

Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Renaissance Plan December 1, 2001

Developed and Adopted by Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association



Prepared by the Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department



Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association Inc.

**P.O. Box 5392
Tallahassee, Florida 323**

December 19, 2001

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with esteemed pleasure that we, the neighbors and residents of the Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association, present to you our Neighborhood Renaissance Action Plan. This plan, which we—the residents, City, County, and partnering institutions—, have been working on for several months, outlines the vision and aspirations of the residents of Apalachee Ridge Estates with respect to our effort to improve the quality of life in our neighborhood. One of the objectives of this plan is not only to address the issues, the concerns, and the potential for revitalization of this community, but also to become a model mechanism to facilitate and foster a sense of possibility that will lead to bridging the gap that separates the communities and the institutions. The plan outlines implementing tasks and strategies that we believe will be key to the success and viability of Apalachee Ridge Estates neighborhood. Implementation of the plan will require the participation of the Renaissance Partners and cooperating institutions; therefore, we ask for your commitment to implement the outlined tasks and strategies of the plan.

The committed efforts and unselfish contributions of the Apalachee Ridge Estates neighborhood, the hosts of volunteers, City and County officials, and institutional partners have been instrumental in transforming what started as dreams and aspirations into a vision for future growth. I, on behalf of the Apalachee Ridge Estates neighborhood, express our thanks to all whom have contributed, for time that was spent and sacrifices that were made in the name of community, neighbors, and of improving the quality of life. We give special recognition to Commissioner Steve Meisburg, Rosa Morgan, and John Baker for their tireless devotion to this process. I would like to also express special appreciation to Winter Troxel and Gayle D'Alessandro, two Florida State University graduates whose inspiration and contributions were instrumental to the shared creation of this dream and the success of our growth in the Apalachee Ridge Estates neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Perry L. West

Perry L. West

President, Apalachee Ridge Estates NA

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**COMMUNITY NEIGHBORHOOD
RENAISSANCE PARTNERSHIP**

**The Apalachee Ridge Estates
Neighborhood Renaissance Plan**

Making Tallahassee Neighborhoods Beautiful and Livable

Developed and Adopted by Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association
December 1, 2001

Prepared by the Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department

TLCPD
*Tallahassee-Leon County
Planning Department*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following individuals served on the Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association Board of Directors:

Perry L. West, President	Tonya Ginnie, Vice-President
Annie Ruth Jones, Secretary	Elton E. Thomas, Treasurer
Shuana Smith, Board Member	Donald Thomas, Board Member
Johnnie L. Blake, Board Member	

The Association Board of Directors would like to thank the members of the Neighborhood Steering Committee who provided neighborhood oversight and leadership for development of the neighborhood plan. The following individuals served on the Neighborhood Steering Committee:

Lorine Flythe	Bonnie Abellera	Clint Tyler
Mildred Harris	Alton Evans	Elton E. Thomas
Anita Walker	Dot Daugherty	Vernell McCray
Perry West		

The Neighborhood Association would also like to thank the following individuals who served on the Neighborhood Planning Team and/or an Action Team:

Community Facilities and Services Action Team

Shuana Smith, Neighborhood Resident, Chair	Anita Walker, Neighborhood Resident
Mildred Harris, Neighborhood Resident	Donald Thomas, Neighborhood Resident
Bonnie Abellera, Beacon Hill Neighborhood	Tom Pugh, Florida A&M University
Tonya Smith, Tallahassee Police Dept.	Lt. Lewis Johnson, Tallahassee Police Dept.
Capt. Emily Smoak, Tallahassee Police Dept.	Cleve Atchley, Streets & Drainage
John Buss, Stormwater Management.	Chuck Blum, Stormwater Management.
Michael Sprayberry, Public Works, Traffic Eng.	Larry Schenk, Parks & Recreation
Sally Dowlen, Public Works, Leon County	Andra McMillan, Neighborhood Resident
Keith Dantin, St. Joe/Arvida Corporation	Rosa Morgan, CNRP

Bob Cambric, Facilitator, Florida Dept. of Community Affairs
Janis Williamson, Facilitator

Housing & Economic Development Action Team

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Mildred Harris, Neighborhood Resident	Debby Love, TLC
Shelly Murphy, Leon County	Ann Cleare, Realtor
Michael Parker, City of Tallahassee	Marcus Hepburn, Covenant Partner
Rosa Morgan, CNRP	

Miaisha Mitchell, Facilitator, FAMU CDC
Bob Cambric, Facilitator, FDCA

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Donald Thomas, Neighborhood Resident
Roger Pinholster, Fairview Middle Sch.
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Mick Overall, City of Tallahassee
Inez Henry, Rickards High School
Sara Ann Harkey, Covenant Partner
Edna Walker, LCS, Adult & Community Ed.

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Brian Henderson, Neighborhood Resident
Wayne Smith, Covenant Partner
Charlie Hogan, Leonard Wesson Elem. Sch
Ron Boege, Learnsomething.com
Steve Rollins, Florida State University
Maggie Lewis, Leon County School Board
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Christ Gospel Church of Tallahassee
Fairview Middle School
Johnnie Blake

Faith Christian Family Center
Leonard Wesson Elementary School
Rickards High School
Leon County Public Library

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Linda Vaughn
Bob Cambric

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Janice Williamson
Miaisha Mitchell

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St. Joe/Arvida Corporation	Bank of America	Capital City Bank
City of Tallahassee	Florida A&M University	Florida State University
Leon County School Board	United Way of Big Bend	Leon County

Covenant Partners' Churches

Bethel AME Church	Faith Christian Family Center
Faith Presbyterian Church	First Presbyterian Church
Good Shepherd Catholic Church	John Wesley United Methodist Church
New Mount Zion AME Church	St. Stephen Lutheran Church
Trinity United Methodist Church	United Church in Tallahassee

The Neighborhood Association expresses its thanks and appreciation to members of the Leon County Board of County Commissioners and its staff for their role in Apalachee Ridge Estates renaissance process. Special thanks to the County Public Works Department for its work on the Orange Avenue wall.

The Neighborhood Association expresses its thanks and appreciation to members of the City of Tallahassee City Commission and the City Manager for their support and leadership of the Community Neighborhood Renaissance Process in Apalachee Ridge Estates. Special thanks to Commissioner Steve Meisburg for his leadership in this process.

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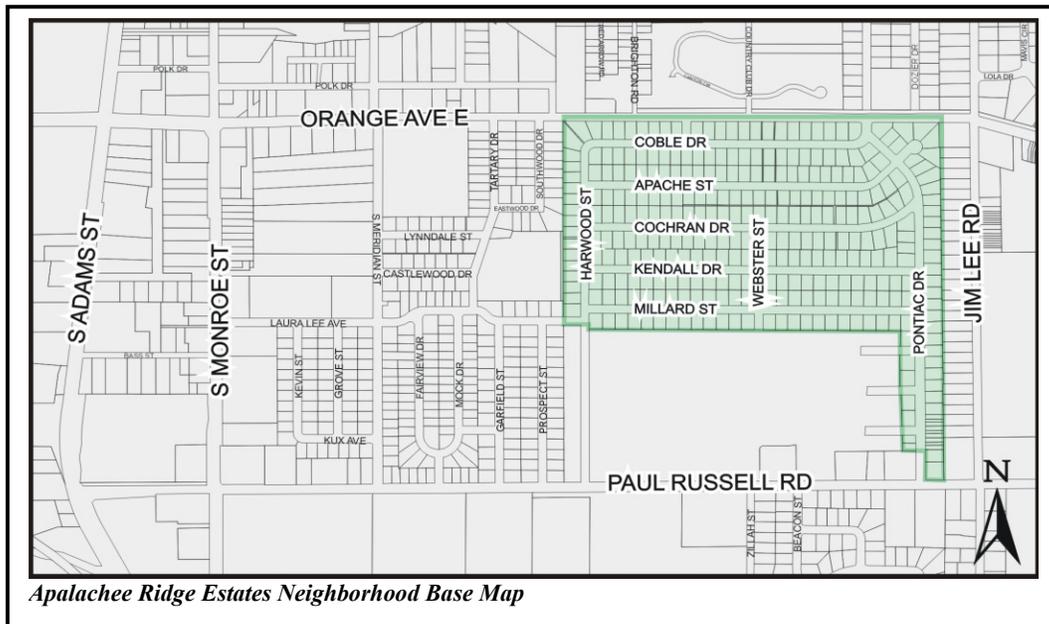
Neighborhood Profile

Physical Environment

The Apalachee Ridge Estates neighborhood is located in the southeastern quadrant of the City of Tallahassee, Florida. The neighborhood is bounded by Orange Avenue to the north, Millard Street to the south, Harwood Drive to the west, and Pontiac Drive to the east and comprises 320 housing units, 95% of which are single-family units. The subdivision was approved in the late 1950's with construction of homes beginning soon after that time. Construction of the neighborhood continued into the early 1990's. Today, there is only one undeveloped single-family lot in Apalachee Ridge Estates.

Housing styles within the neighborhood vary. The majority of the homes, however, are one story single-family homes constructed of masonry blocks with a brick façade or accents. The typical home in the neighborhood is a three-bedroom house with a living room, eat-in kitchen, and a bathroom. Some of the homes have been updated and are larger than the ones constructed during the original construction of the neighborhood. Newer homes in the neighborhood include split-level homes, duplexes and/or town homes. The duplexes and town homes are concentrated along the southern end of Pontiac Drive.

Access to the neighborhood is off Orange Avenue via Pontiac Drive and Coble Street, off Paul Russell Road via Pontiac Drive and off Harwood Drive via Laura Lee Avenue. The neighborhood is served by a network of local city streets (see neighborhood base map).



Land Use & Zoning

The Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood is a residential neighborhood with no non-residential uses within its boundaries. The neighborhood is designated Residential Preservation by the Tallahassee-Leon County Future Land Use Map and is zoned as Residential Preservation-1 (RP-1). This zoning designation is reserved for existing residential areas that are accessible by local

streets. Both single-family detached and duplex residential units in lower densities—up to 6 dwelling units per acre—are permitted, as well as community and recreation facilities. The RP-1 designation also preserves the character of neighborhoods in this category, such as Apalachee Ridge Estates, from incompatible land uses and density intrusion that might result from new developments. The residential areas surrounding Apalachee Ridge Estates are zoned Residential Preservation as well. Other zoning designations in the areas surrounding the neighborhood allow for single family and medium-density residential, office, recreation and community facilities, and a mix of commercial land uses. Even so, over 80% of the surrounding land is preserved for residential use. The neighborhood is fully developed except for one vacant lot located on the corner of Pierson Drive and Pontiac Drive. Maps 1 and 2 (see pages 7 and 8) show the future land uses and zoning designations, respectively, for the Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood planning area.

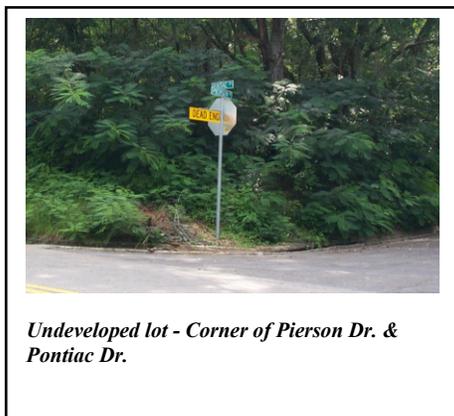
Neighborhood Amenities

One of the natural amenities that the residents of Apalachee Ridge Estates and other Southside Tallahassee residents share is the Jack McLean, Jr. Park, which is located along Paul Russell Road and adjacent to the homes on the southern side of Millard Street in the neighborhood. While there is no vehicular access directly to the park from the neighborhood, there are trails and footpath access from the neighborhood. The park is equipped with pavilions, basketball, tennis, and volleyball courts. A few blocks west of the neighborhood is Tallahassee’s main United States Post Office.



Basketball courts at Jack McLean Park

Across from the post office, is the Dr. B.L. Perry, Jr., Branch Library, a branch of the Leon County Public Library System. The library, a new addition to Southside Tallahassee community resources, provides literary resources to Southside Tallahassee residents, including residents of the Apalachee Ridge Estates neighborhood. Another neighborhood asset is the number of churches adjacent to the neighborhood that provide spiritual as well as social help to neighborhood residents. These churches offer several services outside of their worship services, which include working with youths, children and elderly in the community, as well as providing space for neighborhood meetings and events.

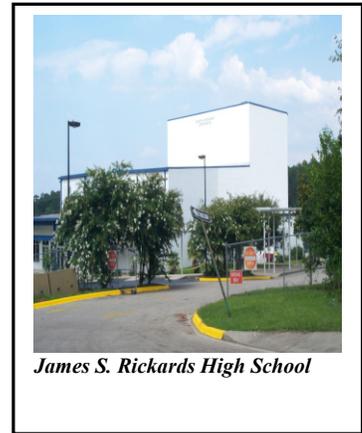
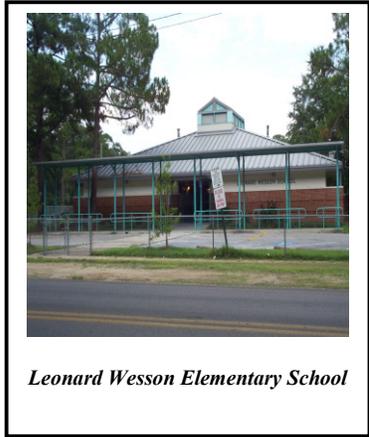


Undeveloped lot - Corner of Pierson Dr. & Pontiac Dr.



A Neighborhood Church- Faith Christian Family Center

Several Leon County public schools are located nearby and are a tremendous asset to the neighborhood. To the west of Apalachee Ridge Estates neighborhood is the elementary school that serves the neighborhood, Leonard Wesson Elementary School, and to the south is the neighborhood's middle school, Fairview Middle School, and to the east is the high school, James S. Rickards High School.



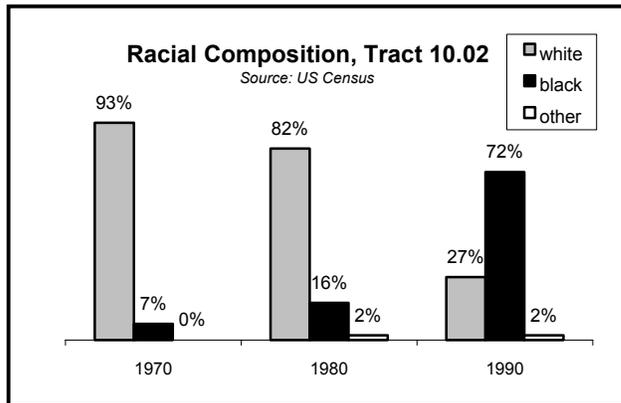
The three neighborhood schools are not only centers for learning during normal school hours, but many of them offer adult and community educational opportunities after hours and on weekends. The schools also serve as meeting places for neighborhood events requiring large meeting space and facilities.

The Tallahassee Boys and Girls Club, which is located in the Orange Avenue Public Housing Complex, is also another community asset. The Boys and Girls Club offers a wide range of training activities and facilities for boys and girls ages 6-18 with an emphasis on leadership development and special outreach to at-risk children. The Boys and Girls Club recently purchased the old Tallahassee Christian School facility, which is located on Laura Lee Avenue, and will be renovating this facility to provide a state-of-the-art Boys and Girls Club. Fire Station No. 3, which is located at 3005 South Monroe Street to the west of the neighborhood, is also an asset to the neighborhood. In addition to its normal fire fighting/prevention and emergency services duties, the station provides free blood pressure checks and fire alarm units to the elderly in the neighborhood.

Most of the immediate/convenience retail needs of the Apalachee Ridge Estates residents are met in the commercial shopping area to the west of the neighborhood along the South Monroe Street and Adams Street area. The area has a variety of shopping opportunities, including a number of fast food restaurants, service stations, grocery stores, automotive repair shops, and banking institutions. There are also discount stores, barber and beauty shops, medical offices and pharmacies. The area, however, lacks in the offering of specialty retail and apparel stores in the immediate vicinity. There is also a deficiency in the diversity of restaurant choices close to the neighborhood; the number of sit-down or dine-in eating establishments is few. Opportunities for entertainment or leisure services are non-existent. Over the years, a significant amount of economic investments have shifted from the more central and southern portions of the city to the northwest and northeast. With the City and County's emphasis on southern Tallahassee, through the Southern Strategy Concept, it is likely that some of these facilities and services will again be available in the southern section of the City.

Neighborhood Demographics

The first homes in the neighborhood were built in the 1950's starting in the northeastern corner and later developing into what is currently recognized as the Apalachee Ridge Estates neighborhood. Because of its proximity to employment and schools as well as housing affordability, the neighborhood was considered a good place to live. Tony Rogers, a resident of the neighborhood since 1964, describes the first residents of Apalachee Ridge as "ordinary middle class residents." At that time, the neighborhood was a collection of predominately white residents who worked as correctional officers, mechanics, medical assistants, teachers, college students, airport personnel and artists. These elements remained characteristic of Apalachee Ridge well into the two decades that followed.

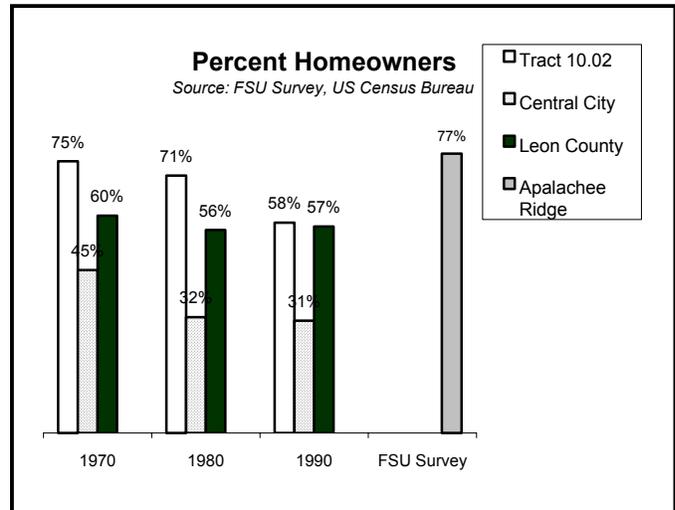


In the 1980's, Census Tract 10.02—the census tract that contains Apalachee Ridge Estates neighborhood—experienced a dramatic shift in its racial composition, a trend that has continued from 1980 until the present time. The 1990 US Census figures reflect a predominately African American population in the census tract, at approximately 72% (see figure at left). A significant portion of the population in Apalachee Ridge is comprised of young children and adolescents. According to a

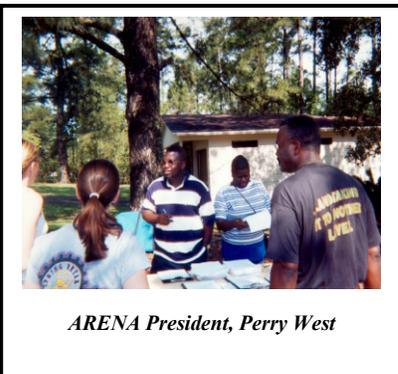
1999 survey conducted by graduate students in the Department of Urban & Regional Planning at Florida State University, about 34% of the residents in the neighborhood are under the age of 18. This figure closely mirrors that of the entire census tract, which indicates that in 1990, 33% of the residents were under the age of 18. Another portion of the younger adults are college-aged renters. Though the racial and ethnic composition of the neighborhood has changed, it has not had a significant impact upon other social factors in Apalachee Ridge. There is a high level of educational attainment among the neighborhood's residents—approximately 40% of the survey respondents have achieved some level of college education.



A large number of the homes in the neighborhood are over 40 years old. Even though the housing in the neighborhood is beginning to show some signs of age, the housing stock is generally very livable and stable. A relatively high level of homeownership persists in Apalachee Ridge Estates —77% in 1999. This value surpasses the homeownership rates for its census tract—a much lower 58%. It also surpasses the homeownership rate of Leon County (57%) and far exceeds that of the Central City area of Tallahassee (31%). The 1990 census report shows that the residents continue to be “middle class residents.” The majority of them work in the construction, wholesale trade, public administration, and professional and related services such as education and health services. One third of those employed in the census tract are state government workers.



Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association—ARENA



ARENA President, Perry West

Although the neighborhood maintained its status as a middle class neighborhood with high homeownership rates, the 1990’s presented some issues related to the aging housing stock, high numbers of youth with no structured activities, and its proximity to Census Tract 10.01, which contains one of the most depressed neighborhoods in Tallahassee. In response to these and other social factors, the residents in Apalachee Ridge Estates were determined to strengthen and stabilize the neighborhood. In 1998, concerned residents formed the Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association (**ARENA**). Since its inception, this group has been striving to make positive changes in the neighborhood.

They have initiated neighborhood beautification projects and have sponsored various neighborhood activities. These highly visible events were a way to make people aware of the changes in the neighborhood and to gain support and momentum for the newly formed organization. Recognizing that their neighborhood is a part of the much larger Tallahassee community, the members of ARENA sought the services of community organizations and local governmental entities to help them develop a comprehensive strategy for stabilizing and improving the quality of life in their neighborhood. This collection of strategies would come together as a neighborhood plan that would represent the residents’ needs.

The first task of the newly founded neighborhood association was to heighten the level of citizen involvement. In 1999, ARENA’s President Perry West solicited the services of Leon County community organizer Jim Bellamy. Bellamy was able to get two Master’s students—Winter Troxel and Gail D’Alessandro from the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at Florida State University (FSU)—to help with the project. Their task was to develop a citizen participation plan and perform a neighborhood assessment. The students successfully completed the citizen participation plan for the neighborhood and hosted a neighborhood assessment kick-off event in conjunction with the Association. This event was very helpful in raising awareness among residents about the strides that ARENA was prepared to make towards shaping the future

of their neighborhood. The neighborhood assessment began shortly thereafter. The students, along with resident volunteers, conducted a door-to-door citizen survey for the Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood from November 1999 to February 2000. The purpose of the survey was to connect the needs identified by the Apalachee Ridge residents to the comprehensive planning process and the resources that are offered by the local governments.

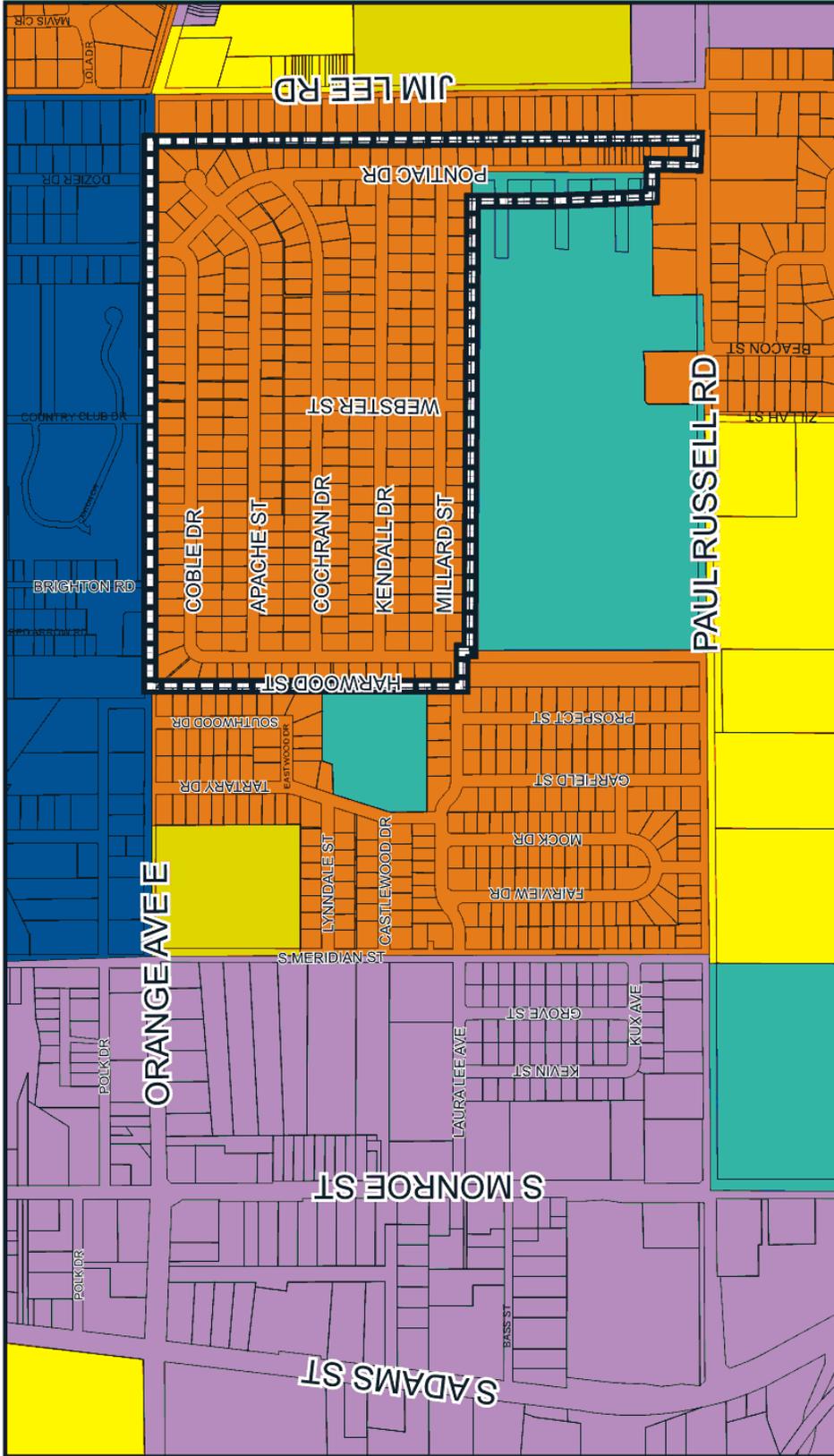
The assessment was a success, and has been used in several documents, including this one, to characterize the assets and needs of the residents and the neighborhood association. Most importantly, the assessment was an extremely useful tool in helping residents identify what were the most significant issues or areas of concern facing Apalachee Ridge Estates. As a result of the survey, important issues and neighborhood strengths were identified. Key issues indicated in the survey included: traffic, property maintenance, recreation facilities, home ownership, and interests in youth and adult education. The survey results were used to develop the seven major neighborhood concerns shown below:

- 1. Increase in homeownership and assistance for home repairs and renovations;**
- 2. Traffic safety and traffic calming;**
- 3. Improved/increased recreational activities and facilities;**
- 4. Improved schools;**
- 5. The wall along Orange Avenue and other infrastructure improvements;**
- 6. Community involvement; and**
- 7. Economic development.**

With increasing participation and a neighborhood assessment completed, ARENA was ready to begin its self-initiated planning efforts in the neighborhood. Concurrently, the City of Tallahassee had begun to develop a neighborhood planning initiative that would empower residents to make significant changes in efforts to stabilize or revitalize their neighborhoods. The target area for the City's initiative would be Tallahassee's inner city neighborhoods whose physical and social infrastructure were in a state of decline or disrepair. After the City Commission agreed to make Neighborhood Revitalization a target issue for their 2000-2001 agenda, the City was ready to begin work in its first neighborhood. With Apalachee Ridge Estates already involved in activities that closely paralleled the goals of the City, the neighborhood was the perfect candidate for the City to take under its wing as the first neighborhood to undergo the neighborhood renaissance planning process.

The neighborhood planning effort in Apalachee Ridge Estates has resulted in a neighborhood plan that outlines the vision and desires of the neighborhood. The neighborhood plan also includes strategies, and tasks to accomplish the neighborhood's short, intermediate, and long-term goals. The intangible, yet visible, results of the process include the social infrastructure that has been built among residents and the sense of community that exists in the neighborhood. Neighborhood residents have been equipped with skills for facilitation, communication, planning and leadership. A sense of responsibility to and ownership of the community has been born or rekindled within the residents, giving them realistic hopes of promoting long-term community involvement and change.

Map 1
 Apalachee Ridge Estates Planning Area
 Future Land Use



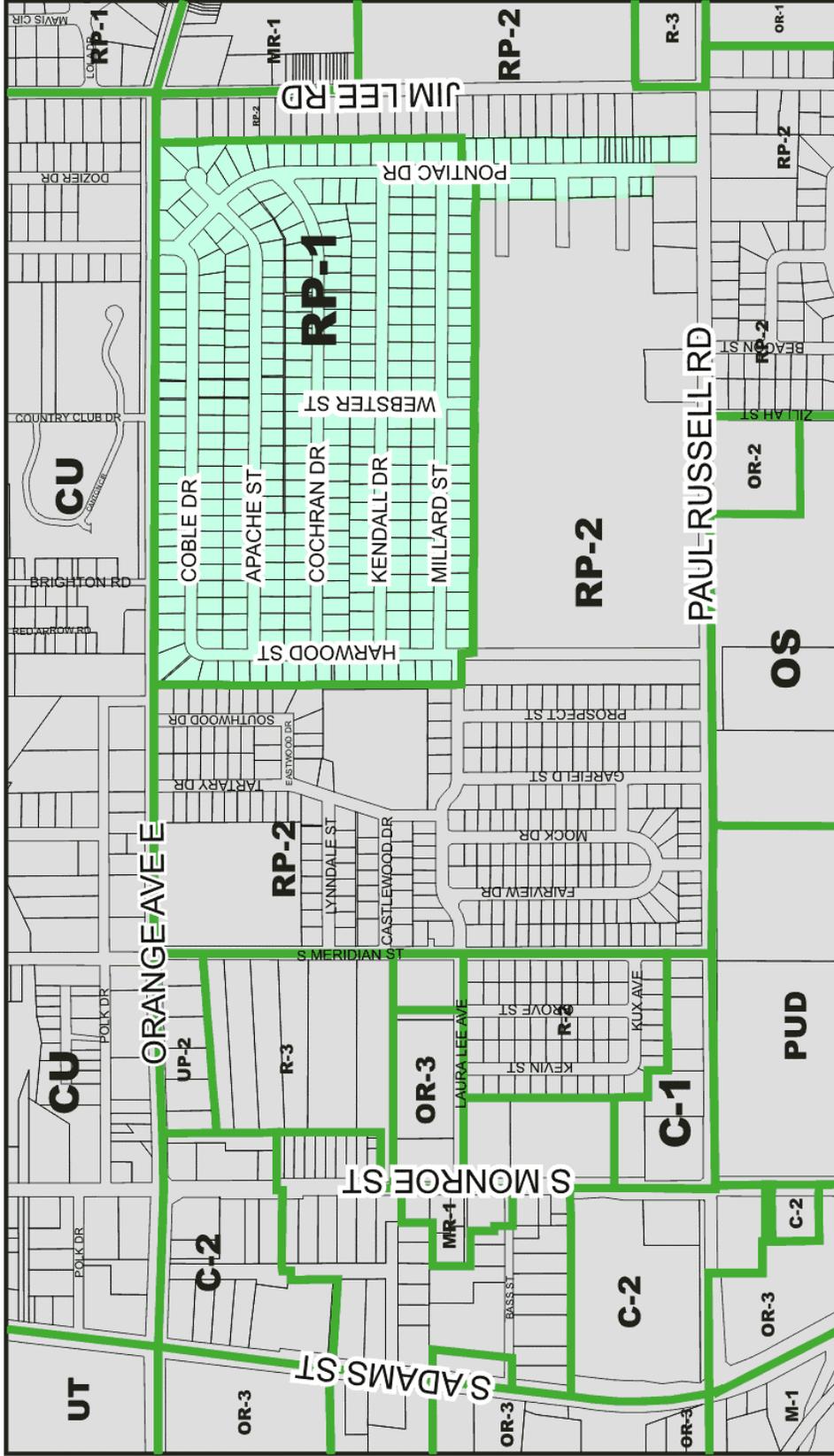
- Residential Preservation
- Central Urban
- Educational
- Mixed Use
- Recreation/Open Space
- Government



Neighborhood Boundary

Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department

Map 2
Apalachee Ridge Estates Planning Area
Zoning



Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department

-  N
- C-1 - Neighborhood Commercial
- C-2 - Neighborhood Commercial
- CU - Central Urban
- M-1 - Light Industrial
- MR-1 - Medium Density Residential
- OR-2 - Office Residential (Medium Density)
- OR-3 - Office Residential
- OS - Open Space
- RP-1 - Residential Preservation 1
- RP-2 - Residential Preservation 2
- UT - University Transition
-  Neighborhood Boundary

The Neighborhood Planning Process

In 1999, members of the Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association began Phase I of the neighborhood planning process with the assistance of Leon County Housing and Human Services Department and students from Florida State University Department of Urban & Regional Planning. A workshop with neighborhood residents was held in June 1999 to determine the assets and needs of the neighborhood. Subsequently, a meeting with representatives from the City of Tallahassee, Leon County, Leon County School Board, and Florida A& M University was held in July 1999. At this meeting, the neighborhood was informed of the City's new neighborhood planning effort, the "Community Neighborhood Renaissance Partnership." Subsequently, Apalachee Ridge Estates was selected by the City Commission as the first neighborhood to go through this neighborhood planning process.

The neighborhood planning process as contemplated by the City is a four-phased process (see Appendix II). The process includes neighborhood selection and assessment, plan development, plan implementation and monitoring, and evaluation. Apalachee Ridge Estates had already initiated a neighborhood assessment process prior to its selection by the City as the first neighborhood to go through the neighborhood renaissance process. However, during Fall 1999 and Spring 2000, students from Florida State University conducted a more comprehensive assessment of the neighborhood to confirm and refine the neighborhood's needs and assets identified at the neighborhood workshop mentioned above. A survey instrument was designed and volunteers from the neighborhood were trained to administer the survey to their neighbors. The results of the survey were provided to the neighborhood in March 2000 and seven issues were identified as major concerns for the neighborhood. A follow-up survey conducted by the "Covenant Partners" of the Community Neighborhood Renaissance Partnership (see Appendix II) to assess the importance of each identified neighborhood concern and to find out the needs of individual households in the neighborhood, was administered between January and March 2001. These neighborhood assessment activities prepared the way for the neighborhood to begin the development of a plan to address the identified neighborhood concerns.

At the outset of the plan development phase, a number of critical issues had to be addressed in order for the process to produce a viable and feasible neighborhood plan. Neighborhood leadership, a critical factor for the success of a collaborative and holistic neighborhood planning process, was one of the first issues addressed. To guide the neighborhood through the neighborhood planning process, the neighborhood association appointed a Steering Committee comprised of residents and people with interest in the neighborhood. Members of the Steering Committee formed the nucleus of the neighborhood planning team that was assembled in Fall 2000 to assist the neighborhood in the development of its plan. In addition to the members of the Steering Committee, the neighborhood planning team included the stakeholders represented by the Community Neighborhood Renaissance Partnership (the entity formed to engage the broader Tallahassee-Leon County community in the neighborhood renaissance process), City staff, County staff, and various neighborhood residents. Once assembled, members of the neighborhood planning team were provided training in the basic elements of consensus decision-making, meeting facilitation, decision making in a participatory environment, agenda setting and meeting facilitation. Knowledge of the basic concepts of these areas is critical to the success of neighborhood planning. Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium was contracted to provide this training and orientation for members of the Steering Committee and the neighborhood planning team. The training also covered the role of each group/person on the planning team. Training sessions were held on February 13, 17, and 22, 2001.

The plan development phase of the project was officially launched on March 3, 2001, with a “Neighborhood Issues Meeting.” This meeting was held at Leonard Wesson Elementary School and was attended by over 60 people from the neighborhood, the Community Neighborhood Renaissance Partnership, Covenant Partners, along with City and County employees. The purpose of the meeting was to gather general input from the residents and the community to assist the neighborhood planning team in formulating strategies and tasks to address the neighborhood’s issues and concerns. Neighborhood issues were grouped into three broad areas: Housing & Economic Development, Community Facilities and Services, and Education and Community Involvement. The neighborhood planning team was then organized into three Action Teams to address these issues, each given one area to address.

The Action Teams allowed for greater neighborhood involvement in the development of the plan and the overall management of the process. Residents and team members who had an interest in only one issue area could attend action team meetings where the primary focus of the meetings was the subject matter of their interest. Each Action Team was chaired by a neighborhood resident who was appointed by the president of the neighborhood association. Volunteer facilitators from the broader Tallahassee community, the Community Neighborhood Renaissance Partnership, and the Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium were assigned to the work with each Action Team.

From March 2001 to early May 2001, the Action Teams met every other week to study assigned neighborhood issues and to develop action plans to address them. For each issue area addressed by the Action Teams, an issue statement, which outlines the neighborhood’s concerns with that particular area, was developed. Using currently available information, the Action Teams conducted an existing conditions analysis of the neighborhood issues to determine whether residents’ perceptions of the issues were supported by the data available on that particular issue area. Research was also done to determine whether there were current plans by any entity to address the neighborhood’s concerns regarding a particular issue area.

Action Team meetings were facilitated by a volunteer facilitator with assistance from assigned City staff and the team leader. Agendas for team meetings were developed by City staff in consultation with the Action Teams leaders and the assigned facilitator. Reports of the meeting were produced by the facilitators and distributed via e-mail and hard copies to members of the Action Teams. Team meetings were held at various churches and schools within the community. By the end of April 2001, the Action Teams produced a draft action plan. The draft plan included goals, desired outcomes, and implementing strategies and tasks addressing each neighborhood concern/issue. On May 5th, the neighborhood planning team held a community-wide neighborhood meeting billed “Neighborhood Consensus Meeting” to obtain input from residents on the initial draft of the plan. The meeting was facilitated by the Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium and the three Action Teams presented to the neighborhood the proposed strategies and tasks each Action Team had developed for its assigned neighborhood issues. Residents were asked to rank the strategies developed by the Action Teams in terms of their importance to them. Residents were also asked to identify their top issue area. Flooding and Drainage was selected as the major concern within the neighborhood.

Following the Neighborhood Consensus Meeting, the Action Teams held follow-up meetings to consider the comments received at the meeting. Changes were then made to the draft plan based on the comments received at the meeting. To solicit additional neighborhood input and support for the draft plan, residents (15 years and older) were asked to vote on the importance of the strategies listed in the draft plan to them as an individual. A ballot summarizing the plan and a cover letter from the neighborhood association president and the neighborhood planner were delivered to the homes in the neighborhood. Ballots were also made available to residents attending the neighborhood’s annual

block party held on June 23, 2001. Copies of the draft plan were also submitted to members of the Community Neighborhood Renaissance Partnership, the City and the County for their preliminary review and comments. Comments from these entities were received and incorporated in the plan, as appropriate.

At this point in the process, the draft plan was turned over to the Neighborhood Steering Committee and the Neighborhood Association Board for review. A structured review session was held by this group in which the Steering Committee members and the Association Board members assisted by a facilitator reviewed each component of the plan and either approved it as is or made changes using an amendatory process. Using the results of the neighborhood voting and the May 5th Consensus Meeting, the Neighborhood Steering Committee and the Association Board also prioritized the tasks listed in the plan.

On July 31, 2001, the Neighborhood Steering Committee unanimously approved transmittal of the draft plan to the neighborhood association and its board of directors for approval. On August 18, 2001, the Neighborhood Association Board of Directors held a neighborhood meeting to take final comments on the plan and to adopt the plan. The plan was adopted by the Board and was transmitted to the Community Neighborhood Renaissance Partnership and the City for preliminary review and general commitments/support for the implementation of the various tasks listed in the plan. Members of the neighborhood association and staff made presentations of the plan to members of the Partnership in seeking their approval and support of the plan. The plan was formally adopted by the City of Tallahassee and Leon County. Letters of support and endorsement of the plan were received from Florida State University, Capital City Bank, United Way of the Big Bend, and the Covenant Partners. Letters of support are forthcoming from other members of the Partnership as well.

The Neighborhood Action Plan

Introduction

The Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Renaissance Plan was written by the neighborhood for the neighborhood. The plan is the result of an extensive collaborative and holistic community effort which engaged neighborhood residents, City and County staff, members of the Community Neighborhood Renaissance Partnership and staff from membership organizations, Covenant Partners, and other interested citizens in the Tallahassee-Leon County community. All residents and property owners in the neighborhood were invited to participate in some manner in the plan development process. Neighborhood residents participated by serving on action teams, which developed the plan, attended neighborhood association meetings, attended community-wide meetings to provide input to the action teams, served on the neighborhood steering committee, filled out various surveys, and voted on the plan.

The Plan identifies neighborhood and community issues, which are of major concerns to the neighborhood, and how the neighborhood proposes to address them. The purpose of the plan, therefore, is to provide direction for future development, City and County programs as well as programs offered by Community Renaissance Partnership and non-partnership institutions as they affect or will affect Apalachee Ridge Estates. The plan provides a clear vision of the neighborhood's priorities, needs, goals and desired outcomes as well as consensus on how things should be done. The plan advises businesses, governmental and non-profit agencies, and the neighborhood of what future activities will be supported and endorsed by the neighborhood. The plan addresses the following issues:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <i>1) Neighborhood Safety;</i> | <i>2) Recreation Facilities and Services;</i> |
| <i>3) Flooding & Drainage;</i> | <i>4) Neighborhood Clean Up;</i> |
| <i>5) Public Transportation;</i> | <i>6) Homeownership;</i> |
| <i>7) Home Retention, Rehabilitation and Modernization;</i> | <i>8) Rental Housing Rehabilitation;</i> |
| <i>9) Neighborhood Character & Beautification;</i> | <i>10) Economic Development;</i> |
| <i>11) Students Skills/Performance;</i> | <i>12) Improved School Facilities; and</i> |
| <i>13) Adult and Community Education.</i> | |

The results that the neighborhood expects to achieve in each issue area are expressed in the goals and desired outcomes for that issue area. The plan then lists the different strategies the neighborhood will undertake singularly or in conjunction with its partners to address each identified issue area. Strategies are broad general approaches (policy directions) that the neighborhood and its partners will undertake to address identified neighborhood issue areas, and include measures which simply call for increased awareness and education of neighborhood residents on a particular issue area or approaches that call for significant capital investments. For each strategy, the plan identifies a number of specific implementing tasks to accomplish that strategy. Again, the identified tasks range from the distribution of flyers to building a neighborhood center.

Primary implementer(s) are listed for each task. A primary implementer is the entity/person that will take the lead on implementing a given task. In some cases, the primary implementer will be the only entity implementing a specific task while in other cases the primary implementer may serve as the coordinator to bring others to the table to work with the neighborhood on a given task.



Issue Area A: Neighborhood Safety **Action Plan**

Goal

To create a safe neighborhood

Desired Outcomes:

1. To slow down the speed of cars traveling through the neighborhood and reduce non-resident traffic going through the neighborhood.
2. To reduce the number of tracked crimes occurring in the neighborhood.
3. To replace the perimeter wall along Orange Avenue with a permanent aesthetically pleasing and functional wall.
4. To increase the number of streetlights within the neighborhood.
5. To increase the number of fire hydrants in the neighborhood.

Strategy A.1.0

Improve motorists' and pedestrians' access to the neighborhood

Implementing Tasks:

Task A.1.1:

Coordinate with Leon County Public Works in the planning and design phases of the Orange Avenue expansion project in order to provide input in the process and to bring to the County's attention the concerns of the neighborhood residents. At a minimum, this coordination effort should include re-examining the possible removal of the traffic light at the intersection of Jim Lee Road and Orange Avenue, other access issues, and lighting of the new roadway.

Primary Implementer: Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association

Task A.1.2:

Monitor traffic counts and turning movements at the intersections of Orange Avenue and Pontiac Drive and/or Coble Drive to determine if a traffic light is needed.

Primary Implementer: City of Tallahassee Traffic Engineering Division

Task A.1.3:

Construct an exclusive left turn lane for vehicles traveling west on Orange Avenue at the intersection of Pontiac Drive to facilitate safe and easy access into the neighborhood. Construction of the left turn lane should be included in the Orange Avenue expansion project.

Primary Implementer: Leon County Public Works Department

Task A.1.4:

Design and construct a median opening at Coble Drive and Orange Avenue to control turning movements to ensure safe access to and from the neighborhood. This should be included in the Orange Avenue expansion project.

Primary Implementer: Leon County Public Works

Task A.1.5:

As part of the Orange Avenue expansion project, design and construct sidewalks and bike lanes to ensure safe access to the neighborhood by pedestrians and bicyclists. Crosswalks should be designed and constructed at the intersections of Jim Lee Road and Orange Avenue and Pontiac Drive and Orange Avenue.

Primary Implementer: Leon County Public Works Department

Strategy A.2.0

Control the flow of traffic within the neighborhood

Implementing Tasks:

Task A.2.1:

Install speed limit signs (25 miles per hour) on all streets within the neighborhood as appropriate and needed.

Primary Implementer: City of Tallahassee Public Works Department

Task A.2.2:

On various streets throughout the neighborhood install traffic calming devices to slow the speed of motor vehicles traveling within the neighborhood. These devices should be installed on Pontiac Drive, Coble Drive and Harwood Street first.

Coble Dr./ Pontiac Dr. – traffic circle with signage and three more traffic humps along Pontiac as deemed appropriate by traffic engineering

Paul Russell Road /Pontiac Dr. – gateway median with signage

Coble/Coble – traffic circle

Harwood St. – a traffic hump between Apache and Laura Lee

Cross streets (Apache, Cochran, Kendall, Millard and Webster) - traffic islands

Primary Implementer: City of Tallahassee Traffic Engineering Division

Task A.2.3:

Install “No Parking” signs or paint the curb at the bend on both Pontiac Drive and Harwood Street to prohibit parking in the bend of the road and in other areas within the neighborhood deemed inappropriate by the City of Tallahassee Traffic Engineering Division for on-street parking.

Primary Implementer: City of Tallahassee Public Works Department

Task A.2.4:

Install “No Truck Traffic” signs at the entrances of the neighborhood to prohibit large trucks from operating within the neighborhood.

Primary Implementer: City of Tallahassee Public Works Department

Task A.2.5: Investigate the feasibility of implementing traffic deterrence mechanisms at the Laura Lee Avenue entrance to the neighborhood.

Primary Implementers: Apalachee Ridge Neighborhood Association & City of Tallahassee Traffic Engineering Division

Strategy A.3.0

Minimize the interaction of neighborhood pedestrians and vehicular traffic

Implementing Tasks:

Task A.3.1: Install sidewalks on one side of all neighborhood streets. In installing the sidewalks, priority should be given to the following streets: Pontiac, Coble and Harwood (going into the Park). Layout and construction of the sidewalks should occur in a manner that maintains as many trees as possible and be least disruptive to the neighborhood.

Primary Implementer: City of Tallahassee Public Works Department

Task A.3.2: Construct sidewalks pursuant to Task A.3.1 above in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Primary Implementer: City of Tallahassee Public Works Department

Task A.3.3: Install crosswalks at busy pedestrian areas near the neighborhood. Areas to be considered are: Jim Lee Road/Orange Avenue, Pontiac Drive/Orange Avenue, South Meridian Street/ Orange Avenue and South Monroe Street/Orange Avenue. This should be done in conjunction with Orange Avenue road widening project.

Primary Implementer: Leon County Public Works Department

Task A.3.4: Install the signs recommended by the City's Traffic Engineering Division to indicate pedestrians are in the neighborhood.

Primary Implementer: City of Tallahassee Public Works Department

Strategy A.4.0

Address the boundary wall

Implementing Tasks:

Task A.4.1: Demolish and replace the perimeter wall along Orange Avenue with a temporary wall.

Primary Implementer: Leon County Public Works Department

Task A.4.2: As part of the Orange Avenue road widening project, replace the temporary wall installed along Orange Avenue, as directed in Task 3.1 above, with an aesthetically pleasing and functional permanent wall designed in a manner to prevent vandalism from graffiti art.

Primary Implementer: Leon County Public Works Department

Strategy A.5.0

Improve police relations and the presence of the police within the neighborhood in order to deter crime

Implementing Tasks:

Task A.5.1: The Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association will extend a standing invitation to the Tallahassee Police Department and the assigned School Resource Officers for the neighborhood's schools to attend its association meetings and include as a standard item on its meeting agenda a neighborhood police report from the Tallahassee Police Department.

Primary Implementer: Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association

Task A.5.2: The crime prevention officer responsible for the Apalachee Ridge Estates Section of the Charlie Patrol District should attend at least one of the monthly neighborhood meetings conducted by the Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association.

Primary Implementer: Tallahassee Police Department

Task A.5.3: Conduct, periodically, in the neighborhood, crime prevention classes ranging from personal safety seminars to residential security surveys in conjunction with the neighborhood association, neighborhood faith-based institutions, and schools.

Primary Implementers: Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association & Tallahassee Police Department

Task A.5.4: Expand and enhance how residents are provided information regarding law enforcement departments' activities, programs, and services. Specifically, the Police Department should use additional forms of media to provide information to churches and schools.

Primary Implementers: Tallahassee Police Department & Leon County Sheriff Department

Task A.5.5: Include in the Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association newsletter Tallahassee Police Department materials, contact names and telephone numbers.

Primary Implementer: Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association

Task A.5.6: Coordinate with the Police Department to expand the BMX program to include youths from Apalachee Ridge Estates and the surrounding areas.

Primary Implementers: Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association & Tallahassee Police Department

Strategy A.6.0

Proper illumination of the neighborhood

Implementing Tasks:

Task A.6.1: Install, as needed, additional street lights on the following streets: Coble, Apache, Millard, Pontiac, Kendall and Harwood.

Primary Implementer: Electric Department

Task A.6.2: Monitor and report streetlights that need repair.

Primary Implementer: Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association

Strategy A.7.0

Revitalize the neighborhood crime watch program

Implementing Tasks:

Task A.7.1:

Use the neighborhood block captain network to re-establish the neighborhood crime watch program.

Primary Implementer: Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association

Task A.7.2:

Convene a neighborhood association meeting to inform residents of the benefits of having a neighborhood crime watch program. The neighborhood crime prevention police officer should be invited to the meeting.

Primary Implementers: Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association & Tallahassee Police Department

Task A.7.3:

Contact area businesses to discuss the neighborhood's security concerns with them. A list of area businesses should be requested from the Southside Business Association. The meetings should start with the two businesses at the intersections of South Meridian Street and Orange Avenue and South Meridian Street and Paul Russell Road.

Primary Implementer: Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association

Task A.7.4:

Survey the neighborhood to determine residents' interest in installing home security systems. Based on the response, negotiate with various security companies a discount rate for the neighborhood.

Primary Implementer: Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association

Task A.7.5:

The Neighborhood Crime Watch should explore with the Tallahassee Park and Recreation Department the feasibility of thinning out the understory in the Jack McLean, Jr. Park, especially in the areas closest to the homes along Millard Street.

Primary Implementers: Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Association & Tallahassee Parks and Recreation Department