largest counties in Florida, approximately the same size as the state of Rhode Island. About 888 square miles of the county is unincorporated, with much of that outside of the Urban Service Area (USA) boundary. This report focuses on the unincorporated areas within the USA.

The county enjoys an excellent strategic location, with about 160 miles of shoreline on Tampa Bay within 500 miles of growing Caribbean markets. The port of Tampa, the largest in Florida, sees 44 percent of the state's waterborne tonnage on an annual basis. The county also has excellent air, rail, and interstate highway access.

The county has been fiscally prudent during a time of significant economic turmoil. As a result, today it enjoys an AAA bond rating and has \$180 million in reserves (22 percent of annual budget) and \$35 million to \$45 million annually in additional residual funds.

Critical to economic competitiveness is the availability of a skilled workforce and proximity to educational and research resources. Hillsborough County has these resources in the University of Southern Florida (USF), Hillsborough Community College, and the University of Tampa. These institutions have already established themselves as major players in the regional economy.

Truly amazing is the staggering array of economic resources that already exist in the county as well as the numerous authorities and institutions with major economic capacity and capital investment capacity that, if harnessed in the same direction, could position Hillsborough County and the region as one of the most sustainable economic centers in North America.



*Regional map.*

## The Panel's Assignment

Hillsborough County asked ULI to assess the county's existing approach to economic development and growth and to identify future challenges, opportunities, and directions for promoting effective economic development. The panel was asked to examine the ways in which the county can leverage its existing assets and overcome barriers to future job-creating commercial and residential real estate development. Although the assignment asked the panel to address the regulatory issues around land development through the lens of economic growth, while on site the panel also heard about several underlying and troublesome issues that needed to be addressed in this report to lay the groundwork for an effective economic development strategy.



*In addition to meeting with more than 90 stakeholders, the panel was briefed by Hillsborough County staff on the study area.*

Specifically, the following questions were asked of the panel:

- Identify concerns facing the county stemming from the recent period of high growth and the severe economic recession.
- How do the county and the region take advantage of its economic drivers and assets? How can Hillsborough County improve its economic competitiveness?
- How does the county maintain the high quality of life that residents desire while allowing and promoting responsible growth?
- How does the county balance the cost of bringing past development and future impacts into compliance while ensuring the necessary infrastructure to serve its present and future residents?
- How can Hillsborough County's Comprehensive Plan and Development Code best be structured to enable the county to address desirable market-based housing and economic development?
- What alternative organizational structures or processes are available for consideration by Hillsborough County to create state-of-the-art approaches to meet the county's commitment to responsible, fair, and efficient governance?
- What alternative organizational structures and processes would make the development process more efficient, fair, and responsible, thus resulting in the county's ability to attract and retain desired business and economic development opportunities?

These questions are addressed throughout the report, but the panel made some troublesome observations during its work while considering these questions. Fundamental

systemic challenges exist that must be addressed before getting to the questions asked of the panel. The county must recognize, acknowledge, and address these challenges before it can embark on a successful and sustainable economic growth initiative.

## What the Panel Heard

Great communities and great companies have a very clear formula for success. They acknowledge and value the resources that they have and build on them; they are honest about their weaknesses and what needs to be improved; they have a vision and a strategic long-term plan for the future; they think bigger than themselves and weave their people and their resources together to build a healthy and thriving future for everyone. And everyone rows in the same direction.

Following is a synthesis of what the panel heard from the various sectors of the Hillsborough County community about important county issues. The reality of these conversations and what it relates about Hillsborough County's current situation established the foundation for this report and the panel's recommendations for the county's future.

### Governance and Leadership

Stakeholders expressed concern that county civic leadership tends to be competitive rather than cooperative. In addition, the lack of one strong leader "calling the shots" at the county level limits the consistency of the vision at the county level. A need was also expressed for more effective communication between the county and its constituents as well as between the many agencies and groups responsible for the various aspects of economic development and land development.

### General Economic Development

Thinking about economic development in Hillsborough County was thought to be out of date, focusing on land use and development as primary economic drivers. Many felt the county needs to modernize and make the economic development incentives it currently offers more flexible. Stakeholders expressed a general feeling that the county

can no longer compete on a “low taxes, low wage, low land value” platform in a global economy. Some felt that a need exists for “another Busch Gardens or University of South Florida” as an economic driver and that protecting agricultural land should be a priority. Stakeholders also called for a renewed focus on blue-collar jobs, such as manufacturing and tourism.

### Planning Processes and Relationships between Planning Entities

Overall, the consensus among stakeholders seemed to be that the county board of commissioners and the planning staff do not take sufficient ownership of the planning process. Confusion exists over the regulatory role of the community plans and interjurisdictional coordination of comprehensive plans. Some believe that a disconnect between the Planning Commission and local governments has contributed to a lack of consistency between long-range planning and economic development goals, leading to a lack of prioritization and consensus around targeted growth areas. Stakeholders also mentioned the need for increased flexibility around the urban service boundary to promote economic growth.

### Working with the County on Development Projects

Generally, stakeholders felt that the county’s approval process for the development process was too complex, time-consuming, and unpredictable. They also called for appointment of one staff person as a “development czar” to help guide applicants through the process and to be more strategic in approving projects that do or do not help meet economic development goals. The panel also heard a desire to streamline and make consistent various aspects of the review process, including ensuring that all regulations and desired outcomes are clear to elected officials, staff, and citizens.

### Business Attraction and Retention

The primary concern of most interviewees was that 40- to 50-acre Class A sites are not assembled and ready for commercial or industrial development. This leads to losing businesses that may have otherwise opened in or relo-



MICHAEL HENLEY

cated to Hillsborough County. Stakeholders also mentioned that the focus on the housing industry as the county’s primary economic driver in the past has now put the area at a competitive disadvantage.

*Many stakeholders believe that the Interstate 4 corridor and its junction with Interstate 75 are critical to future economic development in the county.*

### Interstate 4 Corridor

The I-4 corridor is considered to be critical to future economic development. Concerns were expressed about the lack of political willpower to expand the USA boundary to focus on job creation around the corridor, particularly the highly trafficked I-4/I-75 interchange. Some stakeholders also believed that the current zoning will make corridor development challenging in the future and that the corridor should be protected for future land assembly and development. This would mean expanding the urban service boundary to include the I-4 corridor.

### Transportation

The panel heard two primary thoughts on transportation in the county. First, the backlog of maintenance projects at both the state and county levels is a cause for much concern. In light of declining sales tax revenue and changes to the concurrency laws, funding levels cannot keep up with the need for repair along with other improvements. Second, the panel heard from diverse stakeholders that the lack of transit alternatives and a regional transit plan that can be used to prioritize development areas could potentially hinder economic development and that the proposed light-rail plan was developed with an eye toward political concerns rather than reality-based planning for the future.

# Summary of Key Recommendations

**FOUR THEMES WERE PROMINENT** from the panel's interviews with more than 90 citizens representing the public, business, development, and community sectors of Hillsborough County: trust, clear leadership, connectivity, and cooperation across and between institutions and citizens. The deficiencies in these areas have led to a failure to come together as a county and a region with a common vision for the future that has a long-term strategic plan that the region is executing together and integrating its substantial resources and assets to create a multiplier effect that magnifies the economic benefits of any one county or city.

The panel believes, as a result of its interviews, that Hillsborough County does not have a land use and development management problem but a cultural problem. A fundamental lack of trust, clear leadership, connectivity, and cooperation across and between institutions and citizens appears to exist. Trust is fundamental to all successful relationships and enduring endeavors.

The beauty and long-term value of Hillsborough County will be achieved only as a result of the interwoven strength of each citizen and institution strategically chosen and woven together into a whole cloth that is dramatically stronger and more enduring than each individual strand. This can occur only in an environment of trust.

The panel's key recommendations follow and are organized under these four categories: trust, connectivity, clear leadership, and cooperation.

## Trust

Trust is hard to earn and can be built only over time, based on delivering on what is promised.

- Invest first in existing social, human, and natural assets to focus on building a healthy and thriving community for all citizens.
- Commit long term to regulatory predictability and fairness, evaluate potential effects of planned regulations, involve a cross section of community members in decision making, and commit to scheduled reviews and updating of such programs.
- Invest in a countywide lifelong learning program partnered with the county public school system and key anchor institutions in sports and entertainment, higher education, arts and culture, government, retiree cohort, and private sector employers to expand learning and recreational opportunities and create a sense of place they will not want to leave.
- Invest as a top priority in the quality-of-life assets that will keep the 80,000–100,000 undergraduate and graduate students here for their lifetime.

## Connectivity

Connectivity is the secret to achieving the “1+1 multiplier” and aligning multiple interests in a common direction.

- Consider relocating elected county officials and professional management staff to one of the targeted economic development areas to provide easier access to more of their constituents, thereby enabling better customer service.
- Endorse current initiatives to bring together major educational institutions to create a seamless integrated workforce development capacity from high school through advance certificates and two-year associate degrees to college through graduate-level training partnered with employers.

- Activate and update the plan for natural and open-space assets, including parks, recreational spaces, agriculture, protected habitats, and waterways. Partner with the public school district to connect this natural resource to each public school. Giving stewardship of this system to the children and integrating this natural system asset as a resource for all K–12 education programs brings it back to home.
- Develop a multimodal connectivity strategy to link economic activity centers and invest in the existing road grid supporting pedestrian, bicycle, private car, and transit options as well as evolving as a parkway and natural ecosystem asset. Over time, continue to expand investment in the existing grid as economic growth expands beyond the current centers.

## Leadership

Clear leadership is essential for knowing who is in charge and building community confidence that the region is being managed in the interest of all with a clear set of principles and objectives that are equitable, fair, and transparent.

- Develop a transportation funding package to support required and desired improvements. The package should include a mobility fee based on vehicle use, type of use (personal, commercial), or both; allow fee reductions for proximity to high-employment centers; impose fee increases based on distance from major development nodes; and use state and local funding programs to support high-value connections and improvements.
- Respect and support the professional leadership team as well as trust that the team is using its expertise and advance education in the best interest of the county by elected county officials and citizens alike.
- Institutionalize a research culture to identify and test innovative funding approaches as well as innovative solutions for addressing long-term capital needs.
- Consult a broad spectrum of residents and businesses in establishing and updating plans, plan to test new ideas on the ground before adopting them, and plan to regularly adjust to trends and changes in the population and economy.

- Exercise discipline in evaluating transportation, land use, and economic development initiatives to ensure they are financially sound and sustainable.

## Cooperation

Cooperation allows a broader understanding of the resources and needs of the county and removes the silo mentality that results in duplication and loses the ability to achieve the efficiencies that can be achieved only through synergy.

- County officials should convene a facilitated summit of all major institutions and authorities to align their various strategic plans. The product of this effort should be identification of opportunities to leverage resources more effectively, to align plans and strategies, and to begin the process of working together and creating personal and interagency relationships.
- Focus investment on creating an anchor institution strategy that links key economic engines and builds an integration strategy to create a multiplier effect for long-term economic growth. This requires strong partnerships and ongoing collaboration with local economic anchors, such as the Port Authority, community colleges, universities, the city of Tampa, professional sports teams, MacDill Air Force Base, Busch Gardens, medical and research centers, and the Airport Authority.

# Economic Resources

**HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY'S INHERENT** opportunities are directly related to its mature economic standing at the geographic center of the Tampa Bay region. These activities, assets, amenities, institutions, and intrinsic natural qualities together function as a resource base for the county to use with an ultimate eye toward improving the economic development opportunities and thus the quality of life for the county's residents.

In terms of population and job base, Hillsborough County is the largest component county of the Tampa–St. Petersburg–Clearwater Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which includes Hernando, Hillsborough, Pasco, and Pinellas counties. The fourth largest in Florida, the county is home to more than 1.2 million residents, a 44 percent capture of the MSA. A similar share of the MSA's job base is located in Hillsborough County. The unincorporated county encompasses more than 800,000 of these residents. The region's largest airport, port, university, interstate interchange, and central business district (CBD; downtown Tampa) can be found in Hillsborough County. This existing infrastructure is both the major driver and the result of the county's historical role as the nexus of economic activity on Florida's Gulf Coast.

Demographic growth supports the county's continued leadership in the region's economy. Hillsborough County is forecast to capture 66 percent, or 34,000, new households through 2017, according to projections compiled by Nielson Claritas, a national third-party demographic data provider. The median household income is \$47,500, approximately 7 percent above the MSA median. Among those older than 25 years, 86 percent of Hillsborough County's residents have a high school diploma and 29 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher.

## Employment

Given the diverse set of economic drivers befitting the county's role as one of the state's major trade, commercial, education, and health care concentrations, the county's employment base is well distributed across major sectors. Among private industries, no single sector captures more than 13 percent of the total county employment base (education/health services and retail trade). The next tier features the following diverse set, each capturing 9 percent of the county's private employment base: leisure/hospitality, finance/insurance, professional/technical services, and administrative/waste services. Wholesale trade, manufacturing, and information constitute smaller, though still significant, shares of the local job base. Significant government employment (more than 80,000 among federal, state, and local sectors) and 12,000 military personnel complete the county's dynamic economic profile.

The county's economic situation has improved from the depths of the 2009–2010 global recession. As of March 2012, the county's unemployment rate is 8.5 percent, best among the four MSA counties and in line with state performance. The unemployment rate has fallen from 10.6 percent in the last 12 months and from 11.8 percent in 2010. Indeed, the MSA's jobs increased 1.75 percent over the last 12 months, besting U.S. growth (1.5 percent), southeast Florida (1.5 percent), the Orlando MSA (0.9 percent), and Jacksonville (–0.1 percent). The state of Florida forecasts Hillsborough County will add 100,000 jobs between 2011 and 2019. Although the economy appears to be slowly improving, the recent challenges have motivated the local agencies to proactively assess the county's strengths and weaknesses with an ultimate goal to chart—rather than react to—economic trends.

## Hillsborough Unemployment Rate, 2000–2012

Year	Labor force	Employed	Unemployed	Hillsborough jobless rate (%)	Florida jobless rate (%)	U.S. jobless rate (%)
2000	528,979	511,734	17,245	3.3	3.8	4.0
2001	536,841	514,554	22,287	4.2	4.7	4.7
2002	543,421	514,371	29,050	5.3	5.7	5.8
2003	549,815	521,920	27,895	5.1	5.3	6.0
2004	565,184	540,761	24,423	4.3	4.7	5.5
2005	565,617	544,731	20,886	3.7	3.8	5.1
2006	578,731	559,983	18,748	3.2	3.3	4.6
2007	591,031	567,670	23,361	4.0	4.0	4.6
2008	598,350	561,048	37,302	6.2	6.2	5.8
2009	598,715	537,181	61,534	10.3	10.2	9.3
2010	600,967	530,189	70,778	11.8	11.5	9.6
2011	606,511	542,447	64,064	10.6	10.7	8.9
2012	610,665	558,816	51,849	8.5	9.0	8.2

Source: Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation, Labor Market Statistics.

Note: 2012 figures are for March.

Another telling indicator of the region's improving economy is homebuilding activity. Total building permits are up 5 percent over last year and up 24 percent above the lowest depth of the market recession. Similarly to employment conditions, this activity outperforms recent regional trends. Despite a continued, though slowing, rate of home price decline, financially capable buyers are motivated by "once in a generation" affordability. On the commercial side, although the region has yet to capture any activity, corporate America is again seeking build-to-suit office and industrial sites throughout the southeast United States.

Hillsborough County is expected to remain an attractive permanent or seasonal retirement destination for households emanating from the Northeast, the Midwest, and Canada. Retirees offer significant economic multipliers for health care, retail, recreation/cultural, and personal/

financial services. Increasingly, seniors are seeking educational activities as well to build on "lifelong learning," a relationship that should be further promoted by Hillsborough County's many outstanding educational institutions.

## Land Use

As noted, Hillsborough County is the economic center of the Tampa Bay region. The county (including the cities of Tampa, Plant City, and Temple Terrace) is home to 70 million, or 60 percent, of the region's 117 million square feet of office space, according to national data provider CoStar. Hillsborough employment centers capture over 70 percent of the region's Class A space with major concentrations in Westshore (7.6 million square feet; 82 percent occupancy), Tampa CBD (4.7 million square feet; 85 percent occupancy), and northeast Tampa (3.6 million square feet; 83

*Residential building permits have declined since their 2005 peak, but the partial data for 2012 show a 5 percent increase over the previous year and a 24 percent increase over the lowest point of the market recession.*

## Residential Building Permits

Housing type	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Single-family detached	7,855	8,481	9,012	9,339	6,171	3,420	2,391	1,639	2,360	2,212
Single-family attached	1,568	2,261	2,971	6,318	5,317	2,468	1,192	522	800	418
Apartments	2,400	4,585	1,583	1,483	2,355	2,108	2,845	1,003	982	523
Mobile homes	287	254	252	304	196	119	111	54	52	23
Total	12,110	15,581	13,818	17,444	14,039	8,115	6,539	3,218	4,194	3,176

Source: Hillsborough County City/County Planning Commission.

MacDill Air Force Base hosts air shows and employs about 12,000 people in military and civilian roles.



JEFF KRAUSE

percent occupancy) submarkets. Hillsborough County captures 54 percent of the region's industrial and 51 percent of its retail square footage. Other major regional activity centers are MacDill Air Force Base, USF/Moffitt Cancer Center, Tampa International Airport, and the agricultural and mining activities in the rural areas of the county.

A significant advantage is the ability to pursue a dual strategy of rehabilitation and redevelopment of existing outmoded space and development of new employment-generating uses in greenfield locations. Greenfield locations include southwest Hillsborough County, encompassing the majority of the county's future residential lots, and the Interstate 4 corridor between Interstate 75 and Plant City. Given appropriate zoning and infrastructure, each location offers excellent interstate highway connectivity and the ability to deliver larger pads for large corporate or industrial users.

Hillsborough County's tourism and entertainment industries benefit from assets such as Busch Gardens, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, and the many cruise ships making calls at the port of Tampa.

## Bonding Capacity

Hillsborough County's authorities provide an excellent source to raise capital investment. The Tampa Port Authority, Hillsborough County Aviation Authority, and

Tampa Hillsborough County Expressway Authority all offer bonding capacity that creates a significant economic multiplier effect, notably by promoting trade, tourism, and road connectivity to the region's major employment nodes. Undoubtedly, these activities both support and continue to augment the region's economic activity.

## Tourism and Entertainment

The county boasts vibrant tourism and entertainment assets. More than 14 million visitors came to the Tampa Bay region in 2011, spending \$3.4 billion. Total visitor volume increased 4 percent year-over-year, and spending increased almost 7 percent, according to figures compiled by Tampa Bay and Company. Busch Gardens employs 3,750 and hosted 4.2 million visitors in 2010, placing it among the top 25 theme parks in the world. The National Football League's Tampa Bay Buccaneers, the National Hockey League's Tampa Bay Lightning, and the Tampa Bay Rays offer professional sports entertainment. The cruise industry is active, with Carnival, Norwegian, Royal Caribbean, and Holland America calling at the port of Tampa and providing more than 896,000 visitors to the region in 2011, a 6 percent increase over 2010.

## Educational Institutions

Hillsborough County enjoys a range of high-quality educational institutions that are well known on both state and national levels. USF is a member institution of the State University System of Florida, one of the state's three flagship universities for public research. Founded in 1956, USF is Florida's third-largest institution of higher educa-



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tion, enrolling more than 40,000. The University of Tampa, located in downtown Tampa, has a student body of 6,700, approximately 50 percent of whom come from Florida. The university confers approximately 1,700 degrees annually.

Hillsborough County Public Schools are considered to be among the best in Florida. The district is the eighth largest in the country and was recently a recipient of a \$100 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Hillsborough Community College (HCC) is currently Florida's fifth-largest community college district, serving more than 48,000 students each year at its five campuses and three customized training centers. Over 75 percent of HCC graduates stay in the local community. Together, HCC and its former students contribute more than \$860 million in added income and economic impact to Hillsborough County.

## Housing

Hillsborough County offers diverse housing options at all sizes, price points, and settings in both the incorporated county and the municipalities within the county. Those seeking single-family housing can find it in a wide variety of neighborhoods across the county—on small lots close to downtown Tampa and employment centers, in suburban neighborhoods with tree-lined streets, in homes on five-acre sites, or at beautiful waterfront locations.

Given the steep decline in housing prices, the array of options available to buyers at all price points gives families many options in style, location, and neighborhood amenities within the unincorporated county. A mix of housing density and an ever-growing inventory of good-quality rental housing exist. Close to MacDill Air Force Base, the

Apollo Beach area is home to both military and nonmilitary retirees and enjoys proximity to recreational activities. Sun City Center, a planned community, has a large population of retirees. The established single-family neighborhoods and shopping centers in Brandon are appealing to families. Numerous rural communities also have single-family homes on large lots. Newer subdivisions were under development in the south part of the county when the real estate bubble burst. Although construction halted for a time, builders are beginning new starts as the market revives and interest rates remain at historic lows.

Hillsborough County's municipalities also provide great housing diversity. Historic Hyde Park and Seminole Heights in the city of Tampa offer urban-scale residential neighborhoods with homes in the \$120,000 to \$200,000 price range. Ybor City, a vibrant mixed-use area with retail and entertainment amenities, is appealing to young professionals. The city of Temple Terrace was largely developed in the late 1950s–1980s. Prices range from \$100,000 to over \$300,000, with newer rental developments closer to Telecom Park. Plant City offers an array of housing options, predominantly single family, at a variety of price points.

According to Hanley Wood Market Intelligence, the average price of existing homes in Hillsborough County is \$129,300. Quarterly home sales in Tampa/Hillsborough continued to improve at the end of 2011, posting a slight increase (3 percent) over 2010. Sales of lender-owned properties decreased, while regular resales increased. As the rate of foreclosures begins to taper off, cautious optimism exists that the housing market is stabilizing and poised for a recovery. Prices are expected to remain flat for the duration of 2012 and to begin to increase in 2013.

*Hillsborough County Public Schools, Hillsborough County Community College, and the University of South Florida are each known nationwide for their high quality.*

Rental housing permits rose 25 percent, pushing the total number of permits past 2010 levels.

## MacDill Air Force Base

Since its establishment in 1939, MacDill Air Force Base has been an active partner in the financial growth of the Greater Tampa Bay Area. For years, air crews have trained here for combat duty in the European Theater of World War II, the Cold War, Korea, Vietnam/Southeast Asia, the Persian Gulf, and most recently Afghanistan/Iraq. MacDill is also headquarters for U.S. Central Command and U.S. Special Operations Command.

The economic impact of MacDill Air Force Base on the Greater Tampa Bay region is \$2.87 billion. In addition, the retiree population within approximately 50 miles of the base adds \$2.11 billion, for a total economic impact of \$4.98 billion. (The economic impact of the base on the Tampa Bay region was computed by summing annual base payroll, annual base expenditures, and the estimated annual dollar value of indirect jobs created.)

# Economic Challenges

**HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY FACES A NUMBER** of challenges related to economic development and land use. With such a wealth of national and regional assets located within and adjacent to the county, leveraging these resources to the county's maximum benefit is itself a challenge. The cross pollination of these assets and their appeal to both existing businesses and those seeking new locations depends on the belief that those assets will be useful.

## Business Retention and Attraction Challenges

Prospective businesses need reliable, comprehensive data that can be quickly provided to corporate location professionals. Over the past decade, not only the numbers of corporate expansions and relocations have increased but also the time frame in which they occurred tightened dramatically. For businesses competing in today's relentless global climate, the facility siting process has been reduced from six months to between 45 and 90 days. Although the Tampa Bay Partnership provides an excellent resource for Hillsborough County, particularly as it relates to foreign and domestic business attraction and regional marketing, the county and its local partner, the Tampa Hillsborough Economic Development Corporation, have a professional staff with good resources who can respond quickly to requests for information and assistance from site selectors and companies. Coordination between the economic development staffs, the commercial brokers in the community, and the planning staff is critical to providing timely answers on questions of zoning, schedules, infrastructure, workforce, and land availability.

A lengthy timeline for approvals and the risk of uncertainty are counterproductive to the economic development process. When businesses are hunting for new locations, the speed of the transaction is critical to the capture or

retention of the business, particularly if the business has time constraints of its own, such as an expiring lease or an expanding business strategy. One of the critical issues for both retaining existing businesses and attracting new ones is the availability of project-ready land. The panel heard that prospects looking for available land go through a process that has been described as discouraging. Rezoning property in the unincorporated portions of the county requires an analysis of the Comprehensive Plan, the Zoning Maps, the Land Development Regulations, the Community Plans, and the Overlay Districts, which would still not reveal the likely development fees that would be required. The zoning review process also requires engineering information to be fairly complete prior to entitlement for land use. The panel recommends that the county should develop an attitude to find ways to say "yes" rather than "no" as businesses make their way through the permitting process.

## Uncertainty in Public Infrastructure Funding

The uncertainty of the future of the concurrency process as it relates to development adds additional risk for investors and businesses. Senate Bill 360, which rolled back the state's involvement in growth management, created new opportunities for change but also created uncertainty in the process. The business community understands that fees will be required as part of the development process, but the simplicity and predictability of the formula have a value of their own. As the panel heard, "I should not have to be land use lawyer to understand my zoning." The panel believes that the county could address this issue through more effective messaging, communication, and engagement with its constituents.

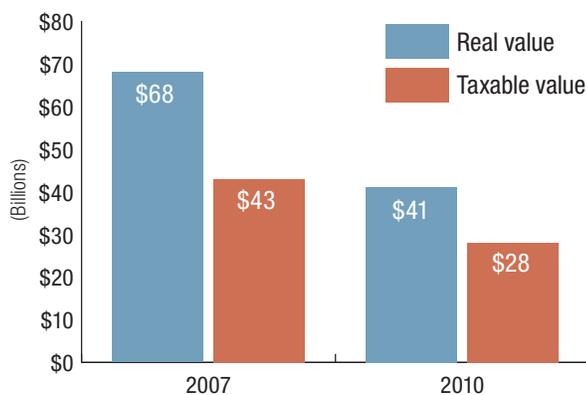
The uncertainty of the fees required for public improvements off site poses a large risk to the business community.

These impact or mobility fees can be a substantial portion of the development capital requirement and may make the difference between a feasible or unfeasible project. Funding public infrastructure through a fair and adequate taxing method is crucial to the county's healthy and robust growth. Between 2007 and 2010, single-family residential real value decreased from \$68 billion to \$41 billion, and single-family residential taxable value decreased from \$43 billion to \$28 billion. The value of commercial property declined from \$15 billion to \$12 billion (values have been rounded). During the same period, the population was increasing and requiring additional services. The state of Florida also reduced the budgets for maintenance of state roads and rights-of-way. The county assessment of long-range roadway and transit needs now stands at \$15 billion.

These fiscal pressures still affect the development of public services and infrastructure, creating the need for new sources of revenue. Although there is no shortage of ideas for generating funds to cover the deficiencies, the resistance to funding maintenance of public infrastructure is significant. Innovative mechanisms to fund capital improvements can be used if sufficient will and cooperation are applied to the problem.

The shortfall is not limited to roads. Public services and institutions are also at risk of reduced viability, as well as capital improvements to address quality-of-life issues. The effect on the government's ability to protect health, life, and property causes the flight of workforce skills. This

### Real and Taxable Value of Hillsborough County Residential Real Estate



affects the formation of private capital for investment and growth. Quality-of-life issues encompass both public and private assets. This includes parks and open space, trails and agricultural land, schools and libraries, and cultural institutions such as museums, theaters, and foundations. It also affects private additions to the quality of life, such as restaurants, shopping, and other commercial, professional, and medical services.

Achieving the integration, union, and growth of regional assets can be accomplished only with cooperation and coordination among diverse entities. The level of trust among public officials and their respective areas of responsibility affect the ability of the public institutions to act in concert without hidden agendas. Strong leadership is required to prevent the various entities from diverging from the regional strategy.

Without a healthy and dependable method of funding the backlog of maintenance and capital improvements, neither developers nor residents can be assured of the stability of their investments in the community. This issue is exacerbated by the demographic profile of the residents. With a population aging in place and in-migration of retirees, the revenue picture can become even more challenging. The older demographic tends to be quite active in elections, successfully limiting growth in schools, infrastructure, and other public assets.

The regional assets described in the previous section could provide a tremendous boost to the engines of growth and fiscal stability, but capitalizing on these assets may be a challenge if institutions do not envision their success as part of the success of the region as a whole. The growth of the airport may not depend on the growth of the port, but if the region can maintain healthy, sustainable growth, then both the airport and the port would benefit. Connecting the employment centers to the higher-density residential with reasonable commuting options and connecting the employment centers to cultural and entertainment centers generate intensity and vitality for the urban centers.

In addition to indicating a need for improvement to the economic picture, the quality-of-life survey shows room

for improvement in transportation and in the environment and natural resources. Access to trails and natural areas is an important component of the perception of the health and well-being of the area. The highest satisfaction rating in the survey is given to the arts and entertainment, which may indicate the contribution those categories make to the perception of a high quality of life.

## Recession and Uneven Recovery

The severity of the recent recession and the unevenness of the recovery have exacerbated the county's challenges. The county has experienced funding shortfalls, inequities in governance, changes in public perception of quality of life, and desire for increased economic development opportunities in both boom and bust times, but the economic challenges of recent years have brought these issues to the forefront. The panel contends that local governments must align their activities and expectations to a "new normal"—one that confronts the historical notion of a region relying solely on outward growth to alleviate core structural issues. Given increased international competition, moderated housing demand, minimal real income growth, and shifting demographics, the county must strengthen its core assets, harness existing resources, and present a unified front to combat challenges and promote economic prosperity.

### Residential Property

As noted previously, the recession's impact is particularly evident in the severe decline of the county's residential tax rolls. Although on the upswing, building permits remain 75 percent below the market peak and 60 percent below the levels of the late 1990s and early 2000s. Weighing down prices are foreclosures, short sales, and other distressed residential properties that have recently captured a share as high as 35 percent of total residential sales.

In a moderated economic climate relying on demographic growth and true economic expansion rather than one motivated by hyper home price inflation, investors, and exotic financing structures, the county must confront a reality where stabilized demand for new homes most likely will be approximately only two-thirds of recent peaks. Although



*The SunTrust building in downtown Tampa sold in 2011 for 28 percent below its 2007 sale price.*

this projected volume represents an improvement over current historic lows, the county still faces a substantial overhang in improved and partially improved residential lots. Data sources vary on the number of finished lots; estimates range from 8,000 to more than 12,000, with the majority located in the county's southwest submarket. These volumes roughly translate to inventory levels of between two and five years. This forecast does not factor in additions of new residential lots to inventory, which could include up to 500 lots in the next year alone and likely ramp up from there, nor does it include future lots, of which at least 30,000 entitlements are located in approved Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs). Increased competition from Pasco County, competition from distressed existing stock, and changing attitudes toward homebuying may all prove to be obstacles to Hillsborough County's homebuilding prospects.

### Commercial Property

Commercial property values have faced similar challenges from an abundance of inventory and declining values stemming from distressed sales. Sales tax revenues remain well below the 2007 peak. Building values exhibit a similar decline, with recent sales trading far below replacement. Two trades notable for their size and visibility in the CBD are the 32-story Rivergate Plaza, which sold in a distressed transaction for \$22 million in June 2011, approximately 40 percent below its 2005 sale price, and more recently, the 36-story SunTrust Financial Centre, which sold at the end of 2011 for \$82 million, approximately 28 percent below its 2007 sale price. As the economy improves, leasing has begun to pick up for commercial properties. Given the recession and a challenging construction lending environment that still continues, limited new inventory will drive occupancies, rents, and values higher. However, the substantial volume of distressed transactions has reset the tax base to a point where the timeline for significant expansion will be protracted.

# Leveraging Resources

## IN CONSIDERING THE COUNTY'S VAST RESOURCES

to meet the challenges described, a strategy for the most effective leveraging of those resources emerges. This section focuses on how best to capitalize on existing strengths in tourism, arts, agriculture, institutions, and green infrastructure. The panel believes the county has identified a comprehensive list of industries to target for potential job growth, and the panel recommends that the tourism, professional sports, and port sectors also be included in this list. In addition, the county needs to “listen to the market” to identify and target emerging industries not already identified.

## Tourism

Hillsborough County has the blessing and the burden of being bounded by the beaches and “The Mouse.” These bookends have large tourist economics. Tourism, on its face, may appear to generate relatively low-quality jobs. However, every visitor is an opportunity for a new business: 80 percent of people who were seeking to relocate a business chose a location where they either had a meeting or went on vacation. According to Tampa Bay and Company, in 2011, Hillsborough County welcomed nearly 17 million visitors who added more than \$3 billion to the local economy. The cruise industry alone brought almost 900,000 guests in 2011. An overnight visitor will spend an average of \$341 per day, and that spending supports more than 50,000 local jobs, which pay \$847 million in wages, thus demonstrating the value of tourism to the economy.

However, tourism is more than building hotels and convention centers, and Hillsborough is not in a position to go head to head with Disney or the beaches. It can capitalize on location to define unique niches that will appeal to people who are visiting the beaches or Disney attractions or who are visiting Tampa for business. Much of the tour-

ism infrastructure does not appear to be linked to other assets to maximize its full potential. For example, building on the professional sports teams in the Tampa Bay region, a large sports complex available for youth competitions would attract families from throughout the East Coast. They would stay at hotels, eat at local restaurants, and see all the area has to offer.

Every year, college sports teams of all stripes do a week of spring training, often in Florida. These are not the dreaded “spring breakers.” They are varsity athletes traveling with their team. Aligning facilities to attract these teams and packaging other activities could lead to the next wave of young Hillsborough residents.

## Arts and Culture

Cultural offerings are also a vital component of tourism. The panel heard that those offerings are largely found outside of Hillsborough County. Nevertheless, the county is home to many creative people who lack the local cultural infrastructure to showcase their work. A lively arts community boosts local economics and aids in neighborhoods of faded commercial districts. It is within the county's power to grow a local arts scene. For example, Woodbridge, New Jersey, a largely blue-collar community lacking many of the assets found here, has created a vibrant arts scene in three short years, pulling people out of their homes to appreciate all the cultural assets that were in their backyards.

This initiative does not require new buildings, new staff, or a new study. It requires someone inviting local artists to a meeting and treating them as legitimate business people. The next step is forming an ad hoc arts advisory committee to gather information and guide the process. This endeavor will allow projects to percolate and the arts scene to evolve and specific arts initiatives to emerge. This



DOUG KERER

*Barron Arts Center in Woodbridge, New Jersey, is the epicenter of the town's burgeoning small-scale art scene and hosts readings, exhibitions, and other events featuring New Jersey artists.*



*Hillsborough County has more than 243,000 acres of agricultural land and \$778 million in annual sales of agricultural products, ranking it fourth in the state and 59th nationally among counties in the value of farm products.*

activity will create synergy and spin-off. Existing public and private facilities serve as arts venues. A vibrant arts scene does not start with facilities, it starts with programming. By planting seeds, Hillsborough can grow a lively arts scene as a special and vital part of the community, adding more threads to the community fabric.

## Agriculture

Other things grow in Hillsborough as well. According to the 2011 "Hillsborough County Agriculture—Trends" report prepared by the Hillsborough County Economic Development Department, agriculture is a vital industry, ranking fourth in the state and 59th nationally in the value of farm products in 2009. With commodities ranging from aquaculture to zucchini and everything in between, Hillsborough had \$778 million in annual sales on 243,000 acres. More than half of those sales came from strawberries and vegetables. Agriculture's effect cannot be underestimated; more than 20,000 jobs would be lost if the industry were to disappear. These jobs include all the support industries of packing and processing as well as the actual farming activity. Currently the vast majority of these farms are exporters from the region or state. However, the growth of farmers markets throughout the region as destinations for home and commercial chefs as well as tourists is an opportunity being missed.

### Transfer of Development Rights to Preserve Land

The Agriculture Stewardship Grant Program was an effective mechanism for voluntary preservation of agricultural land for a period of ten years; however, the program has been suspended. Even when it was operational, it did

not provide permanent preservation; therefore, it did not provide the certainty required for long-term sustainable agriculture. Because agriculture is a valued part of the heritage of the area and provides a significant economic impetus, a long-term agriculture preservation strategy is required.

Hillsborough County has had a transfer of development rights (TDR) program in the Comprehensive Plan for some time. However, it has not been used to permanently preserve land for agriculture or recreation. Although TDR is a complex tool, it has been used very successfully in other jurisdictions that value their agricultural heritage, such as Montgomery County, Maryland. Every property has a bundle of rights: development rights and underlying fee rights. The total value of the property is the sum of those rights. Typically when land is sold, all the rights are sold together. However, these rights can be sold separately either through TDR or purchase of development rights (PDR).



TDR requires “sending” and “receiving” zones, permanently stripping the development rights from the sending zone and increasing the developability of the receiving zone. Developers purchase the rights from the sending area and use them to increase intensity on the receiving area. This program accomplishes several goals: it uses private money to preserve agriculture in perpetuity; it identifies areas where increased intensity is appropriate, thus helping form a platform for the effective use of transit and the effective provision of infrastructure; it makes the farmer “whole” by paying for the development value of the farm while leaving the farmer the fee ownership of the farm.

Because TDR is a new concept in this region, “priming the pump” may be necessary for TDR to be effective. This endeavor would entail purchase by the public sector of some development rights to make them available to sell to developers. Once the development community is familiar with the program, it will be more likely to work directly with farmers.

Another tool used in agricultural preservation is PDR. In this case, the public or nonprofit sector purchases the development rights and retires those rights, meaning they can never be transferred for development in the future. In both cases, the sale is a recorded document, which will appear on title searches, allowing lenders and buyers to know the property cannot be developed.

Land that has been stripped of its development rights should remain available for agriculture. The definition of *agriculture* is quite broad and continues to evolve. Fish farming, horse breeding, and greenhouses are not what the average person imagines when he or she thinks of agriculture. However, these uses would all be appropriate on a preserved farm.

## Green Infrastructure

Agriculture is but one component of green infrastructure. Parks, recreation, and preservation of natural lands and habitat all contribute to quality of life. Hillsborough has some wonderful green infrastructure assets that need to be knit together to enhance habitat viability, improve ac-

cess, and provide the best benefit for the community. The recreation and open-space component of the Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2008, proposes creation of a countywide open-space network based on existing natural resources and public facilities. The plan analyzed existing recreational and natural infrastructure and found a surplus of unused land in many areas whereas others had a significant deficit. The vast majority of the land is in the form of unimproved preserves, which are important for habitat protection but do not offer ready recreational opportunities.

Planning of open space and natural areas is a complex endeavor. High-value natural systems tend to exist away from developed areas. Large contiguous areas suited for active parks are also more likely to be located in largely undeveloped areas. However, recent recommendations for park location, responding to the national obesity crisis, have directed that parks be close to where people live. Expanding investments in natural lands and parks at appropriate locations would support the USA boundary, assist in creating a sense of community, and provide valuable opportunities for active and passive recreation.

Regulations that require development projects to mitigate their impact on wetlands should be reworked to create strategic wetlands areas without changing the Comprehensive Plan goal of no net loss. Mitigating isolated wetlands on corner lots in highly developed areas does not serve the primary purpose of wetlands preservation: habitat protection. Allowing the highly skilled, professional staff to use its expertise to direct mitigation efforts to fill in the gaps in the lands preserved through the Hillsborough County Environmental Land Acquisition and Protection Program would further the green infrastructure effort without using public funds while allowing development to occur in logical places. It would also allow stewardship of the wetland systems because the affected land would be contiguous, thereby ensuring a long-term sustainable future.

## Relationships with Educational Institutions

The future will also be sustained by building strong multidimensional relationships with the county's colleges and universities. Each brings unique assets, and all house young people who are the future of Hillsborough County. Capitalizing on these rich academic resources will have multiple benefits, bringing local expertise to solve local problems and offering an opportunity to strengthen the fabric of the Hillsborough community.

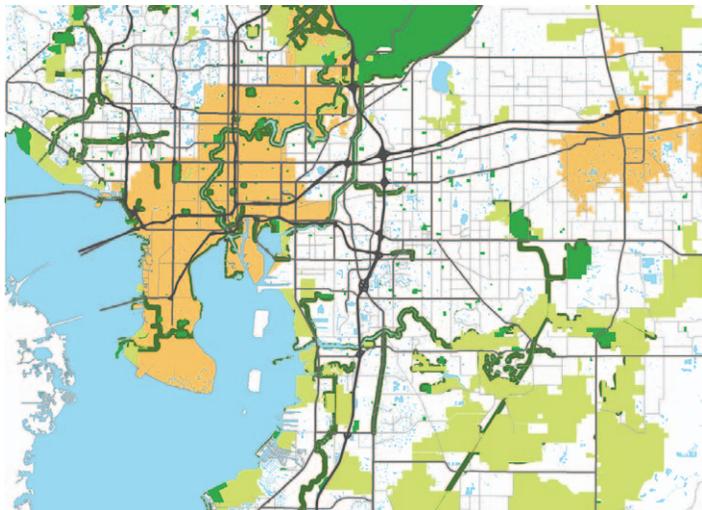
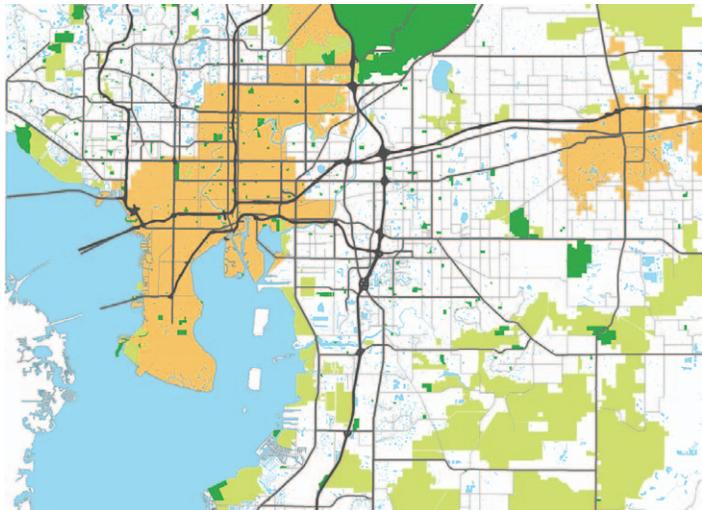
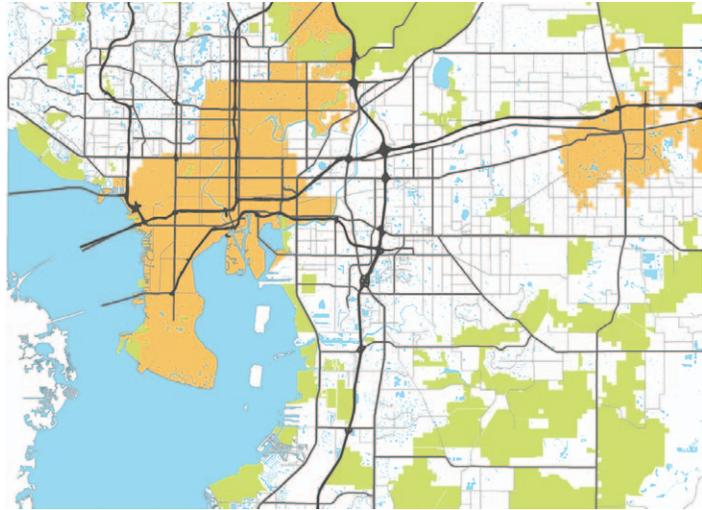
### Leadership Development

The University of Tampa has an experiential education program that focuses on civic engagement and leadership development. The Bonner Leader Program sends eight students a year into the community to work in area nonprofits. The students work on the same project for four years, and several students work together. The projects focus on social justice initiatives, including building community, civic engagement, and diversity. Students participating in the leadership studies minor complete 18–20 credit hours of coursework and 90 hours of experiential learning, such as internships with a leadership focus.

### Center for Urban Transportation Research at USF

The Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) is nationally recognized and serves as an important resource for policy makers, transportation professionals, the education system, and the public. With an emphasis on developing innovative, implementable solutions to transportation problems, CUTR provides objective transportation expertise in the form of technical support, policy analysis, and research support for its project sponsors. The multidisciplinary research staff includes experts in economics, planning, engineering, public policy, and geography who develop comprehensive solutions for all modes of transportation while combining academic and real-world experience.

*Consideration of these areas in the county as a whole rather than individually allows a network of open space to begin to emerge. Top right: land that has been preserved from development. Middle: land that has been preserved from development overlaid with public parks and recreational areas. Bottom: land that has been preserved from development overlaid with public parks, recreational areas, and trails.*



CUTR conducts over \$8 million in research annually for a variety of public and private sector sponsors in Florida and the United States, including the Florida Legislature, the Florida Transportation Commission, and state and local governments, agencies, and organizations. Areas of research include public transportation, transportation planning, intelligent transportation systems, transportation demand management, transportation economics and finance, geographic information systems, access management, alternative fuels, and transportation safety, among others.

CUTR houses the National Center for Transit Research (NCTR), designated by the U.S. Congress in 1991, and reaffirmed in 1998 and 2002. CUTR's NCTR was selected as a Tier I University Transportation Center in 2012, in partnership with North Dakota State University, Florida International, and the University of Illinois–Chicago. CUTR also houses the National Bus Rapid Transit Institute (NBRTI), sponsored by the federal NBRTI. CUTR conducts research projects in rapidly growing urban areas to develop innovative, pragmatic approaches that will enable public transportation to better meet the evolving needs of U.S. citizens.

#### **Florida Center for Community Design and Research at USF**

USF houses the Florida Center for Community Design and Research. The Florida Center is an interdisciplinary research center within the School of Architecture and Community Design, part of the College of the Arts at USF. It was founded in 1986 as a statewide research center to address urban and regional problems related to both natural and built environments and to provide design expertise, technical assistance, and applied research to assist Florida's growing communities.

# Transportation Infrastructure

**HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY** has transportation issues related to roadway capacity, transit service, and pedestrian and bicycle connectivity that were identified during the panel process. However, before infrastructure improvements can be discussed to address these issues, funding sources must be identified, publically and politically agreed upon, and adopted. A thorough assessment of the county's transit system and pedestrian and bicycle networks is necessary to ensure competitiveness into the future.

## Funding

Transportation funding mechanisms need to be designed to address the existing deficiencies, as well as the future infrastructure needed to accommodate growth. Two strategies are recommended to help address the funding shortfall, which are discussed below. In addition, the county may want to consider expanding its existing gasoline tax levy.

- A 1 percent county sales tax dedicated to multimodal transportation improvements should be implemented. The sales tax revenue should be used to fund transit, pedestrian and bicycle networks, and roadway improvements. An opportunity exists to learn from the 2010 failed referendum. The county should identify specific projects where the money will be spent, use a citizen advisory board to oversee the fund and ensure accountability and timely implementation, and develop an extensive public involvement campaign to educate the voters on the public benefit of the improvements. As already noted, the county needs to improve its public messaging, communication, and engagement with its citizens, including those who reside within the three jurisdictions.
- A mobility fee for new developments is recommended to accommodate the traffic growth expected from

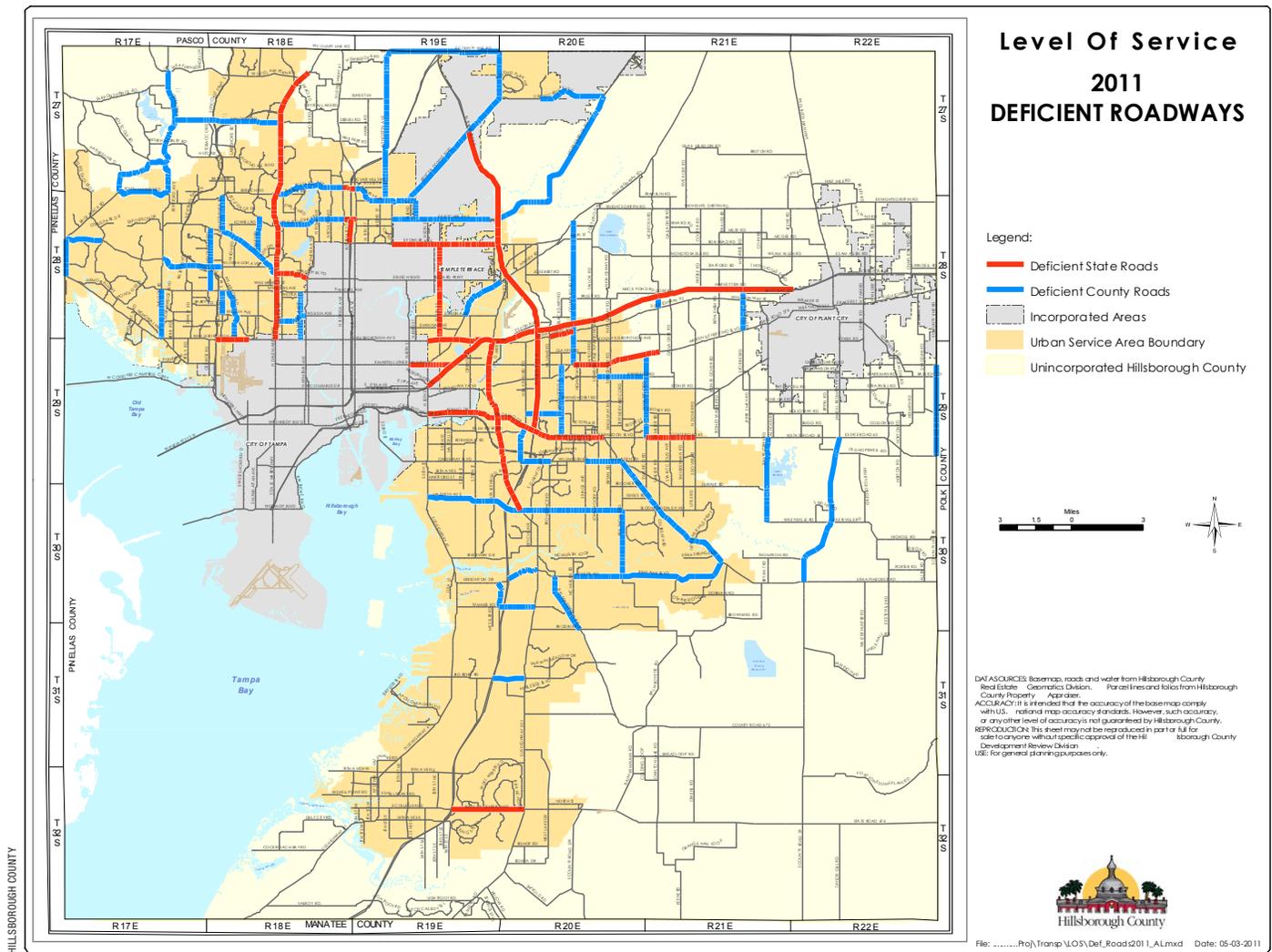
new developments. Several potential models can be followed in determining how to assign the fee, such as trip generation or vehicle miles of travel. Desirable development patterns can be encouraged through mobility fee incentives. Potential incentive applications include infill developments, developments located within targeted economic zones, developments located along transit lines, and developments using compact design practices.

Adopting this two-pronged funding mechanism will help address the existing and long-term transportation deficiencies. Both methodologies working in concert are needed to help fund the necessary improvements.

## Roads and Intersections

Several roadways were identified as deficient in the county's 2011 Level of Service Evaluation. The deficient roadways primarily experience peak-hour congestion, and acceptable delays and queues are experienced during most hours of the day. Although the level of existing congestion may be perceived differently among the traveling public, the traffic will increase as the economy rebounds and the level of congestion will spread to other hours of the day. More important, several intersections and roadway segments experience high crash rates, and these safety issues need to be addressed sooner rather than later. The following roadway improvements are recommended:

- Short-term improvements (0–3 years)
  - Conduct a countywide safety assessment for all collector and arterial roadways, if not already available. Use the safety assessment to prioritize safety improvements at intersections and roadways.



The county must address its deficient roadways, most of which are located within the Urban Service Area.

- Use the 2011 Deficient Roadways analysis and other intersection studies to prioritize spot improvements to address existing congestion.
- Conduct extensive public outreach to convey the critical existing, short-term, and long-term roadway needs and the benefits associated with improvements.
- Long-term improvements (3+ years)
  - Construct roadway corridor improvements to align with targeted economic development regions.
  - Use state-of-the-art technology to administer the county's asset management program.

## Transit

Transit is critical to Hillsborough County's growth. Growth in the county will occur with or without transit. However, a modern and efficient transit system will enable more desirable densities at targeted locations. In addition, national studies consistently find young professionals want to be located in cities where they are not auto-dependent for all trips. Transit, bike facilities, and sidewalks all contribute to meet this need. The following transit improvements are recommended to promote economic growth.

- Short-term improvements (0–3 years)
  - Inventory the assets and deficiencies within the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit system. USF's CUTR should be considered as a resource.

- Focus transit improvements along routes that serve the targeted economic development zones.
  - Conduct extensive public outreach to convey the critical existing, short-term, and long-term transit needs and the benefits associated with improvements.
  - Educate nontransit-dependent people on using transit services to minimize potential apprehensions
- Improvements to existing bus service are expected to accommodate the short-term economic growth of the county.
  - Long-term improvements (3+ years)
    - A modern transit system should be planned for the future, and all transit modes (light rail, bus rapid transit, modern street cars, and so forth) should be considered. As noted previously, political discipline is needed to ensure that such planning is financially sound and sustainable.
    - The existing population densities do not appear to support the ridership estimates needed to support the previously proposed light-rail system. In addition, the historic development patterns do not convey optimism that required densities will be achieved. A stronger agency commitment to promoting increased densities and infill is needed before recommending expensive capital expenditures.

## Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements

Volume 9 of Hillsborough County's Quality of Life Survey (March 2011) found that over 60 percent of respondents indicated sidewalk and bike lanes do not provide safe mobility options. A decade-long national pedestrian study found the Tampa Bay Region (including St. Petersburg and Clearwater) was the second most dangerous metropolitan area in the United States (behind Orlando). On average, 90 pedestrians were killed each year from 2000 to 2009. Nineteen bicyclist fatalities occurred in Hillsborough County in 2010 and 2011. Limited connectivity exists for bikes within the county, although most suburban collectors and arterials constructed recently include paved shoulders to accommodate bikes. Older roadways, including most roadways within the city of Tampa, have few bike accommodations. The following improvements are recommended to enhance pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and safety:

- Look for opportunities to implement the Metropolitan Planning Organization's 2008 bike plan.
- Adopt a complete streets policy and ordinance, which requires pedestrian and bicycle accommodations on all new and reconstructed roadways (both public or private).
- Undertake a public safety campaign using existing Florida Department of Transportation PedBike Resource Center material.

*The county should make improving pedestrian conditions a priority.*



# Framework for Responsible and Sustainable Growth

**BEFORE MEANINGFUL AND SUSTAINABLE** economic development and growth can occur, the county must address its framework for both the planning and development processes, including the cumbersome, multiagency regulatory structure in place for planning, which is far-reaching and engages agencies such as the Environmental Protection Commission, the City-County Planning Commission, Hillsborough County, and the Metropolitan Planning Commission. This section articulates the panel's recommendations in that realm.

## Governance

Government oversight of the development process may suggest either positive or negative responses from citizens and the real estate industry that is subject to development regulations. Residents may welcome the application of standards to guide the quality of a proposed development project, or they may complain that such regulations are not strictly applied to guide the design and construction of buildings. Developers may resist requirements they believe are unnecessary or too restrictive, or they may take advantage of standards that generate increased value in their projects. In either case, distrust of the governing body may ensue, along with extended hearings and misunderstandings, and both parties may be dissatisfied with the results.

Often these situations stem from hard feelings stimulated by past experience, but too frequently they arise from the lack of clarity of the adopted standards and requirements or uneven application of standards by government officials. The complicated standards and processes of planning and constructing buildings and projects can be daunting for the designers, developers, and building inspectors involved. And the residents in the locality often are not well informed about often-complex legal requirements. But misunderstandings can also arise from the fractured leadership

of local officials who fail to keep local residents aware of regulatory standards, the local entitlement process, or upcoming project hearings. This type of situation can become more difficult if new projects are likely to affect residents in nearby jurisdictions—residents who often have little experience with or influence on the neighboring communities.

Elected officials and planners in many communities try to respond to these situations with programs to make local residents more familiar with development requirements and processes. In addition, they frequently establish procedures to provide detailed information for developers unfamiliar with their requirements (see sidebar). Professional organizations also offer educational programs for such purposes.

## Plans, Codes, and Procedures

Drilling down from the general to the somewhat more specific, the panel has been asked to review the county's plan and development code with an eye toward how these documents affect the desirable economic development goals. The following insights and recommendations were gained from a thorough review of the planning and regulatory environment in the county, using both documentation and the panel's stakeholder interview process.

### Planning Framework: Comprehensive Plans

Comprehensive growth planning for all cities and the county's unincorporated areas is the responsibility of the Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission. These plans are represented in separate Comprehensive Plan documents for Tampa, Temple Terrace, Plant City, and the unincorporated areas of the county. At the implementation level, each jurisdiction within these city and

## A Responsive Economic Development Delivery System

A number of activities must take place to create a dynamic system to respond to economic growth opportunities. The following principles laid out in a landmark study by the Urban Institute (an organization that gathers data, conducts research, and evaluates programs to foster sound public policy and effective government) should feed into the planning and governance activities discussed in this section.

- *Government needs the ability to track and respond to market forces.* This involves having an excellent grasp of your community's strengths and weaknesses as they relate to development in general and specifically to the industry clusters for which Hillsborough offers strategic location advantage.
- *Government needs to provide the operating support required.* This support ensures that the local and regional economic development organizations have adequate resources to carry out the responsibilities assigned to them. Roles need to be defined so that the delivery system connects seamlessly to the client and provides assurance to clients that "Hillsborough County has its act together." Competition among partners has no role

here. A location in the region will benefit all, not just the host community.

- *An identified entity needs to have the authority and resources to assemble land for future development.* No matter how good your economic development agency and its institutional partners may be, if they do not have the ability to deliver sites, they will not get a second look. Businesses now have very short time horizons for making location decisions—often as short as 45 to 90 days—and the location will go to the jurisdiction that can deliver a development-ready site. In Hillsborough County this entity should be either the county or the Economic Development Commission.
- *A regulatory environment that is predictable and timely is critical.* This environment is critical to the success of all economic development activity. Nationally, communities that view their base industries as valued clients rather than objects of taxation and regulation have the most economic success. That is not to say that permits and regulatory requirements should be diminished or ignored, but they should be clear, predictable, and achievable within a reasonable time period.

county areas implements the adopted plans through its individual planning and public works departments.

### The County Areas: Comprehensive Plan and Community Plans

Within the county areas, the Planning Commission is responsible for the preparation of Community Plans to implement the overall Comprehensive Plan and to provide more specific general plan-level guidance for distinct subareas. To date, 21 separate Community Plans have been adopted. The Community Plans are not meant to be regulatory or budgetary documents. The panel did, however, hear that some of the adopted Community Plans do contain regulations differing from those in the current plans. The panel understands that, in future, any such special development standards or regulations would not be included in the approval of the Community Plan but would

be implemented through subsequent conforming actions undertaken by the planning staff.

In the unincorporated county areas, detailed planning and construction standards and reviews are the responsibility of the Hillsborough County administration as implemented through its Development Services Department.

### Comprehensive Plan Updates

The panel understands that in the near future the Comprehensive Plans of all the jurisdictions are to be updated. Although completion of this process will likely take a few years, the panel believes beginning this work in a fashion that can foster some of the previously discussed and much-needed intergovernmental cooperation is very important. Further, the panel recommends that the Comprehensive Plans for Tampa, Temple Terrace, Plant City, and the unincorporated areas be finalized almost

contemporaneously to provide a seamless and cohesive vision for Hillsborough County.

### **Laying the Groundwork for the Plan**

Certain activities should take place to lay the groundwork for this next round of Comprehensive Plan updates. The panel believes the first activity in this work should be the verification and if necessary updating of information available on maps in the county's geographic information system database. Overlaying these data a series of updated maps should be prepared to define sensitive areas (environmental, cultural), travel (car, bus, pedestrian/bicycle, transit) corridors, and areas most and least likely or desirable to develop in the time frame of the plan about to be prepared. These map layers can then be combined and provide a compelling vision of the sensitive and more desirable development areas within the plan area. These analysis maps should cover the entire county and show what is happening in all four jurisdictions on one set of maps.

### **Community Involvement**

The Planning Commission is experienced in the area of public participation. With this upcoming update the commission has the opportunity to refine some of its approaches to public participation. The panel notes the outline of a public participation strategy template in the recent Community Plan Guide document published by the City-County Planning Commission. This strategy could be analyzed and revised for the broad countywide Comprehensive Plan work.

### **Important Comprehensive Plan Update Considerations**

As the county and cities embark on the update to the Comprehensive Plan, the panel believes significant consideration should be given to the following:

*Connectivity on a Variety of Levels:* The most obvious is vehicular circulation corridors, but beyond the arterials the panel strongly recommends requiring pedestrian and vehicular connections within the megablocks created by the arterial grid. Projects must be designed to be interconnected within a given megablock. It should not

be necessary for a child in one subdivision to go out and down the arterial to visit a child in an immediately adjacent subdivision.

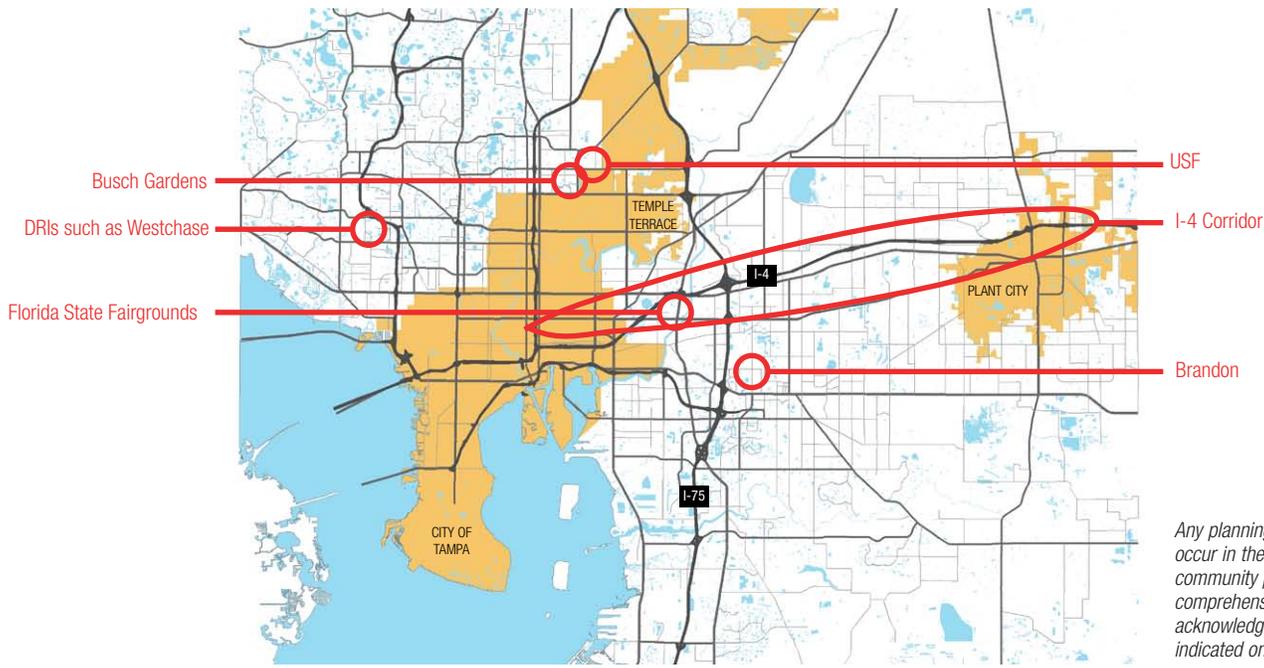
Quality-of-life surveys in a wide variety of cities and residential communities indicate that trails and open space are among the community elements most desired by citizens. Furthermore, environmental habitats are significantly strengthened when sensitive areas are interconnected.

Another and no less important level of connection is between the land use, circulation, and open-space policies and plans of the unincorporated areas and city areas within the plan. The updated plans of all should emphasize corridors and the continuity of these connections.

*Planning Observations:* The panel notes that the county's current Comprehensive Plan densities decrease in intensity as one moves away from the city centers and Interstate 75 and toward more rural lands. Although this strategy generally is still appropriate, the process should acknowledge the following:

- The existence of already developed urban nodes (Brandon, major DRIs);
- The importance and development potential of the designated I-4 green-tech corridor between Tampa and Plant City (and beyond to Orlando);
- The potential for higher-density development nodes around USF and Busch Gardens and the State Fairgrounds; and
- Plan influences arising from the nature of development, open spaces, and planning for lands across the county line borders to Pasco, Polk, Pinellas, and Manatee counties.

*Plan Integration:* The Planning Commission has responsibility for ensuring consistency between the cities' and the county's Comprehensive Plans. Because this one body has such overarching responsibility, ultimately a set of plan maps, including land use, circulation, and open space, should be prepared that displays all jurisdictions' plans



Any planning processes that occur in the future, including community planning and comprehensive planning, must acknowledge the activity centers indicated on the map.

on one set of maps. At present, understanding how many of the topics raised in the county areas relate to similar issues within the cities is difficult. Although the status of plan updates across these boundaries makes such confusion understandable, the delivery of one set of consistent documents should be possible if all the Comprehensive Plans can be updated contemporaneously.

*Comprehensive Plan Policies and Programs:* The panel notes that the current Comprehensive Plans and Policies incorporate many of the most current progressive plan ideas. The panel applauds the county for such a flexible, forward-thinking document and encourages the continuation of such policies and the wider use of such standards in the coming years. Last, and maybe most important, the panel observes that the existence of these innovative provisions is largely unknown to the general public. The opportunities here should be spotlighted and brought to the public's attention during the plan update work through a comprehensive public outreach and communication process.

*Community Plans:* As mentioned, within the unincorporated areas Community Plans are prepared to provide more specific general plan-level guidance for distinct subareas. In May 2012, an updated effort was formally launched in a session discussing a new document prepared by Planning Commission staff to guide the preparation of Community Plans. This document spells out various responsibilities

and opportunities and appears to be a useful complement to the formal update of the overall Comprehensive Plan.

### Planning and Development Reviews

As mentioned, in the unincorporated county areas detailed planning and construction standards and reviews are the responsibility of the Hillsborough County administration as implemented through its Development Services Department. The panel heard from numerous stakeholder interviews that this process needs to be improved. As this topic was considered, the panel distilled its thoughts into three points:

- Clearly say what you require.
- Require what you say.
- Consistently enforce your requirements.

That seems simple. What the panel heard was, "It's not the requirements; it's the way things operate."

Beyond interpretation issues, clarity is often lacking as to what is required. Applicants, whether individual homeowners, developers, or civil engineers, are often unable to discern what is required until after they have submitted documents for review. This problem arises in many communities around the country, but the panel heard several comments of this nature regarding the difficult and time-consuming nature of the development review process.

The panel recommends that the county take a fresh look at the review process and how it should work. The county should take advantage of the chance to see if it might approach things in new ways. Through the interview process, the panel heard that in many cases the Development Services Department may not operate as designed. Reviews have been delayed by the manner in which the department interfaces with outside departments (Environmental Protection Committee, Water, Storm) and at times the way the department staff responds to applicants (returning phone calls, having authority, and giving direction).

To address some of these concerns, a cross-departmental development services team should be established with staff that can make timely decisions in their area of expertise. A senior development services facilitator should be assigned to oversee and implement Development Services Department practices. This person would interface with, among others, the Economic Development Manager. Working together they could achieve the goals of providing clarity, certainty, consistency, fairness, and speed in the review process. This commitment to timeliness would mean that applicants, whether individual homeowners, businesses, or major developers, receive prompt service without cutting corners in the interest of expediency. This position could be filled by the deputy administrator, or his or her designated senior representative, with the authority to demand and deliver efficient staffing and services from the various elements of development services.

Finally, whether at a major project level or a construction plan review, a process should be established to bring all the external commenting parties (i.e., Environmental Protection Committee, Water, and Storm) into the process efficiently and at the same table at the same time.

# Conclusion

**THE PANEL BELIEVES THAT BY FOCUSING** on the most effective ways to leverage the county's considerable economic assets and resources, the community will be able to accomplish much, even in today's uncertain global economic climate. Investment in transportation infrastructure and in restructuring the development approval and comprehensive planning processes to provide maximum transparency is especially important.

Hillsborough County is at a critical juncture for its future. The competition for business and development that can lead to economic prosperity has never been greater as

communities throughout the United States must measure up against both each other and regions around the globe. Ensuring that a foundation of trust, leadership, and cooperation are inherent in the culture of Hillsborough County's governance will allow the county to be a leader in pursuing innovative economic development opportunities.

# About the Panel

## Franklin A. Martin

*Panel Chair*  
*Ventura, California*

From 1997 to 2008, Martin was responsible for the planning, development, and management of Hidden Springs, a 1,724-acre planned community in the Boise front foothills. Hidden Springs was the 2000 recipient of the “Best in American Living” Platinum Award for Smart Growth sponsored by *Professional Builder* magazine and the National Association of Home Builders. Hidden Springs was also featured prominently as a case study in the Urban Land Institute book *Conservation Communities: Creating Value with Nature, Open Space, and Agriculture*.

Between 1971 and 1997, Martin was responsible for the development of more than 3,000 homes, primarily located in the Chicago metropolitan area, and performed project management for several financial institutions to stabilize and market their distressed real estate projects. From 1989 to 1997, he was chief operating officer of Shaw Homes Inc., an affiliate of the Shaw Company. During this period, he managed the development of several award-winning communities, including Garibaldi Square, Homan Square, Luther Village, Prairie Crossing, and The Reserve at the Merit Club. Garibaldi Square and Homan Square were recipients of ULI’s prestigious Award for Excellence.

Martin is a former chair of the Urban Land Institute’s Sustainable Development Council and the ULI Idaho District Council. He has chaired seven ULI Advisory Services panels and served on three others.

He received a BA in economics from Hanover College and an MBA in finance from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

## Bill Clarke

*Ross, California*

Clarke is licensed as both a civil engineer and a landscape architect and has over 30 years’ experience in planning, design, and construction projects. He currently consults to developers and other planning and design firms and public agencies on issues ranging from new community plans to site planning and engineering.

For over 20 years Clarke was with two of the largest landscape architecture firms in the country. As a principal at the SWA Group in Sausalito, California, he worked on projects including the Weyerhaeuser Corporate campus outside Tacoma, Washington, and the engineering planning for the Woodbridge new community in Irvine, California, and for ARAMCO compounds in Saudi Arabia. As a principal at EDAW Inc., Clarke led a team that won a design competition for a government complex in Doha, Qatar; prepared two specific plans for more than 6,000 homes and 800 square feet of office industrial land in Tracy, California; and prepared construction documents for Washington Harbour in Washington, D.C.

In recent years, Clarke’s work has centered on the planning and implementation of a variety of projects. Among these projects were an 11,000-acre residential development near Livermore, California; an 800-acre commercial/industrial plan in Tracy, California; and a 300-acre business park in Livermore, California. He was also part of a team preparing a resource management plan for the country of Palau. Currently he is working on the implementation of a town center for the new community of Mountain House, California.

## Brian Fogarty

*San Francisco, California*

Fogarty is a director in the San Francisco office of the Concord Group. The Concord Group provides strategic independent advisory services to all sectors of the land use industry, advising public agencies, financial institutions, developers, and joint ventures on real estate and economic development issues. His primary responsibility is to plan, coordinate, and carry out the day-to-day consulting efforts of the firm.

His expertise is determining the feasibility, revenue optimization strategy, and product segmentation of planned communities. In his eight years at the Concord Group, Fogarty has completed over 300 engagements around the country for leading developers and financial institutions. His experience ranges from infill and urban revitalization projects to suburban master-planned community development and new towns. In addition to feasibility and development programming, Fogarty leads a team at the Concord Group that specializes in portfolio due diligence and valuation engagements. This work has taken him throughout the United States and Europe, where the firm has analyzed over \$2.5 billion in commercial and residential assets.

Fogarty graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, in 2004.

## Pat Hawley

*Brookfield, Wisconsin*

Hawley is a traffic planning project manager with about 20 years of experience. His areas of expertise include traffic planning, safety, access management, traffic impact/site circulation, roundabouts, and parking. He manages projects as varied as traffic impact studies for private developers, expert witness on access cases, corridor studies for state departments of transportation, financial assessments for parking utilities, regional freeway planning efforts, and intersection safety assessments. He is currently in his sixth year of working part time, on site as a consultant for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Hawley's diverse

experience has enabled him to obtain consent on complex and controversial projects.

Hawley has taught four transportation courses at Marquette University, and he teaches two to three short courses a year through the University of Wisconsin—Madison on transportation and site development. He is the current president of the Wisconsin Parking Association, past president of the Wisconsin section of the Institute of Transportation Engineers, member of the City of Delafield Public Works Committee, and a former committee member of the Transportation Research Board's Access Management Committee. He is active with the Women's Transportation Seminar, Public Policy Forum, and Marquette University's Senior Design program.

He received a BS in civil engineering from Marquette University and an MS in civil engineering from Texas A&M University. He is a registered professional engineer in Wisconsin, and he is certified as a Professional Traffic Operations Engineer. He has served on two prior ULI panels.

## John L. Knott Jr.

*Charleston, South Carolina*

Knott is an internationally recognized leader in the redevelopment of urban real estate, infrastructure, energy, and environmental systems. He is the creator of the CityCraft process, which is a development and city planning process that restores the economic, environmental, and social health of cities. Knott is a recognized thought leader and keynote speaker on sustainable development, the green economy, and restoration of cities.

A third-generation developer, Knott has over 40 years of experience in urban redevelopment. His award-winning projects include work at the Baltimore Inner Harbor; urban areas in Baltimore and Washington, D.C.; the University of Texas Health Science Center in the Houston Medical Center; Dewees Island in South Carolina; and the Noisette Community of North Charleston in South Carolina.

Through his ingenuity at both Dewees and Noisette, Knott has been recognized as an influential leader in molding the

nation's sustainable development movement. In 2001, ULI honored Dewees Island with the Award for Excellence. In July 2005, the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) selected the Noisette Community Master Plan for its 2005 Professional Award. Noisette was the only recipient in ASLA's Analysis and Planning Category, with the Award of Excellence, the organization's highest honor. The city of North Charleston was the 2009 recipient of the Home Depot Foundation award as the leading sustainable city (under 100,000) in the United States, centered on its partnership with the Noisette Company and the Sustainability Institute (a nonprofit founded by Knott in 1999).

Since 1994, Knott has served in numerous national leadership roles for ULI, including as a founding member of the Sustainable Development Council and Responsible Property Development Council. He served for four years as a member of the District Council Advisors to the ULI Trustees and currently serves as ULI's Program Committee leader for Sustainability as one of ULI's five core focus areas for the global organization. Knott has served on numerous international and national ULI Advisory Services panels, developing recommendations for regional and municipal governments to solve some of their most challenging land use issues. He was also the founding chairman of the ULI District Council for South Carolina (2004–2008).

## Donna Lewis

*Trenton, New Jersey*

Lewis is the planning director for Mercer County, New Jersey's capital county. She has served geographically and economically diverse Mercer County for 25 years. The county comprises large contiguous agricultural areas, suburbs, classic small towns, and Trenton, the state capital city. Her office is responsible for transportation and infrastructure planning; open space, historic, and farmland preservation; land development review; and redevelopment planning. The office also administers the Open Space Preservation Trust Fund, which generated \$15 million annually.

Lewis managed the award-winning restoration of the Louis Kahn Bath House in Ewing, New Jersey, the former site

of the Jewish Community Center. This modern structure is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places and was featured in the movie *My Architect*. She is a past member of the National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council, an advisory board to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. She also served on the Transportation Research Board (TRB) Transportation Needs of National Parks and Public Lands Committee and is a friend to the TRB Access Management Committee. She is a member of the Central Jersey Transportation Forum Steering Committee and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. She has participated in two National Cooperative Highway Research Panels and in the national scan of best practices in highway access management. Lewis has sponsored two ULI Advisory Services panels and has served on numerous panels.

She has bachelor's degrees in political science and English from the College of New Jersey and a master of city and regional planning from Rutgers University. She is a New Jersey-licensed professional planner and a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners. She has also been an adjunct professor at the College of New Jersey.

## Daniel B. Quinto

*Fort Worth, Texas*

Quinto is president of Roaring Brook Development Company (RBDC), a development services firm specializing in mixed-use and traditional urban real estate development. Founded in 1999, RBDC facilitates real estate transactions by assisting the buyers, the sellers, and the municipalities reach consensus on development rights through land planning, zoning, and design restrictions.

A graduate of the Yale School of Architecture, Quinto is a licensed architect and real estate agent. Prior to joining RBDC, Quinto practiced architecture and construction management as a principal of Irons and Quinto Inc. He moved from architecture into real estate development when he joined Disney Development Company in Florida to act as a project manager for such projects as the Wilderness Lodge, Disney's Sports Complex, and the Wedding

Pavilion, before moving to Texas to manage the design and construction of the opening phase of Southlake Town Square in Southlake.

Since its founding, RBDC has focused on the central issues of real estate development: creating value for owners, creating quality for end users, and creating meaningful assets for the broader community.

Quinto served as a member of the Steering Committee for the North Texas Council of Governments' Center for Development Excellence; he is a member of the Urban Land Institute and the Economic Development Committee for North Richland Hills, Texas.

## Douglas Porter

*Chevy Chase, Maryland*

Porter is one of the nation's leading authorities on managing community and regional growth. In consulting and writing, and through the nonprofit Growth Management Institute (which he founded in 1992), he conducts research and engages in educational activities. His work spans the spectrum from affordable housing programs to transportation/land use relationships, regional growth management, transit-oriented development, and local community development issues. From 1979 to 1991, Porter directed the public policy research program of the Urban Land Institute. His recent publications include *Smart Growth Endorsement/Rating Systems* (APA), *Breaking the Logjam: Civic Engagement by Developers and Planners* (ULI), *Inclusionary Zoning for Affordable Housing* (ULI), *Developing Around Transit* (ULI), *Exploring 'Ad Hoc' Regionalism* (Lincoln Institute), *Making Smart Growth Work* (ULI), and *The Practice of Sustainable Development* (ULI). He is a Fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners and received a BS in urban and regional planning from Michigan State University and an MS in the same subject from the University of Illinois.

Porter began his career in Washington, D.C., as a planner with a newly formed consulting practice, Marcou, O'Leary and Associates. In his 12 years with that firm he became

a partner and directed many planning projects, including preparation of numerous plans for downtown revitalization, urban renewal, and neighborhood renewal. Working with business organizations, neighborhood committees, and public staffs, he focused on defining economically feasible projects that met public and private objectives. His work also included preparation of comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances, and subdivision regulations for several cities and counties, working closely with local planners and planning commissions. In addition, he analyzed the fiscal effects of development projects and proposed comprehensive plans using a computer-assisted fiscal impact model.

## Dan Slone

*Richmond, Virginia*

Slone represents developers and communities in overcoming the land use and environmental permitting impediments to small and large-scale projects such as new towns, utilities, and industrial facilities. He provides a wide range of services for developers of new urban and sustainable projects with a related focus on the convergence of communication, power, and essential services. He has assisted clients in dealing with wetlands permitting and enforcement for more than two decades. Slone also works with a wide range of green product manufacturers. His practice areas include environmental solutions, land use, energy and utilities, and sustainability.

Slone has a JD cum laude from the University of Michigan Law School, Ann Arbor, and was an editor with *Journal of Law Reform*. He has a BA summa cum laude in philosophy and political science from Birmingham Southern College, Birmingham, Alabama. Among the many honors he has received are "Best Lawyers in America," Woodward/White, Inc., 2006–2011; named to *Lawdragon 3000 Leading Lawyers in America* List, 2009–2011; named one of America's "Leading Lawyers," environmental law, *Chambers USA*, 2004–2010; named a Virginia "Super Lawyer," *Law & Politics*, 2005–2011; recipient, Henry David Thoreau Environmental Conservator, Better Housing Coalition 2010 Groundbreaker Award; recipient, Special

Recognition for Service Award, Virginia Sustainable Building Network, 2006; recipient, Leadership Award, James River Green Building Council, 2005.

Slone is a full member of the Urban Land Institute and is a member of its Sustainability Council.

## Sue Southon

*Bloomfield Hills, Michigan*

Southon is a development professional, trainer, and strategic planner. In 1992 she founded Strategic Planning Services to provide strategic planning, site consultation, organizational development, project management (including construction project management), and grant writing assistance to industry, government, nonprofit organizations, and educational institutions. She has extensive experience in community, economic, and housing development. Strategic Planning Services has offices in southeastern Michigan and New Orleans, Louisiana.

Before 1992, Southon was with the Michigan Department of Commerce, responsible for comprehensive strategic planning in distressed communities and assisting local government to develop and implement a range of business development and retention programs. From 1995 to 1996, Southon served as the senior director of business development for Michigan First, the state's public/private business attraction and marketing organization. From 1980 through 1990, she was the executive director of the Independent Business Research Office of Michigan, created as a public policy research resource for small business interests. Southon authored federal, state, and foundation grants resulting in awards in excess of \$55 million.

Southon served on the Professional Development Committee that created the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) professional certification program. She assisted in the development of the curriculum for the Marketing Business Attraction and the Strategic Planning modules and served as an instructor for both courses. She worked with the IEDC advisory services program on regional economic development, state business attraction,

and strategic planning presentations. Southon was a regular volunteer for IEDC's Disaster Recovery Panels and is a member of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Subject Matter Experts Disaster Recovery Cadre.

Southon has worked extensively on community development and affordable housing projects, with a focus on effective project management and the use of multiple financing mechanisms to finance affordable housing and community development in urban areas. She is currently serving as a technical assistance consultant for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Neighborhood Stabilization Program through its national contract with the Local Initiatives Support Corporation and for the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. Current projects include the management of affordable housing projects and assisting municipalities to define and implement effective community development delivery systems. Southon has bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Michigan.





# A ULI Advisory Services Panel Report



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