

The lack of families in the sector is consistent with the national trend in urban core areas. According to the latest census information:

- Empty nesters, young singles and young couples without children (first time home buyers) are most likely to move back to the urban core
- These residents desire entertainment or activities (special lectures, athletics, night-life)
- The suburbs are for families with children and retirees choosing not to move from homes they have spent most of their lives
- Families generally are not moving back to the urban core

The condition of schools also impacts the choice of homeowners. According to the State of Florida and Leon County School Board records, here are how the schools in or serving the sector have fared:

- Brevard Elementary – Earned a Grade C and enrollment fell from 579 to 342 students since 1995
- Bellevue Middle School – Earned a Grade C and enrollment fell from 853 to 582 since 1995
- Godby High School – Earned a Grade D and enrollment fell from 1651 to 1278 since 1995.

## Affordable Housing in the Sector

In addition to students, the sector is also home to those in need of affordable housing. The existing neighborhoods are the most likely location for affordable single-family housing in the sector. However, those looking for affordable housing have to compete with investors who understand the competitive advantage of housing close to campus and students who are willing to rent per bedroom to share the cost of a house.

There are residents in the sector in need of affordable housing. 20% of households in the sector are families and 31% of these families are below the poverty level. Some of these figures are askew by the amount of students in the area. Students are typically identified as below the poverty level, not accounting for the financial backing of family or student loans.

## Distinctions in Neighborhoods

All of the neighborhoods have increased in renters and declined in homeownership. However, based upon homeownership rates, there are clear differences between neighborhoods. Cactus Street, Elberta Empire and Bradford Manor have the highest homeownership in the sector at above 40%. Cactus Street, (Bloxham Terrace Neighborhood) and Bradford Manor are also located further away from Florida State University's campus than other neighborhoods. All other neighborhoods have less than 25% homeownership.

## Land Use Analysis of the West Pensacola Sector

The Planning Department analyzed the sector based upon the public comments as well as staff knowledge of the area. The analysis was organized as follows:

1. Major Corridors
2. Single-Family Neighborhoods
3. Old Dale Mabry Lands

The criteria used for the analysis included: 1) public recommendations, 2) suitability of the area for development, 3) zoning, 4) existing conditions and 5) consistency of zoning and character of the area with the public recommendations. Each category is discussed below.

## 1. Major Corridors

The major corridors in the sector include Ocala Road, West Tennessee Street, West Pensacola Street, Jackson Bluff Road, Appleyard Drive and Stadium Drive. In the workshop the public generally recommended that the corridors be the location for the highest density development as well as supporting retail and office uses. The participants recommended the corridors as the best location for apartments, retail and office uses because they are best suited for high-density development and activities that created noise and traffic impacts. Much of this development pattern is in place today along Tennessee, Pensacola, and Ocala Streets.

### Suitability

All of the corridors are suitable for additional development. There are very few vacant parcels remaining along these corridors. The few parcels that do remain have limitations for development such as wetlands or flooding issues. A larger issue than environmental suitability is the impact to single family areas. This will be discussed later in the analysis.

### Zoning

Overall, the zoning along the corridors is very consistent with encouraging additional development in the sector. The majority of the corridors are zoned for apartments, retail and office uses. Those zoning districts include University Transition (UT), Urban Pedestrian (UP) and Medium Density Residential (MR1). However, there are a few areas along the major corridors that do not encourage higher density development. All of these areas have direct frontage on the corridor but are zoned for single family residential exclusively. These areas are:

- Sections of Chapel Ridge neighborhood fronting Ocala Road and West Pensacola Street
- Palmer Monroe, Bellevue and Bradford Manor neighborhoods fronting Jackson Bluff Road

### Existing Conditions

The major corridors in the sector are built out with little vacant land remaining. All of the corridors except Jackson Bluff are dominated with apartments, retail and office uses. The corridors have underutilized parcels that over time will be converted to uses more in keeping with the surrounding University influences. As mentioned before, very few vacant parcels remain along the corridors. Future development will be the conversion of existing buildings to more intense development.

Jackson Bluff Road is an exception to the other corridors. Jackson Bluff is generally a residential corridor with a combination of single-family residential and apartments fronting the road. A neighborhood community center, an elementary school and a middle school are within walking distance. Retail is also on this road but it is concentrated toward Lake Bradford Road. Redevelopment will occur along this road. The type, density and intensity of development will need to be consistent with the vision for the corridor.

## Consistency of analysis with public recommendations

The public's recommendation for encouraging the highest density/intensity development along the corridors is consistent with the staff analysis. All of the corridors can accommodate additional development. The only issue that may impact development along the corridors is the limited roadway capacity identified in the transportation section in Priority Issue 3 Report. However, with very little vacant land remaining, additional development will require the redevelopment of underutilized parcels. The zoning, for the most part, is also consistent with encouraging more intense development. In order to direct additional development along the corridor, the University Transition designation could be applied.

The inconsistencies with the public's recommendation were the areas zoned for single-family residential along the major corridors. This is especially true for those areas fronting Ocala Road, West Tennessee Street and West Pensacola Street. The Resident-Owners and Rental-Owners disagree on the best use of these parcels. Rental-owners believe the parcels should be re-designated consistent with the other parcels on the corridor. Resident-Owners believe the existing single-family residential zoning should remain. However, if a re-designation is approved, resident-owners recommend that any new development be compatible with the surrounding area and utilize good urban design principles.

Jackson Bluff Road is a combination of apartments and single family residential. This area could retain single-family homes along the corridor for much longer than West Pensacola and West Tennessee Streets. Both the resident-owners and rental-owners agreed that the portions of Jackson Bluff that currently have retail uses (from Lake Bradford Road to Hayden Road and the old shopping center) and the industrial/government operation uses from Mabry Street to Appleyard Drive should be redeveloped. Both parties also agreed that the Bradford Manor subdivision along Jackson Bluff should be protected. Rental-owners and resident-owners disagreed on the future of the remainder of the corridor, which is mostly residential. Consistent with other areas, resident-owners desired the protection of these areas and rental-owners desired the redevelopment. However, resident-owners stated if additional development is permitted, then this development needs to be compatible with the surrounding area and demonstrate good urban design.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations were developed based upon public input:

1. Direct high density/intensity development to the corridors (most likely onto under utilized parcels) and encourage transit, walking and bicycling.
2. Review current densities along the corridors. Permit an increase in density but retain protections encouraging mixed uses, pedestrian oriented development (especially along West Pensacola) and good urban design. In order to ensure good urban design, development standards for this sector would need to be adopted to ensure that new construction adds value to the community that are architecturally and aesthetically an asset that is compatible with its surroundings. In addition, in order to create an urban community, not only design but function is important. The goal should be to create projects that result in a mixture of land uses that encourage walkability and support other modes of transportation. A good example in the City is Gaines Street.

3. Resident-owners recommend that the high-density corridors be adequately buffered from the existing residential areas.
4. Jackson Bluff Road should be developed as follows:
  - Higher intensity development in existing retail areas or existing multifamily.
  - Retain RP designation for Bradford Manor neighborhood
  - Redevelop Jackson Bluff Road between Mabry Street and Appleyard Drive where existing Industrial and Government Operations
  - Rental-Owners recommend the remainder of Jackson Bluff be developed as an urban community with higher densities.
  - Resident-owners recommend the remainder of Jackson Bluff remain as single-family housing. However, if additional development is approved then the development should be compatible with adjacent single-family housing and utilize urban design techniques.
5. Protect Jackson Bluff Road as a two-lane (with turn lanes) walkable road. Ensure the redevelopment of the area is compatible with the vision as a walkable/pedestrian friendly road with a mixture of housing types and uses.
6. Redevelop Appleyard Drive with university related uses. A comprehensive plan and zoning change would be required to permit retail and apartments between Pensacola and Jackson Bluff along Appleyard Drive.
7. Encourage Florida State University to increase on-campus housing, thus relieving stress on adjacent neighborhoods.

## 2. Single-Family Residential Neighborhoods

The single-family residential neighborhoods in the sector include Cactus Street (south of Hayward St.), Chapel Ridge, Bradford Manor, Bellevue, Palmer Monroe and White Drive. In the workshops the Planning Department asked the participants to consider three long-term potential scenarios for these residential areas. The three options were:

Option 1 - Return to a neighborhood of majority homeowners – A major shift will be needed to move these neighborhoods back to majority homeownership. In the meetings, resident-owners have recommended incentives for the private sector to rebuild existing single-family neighborhoods and homeowners to purchase in the sector.

Option 2 - Become rental neighborhoods – The trend (both short-term and long-term) for all of the neighborhoods is an increase in rentals. With the exception of Cactus Street all neighborhoods are majority rental neighborhoods. This is the status quo choice.

Option 3 – Create an Urban Community - Some of the residential areas may be better utilized as higher density development. Through the application of design standards similar to areas in the Downtown, the western edge of campus could redevelop with a combination of housing types while improving the condition of the area. However,

simply rezoning the property does not ensure the assembly of properties and quality redevelopment.

The Resident-Owners and Rental-Owners generally disagree with which option to pursue. Resident-owners recommend Option 1 to preserve the neighborhoods. Rental-Owners recommend Option 3, to create a high-density urban community.

The public also mentioned a few neighborhood specific recommendations those included:

- For Cactus Street – renovating a vacant parcel adjacent the neighborhood to address stormwater and provide a park
- For Chapel Ridge – if densities are increased in Chapel Ridge, ensure protection of the western section of Chapel Ridge which has the highest homeownership, but the first preference is for protection of the neighborhood
- For Bellevue, Palmer Monroe and Bradford Manor – carefully consider the existence of public schools (Bellevue Middle School and Brevard Elementary School) and a community center when analyzing the viability of these neighborhoods

## **Suitability**

Most of the sector is developed including the single-family areas. Few vacant parcels remain. Those that remain typically have development constraints including the existence of wetlands, floodplains, drainage issues or significant grades.

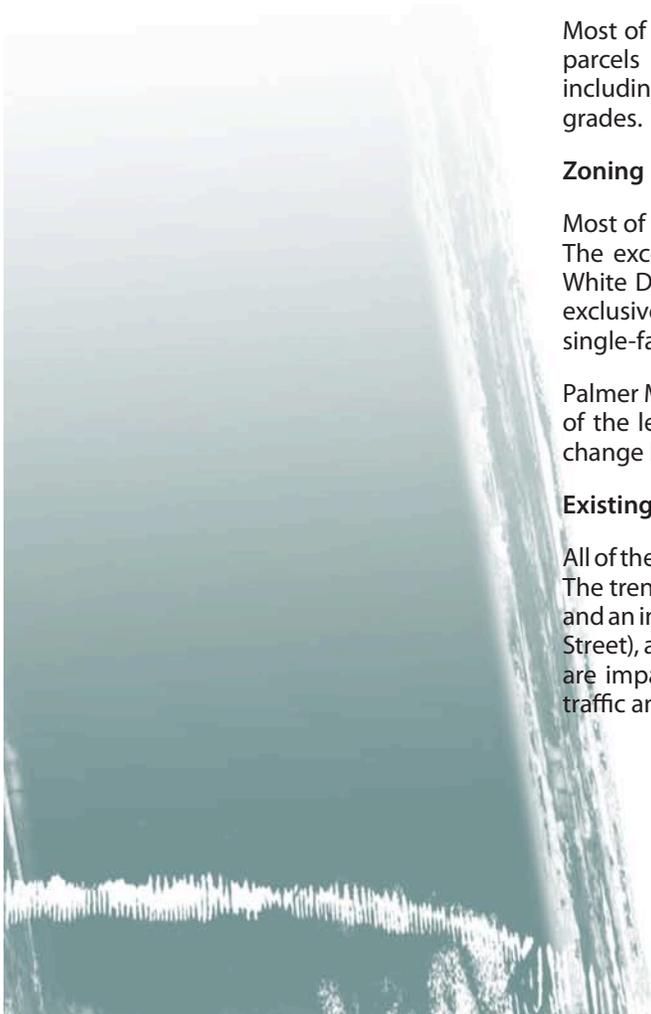
## **Zoning**

Most of the single-family areas are zoned exclusively for single-family housing. The exceptions to this are along White Drive, Bellevue and Palmer Monroe. White Drive and Bellevue have very similar characteristics. The areas are not exclusively single-family. Apartments and duplexes are intermingled with the single-family homes and the area is zoned for higher densities.

Palmer Monroe is an exception. The area was zoned for higher density because of the level of investment property owned in the area. Since that time little change has occurred.

## **Existing Conditions**

All of the single-family neighborhoods are a mixture of rentals and homeowners. The trends for all of the neighborhoods have been a reduction in homeowners and an increase in renters. With the exception of Cactus Street (south of Hayward Street), all of the neighborhoods have a majority of renters. The neighborhoods are impacted by the surrounding apartments and renters by noise, garbage, traffic and parking.



The table below shows the homeownership levels in each neighborhood from 2000 until today:

**Table 1: W. Pensacola Sector Neighborhood Profiles**

| Neighborhoods     | # of Homes | # of Renters | # of Home-owners | % of Home-ownership | % Loss since 2000 Analysis |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Cactus Street     | 41         | 16           | 25               | 60.97%              | -26.5%                     |
| Elberta Empire    | 198        | 115          | 83               | 41.91%              | -15.3%                     |
| Bradford Manor    | 184        | 116          | 68               | 36.95%              | -23.0%                     |
| Palmer Monroe(W)  | 195        | 144          | 51               | 26.15%              | -34.6%                     |
| Palmer Monroe (E) | 277        | 212          | 65               | 23.47%              | -31.6%                     |
| Chapel Ridge      | 178        | 137          | 41               | 23.03%              | -48.75%                    |
| Prince Murat*     | 27         | 21           | 6                | 22.22%              | -25.0%                     |
| Bellevue Area     | 257        | 200          | 57               | 22.18%              | -17.4%                     |
| White/ Valencia   | 70         | 62           | 8                | 11.43%              | NA                         |

\*Prince Murat is contained within the larger Bellevue Area and has been counted twice in this analysis.

However, there are differences in the neighborhoods. Cactus Street, Bradford Manor and Elberta Empire have the highest homeownership rates in the sector near or above 40%. In addition, all of these neighborhoods appear less student oriented than many of the other neighborhoods. Cactus Street and Bradford Manor are also further from Florida State University than many of the other neighborhoods which may account for some of these differences.

### Consistency of analysis with public recommendations

The recommendations for the long-term end of the single-family areas were split between the rental-owners and the resident-owners. The analysis provides support for both views. There are pros and cons to consider with Option 1 and 3. There are areas where Option 1 (preserve the neighborhood) appears to be the best option and there are areas where Option 3 (redevelop the area) appears to be the best option.

### Preserve the Neighborhood

This is the best option for the neighborhoods where homeownership is the highest and more stable. Cactus Street is the most stable neighborhood in the sector. The neighborhood has a majority of homeowners and through this process the neighborhood has organized itself as the Bloxham Terrace Neighborhood Association.

Other stable neighborhoods that should be protected are Bradford Manor and Elberta Empire. These neighborhoods are at or above 40% homeownership. In addition, Cardinal Court off Bellevue Way has a high percentage of homeownership. Finally, all of these neighborhoods are zoned exclusively for single family housing. Both the rental-owners and resident-owners generally agree with the protection of these areas.

For the remaining neighborhoods, preserving some or all of these areas may not be the best option. Some of these single-family areas aren't zoned exclusively for single family housing. In addition, for some of these neighborhoods that are, the homeownership has reduced significantly in just the past 5 years. The surrounding zoning has impacted these neighborhoods with traffic streaming through neighborhoods and apartments along the edge of the neighborhood.

If these neighborhoods are to remain viable long-term, careful thought will be needed to make the areas attractive for single-family residents.

A move to strong single-family neighborhoods would require aggressive steps to address the impacts in the neighborhood (noise, traffic and garbage) while also focusing homeownership programs. However, as the City has seen in other neighborhood revitalization efforts, the more attempts are made to improve an area the more investors are drawn to the area.

Even with low homeownership rates in a neighborhood, increasing density is a hard decision. Residents respond to an increase in density as the City has given up on the neighborhood as a viable living area. For this reason, if an increase in density is approved in an existing single family neighborhood, the City should carefully consider how to increase density and to ensure that the result of an increase would result in a better product for the community.

In addition, a community center and two neighborhood schools are within the sector. Decisions directed toward increasing the student population would further reduce the enrollment in these schools and the community center. This impact should be considered in any decision made.

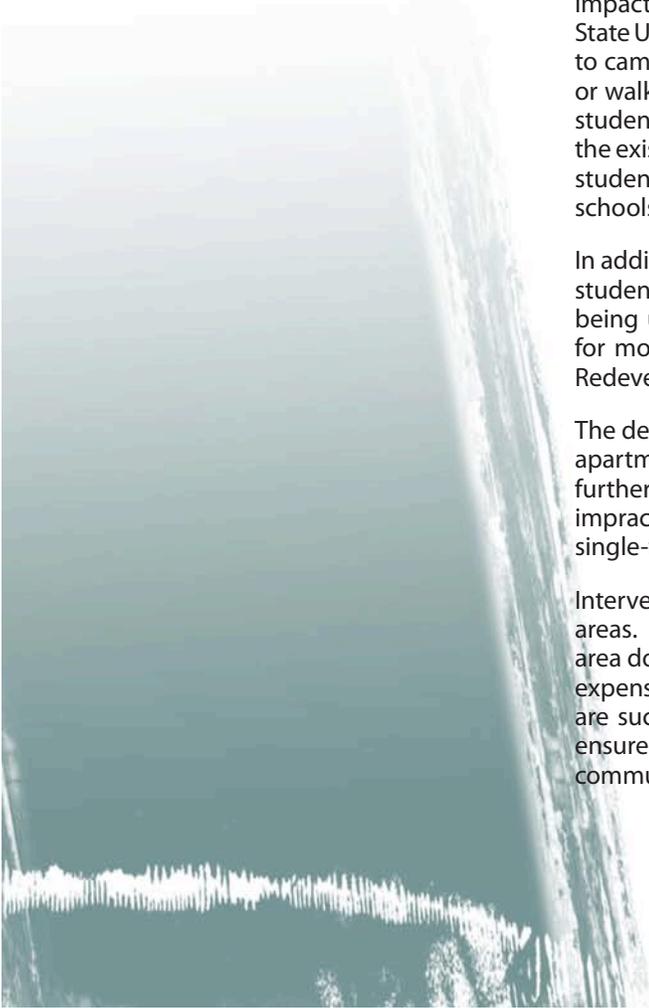
### **Redevelop these Neighborhoods**

When Cactus Street, Bradford Manor, Elberta Empire and Cardinal Court is eliminated from consideration, the redevelopment of much of the sector impacts far fewer homeowners. The sector is within close proximity to Florida State University and Tallahassee Community College. Students want to live close to campus where they have a short commute or the opportunity to bus, bike or walk to school. The majority of the sector are students (63.5%). With more students living close to campus the opportunities to direct these commutes to the existing bus system increase. Also, by directing more students to this sector, students are directed away from other areas of the community, further from the schools.

In addition, many of the properties in question are already being used to house students, only at a lower density. Through redevelopment, areas already being used to house students could be rearranged to better utilize the land for more students. Some of these homes in the area are in poor condition. Redevelopment could improve the housing stock of portions of the sector.

The development pattern in many of these areas is a combination of duplexes, apartments and single-family housing. Higher density development has crept further in this area and the zoning makes a move to exclusive single-family areas impractical in much of the sector. However, for portions of the sector exclusive single-family zoning remains in place.

Intervention will be needed if higher density is applied in some or all of these areas. As seen in the Palmer Monroe neighborhood, simply redesignating an area does not overcome the challenges of assembling property. It is extremely expensive for private investment to consolidate single-family homes that are successful as rentals. In addition, design standards should be created to ensure that the redevelopment of the sector results in a better product for the community.



## Recommendations

1. Retain single-family zoning and protect the Cactus Street, Bradford Manor, Elberta Empire neighborhoods and Cardinal Court.
2. If Option 1 is pursued for the remaining single-family areas then:
  - Retain existing single family zoning
  - Enact programs to increase homeownership in the neighborhood
  - See Map of Option 1
3. If Option 3 is pursued for the remaining single-family areas then:
  - Identify areas appropriate for redevelopment
  - Determine what densities are appropriate to encourage redevelopment
  - Establish incentives for the private sector to assemble properties for higher density
  - Ensure a mixture of uses and densities especially along the corridors
  - Ensure quality urban design
  - See Map of Option 3
4. Resident-owners recommend establishing a stakeholders committee with representatives of the City of Tallahassee, neighborhoods, property owners, rental-owners, Florida State University and Tallahassee Community College. The committee could act as a commenting body to the Planning Commission and City and County Commissions for land use and other decisions directly impacting the sector. In addition, the body could develop recommendations to address the quality of life problems identified in Priority Issue 2 report.
5. In the Cactus Street neighborhood, renovate the vacant parcel adjacent the homes to address stormwater and provide a park
6. Resident-owners recommend encouraging Florida State University to increase on campus housing to minimize impacts of students living off campus. They also recommend FSU restricting underclassmen (Freshmen and Sophomores) from living off campus.

## 3. Old Dale Mabry Lands

The Old Dale Mabry Field lands are the government operational/industrial quadrant of the sector from West Pensacola Street on the north, Mabry Street on the east, and the railroad tracks on the southern edge. Appleyard Drive bisects the area. In the workshop the public generally recommended the better utilization of the old Dale Mabry lands. Citizens questioned whether government operations and warehousing was the best use of this land sandwiched between Florida State University and Tallahassee Community College. Residents also recommended the upgrading of Messer Park's facilities.

### Suitability

This area is suitable for development. The area has few known environmental constraints. With its use as an airport and industrial lands, it is unknown whether any uses of the site may have created contamination issues. An environmental

analysis would be necessary to ensure the area is clean.

## **Existing Conditions**

This quadrant of the sector is a combination of government operation uses and warehousing. Much of the quadrant is very actively used with Taltran's operations, the Leon County jail, the City fleet maintenance facilities and other uses. There are also active private industrial uses. However, there are also underutilized industrial properties in the sector. It is not uncommon for investors to ask planning staff if a property in this area could be rezoned to permit apartments. With its proximity to Tallahassee Community College and Florida State and its larger parcels, there is definitely potential for higher density apartments in the area.

## **Zoning**

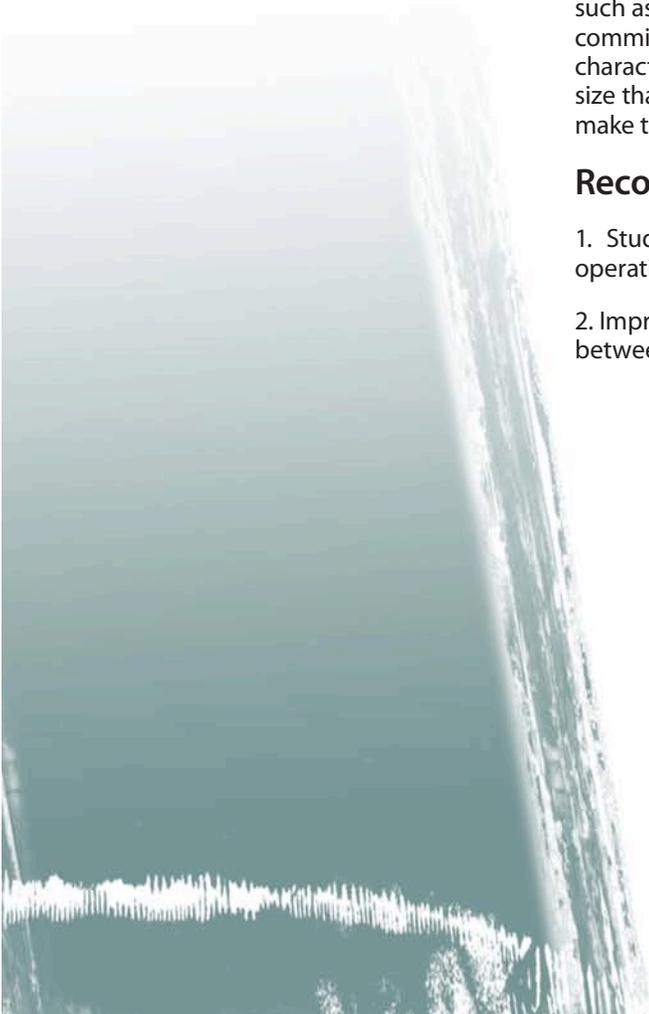
The zoning for the area is not consistent with apartments or retail uses. The zoning for the area is Industrial except for Messer Field, which is, zoned Open Space. A rezoning would be required to change this area to permit apartments and retail.

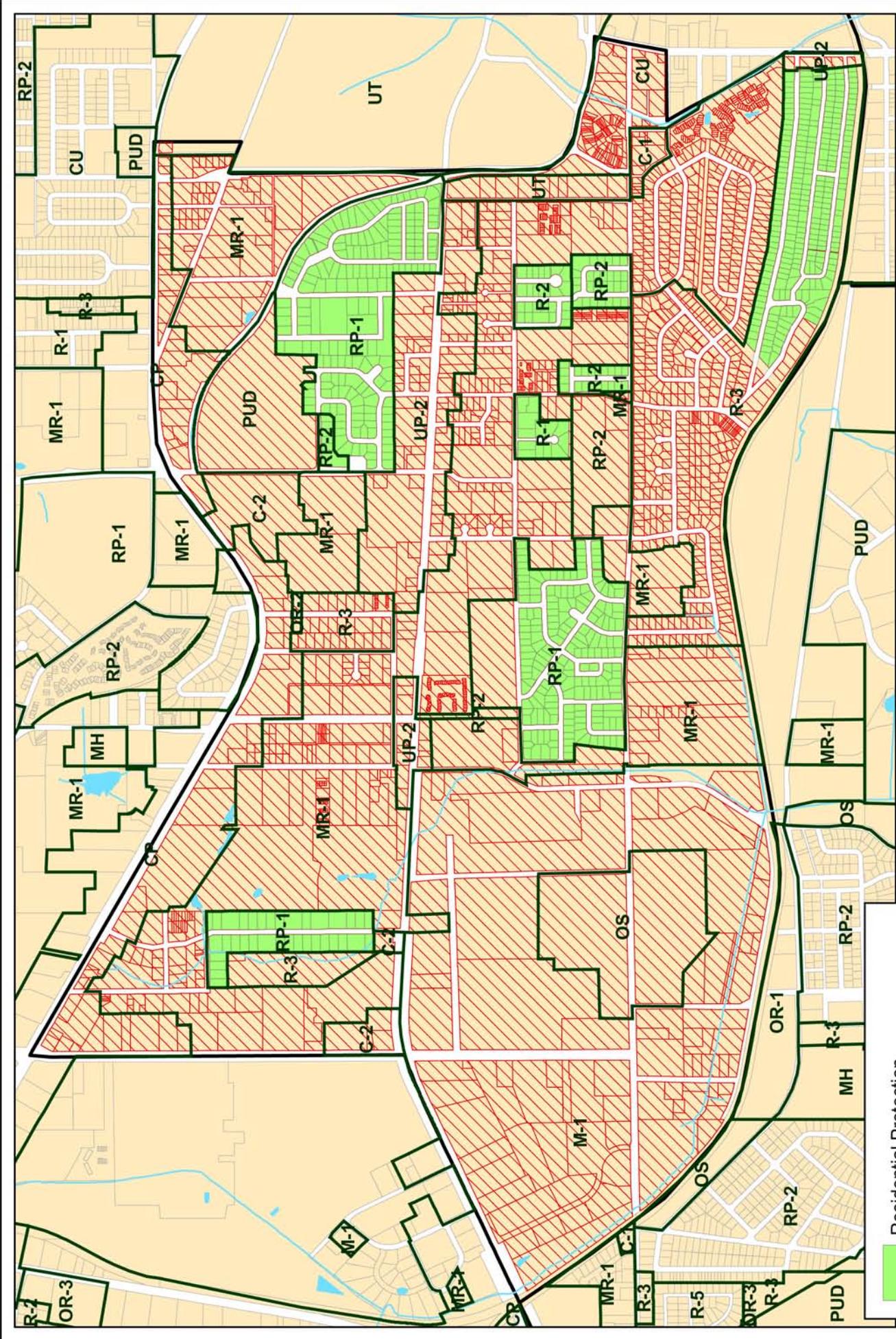
## **Consistency of analysis with public recommendations**

The current character of the area is not consistent with the public recommendations. Both the City and the County have upgraded facilities such as the Fire Department training facility and the Leon County Jail. A major commitment would be needed to move some of these operations to change the character of the area. However, there are underutilized properties of significant size that could be developed as apartments. A rezoning would be required to make this change.

## **Recommendations**

1. Study the long-term viability of these areas for industrial/government operations
2. Improve the amenities at Messer Park to coincide with a growing population between FSU and TCC.



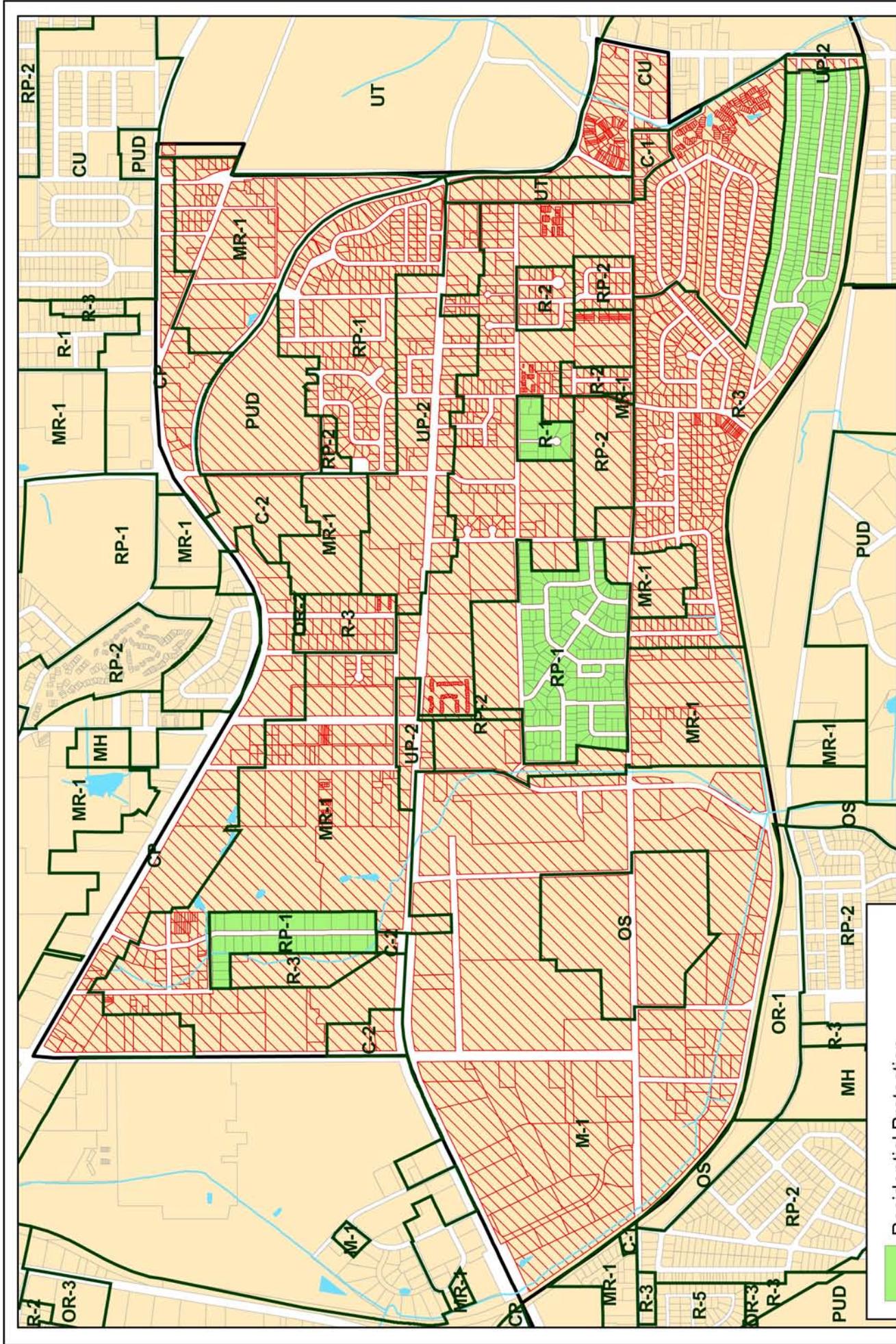


# Option 1: West Pensacola Sector

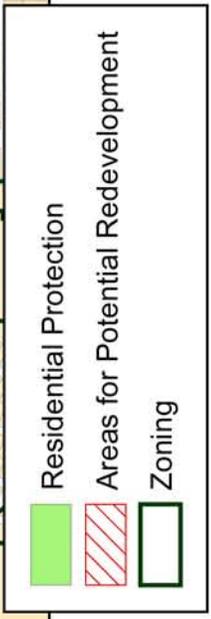
Areas of Residential Protection and Potential

Redevelopment determined from Existing Land Use patterns

|   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
|  | Residential Protection            |
|  | Areas for Potential Redevelopment |
|  | Zoning                            |



**Option 3: West Pensacola Sector**  
 Areas of Residential Protection and Potential  
 Redevelopment determined from Existing Land Use patterns





## Priority Issue 2 – Quality of Life

The Planning Department met with the residents, property owners and other interested people to discuss the topic – Quality of Life. Resident-owners and Rental-owners were concerned about the factors diminishing the quality of the sector. Student impacts were the main reason mentioned for this deterioration. Participants identified the following specific concerns:

- Noise
- Garbage
- Public Safety
- Flooding

The Planning Department asked various City departments to speak to the participants about each of these issues. This provided the resident-owners and rental-owners an opportunity to ask department representatives their questions directly while also receiving a better understanding of the level of work currently underway.

The overarching concern is the lack of care for the community from the students. The participants also believed that the students did not understand the responsibilities of living in a neighborhood. Another problem is the dependence in the City's delivery of services (garbage, public safety and code enforcement) upon residents contacting the City for assistance. Most City services are dependent upon a request for service or the knowledge to know who to call if there is a problem. In the West Pensacola Sector and its high percentage of students, there is ignorance or apathy of these responsibilities. Also, there is constant turnover with residents moving each semester.

Based upon these comments, three general strategies were identified to improve the sector's neighborhoods. The strategies are as follows:

### General Strategies

1. Communication – Communication is a relatively inexpensive tool that can improve the quality of life in the neighborhoods. All parties have responsibility in better communicating the expected norms of living in a neighborhood. Those needed to help address this issue include the City, residents, landowners and tenants. Examples include the following:
  - City – can improve communication by providing the residents, landowners and students with the information needed to address noise violations, garbage pickup, party patrol and other issues. The City has taken measures to improve communication but as identified in the Student Affairs Advisory Committee report, through the internet and other venues the City can better communicate, especially to the students.
  - Landowners – can educate their tenants of the responsibilities of living in a neighborhood. Landowners can also screen tenants to reduce the risk of problem tenants moving in an area.
  - Students – can accept the responsibilities of living off campus. This includes reading the information provided regarding garbage pickup, crime/safety, requirements for hosting parties and working with their neighbors to ensure they are not creating problems in

the neighborhood. This information could be addressed during student orientation.

2. Articulate Homeowner responsibilities – Homeowners are responsible to ensure a safe/well maintained home. Resident-owners suggested annual inspection of rental properties and licensing of landlords as potential tools to address problem homes in neighborhoods. This program could require that rental-owners distribute certain documents to tenants including “So you want to live off-campus”, bus schedules and garbage pickup schedules. However, Rental-owners strongly objected and raised questions regarding subjecting rental homes to inspection and not other homes in the area as well as the larger City. Rental-owners also stated that enforcement of current codes would be sufficient to address the problems being faced in the sector. Resident-owners clarified their main concern was the lack of care from some property owners for the neighborhoods especially by absentee owners. Also the fast-growing trend of “kiddie-condos” are becoming problem homes in the neighborhoods as well. No consensus was identified beyond the need for the neighborhoods and property owners to work together to improve these issues in the sector. As mentioned in Priority Issue 1 report, the establishment of a stakeholder committee could be a tool to get all parties to work together to resolve these common issues.

3. Participate in Neighborhood Improvement – As stated above, many of the services the City provides are dependent upon residents informing the City when there is a problem. Citizen participation is a must to ensure neighborhood problems are addressed. Participation includes:

- Meeting students as they move in. Be friendly but let them know you care about the area. Meet their parents during the move if possible.
- Report violations – City Departments must have a record in order to do address the problem or to establish a pattern.

In addition to these general strategies, the report includes the residents four specific concerns: noise, garbage, public safety and flooding. Below is a further analysis of each of these issues.

## Noise

The Tallahassee Police Department (TPD) and Department of Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS) attended the Priority Issue Meeting to present the programs underway to address noise issues as well as to hear the concerns from the public. TPD explained that their response was based upon a hierarchy from life safety to noise and other infractions. In addition, it is difficult for TPD officers to address noise violations because they are so often random, such as a passing car. However, if there is a pattern then by informing TPD the officers can patrol the area looking for this problem. TPD also utilizes the party patrol to control noise and underage drinking during peak party times.

NCS presented the various projects underway including implementation of the Rooming House policies and conducting at home meetings with residents who are consistently creating problems. These individual meetings, usually targeted to students, are intended to both educate and explain the seriousness that Tallahassee takes these infractions. NCS also explained many of the reforms identified in the Student Affairs Advisory Committee taskforce including improved education of students regarding the responsibilities with living off-campus.

Resident-owners and rental-owners were in agreement that noise and garbage (mentioned below) are issues that need to be improved. Suggested was a

notification system (could be web-based) where City departments and property owners could be notified if there is an infraction.

## **Garbage**

Reginald Ofuani, Manager and Julia Dupree, Inspector with Solid Waste Services attended the Priority Issue Meeting in order to present the programs that were underway and to address the frequency of garbage pickup in this highly student area as well as to receive inputs and/or concerns from the public. Solid Waste explained that they have increased the frequency of garbage pick up during peak times. The problem according to the Department is with students not following the requirements of taking their trash to the street, putting their trash in the dumpster or knowing the days of trash pick-up. The Department also recommended that residents be aware and report illegal dumping, which mostly occurs on vacant lots in neighborhoods.

In addition to the on-going efforts of the Solid Waste Department, citizens identified the following recommendations:

- Increase frequency of garbage pick-up or additional service at end of semester during students moving in or moving out. Some even suggested a rate increase to improve service in the area. Rental-owners could pass on the rate increase to the renters.
- Issue tickets/fines for leaving bulk items out too long in advance etc.
- Partner with Law Enforcement to have community service work for underage drinkers to clean up the neighborhoods impacted by their behavior.
- Charge higher rates for higher densities (Rental-owners object to this approach)

Garbage in the sector is a problem that resident-owners and rental-owners all agree that is a major problem. All parties need to work together to identify solutions that will help solve the problems that are unique for this area. Students appear to generate more trash especially during peak times (moving in and out) and generally do not demonstrate care for the area as long-term residents do.

## **Public Safety**

The Tallahassee Police Department (TPD) attended the Priority Issue Meeting in order to present the programs underway to address public safety concerns as well as to hear the concerns from the public. TPD explained that this is primarily a problem in the student areas because students are an easy target with money or valuables mixed with naivete such as leaving their apartments or cars unlocked. In addition, during holidays student areas are deserted and easy targets. TPD can assist as follows:

- Help establish a crime watch program as a first defense for neighborhoods.
- Conduct lighting surveys for both residential and commercial areas and make recommendations to improve safety.

Residents were encouraged by the efforts underway but recommended further actions to improve the safety of neighborhoods including:

- Post illegal parking signs. Once signs are posted then TPD can enforce.
- Increase directed patrols in problem areas. This is especially needed during student holidays. Citizens need to contact TPD so they identify problem areas. Citizens can communicate them to the Alpha or Charlie Commanders. Citizen calls help establish the problem areas.
- Call party patrol if party disturbance

- Encourage police to reside in neighborhoods
- Improve TPD's reporting procedures so property owners can be informed if problems are taking place at their rental properties.

## **Flooding**

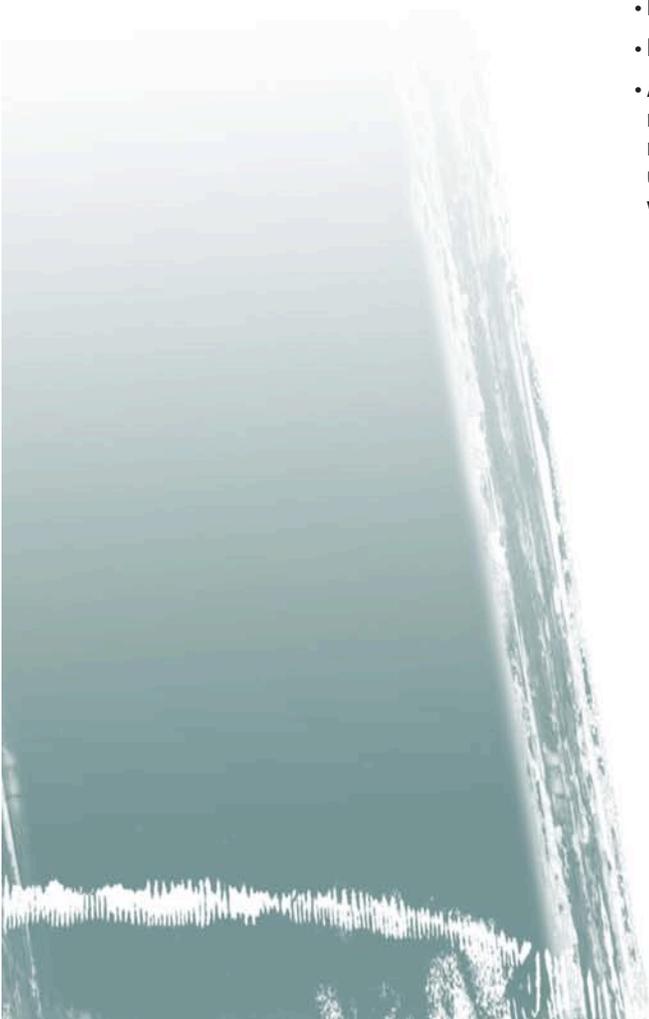
John Buss, Director of the Stormwater Division for the City of Tallahassee presented the programs underway to address flooding as well as to hear the concerns from the public. Mr. Buss identified the projects that are currently underway that will help with flooding in certain locations. Improvements proposed include:

- Lake Elberta
- Pepper Drive
- Lipona Road

These projects will help but will not solve the flooding problems for certain areas in the sector. This is because some of these areas were originally low areas and part of the natural floodplain. As heavy rains occur the water flows according to the natural drainage paths causing isolated flooding. Citizens can help by calling the Stormwater Division when flooding occurs in the City streets or in homes. This will ensure that the Stormwater Division is aware of all instances of flooding.

In addition to these projects, the residents had the following recommendations:

- Retrofit city streets with curb and gutter
- Retrofit localized stormwater problems including Pepper Drive
- Address stormwater drainage problems in the Cactus Street neighborhood. In the short-term, ditches are very shallow and need maintenance. In the long-term, the stormwater system needs to be upgraded to handle the volume of stormwater to alleviate standing water conditions.





## Priority Issue 3 – Transportation

The initial community workshops gave residents the opportunity to voice opinions about numerous topics affecting their neighborhoods. Transportation was a major point of emphasis for many citizens. With Florida State University and Tallahassee Community College forming bookends to the Sector, area roadways are often clogged with commuter traffic. When combined with standard workday travel along the major corridors of West Tennessee Street, West Pensacola Street, and Lake Bradford Road, congestion in the area presents challenges which need to be addressed.

Throughout the community workshops, citizens in the community have recognized the existing high-density development along major corridors, a prerequisite for successful mass transit. Both students and long time residents have suggested using small, quick TalTran shuttles to better serve the dense student populations at the numerous apartment complexes in the Sector. Support has been expressed for additional bike lanes and creating connections to the existing Greenways System. Recognizing the close proximity of numerous daily services, ideas were also put forward for improving pedestrian facilities to achieve connectivity. This is more than appropriate given West Pensacola Street is currently zoned Urban Pedestrian. Specifically, residents recommended the following transportation improvements and land use compliments for the sector.

### General Transportation Strategy

1. Add gateways to the area by constructing planted medians and sidewalks connecting businesses along West Tennessee Street, West Pensacola Street, White Drive, and Ocala Road.
2. Connect Florida State and TCC with transit and bicycle/pedestrian improvements.
3. Make neighborhoods safe for pedestrians while minimizing impacts of cut-through traffic.

### Street Recommendations

- Add neighborhood entrance with traffic calming feature along Cactus Street
- Add traffic calming along White, Airport, Atkamire, and Mayhew Drives.
- Improve road maintenance along sector roads including roadway striping and trimming hedges/trees
- Replace ditches with culverts and drainage in Lipona Drive area.
- Pave Hayward and McKeithen Streets

### Transit Recommendations

- Connect Tallahassee Community College to Florida State via bike paths
- Modify TalTran's bus routes from an inefficient spoke system to sector specific loop lines
- Encourage student shuttles for high density apartments

- Construct sidewalks along West Tennessee Street, Jackson Bluff Road and Bellevue Way where sidewalks are not connected and in neighborhoods.

### Existing Conditions

The City of Tallahassee is projected to add 50,000 new residents in the next 25 years. In addition, the three educational institutions in the community estimate that they will add approximately 7,000 new students by 2010. This growth in the general and student populations will put additional strain on transportation services. The City’s Growth Management department, which maintains data on roadway concurrency, reports that several roads in the West Pensacola Sector are deficient or nearly deficient due to the extreme traffic volume. A road is considered deficient when it does not have room to add one percent of its total capacity and remain in compliance with concurrency. Near deficient segments are those that cannot absorb 5 percent of the calculated capacity. As detailed in Table 1 below, several connecting roads are over burdened. For example, the intersection of Lake Bradford and Jackson Bluff Roads has been noted for its congestion and has undergone capital upgrades to improve traffic flow.

**Table 1: Roadway Concurrency Evaluation**

| Road (direction)      | From           | To             | Status         |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Appleyard (south)     | West Pensacola | Jackson Bluff  | Deficient      |
| Appleyard (north)     | TCC            | Tennessee      | Near Deficient |
| Call (east & west)    | West Tennessee | Stadium        | Near Deficient |
| Chapel (north)        | Westridge      | Call           | Near Deficient |
| Jackson Bluff (east)  | Hendry         | Lake Bradford  | Deficient      |
| Lk. Bradford (north)  | Jackson Bluff  | Gaines         | Deficient      |
| Lipona (north)        | Jackson Bluff  | West Pensacola | Near Deficient |
| Ocala(north & south)  | West Pensacola | West Tennessee | Near Deficient |
| Stadium (south)       | Connector      | West Pensacola | Deficient      |
| West Tennessee (west) | White          | Appleyard      | Near Deficient |
| West Tennessee (east) | White          | Ocala          | Near Deficient |

Because of congestion problems in the area, mass transit, bicycle, and pedestrian connectivity must be improved and promoted. TalTran routes serve the major roadways in the Sector, with east-west routes along West Tennessee, West Pensacola, Jackson Bluff and north-south service on Appleyard Drive, Mabry Street, and Stadium Drive. On street parking near apartments or rental neighborhoods adds to the congestion. This issue should be addressed in the City parking standards and enforced by Code Enforcement. Sidewalks are found throughout the area but there are disruptive gaps and adjacent open drainage ditches can pose a safety hazard. Pedestrian facilities are lacking in most residential areas and along some major corridors, such as Jackson Bluff Road, Belle Vue Way, and sections of West Tennessee Street. Lastly, while bike lanes can be found in the Sector, as yet there are no official connections to the countywide Greenway System. However, the first leg of the St. Marks Trail begins on Ocala Road near its intersection with West Tennessee Street.



## Proposed Projects

### Roadways

Projects have recently been undertaken to improve the surface condition of Jackson Bluff Road and traffic flow at its termination point with Lake Bradford. Additional projects in the area include, gateway improvements along West Tennessee Street and Lake Bradford Road. Gateway enhancements are intended to improve visitors’ image of Tallahassee. These projects may include sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and median and right-of-way landscaping, which is often credited with a certain level of traffic calming. According to the 2020 Long Range Transportation Plan, within the next four years, West Pensacola Street will be expanded from 2 to 4 lanes along the section from Appleyard to Capital Circle SW. This is intended to limit congestion between the two sections that have already been widened to four lanes.

**Table 2: Roadway Improvement Projects**

| Road           | From      | To                | Project Description        | Construction Schedule    |
|----------------|-----------|-------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Lake Bradford  | Orange    | Gaines            | Gateway enhancement        | 10.05 – 7.07             |
| West Tennessee | Ocala     | Dewey             | Gateway enhancement        | 10.05 – 7.07             |
| West Pensacola | Appleyard | Capital Circle SW | Widening from 2 to 4 lanes | L RTP 2020; Priority #13 |

The table above of budgeted and approved roadway improvement projects does not directly coincide with the concurrency deficiencies noted in Table 1. Many of the roadway sections found to be deficient or near deficient are located in residential areas that limit the ability to expand roads. Appleyard Drive is listed as deficient due to the congestion which occurs at the termination point with Jackson Bluff Road. Ocala Road is nearly deficient due to its role as a primary connector between West Tennessee and West Pensacola Streets. The segment is currently a four-lane road with intense development on either side leaving little room to expand.

In view of the congested traffic flow and increasing urbanization in the sector, concurrency deficiencies could eventually prevent infill development and promote sprawl by pushing new homes farther away from the city center. Alternatives to road expansion will need to be explored to address these capacity issues.

### TalTran

In the past year, TalTran has undertaken what it has dubbed its Renaissance Plan. Possible improvements to come out of this series of analysis and recommendations make reference to new routes, punctuality, customer service, and route reconfiguring. The plan is not final but proposed recommendations in the West Pensacola Sector include, the need to lesson headways from hourly to 30-minutes due to intense student ridership. Also likely in relation to high student ridership, new service is proposed for the Ocala Road corridor. The needs of many patrons go beyond the standard workweek. TalTran is analyzing which routes are best served by extensions into the late evening and throughout the weekend.

Infrastructure improvements are seen as another side to improving transit service in our community. Bus stops are being inventoried to determine higher intensity stops which are best suited for shelters, benches, and amenities. These are likely to be near transfer locations, major street intersections, and major trip generators. In addition to the improvements to regular stops, TalTran intends to develop “superstops” in each quadrant of Tallahassee, including the West

Pensacola Sector. These would act as transfer stations, thereby negating the need to travel to C.K. Steele for the majority of transfers. Lastly, cost feasibility is being examined for the implementation of limited-stop commuter express buses along major corridors, including West Tennessee Street. This potential service would necessitate the creation of park-and-ride lots beyond Capital Circle.

### Bicycle and Pedestrian

Many involved citizens mentioned the need to improve accessibility and connectivity in the Sector. In particular, sidewalks, bike lanes, and greenways could help transport people in ways besides the automobile. There are numerous projects slated for the West Pensacola Sector that are in various stages of development. The aforementioned gateway enhancement projects along West Tennessee Street and Lake Bradford Road will include both sidewalk and bike lane facilities. The PASS projects will include new sidewalks where there are none and the enclosure of open drainage ditches. The Long Range Transportation Plan of the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA) has West Pensacola Street listed to receive bicycle and pedestrian improvements from Stadium Drive to the western city limits.

The Tallahassee-Leon County Greenways Master Plan lays out plans for greenways, parks, and multi-use trails throughout our community. Proposals in the plan are purely conceptual and lack a definitive timetable due to funding constraints. Included within the plan is the Education Quadrant Greenways. The proposed trail runs roughly adjacent to the CSX railroad between Tallahassee Community College and Lake Bradford Road, with an eventual connection to Florida State. North-south connections to other trails are found along Ocala Road and Mabry Street. The connectors are intended to link student housing areas and Innovation Park and the future FSU Intramural facilities, respectively. Planned projects are listed below in Table 3.

**Table 3: Bike, Pedestrian, & Greenway Improvement Projects**

| Modal Type        | Location  | Project Description  | Construction Schedule                             |
|-------------------|---|--|---|
| Bike & Pedestrian | Lk. Bradford Rd. from Gaines St. to Springhill fork.                    | Bike lanes provided in both directions and pedestrian sidewalks improved.        | 10.05 – 7.07                                      |
| Bike & Pedestrian | W. Tennessee St. from Ocala Rd. to Dewey Dr.                            | Provision of new bike lanes & sidewalks, improvements made to existing sidewalks | 10.05 – 7.07                                      |
| Pedestrian        | Lipona Rd. from W. Pensacola St. to Jackson Bluff Rd.                   | PASS project - New sidewalks and enclosure of drainage ditches                   | Committed Funding; No firm construction schedule  |
| Bike & Pedestrian | W. Pensacola St. from Stadium Dr. to western city limits                | Provision of bike lanes and improvements made to existing sidewalks              | Cost feasible need; No firm construction schedule |
| Pedestrian        | Belle Vue Way from Mabry St. to Hayden Rd.                              | PASS project - New sidewalks and enclosure of drainage ditches                   | Cost feasible need; No firm construction schedule |
| Greenway          | Adjacent to CSX railroad in forested, undevelopable lands (100 year FP) | Connection between TCC and FSU via Innovation Park and Lk. Elberta Park          | Low Priority; all work dependent upon funding     |
| Greenway          | San Luis Park at intersection of Ocala and W. Tennessee                 | Provide a corridor extension of the St. Marks Trail                              | Low Priority; all work dependent upon funding     |

### Strategies

The Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department in conjunction with the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency, TalTran, and City Public Works have developed plans to meet the future transportation needs of the community. The proposed projects noted in this report are scheduled for beginning construction dates ranging between Fall 2005 to 2008. Due to the urbanization of the West Pensacola Sector, improvements to public transportation, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities are of utmost importance.





**WEST PENSACOLA**  
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