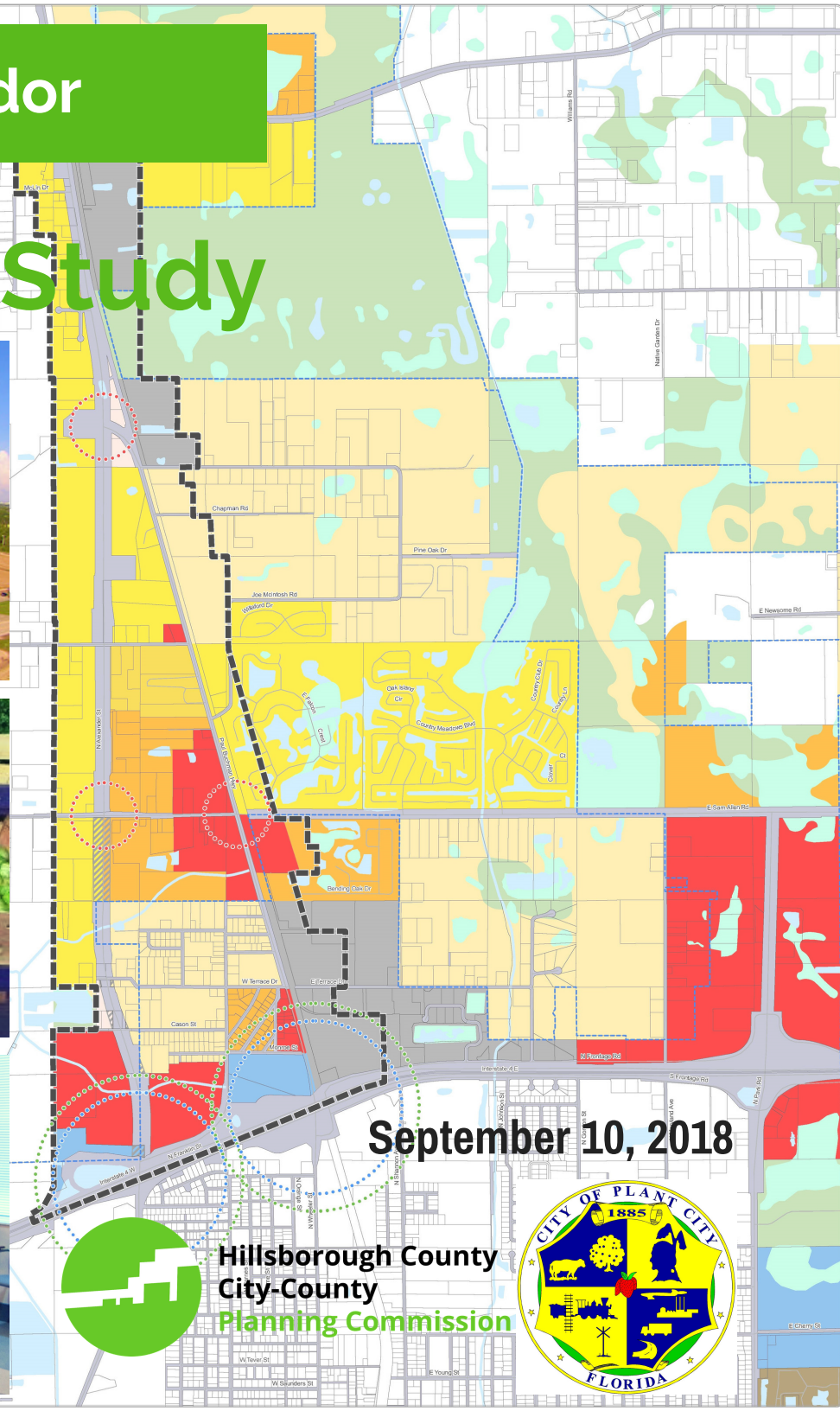
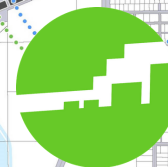


# North Alexander Street Corridor

## Land Use & Market Study



September 10, 2018



Hillsborough County  
City-County  
Planning Commission



## Table of Contents

Executive Summary	5
Focus of the Study	6
Scope	7
Public Outreach	7
Section 1: Existing Conditions Assessment	10
Land Use – General	10
Existing Land Use	11
Table 1: Existing Land Use – Study Area	11
Future Land Use	11
Table 2: Future Land Use – Study Area	12
Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan – Preferred Land Use Scenario	12
Table 3: Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan – Preferred Land Use Scenario Acreage – Study Area	13
Environmental Resources and Constraints	13
Significant Wildlife Habitat	13
Wetlands	13
Floodplains	14
Transportation Network	14
Functional Classification and Jurisdiction Ownership	14
Roadway Level of Service	14
North Plant City Area Master Plan – Recommended Roadway Improvements	15
2040 Needs and Cost Affordable Transportation Plan	16
Other Public Facilities	16
Water, Wastewater and Solid Waste	16

Parks	16
Schools	17
Section 2: Adopted Studies and Policy Direction	17
Plant City Vision and Strategic Guide	17
Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan	17
Strip Commercial and Mixed-Use Development in Hillsborough County Study	18
Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan	19
Future of Hillsborough - Comprehensive Plan for unincorporated Hillsborough County	20
Section 3: Market Report – Summary (see Appendix)	20
Demographic and Economic Profile	20
Table 4: Population Growth and Projected Growth (1999 to 2040)	21
Trends and Forecasts	21
North Alexander Street Trade Area	21
Household Retail Spending	22
Employment Trends	22
Table 5: 10 Year Employment Trend (2006-2015)	23
Real Estate Market Conditions	23
Housing	23
Housing Starts	23
Multi-Family Rental	24
Hotel/Lodging	24
Workplace: Office	25
Workplace: Industrial	25
Workplace: Retail	26
Site Analysis and Suitability	26

Impact of Logistics and Distribution	27
Intersections and Development	28
Market Potential and Implementation	29
Market-Rate Housing	29
Workplace/Office	30
Table 6: Workplace/Office Potentials 2016-2024	31
Workplace/General Industrial	32
Table 7: Workplace/General Industrial Potentials (2016 to 2024)	34
General Retail	35
Section 4: Conclusions, Recommendations and Next Steps	37
Table 8: Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan Updated Preferred Land Use Scenario Acreage	39
Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan - Recommendations	40
Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan - Recommendations	40
Other Recommendations	41
Appendix	42
Figure Series	42
Figure 1: Aerial and Study Area Boundaries	
Figure 2: Existing Land Use	
Figure 3: Adopted 2040 Future Land Use	
Figure 4: Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan – Preferred Land Use Scenario	
Figure 5: 2010 Local and Federal Roadway Functional Classification	
Figure 6: 2010 Roadway Level of Service	
Figure 7: North Plant City Area Master Plan – Recommended Roadway Improvements	
Figure 8: North Alexander Street Trade Area	
Figure 9: Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan – Updated Preferred Land Use Scenario	

Postcard announcing an Open House on May 23, 2018

Land Use Market Analysis – North Alexander Street Corridor [Supplied Upon Request]

-

## ***North Alexander Street Corridor – Land Use & Market Study***

### **Executive Summary**

The City of Plant City desires to foster a high-quality environment for community growth and investment. To accomplish this, the municipality employs a variety of planning techniques and principles to discourage urban sprawl, promote an efficient land use pattern, encourage a mixture of uses, provide for sustainable development, all while preserving and protecting the natural amenities of Plant City.

In this regard, properties along a new two-mile stretch of North Alexander Street were studied in relation, in part, to the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan* and the *Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan*. The analysis contained in this study ascertained if the assumptions in these plans are still valid and the best use of the adjacent land in relation to this new roadway facility and the population projections for Plant City. The study area is generally bounded to the west by Alexander Street, south by Interstate-4 and to the east and north by Paul Buchman Highway.

The construction of North Alexander Street has greatly improved the local transportation network within the study area and eastern Hillsborough County. One of the major benefits of this facility is to improve the flow of truck traffic by providing another north/south corridor that bypasses the historic downtown of Plant City. As a byproduct, this new roadway provides additional opportunities for compact mixed-use growth, particularly as it relates to retail, distribution and residential development along North Alexander Street.

It is not expected this corridor will achieve the same level of growth that is anticipated in some other parts of Plant City. For example, a greater magnitude of mixed-use development is expected along the southern limits of James L. Redman Parkway, more homes are projected in North Park Isles and Varrea, and the study area will not contain a logistics and distribution hub to the scale of what is occurring on County Line Road. However, as noted in this report, the corridor contains many assets, which overtime will attract businesses and residents to this area that has convenient access to Interstate-4.

At times this growth will appear unorganized and haphazard, as the boundaries and total land area of the municipality is anticipated to only expand through voluntary annexations. Therefore, it is critical to have an overarching “vision” in advance of this growth that is desired and supported by the residents along and around North Alexander Street. One such way to implement this “vision” is through a preferred land use scenario and supporting policies that will guide the City Commission and staff of Plant City.

Based in the analysis of this report, Planning Commission staff updated the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan – Preferred Land Use Scenario* and provided sixteen recommendations that will help guide growth in an efficient and effective manner as property owners voluntarily annex lands into Plant City. As the analysis provided in this report covers more than 1,000 acres, the land use scenario is a broad indicator of what the preferred development pattern should be, which will need to be augmented with a more in-depth analysis conducted in concert with the process of amending each parcel’s future land use and zoning, approved through a public hearing process before the Plant City Commission.

## Introduction and Purpose

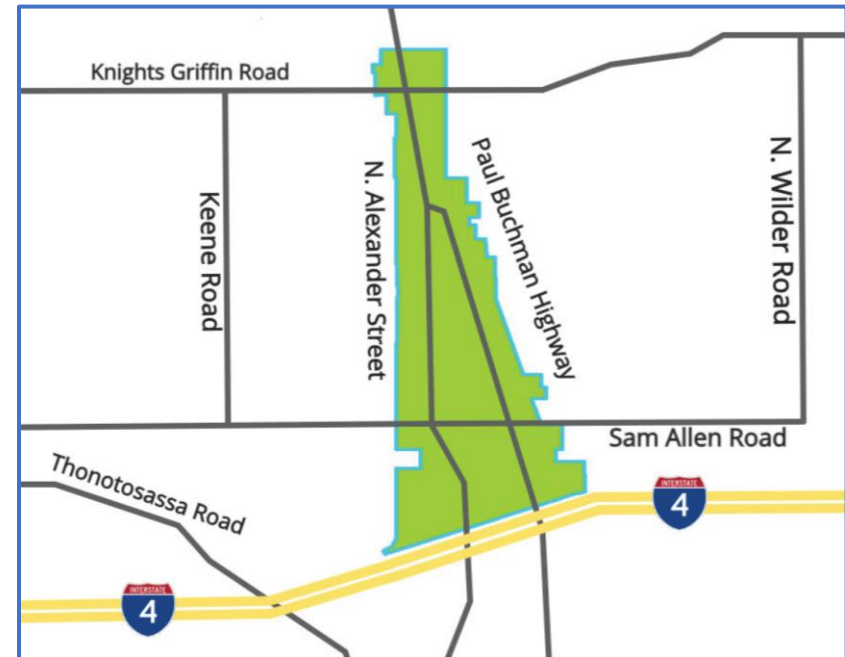
Cities, like people, have a unique past and numerous potential futures, which is true of Plant City. Studies, such as this, are a means to shape and guide that identity in ways that make the future a better place to live, by leveraging opportunities, minimizing difficulties, and overcoming any inherent weaknesses, with the goal of meeting the collective “vision” set forth by the residents of Plant City and eastern Hillsborough County. The following study explains the current context of the area and provides an updated and more focused “vision”, which will guide the future land development decisions of the Plant City Commission.

The City of Plant City is a municipality in eastern Hillsborough County, with an estimated population of 37,840 residents in 2016. The City is projected to have a significant amount of commercial, residential and industrial growth by 2040. Much of this projected population growth will occur in the northeastern quadrant of Plant City. Completed in 2014, the North Alexander Street “extension”, located within this quadrant, connects the existing roadway terminus at Interstate-4 and travels north to Paul Buchman Highway.

The City of Plant City desires to foster a high-quality environment for community growth and investment. To accomplish this, the municipality employs a variety of planning techniques and principles to discourage urban sprawl, promote an efficient land use pattern, encourage a mixture of uses, provide for sustainable development, all while preserving and protecting the natural amenities of Plant City.

Properties along this new two-mile roadway were studied in relation to the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan* and the *Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan*. This analysis contained in this study ascertained if the assumptions in these plans are still valid and the

best use of the adjacent land in relation to the new roadway facility and the population projections for Plant City.



The study area is shaded Green.

## Focus of the Study

The study area is generally bounded to the west by Alexander Street, south by Interstate-4 and to the east and north by Paul Buchman Highway. Please reference Figure 1. As the development pattern is already well established, this study does not include and therefore did not consider properties south of Interstate-4. This study was conducted:

- To improve the coordination of an envisioned future land use pattern between Hillsborough County and Plant City.

- To assess potential land uses for parcels within the study area once they voluntarily annex and receive municipal (i.e., potable water and wastewater) services from Plant City.
- To provide a demographic analysis, economic profile and market study of the lands along Alexander Street, north of Interstate-4.
- To identify activity nodes that can become future community/neighborhood focal points for Plant City and eastern Hillsborough County.
- To evaluate the related principles, objectives and policies for this area in the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan* and *Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan*.
- To assess and if appropriate recommend additional policy direction from the 2014 - Dover Kohl Study for “Strip Commercial and Mixed-Use Development in Hillsborough County”.

### Scope

The scope of the study is broken into four major sections. The first of which is an *Existing Conditions Assessment* covering topics such as land use, environmental resources and constraints, the transportation network, and the provision of other public facilities within the area of the *North Alexander Street Corridor – Land Use & Market Study*. Next the study reviews and evaluates the existing policy direction for this area contained in several adopted plans and studies, the foremost of which are the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan* and the *Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan*. This is followed by a summary of an in-depth market report conducted (by WTL+a) for the study area, with the full analysis being provided in the Appendix. The last section of the study provides conclusions, makes recommendations and proposes next steps to the Plant City Commission.

### Public Outreach

Public input was central to the development of the *North Alexander Street Corridor - Land Use & Market Study*. The process began at the inception of the study, by staff and our consultant team conducting a series of stakeholders’ interviews whose participants were identified by the staffs of the Hillsborough County Planning Commission and Plant City. Generally, the questions posed to each stakeholder related to how they envision the study area developing over time, based on potential market performance and other locational characteristics, as these lands voluntarily annex into Plant City. Interviews were conducted with the following individuals as part of our project analysis in late August 2017:

#### August 24, 2017

Rick Lott	Mayor of Plant City
Robert Appleyard	Sunrise Homes & Lakeside Station Logistics Park
Matthew Buzza	Pilot Bank & Hillsborough County Planning Commissioner
Kim D. Leinbach	Interim Plant City City Manager

#### August 25, 2017

Jake Austin	President - Plant City Economic Development Corporation
Nate Kilton	Sedita Kilton & City Commissioner (now Vice-Mayor of Plant City)
Christine Miller	President – Greater Plant City Chamber of Commerce
Gary Pike	Consolidated Electrical Distributors & Hillsborough County Planning Commissioner
David Sullivan	Platinum Bank & Chair - Plant City Economic Development Corporation
Phil Waldron	Waldron Consulting Services & Former Plant City Planning & Zoning Director and City Manager



Also, to garner public input and keep the residents informed, an open house was held for the *North Alexander Street Corridor - Land Use & Market Study* at Plant City City Hall, on May 23, 2018. Each property owner in the study area received a post card (see Appendix) announcing the event, as well as being advertised on the websites and social media outlets of both the Planning Commission and Plant City. In addition, flyers were placed at several strategic locations around the municipality, including City Hall and the Bruton Memorial Library.

At the open house, numerous draft figures were made available for review, depicting information such development patterns, roadway networks, natural amenities and the land use scenario of the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan*. Also available for review was the initial market analysis of the study area produced by the retained consultant, WTL+a. However, the most critical product that was shared with the attendees was an Updated Preferred Land Use Scenario (draft) for the *North Alexander Street Corridor - Land Use & Market Study*.



Open House on May 23, 2018.

Twenty-seven people signed the attendance sheet, representing an estimated total turnout of approximately 50 to 60. Of these attendees, approximately one-third resided within Plant City, with the remainder living in unincorporated Hillsborough County. Local property owners also attended from further afield, from such places as Sarasota, St. Petersburg and Jupiter, Florida. Staff worked with the attendees on an individual basis or in small groups, to explain the data and information being provided and to seek their input on the products produced thus far and what they would like to see happen in the future along North Alexander Street. Input was documented through several means, such as staff notes, drawing on maps and comments cards provided to those attending the event at Plant City City Hall.

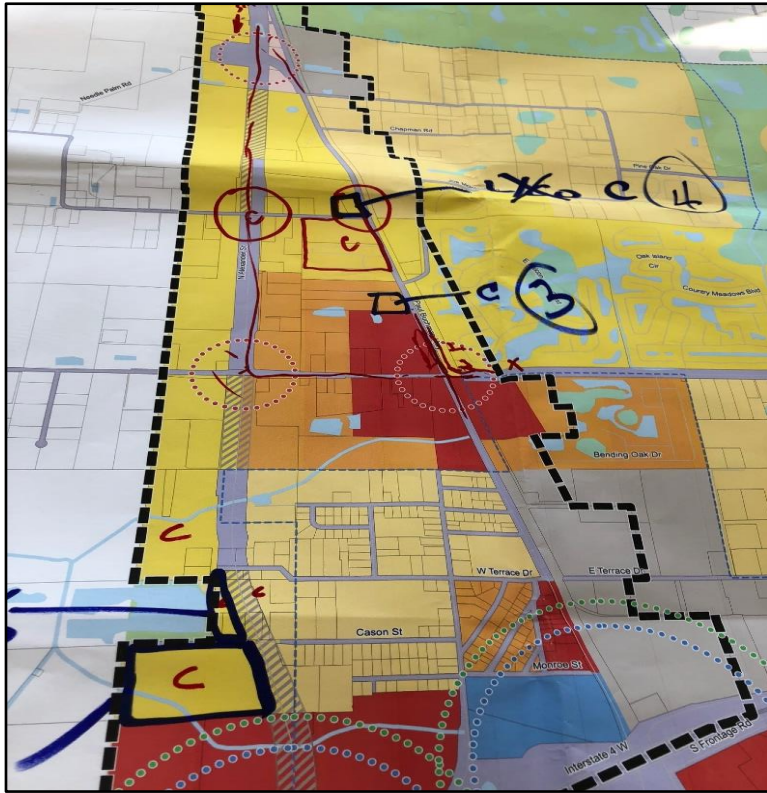
In general, the attendees responded favorably to the objectives of the study and the products produced this far, including the Updated Preferred Land Use Scenario for North Alexander Street. A summary of the written comments provided is listed below:

1. *Please consider making the west side of North Alexander Street commercial from Sam Allen Road to Interstate-4.* [Staff response: After further analysis, additional commercial and light commercial/office lands were programmed on the west side of North Alexander Street between West Terrace Drive and Interstate-4. Also, based on locational criteria, neighborhood commercial uses may be considered at the intersection of Sam Allen Road and North Alexander Street.]
2. *There will be a need for more commercial property along North Alexander Street.* [Staff response: See previous discussion under #1.]
3. *North Alexander Street is a four-lane truck route and lends itself to commercial development between Sam Allen Road to Interstate-4.* [Staff response: See previous discussion under #1.]

4. *I am saddened by the great reduction of natural preservation areas from the previous plan (Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan).* [Staff response: Wetlands will continue to be protected through the regulations and permitting requirements of the Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County and the City of Plant City. Also, these areas would be depicted in the future as part of an Environmentally Sensitive Area Overlay.]
5. *Not in favor of annexing into Plant City.* [Staff response: Only voluntary annexations are under consideration by the City of Plant City.]
6. *Before annexations are considered by residents, we need to be told of all the expenses that it would mean for us (taxes, utilities etc.) and what the benefits are and the timeframe to see these benefits.* [Staff response: When a property owner petitions the municipality for voluntary annexation, this counseling is provided by the staff of Plant City.]
7. *Speeding traffic both northbound and southbound on North Franklin Street from the traffic light at North Alexander Street (near I-4) to the four-way stop at West Terrace Drive.* [Staff response: Referred to the Plant City City Engineer.]
8. *Excessive commercial truck traffic on Monroe Street and the southern end of North Franklin Street used as a shortcut from Paul Buchman Highway to North Alexander Street.* [Staff response: Referred to the Plant City City Engineer.]
2. *Protect the established single-family detached neighborhood (currently within Plant City) on the westside of Paul Buchman Highway (east of North Adams Street) between Monroe Street and West Terrace Drive.* [Staff response: The neighborhood has a commercial land use, with zoning designations of either R1-A or C1-A. It is unlikely these single-family homes will transition to non-residential uses in the near term, however further and more detailed analysis of the area should be conducted by the Planning Commission and Plant City.]
3. *Recognize commercial uses at McGee Road and Paul Buchman Highway.* [Staff response: After further analysis, to recognize existing non-residential uses, modified the northwest corner of McGee Road and Paul Buchman Highway to Commercial on the Updated Preferred Land Use Scenario. As it is premature at this time, in the future recognize the other corners of this intersection with non-residential uses when McGee Road is classified as a collector by either Plant City or Hillsborough County.]
4. *Recognize commercial uses at McGee Road and North Alexander Street.* [Staff response: Again, as it is premature at this time, recognize non-residential uses at this location when McGee Road is classified as a collector by either Plant City or Hillsborough County.]

Also, a summary of additional verbal comments provided is listed below:

1. *We need better signage to encourage through truck traffic to use North Alexander Street not Paul Buchman Highway.* [Staff response: After further analysis, added an additional recommendation to address this issue under Conclusions, Recommendations and Next Steps.]



Some comments received at the Open House on May 23, 2018.

5. *I am worried that with increased development additional flooding may occur in the study area for North Alexander Street.* [Staff response: Development in the 100-year flood plain will be managed through the regulations and permitting requirements of the Southwest Florida Water Management District and the City of Plant City.]
6. *How will increased traffic levels be managed as the study area develops after voluntarily annexing into Plant City.* [Staff response: Plant City, in cooperation with Hillsborough County and

the Florida Department of Transportation, will be implementing the preferred transportation network of the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan*. This plan will be funded through several sources, including the collection of “mobility fees” as the study area develops in Plant City.]

7. *To protect the commercial corridor and adjoining residential areas, through truck traffic should be routed to avoid Alexander Street south of Interstate-4. Instead trucks should be routed via Interstate-4 to Park Road.* [Staff response: Referred to the Plant City City Engineer.]

Through staff to staff meetings and by supplying draft documents for review and comment, Planning Commission staff also coordinated the development of this study with the staffs of Plant City, Hillsborough County and the Florida Department of Transportation.

## Section 1: Existing Conditions Assessment

### Land Use – General

The study area, at just over one thousand acres, is of considerable size encompassing numerous land uses that support a rural and suburban lifestyle in northeastern Hillsborough County. Nearly 70% of this area is in unincorporated Hillsborough County. These lands are all encompassing and includes public and privately-owned parcels, roadways and other rights-of-way, as well as protected natural amenities both inside and outside of Plant City. The land uses in the area are indicative of a municipality with an expanding population and employment base sharing space with an adjacent rural community that is being transformed into a more suburban environment through voluntary annexation and public investment by Plant City.

Historically, when property is voluntarily annexed into the municipality, densities and intensities of the land are increased, as future development is now required to be served by the water and wastewater systems offered by Plant City. This provides for a distinct advantage in their future development potential, as compared to those lands that remain in unincorporated Hillsborough County. A primary example of this are the two interchanges of Interstate-4, at Paul Buchman Highway and North Alexander Street. This is an asset that has been leveraged by Plant City with future land uses designations of either Industrial or Commercial. One of the effects of which is to provide employment opportunities for residents that remain in rural eastern Hillsborough County, as well as those who reside in Plant City.

### Existing Land Use

Existing land use refers to how the property is being used today, as classified by the Hillsborough County Property Appraiser. Nearly 60% of the land in the study area is either agricultural, single-family detached housing (mostly rural) or vacant in 2018. Only 10% of the land has an existing use categorized as industrial or commercial, most of which resides inside of Plant City. There are two large areas in the southern part of the study area with a designation of public/semi-public, which are Shiloh Baptist Church and Memorial Park Cemetery. There is also a large area that is listed as heavy industrial, at the northwest corner of Sam Allen Road and Paul Buchman Highway, which currently operates as a wholesale farmers market known as the Plant City Farm & Flea Market. Finally, there are some additional non-residential activities on North Alexander Street at Paul Buchman Highway and Knights Griffin Road, with designations of either Light Commercial and Light Industrial. For more detailed information please refer to the table below and Figure 2.

**Table 1: Existing Land Use – Study Area**

Key	Land Use Category	Acres	% of Total
AG	Agriculture	254.70	24%
HI	Heavy Industrial	24.00	2%
LC	Light Commercial	62.00	6%
LI	Light Industrial	26.40	2%
MHP	Mobile Home Park	41.30	4%
NAT	Natural	27.70	3%
NC	Not Classified	172.70	16%
PI	Public/Quasi-Public Institutions	151.30	14%
PU	Public Communications/Utilities	11.50	1%
R/W	Right-of-Way	3.00	<.5%
SCH	Educational	1.90	<.5%
SF	Single-Family/Mobile Home	131.00	12%
TF	Two-Family	9.20	1%
VAC	Vacant	143.40	14%
<b>Total-Study Area:</b>			
<b>Note: For corresponding map see Figure 2</b>		<b>1060.10</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Future Land Use

Future land use refers to how the property is planned for developed, as adopted by either the Plant City Commission or the Board of County Commissioners. Today, most of the lands in the study area are outside of Hillsborough County’s Urban Service Area and as such do not support urban development patterns (due to their lack of public utilities), thus these parcels have been given future land use designations of Hillsborough County Residential-1 and Residential-2. These low-density future land uses are quite common in areas of Hillsborough County that abut Plant City. The two major exceptions

are warehousing activities near North Alexander Street at Paul Buchman Highway with a designation of Light Industrial and Country Meadows Golf Club (or The Lakes at Countrywood), which is a senior living neighborhood (R-6) along Sam Allen Road, east of Paul Buchman Highway.

In stark contrast, in the southern portion of the study area, Plant City provides a wide range of housing densities and employment generating land uses, from Residential-4 to Commercial to Industrial. For more detailed information please refer to the table below and Figure 3.

**Table 2: Future Land Use – Study Area**

Key	Land Use Category	Acres	% of Total
HC	Residential-1 (1 DU/Acre)	637.00	60%
HC	Residential-2 (2 DU/Acre)	19.00	2%
HC	Residential-6 (6 DU/Acre)	37.00	3.5%
HC	Light Industrial (0.50 FAR)	27.38	3%
PC	Residential-4 (4 DU/Acre)	172.21	16%
PC	Residential-12(12 DU/Acre)	25.29	2%
PC	Commercial (0.35 FAR)	40.03	4%
PC	Industrial (0.50 FAR)	61.39	6%
PC	Recreation/Open Space	9.75	<1%
PC	Natural Preservation	14.76	1%
PC	Public/Semi-Public	16.29	1.5%
<b>Total-Study Area:</b>			
<b>Note: For corresponding map see Figure 3</b>		<b>1060.7</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan – Preferred Land Use Scenario

In 2007, the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan* was developed to guide future growth patterns, plan for the timely provision of public facilities and to ensure future businesses and neighborhoods are well integrated into Plant City. The two key elements of this plan were the development of a preferred land use scenario and transportation network that promotes sustainable development and reduces future traffic impacts to Interstate-4. As lands voluntarily annex into Plant City, most are seen as transitioning to a more suburban development pattern with designations of either Residential-4 and Residential-6. An industrial park is planned for the northeast corner of Paul Buchman Highway and Interstate-4, while a large commercial node is envisioned at Sam Allen Road and Paul Buchman Highway. Throughout the study area, identified environmental sensitive lands are shown as Natural Preservation. As the exact alignment of North Alexander Street was not known at the time of the development of the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan*, the preferred land use scenario needs to be reevaluated by Plant City. For more detailed information please refer to the table below and Figure 4.

**Table 3: Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan – Preferred Land Use Scenario Acreage – Study Area**

<b>Northeast-Existing Preferred Land Use Scenario</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Commercial	72.39	7%
Industrial	78.32	7%
Residential-4	381.15	37%
Residential-6	124.91	12%
Residential-12	95.73	9%
Recreation/Open Space	39.51	4%
Natural Preservation	223.53	22%
Public/Semi-Public	16.15	2%
<b>Total (Note: Does not include 28.41 acres of the Study Area - For corresponding map see Figure 4)</b>	<b>1031.69</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

## Environmental Resources and Constraints

### Significant Wildlife Habitat

Significant Wildlife Habitat is defined by the Hillsborough County Land Development Code as “Contiguous stands of natural plant communities, which have the potential to support healthy and diverse populations of wildlife and which have been identified in the Florida Game and Freshwater Commission Natural Systems and Land Use Cover Inventory for Hillsborough County.”

State and local regulations provide for the on-site protection and preservation of Significant Wildlife Habitats. There are none of these sites inside the study area, however, there is a large area designated Significant Wildlife Habitat approximately one mile east of the study area for the North Alexander Street Corridor.

### Wetlands

In past decades, a significant number of wetlands were drained and filled, thus reducing or eliminating their natural functions of providing water quality treatment and diverse fish and wildlife habitat. Since the late 1980s, policies have been put in place to protect wetlands and their related functions, which is implemented by several agencies including the Environmental Protection Agency of Hillsborough County. In the *Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan*, the following are just a couple examples of such policies:

**ENV Policy 1.3.1:** *Through the land use planning and development review processes, and in cooperation with state and local agencies [SWFWMD, EPC, etc.] continue to conserve and protect wetlands and floodplains from detrimental physical and hydrological alteration.*

**ENV Policy 1.3.3:** *Through the land planning and development review processes and in cooperation with state and local agencies [SWFWMD, EPC, etc.] continue to prohibit unmitigated encroachment into wetlands and the 100-year floodplain of riverine systems.*

**ENV Policy 1.3.8:** *A minimum buffer of 15 feet and an average of 25 feet shall be required for all wetlands, consistent with State of Florida Environmental Resource Permitting (ERP) Rules.*

**ENV Policy 1.3.9:** *The development review process, part of a comprehensive program for the protection of wetlands, shall make every effort to maintain natural undisturbed wetlands by way of a sequential review process that, in cooperation with the EPC, first evaluates means of avoiding wetland impacts in regard to a particular project; if necessary, secondly, evaluates and requires measures to minimize wetland impacts; and if necessary, thirdly, evaluates and requires the mitigation of wetland impacts.*

The study area is mostly uplands, but also contains some wetland designated areas both within Plant City and Hillsborough County (see Figure 3). Most of the wetlands reside in the southern portion of the study area and are associated with Pemberton Creek. This is particularly true on the west side of North Alexander Street between Sam Allen Road and Interstate-4. The future development of lands with significant wetlands present will be limited per the policy direction contained in the comprehensive plans of both Plant City and Hillsborough County.

### Floodplains

Almost the entire study area is outside the 500-year floodplain with less than a 0.2% annual probability of flooding and therefore is designated as "Zone X". However, the study area does contain areas that are zoned "A" and "X500". "A" zoned areas are subject to 100-year flood, while "X500" zoned areas are subject to flooding between a 100 and 500-year period. Like wetlands, most areas within the 100-year floodplain are in the southern portion of the study area and are associated with Pemberton Creek. As with wetlands, the future development of lands with significant floodplains present will be limited in both Plant City and Hillsborough County. Along with the City Engineer, future development within floodplain areas will be reviewed and permitted by the Southwest Florida Water Management District.

### Transportation Network

As already noted, the study area is served by two major north - south roadways, North Alexander Street (4 Lanes) and Paul Buchman Highway (2 Lanes). East-west roads include Knights Griffin Road (2 Lanes), Sam Allen Road (2 Lanes), Franklin/Monroe Street (2 Lanes) and Interstate-4 (6 Lanes).

### Functional Classification and Jurisdiction Ownership

Functional classification is the process by which roads, streets, and highways are grouped into classes according to the character of service they provide, in our case this includes the transportation network that serves the study area along and around North Alexander Street. There are three main classifications, the first being arterials, which are a group of roads with the highest degree of through traffic movement and provides the largest proportion of total miles traveled, for example North Alexander Street. The second are collectors, which provide a link between through traffic movement and private property access, such as Sam Allen Road. Finally, the local street system, these roads have direct property access as their primary purpose. Although providing the largest proportion of road miles, this system contributes little to total roadway travel due to short trip lengths and low volumes.

In the study area, North Alexander Street and Paul Buchman Highway are state facilities that are both classified as Principle Arterials (see Figure 5). While, Knights Griffin Road is an Arterial and Sam Allen Road is a Collector, both of which are under the jurisdiction of Hillsborough County. Franklin Street/Monroe Street is a collector street owned by Plant City. At the southern boundary, Interstate-4 is a limited access highway operated by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). The remaining roads are local streets either under the jurisdiction of Plant City or Hillsborough County.

### Roadway Level of Service

Levels of Service (LOS) is a qualitative measure describing the operational conditions of a roadway, ranging from the best "A" to the worst "F". These measures indicate the quality of traffic flow measured by a scale of driver satisfaction, which are:

- Level of Service A: Represents free flow. Individual users are virtually unaffected by the presence of others in the traffic stream. Freedom to select desired speeds and to maneuver within the traffic stream is extremely high. The general level of comfort and convenience provided to drivers is excellent.
- Level of Service B: Allows speeds at or near free-flow speeds, but the presence of other users in the traffic stream begins to be noticeable. Freedom to select desired speeds is relatively unaffected, but there is a slight decline in the freedom to maneuver within the traffic stream relative to LOS A.
- Level of Service C: Speeds at or near free-flow speeds, but the freedom to maneuver is noticeably restricted (lane changes require careful attention on the part of drivers). The general level of comfort and convenience declines significantly at this level. Disruptions in the traffic stream, such as an incident (for example, vehicular accident or disablement), can result in significant queue formation and vehicular delay. In contrast, the effect of incidents at LOS A or LOS B are minimal and cause only minor delay in the immediate vicinity of the event.
- Level of Service D: Conditions where speeds begin to decline slightly with increasing flow. The freedom to maneuver becomes more restricted and drivers experience reductions in physical and psychological comfort. Incidents can generate lengthy queues because the higher density associated with this LOS provides little space to absorb disruption in the traffic flow.
- Level of Service E: Represents operating conditions at or near the roadway's capacity. Even minor disruptions to the traffic stream, such as vehicles entering from a ramp or two vehicles changing lanes, can cause delays as other vehicles give way to allow such maneuvers. In general, maneuverability is extremely limited, and

drivers experience considerable physical and psychological discomfort.

- Level of Service F: Describes a breakdown in vehicular flow. Queues form quickly behind points in the roadway where the arrival flow rate temporarily exceeds the departure rate, as determined by the roadway's capacity. Vehicles typically operate at low speeds in these conditions and are often required to come to a complete stop, usually in a cyclic fashion. The cyclic formation and dissipation of queues is a key characterization of LOS F.

In the latest LOS Report, Knights Griffin Road and Sam Allen Road functions at a level of service "B". While, North Alexander Street, Paul Buchman Highway and Franklin Street/Monroe Street all operate at a level of service "C". This segment of Interstate-4 is listed as level of service "D".

### North Plant City Area Master Plan – Recommended Roadway Improvements

Like the future land use scenario, a transportation scenario or preferred build network was developed for the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan*, in 2007. This future transportation network was designed to support the implementation of the preferred land use scenario for the twenty-two square mile area northeast of Plant City. The study area of this report only covers a relatively small area on the western edge of the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan*. The following are the recommended roadway improvements from this study (see Figure 7) that reside near and around North Alexander Street, they include:

- Extend Joe McIntosh Road from Paul Buchman Highway to North Alexander Street (The need for this facility was reevaluated by the staff of Plant City – See Recommendations);



- Widen Knights Griffin Road from 2 to 4 lanes from North Alexander Street to Polk County, and;
- Widen Sam Allen Road from 2 to 4 lanes from North Alexander Street to Park Road.

Based on the analysis contained in this report, except for some potential intersection improvements, additional new or expanded roadways are not expected to be needed prior to the horizon year of 2040.

### 2040 Needs and Cost Affordable Transportation Plan

Of the roadway projects noted above, only two are listed in the Metropolitan Planning Organization’s 2040 Cost Affordable Transportation Plan. Expanding Sam Allen Road from Paul Buchman Highway to Park Road (2L to 4LD) is funded with work expected to begin in 2018/9. While not currently funded, expanding Sam Allen Road from Alexander Street to Paul Buchman Highway (2L to 4LD) is listed as a cost affordable project and is one of the top transportation priorities of Plant City. With the completion of these two projects the loop transportation system that will serve central Plant City would be complete, as noted on the Vision Map of the *Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan*. It should also be noted that within the study area, the widening of Interstate-4 from 6 to 10 lanes (including express toll lanes) is in the Metropolitan Planning Organization’s 2040 Transportation Needs Plan.

### Other Public Facilities

#### Water, Wastewater and Solid Waste

As noted earlier, most of the study area is not within Plant City but resides in unincorporated Hillsborough County. As such, only the southern portion of the study area that is within the municipality, is currently provided water and wastewater utilities by Plant City. This part of the study area is generally north of Interstate-4 and south of

Sam Allen Road. North of Sam Allen Road is not within an urban service boundary and no public utilities are provided, thus these areas are served by private wells and septic tanks in unincorporated Hillsborough County.

In the near future, when a new well (#10) is constructed, it will bring Plant City’s total water pumping capacity up to 9.85 million gallons daily (MGD). This will increase the existing available water pumping capacity up to 3.65 MGD. Plant City’s permitted wastewater capacity is 10.0 MGD, with an available capacity of 3.17 MGD. Plant City’s Utilities Department is developing and formulating plans to serve the expansion area envisioned in the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan*. As a rural area, there are no plans to provide water and wastewater services by Hillsborough County.

Both Plant City and Hillsborough County operate comprehensive solid waste collection programs, which are designed to provide residents and businesses with regular and special solid waste pick-up service in the study area for North Alexander Street. In the case of Plant City, some of the collected solid waste is currently transported to a transfer facility that abuts the study area (402 North Frontage Road) and is then transported for final disposal outside of Hillsborough County. Outside of the municipal limits solid waste is either incinerated or disposed in a landfill by Hillsborough County.

### Parks

The only and most significant park within the study area is McIntosh Park, located southeast of the intersection of Knights Griffin Road and North Alexander Street. McIntosh Park is a 363-acre passive park that is owned and operated by Plant City. Along with stormwater treatment and retention, the park is primarily used for off-road bicycling, with access and parking on Knights Griffin Road, east of North Alexander Street. Plant City has a large inventory of active parks

to serve its residents, but today, apart from McIntosh Park, all lie south of Interstate-4. As Plant City grows into this corridor, there will be a need to either create new parks and/or further develop McIntosh Park.

### Schools

Good schools with capacity to take on additional students is critical to the future residential growth prospects along North Alexander Street. Today, the study area is served by Knights and Cork Elementary Schools, Marshall and Tomlin Middle Schools and Plant City High School. Knights and Cork Elementary Schools are operating at 77% and 74% of capacity, Marshall and Tomlin Middle Schools at 70% and 88%, while Plant City High School is near capacity at 98%. In 2018, all these school's performance achievement grade was either a "B" or "C". If residential growth is programed within the study area, additional school capacity will need to be coordinated and planned for with the Hillsborough County School District.



## Section 2: Adopted Studies and Policy Direction

### Plant City Vision and Strategic Guide

The analysis, conclusions and recommendations contained within this study considered the "strategic guide" or "vision" developed and adopted by the Plant City Commission in 2004 and later updated in 2008, which states:

*"Plant City is a diverse and vibrant "hometown" community. People work together to solve problems and ensure a better future for their children. Local businesses grow and prosper through innovation and hard work. Local government makes prudent investments in infrastructure and services. The safety and wellbeing of our citizens is a priority."*

Goals to implement this "strategic guide" or "vision" cover such topics as:

- *Unique Sense of Place*
- *Thriving Local Economy*
- *Superior Education/Skills*
- *Quality Services and Infrastructure*
- *Citizen Involvement*

These themes first identified in 2004, were later incorporated, expanded upon and implemented through numerous policy directives, including the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan* and *Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan*.

### Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan

Plant City has grown significantly over the last decade, transitioning from a "small" town to a "mid-sized" city in eastern Hillsborough County. Based on recent annexations and discussions with other large property owners, it is anticipated that most of the voluntary annexations over the

next twenty to thirty years, will be to the northeast of Plant City. Due to the anticipated expansion in this area, the municipality proactively embarked on the development of a “*vision plan*” for this area, known as the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan*. This study was undertaken to guide future growth patterns, plan for the timely provision of public facilities and to ensure future businesses and neighborhoods are well integrated into the cultural and economic fabric of Plant City. Two of the key elements of the plan was to develop a proposed future land use scenario and transportation network that promotes sustainable development and reduces future traffic impacts to Interstate-4.

Completed in 2008, the study formulated four major guiding principles, which are:

- *Preserve Home Town Character*
- *Promote Economic Diversity*
- *Provide Adequate Infrastructure*
- *Create a Sustainable Natural and Built Environment*

These principles are still valid today and followed during the development of the recommendations for the *North Alexander Street Corridor – Land Use & Market Study*. As the extension of this roadway was anticipated in 2008, it was considered during the development of the preferred transportation network of the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan*. Therefore, this analysis remains valid and no additional roadway improvements are deemed necessary, above what has already been identified in the *Imagine 2040: Long Range Transportation Plan*. However, since the exact alignment wasn’t known at the time, staff recommends some revisions to the preferred land use scenario, particularly in relation to recognizing new or larger activity centers at the intersections of Sam Allen Road, Paul Buchman Highway and Knights Griffin Road with North Alexander Street. In addition, staff recommends a denser residential land use pattern for

a large segment of the study area from what it is today (Residential-4) to Residential-6. More detail on the proposed changes to the preferred land use scenario of the area is reflected under the Conclusions, Recommendations and Next Steps section of this report and in Figure 9.

### Strip Commercial and Mixed-Use Development in Hillsborough County Study

The *North Alexander Street Corridor - Land Use & Market Study* was partly guided by and furthers the policy direction and other recommendations found within the Planning Commission’s 2014 *Strip Commercial and Mixed-Use Development Study*, authored by Dover Khol. This study defined areas with the greatest potential to develop or redevelop with a mix of uses at varying scales of intensity and density to create activity centers, whilst discouraging strip commercial development in Hillsborough County.

Much of the study area is currently undeveloped and mixed land uses are not specifically identified within the Preferred Land Use Scenario. However, though the underlying principles upon which this scenario was developed, the aforementioned development pattern, once fully developed, will be realized along North Alexander Street. As a result, identified specific intersections at varying intensities and densities will complement the envisioned surrounding development pattern within the study area of North Alexander Street. The study focuses most of the potential commercial development at intersections, partly in response to the market study the area underwent, the current adopted future land uses, the adopted land development code of Plant City and public input into the planning process received during the open house on May 23, 2018.

## Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan

The *Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan* was last updated in February 2016. This update, in part, was based on the findings of the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan* and the “vision” developed by the City Commission and residents of Plant City. This plan envisions Plant City transitioning from a “small town” to a “mid-sized city” by 2040. By the planning horizon year, the municipality is expected to grow to more than 70,000 citizens, with most of these new residents expected to live in the northeast quadrant of Plant City.

The *Plant City Vision Map*, which is part of the *Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan* envisions the heart of the municipality being connected by a looped transportation system, which includes Alexander Street. This *Vision Map* does not give much direction as to the expected future growth patterns of the study area, as for the most part it lies outside of the municipal boundaries of Plant City. Due to the parcellation of the land and environmental constraints the interchange of Alexander Street and Interstate-4 was not seen as a major community activity center, unlike the interchanges at Thonotosassa Road and Park Road.

As noted above, less than one-third of the study area is within the municipality and therefore most of these lands are not reflected on Plant City’s adopted Future Land Use Map. For those lands that are within the City, an almost thirty-acre commercially designated vacant parcel abuts Alexander Street and Interstate-4, with most of the remaining lands to the north (between Alexander Street and Paul Buchman Highway) part of established single-family neighborhoods (Blain Acres, Carolyn Gardens, Highland Terrace and Oakland Heights) with future land use designations of either Residential-4 or Residential-12. Lands within the study area to the east of Paul Buchman Highway are Industrial, until one travels north and approaches Sam Allen Road where they transition to either

Residential-12 or Commercial. A large municipal cemetery (Memorial Park) exists on the west side of Paul Buchman Highway and Interstate-4 that has been designed Public/Semi-Public. For more detail, please reference the Plant City adopted Future Land Use Map (see Figure 3).

Also, those lands adjacent to interstate are within the I-4 Tech Corridor Overlay. These lands have been granted some additional entitlements to increase the supply of land available for light industrial, research, and office development with the aim of increasing the total number of jobs in the following target industries of Plant City:

- Professional, Scientific and Technical Services;
- Medical, Bioscience and Research Facilities;
- Manufacturing and Distribution Facilities;
- Finance and Insurance Services;
- Management Services, and;
- Administrative and Support Services.

The revised land use scenario and other recommendations contained in this report are supported and further numerous policies with the *Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan*. This policy direction addresses such issues as:

- Neighborhood Conservation
- Community Development
- Enhance “Hometown Charm”
- Future Growth – Annexations
- Commercial Development
- Natural Environment
- Growth Management

- Provision of Public Facilities
- Agriculture - Compatibility
- Intergovernmental Coordination, and;
- Economic Growth

This planning effort is supported by Land Use Policy 2.6.1, which states:

*...As resources allow, the City, with the assistance of the Planning Commission, will conduct future Corridor and Select Area Studies, along with Vision, Sector and/or Neighborhood Plans that primarily focus on enhancing these areas to preserve the overall “hometown charm” of Plant City...*

### Future of Hillsborough - Comprehensive Plan for unincorporated Hillsborough County

The *Future of Hillsborough - Comprehensive Plan for unincorporated Hillsborough County* is the official document adopted by the Board of County Commissioners setting forth its’ goals, objectives, and policies regarding long-term development within unincorporated Hillsborough County. The last major update of this document was in 2008. One of the major concepts of this plan is furthering the concept of an Urban Service Area, which designates the locations where an urban development pattern is desired to aid in the planning of roadways, utilities and other public services. The Urban Service Area serves to promote an efficient land use pattern and to deter sprawl.

The study area for North Alexander Street is well beyond the limits of Hillsborough County’s Urban Service Area. Therefore, as the study area is outside of this boundary, most of the future land use designations provide for very low residential densities, such as Residential-1 or Residential-2. Two notable exceptions that were

developed prior to the establishment of the Urban Service Area, is a 37± acre area designated as Light Industrial near the apex of Paul Buchman Highway/North Alexander Street and Country Meadows Golf Club (or The Lakes at Countrywood), which is a senior living neighborhood along Sam Allen Road, east of Paul Buchman Highway. As parcels in the study area voluntarily annex into the municipality, in general it is expected their development entitlements will be increased with the provision of public utilities, consistent with the *Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan*.

## Section 3: Market Report – Summary (see Appendix)

### Demographic and Economic Profile

Staff engaged a consultant (WTL+a) to evaluate those indices that drive fundamental market demand for residential, office, industrial, retail and lodging to project development potential in the study area for North Alexander Street. This analysis focuses on population and household growth, employment trends and forecasts, household incomes and annual retail spending power, along with the current business mix in both Plant City and Hillsborough County. This profile is based on data from various secondary public and private sources, including: U.S. Census Bureau; University of Florida Bureau of Business & Economic Research; Environmental Systems Research Institute (ERSI) Business Analyst; Dun & Bradstreet Incorporated, and the City of Plant City. Section 3 is a summary of material found within the “Land Use Market Analysis” prepared by WTL+a and available by request or by visiting <https://tinyurl.com/alexanderstreetext>.

**Table 4: Population Growth and Projected Growth (1999 to 2040)**

Period	Time	Beginning	End	Change	Compound Annual Growth Rate
1990-2016	26 Years	22,859	37,840	14,981	1.96%
2016-2040	24 Years	37,840	71,523	33,683	2.69%

Period	Time	Beginning	End	Change	Compound Annual Growth Rate
1990-2000	10 Years	22,859	30,214	7,355	2.83%
2000-2010	10 Years	30,214	34,763	4,549	1.41%
2010-2016	6 Years	34,763	37,840	3,077	1.42%

**Trends and Forecasts**

In 1990, Plant City’s population stood at 22,859. In 2016 its’ population was estimated at approximately 37,840, resulting in a population increase of 14,981 new residents over the past 26 years. This yields a compound average annual growth rate over this period of 1.96%. It is notable that average annual growth rates declined in the 2000s relative to the higher growth rates in the 1990s, from 2.8% per year to 1.4% per year since 2000 (see Table 4). For Plant City to grow to 71,523 residents by 2040 (as noted in the population forecasts in the *Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan*) it will

necessitate a sustained annual growth rate of 2.69% per year through 2040. While not as a high a rate of growth as the 1990s, this forecast is higher than its historic growth rate of 1.96%. Therefore, this projection for Plant City should be reevaluated and validated during the Planning Commission’s upcoming effort to update population and employment numbers to 2045.

**North Alexander Street Trade Area**

To evaluate retail development potentials in the study area for North Alexander Street, the consultant examined demographic characteristics for a smaller geography surrounding the study area - known as a “Trade Area” (see Figure 8). This analysis considered existing population as well as future residents of planned or proposed residential projects such as Varrea and North Park Isles. The trade area comprises approximately 9.5 square miles, bounded roughly by Knights Griffin Road on the north, Interstate-4 on the south, Wilder Road on the east and to the west an undeveloped area parallel to North Alexander Street. The trade area is relatively undeveloped with a population of only 5,700± residents in 2017.

Since long-term forecasts at this finite level of geography are not available, Environmental Systems Research Institute’s (ESRI’s) five-year forecasts suggest that the trade area will add 281± new residents by 2022. Forecasts further suggest that population growth will parallel the rest of Plant City, with higher growth in three age cohorts: 35-44, 65-74 and 75+. This is likely to translate into opportunities for specific types of housing, such as age restricted and independent living/continuing care, as well as housing for move-up home buyers in Plant City. Today, the trade area has a slightly lower household income level than Plant City as a whole, with an average of approximately \$61,700. These household incomes are forecast to increase by 3.5% per year, which is well above the rate of growth in incomes across Plant City, to almost \$73,200 by 2022.

## Household Retail Spending

Household retail spending is the primary driver of demand for retail space such as shopping centers, food and beverage establishments, specialty or destination shops and “big box” stores such as Wal-Mart or Target. In 2016, the average household income in the trade area was \$61,700. These households are less affluent than their counterparts elsewhere in Hillsborough County. This suggests less disposable income, however forecast income growth is expected to be above the rate of inflation, suggesting real growth in spending power by 2022.

Households spend an average of \$15,048 per year on consumer retail goods, including clothing, entertainment/recreation, electronics, groceries, food and beverage, household furnishings and health care in Plant City. By comparison, the trade area households spend slightly more - \$15,162. Retail spending among households in the trade area totals just under \$36 million per year, as compared to over \$205 million for all of Plant City.

## Employment Trends

Job growth is a key barometer of demand for “workplace” uses such as multi-tenant office space, industrial parks, retail centers and the like. The consultant examined trends and forecasts in employment growth, utilizing data from the Tampa/St. Petersburg/Clearwater Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The MSA added a remarkable 241,700 new jobs in the 10-year period between 1995 and 2005. This growth, which translates into almost 25,000 new jobs annually, was focused largely in specific sectors, including: Professional/Business Services, Construction and Financial Activities. Growth in Professional/Business Services has fueled demand for office space in key locations across the MSA. Other sectors with solid job growth during this period also included: Retail Trade; Leisure and Hospitality; and Government.

By contrast, the economic downturn of 2007-2009 resulted in the loss of 122,600 jobs throughout the MSA. Over the past 10 years (and over multiple economic cycles), job losses have been greatest in Construction, Manufacturing and Information. In only four years since 2011, the economy has significantly recovered from the 2007-2009 recession, with the creation of 219,000 new jobs in Tampa Bay.

Hillsborough County contained approximately 619,500 full-time jobs in 45,700+ registered businesses in 2016. That is, there is almost one-half a job for every one of the 1,382,700 residents in Hillsborough County with concentrations of large employment centers such as Westshore, Brandon and Downtown Tampa. Hillsborough County’s 619,500 jobs comprise 46% of the 1.32 million jobs in the MSA.

Estimates indicate there are more than 21,300 jobs in over 1,500 registered businesses in Plant City. The City accounts for approximately 3.4% of the full-time jobs in Hillsborough County. The three largest sectors generating demand for workplace real estate in Plant City include: Retail Trade (7,000+ jobs), Other Services (2,200+ jobs) and Manufacturing (2,200+ jobs). Together, these three sectors account for 11,400 jobs, or fully 54% of the jobs in Plant City. Industries such as automotive repair and maintenance are included in “Other Services”. The data also suggest that the City’s current jobs-to-population ratio is 0.54 (i.e., there is one-half a job for every resident living in Plant City). This ratio is higher than Hillsborough County (0.45). U.S. Census Bureau data indicates Plant City’s employment base has recovered from the significant impacts of the recession of 2007-2009. The Census Bureau estimates greater employee in-flow (16,189 per day) than outflow (13,081 per day), with the highest employment densities located near Plant City Airport, around South Florida Baptist Hospital, and in the commercial cluster along James L. Redman Parkway/East Alexander Street.

**Table 5: 10 Year Employment Trend (2006-2015)**

<b>Industry Sector</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>Amount Change</b>
Agriculture & Mining	2,353	1,513	-840
Construction	1,062	1,166	104
Manufacturing	4,729	2,348	-2,381
Transportation & Warehouse	1,135	1,091	-44
Utilities	153	113	-40
Trade*	3,610	4,702	1,092
Information	138	451	313
Finance & Insurance	345	454	109
Real Estate/Rental & Leasing	185	179	-6
Services**	4,598	6,454	1,856
Public Administration/Gov't	411	329	-82
<b>Total:</b>	<b>18,719</b>	<b>18,800</b>	<b>81</b>

\* Includes: Wholesale & Retail

\*\* Includes: Professional Business Services, Management of Companies, Administration/Waste Management, Education Services, Health Care & Social Assistance, Arts/Entertainment/Recreation, Accommodation & Food Services, Other Services

### Real Estate Market Conditions

The consultant evaluated real estate market conditions in Plant City and in other selected, competitive locations in Hillsborough County. This was done to understand how recent market trends, current economic conditions, and future growth affect opportunities for new development within the study area for North Alexander Street. This analysis provides overall market potentials that will inform and guide long-term land use growth scenarios near North Alexander Street. This section of the report analyzes historic and current building

inventory, occupancy and vacancy levels, annual absorption (leasing) activity, historic development trends, and other appropriate market indices for housing, workplace (office and industrial), supporting commercial (retail) and lodging/hospitality uses.

### Housing

Plant City contains a diverse array of residential neighborhoods, such as Walden Lake, Country Hills, the historic residential districts and Downtown. In the trade area surrounding North Alexander Street, residential neighborhoods include Country Meadows Golf Club (or The Lakes at Countrywood). Based on data from ESRI Business Analyst and the American Community Survey (ACS), Plant City contains almost 15,000 housing units, which has increased by over 1,200 units since 2010. Fully 51% of the housing stock is owner-occupied, another 40% of the inventory is rental and approximately 9% was “unoccupied” in 2017.

The 2017 median unit value of all housing units in Plant City is almost \$162,600. Over the next five years, median housing values are forecast to increase at a strong, compound annual rate of 4.6% per year - to \$203,300. In Plant City, the number of unoccupied units declined from 10.9% in 2010 to 8.9% in 2017. Combined with other units, such as those that are sold but not yet occupied, Plant City’s true vacancy rate in 2010 was lower - 7.7%. The 2015 American Community Survey (ACS) suggests that the number of truly vacant units declined further, from 1,057 in 2010 to 981 in 2015, revealing a vacancy rate of just 6.1%. The American Community Survey (ACS) reveals that single-family detached homes (69%) dominate the housing stock of Plant City.

### Housing Starts

To document how population and household growth affects market potentials for new housing near North Alexander Street, the



consultant reviewed information on annual housing starts and residential building permits. This analysis also compares housing starts to household growth to better understand whether the pace of one metric is consistent with (or exceeds) the other. Key findings indicate since 2007, Plant City housing starts totaled 1,297 units over the past 10 years or roughly 130 units per year. As noted earlier, single-family detached homes were predominant (1,036, or 80%), with only 261 multi-family units being constructed during this period. Within the study area, there were 74 residential units constructed inside Plant City, while another 57 units were built in unincorporated Hillsborough County, since 2007. In Plant City, the ratio of household growth to housing starts is close to equilibrium with new household creation totaling 175 per year against annual housing starts of 158 per year from 2001 to 2016.

### Multi-Family Rental

Market trends among selected multi-family rental apartment properties located near the North Alexander Street were examined according to properties reporting to REIS, Inc. There are seven market-rate complexes containing 1,132 rental units in the surrounding environs of Plant City. Among those that report, vacancy rates have declined from 3.6% in 2012 to 1.9% in 2017. The apartment industry considers “stabilization” (i.e., full market strength) to be a vacancy rate of less than 5%. The multifamily rental market is stabilized and operating at full occupancy in Plant City. The highest asking rents are for one-bedroom units at \$1.51 per square foot per month at Walden Lakewood Apartments. Characteristic of a lower-cost suburban markets, overall rents for these properties averaged \$1.01 per square foot per month (or \$844 per month). Plant City’s multi-family rental market is strong with vacancies averaging 2.4% over past 5 years.

### Hotel/Lodging

Market conditions for hotel and lodging uses in the study area and environs was evaluated based on performance data provided by STR Global. Performance metrics from this analysis were used to determine the potential for developing an additional hotel somewhere along the Interstate-4 corridor near North Alexander Street. Because the interchanges at North Alexander Street and Paul Buchman Highway offer both accessibility and strong visibility, these two locations should be considered the most likely opportunities to accommodate new hotels in this part of Plant City.

In larger population centers and communities with established commercial office concentrations, hotels can serve as an important supporting amenity to corporate and business activity generators, for tourism destinations and for nearby residential clusters. Hotel quality levels are generally determined by the depth and sustainability of support from available market segments. In areas with lower spending potentials or more price-sensitive consumers, market potentials may be best met by a limited-service property as opposed to higher-priced hotel categories or destination resorts oriented toward beaches, golf courses, etc. In the consultant’s estimation, limited-service hotels are the most likely category needed to serve Plant City. There are 481 hotel rooms in Plant City, accounting for only 2.2% of the total inventory in Hillsborough County. To understand the competitive nature of the business sector, Lakeland has more than twice as many hotel rooms (10 properties and 920 rooms) as does Plant City.

Hotel occupancies are a principal source of information on business and leisure visitor markets, and measures of demand for hotel development follow industry patterns that identify markets as ready to add more room capacity. The general thresholds used in the capital markets to test growth capacity for new hotel rooms include: Average

Daily Rates (or ADRs) and Average Annual Occupancy Levels. Notably, the hotel industry considers average annual occupancy between 65% and 72% as a break-even threshold necessary to support additional capacity and warrant development of new hotel rooms.

Over the past six years, average annual occupancies in the area have increased from approximately 49% in 2011 to 64.5% in 2016. While this rate of growth is significant, the primary metric is sustained average annual occupancy, which averaged 57.8%. This is well-below the threshold of annual occupancies required to warrant capital market-based financing of new hotel construction and justify the addition of new hotel rooms in the Interstate-4 corridor in Plant City and Lakeland.

#### Workplace: Office

The market analysis includes an evaluation of “workplace” uses, including: office and industrial real estate sectors in both Plant City and Hillsborough County. This information will help guide long-term land use and zoning policies to ensure that future private reinvestment in each of these key sectors is successful within the study area of North Alexander Street.

Hillsborough County contains almost 31.6 million square feet of office space across the six suburban submarkets and the Central Business District (Downtown Tampa). There was more than 3.98 million square feet of vacant office space, which reflects a current vacancy rate of 12.6% in Hillsborough County. Multiple factors have combined to strengthen overall leasing activity, including the recovery from the recession of 2007-2009. In fact, net absorption for office space totaled more than 1.8 million square feet over the past three years in Hillsborough County. If this annual pace can be sustained, it would require approximately six years to reduce the vacant office space to stabilized levels in the range of 7%. The strengthening office market

is also reflected in increasing rents, with average rates increases of 9% between 2015 and 2017.

Plant City is considered a tertiary office location in the “East Tampa” submarket of Hillsborough County. There are 172 office buildings of varying sizes scattered across the municipality in a combination of rehabbed historic buildings in Downtown as well as freestanding buildings along the commercial corridors of Plant City. With a reported total inventory of 932,000 square feet, the average office building is only 5,420 square feet in Plant City. The commercial real estate industry defines such small buildings as “garden” office space and are typically occupied by small professional service firms. Plant City’s office inventory comprises 14% of the 6.88 million square feet in the submarket of East Tampa. Vacancy rates have mirrored other office locations elsewhere in Hillsborough County. Plant City’s office market has averaged a modest 17,200 square feet of annual net absorption since 2013. New construction over the past 10 years has delivered only 58,200 square feet of office space in Plant City.

#### Workplace: Industrial

Industrial uses can take many forms from heavy industrial to manufacturing to freight and logistics uses. For purposes of this market study, industrial uses include manufacturing, office-service/flex, warehousing, and distribution functions. Hillsborough County contains 79.1 million square feet of industrial space distributed across seven submarkets. Of this almost 4.1 million square feet are vacant, which reflects a vacancy rate of only 5.2%. These vacancy rates have declined from 6.1% in 2015. By 2017, the industrial market has achieved stabilized levels of occupancy/performance in Hillsborough County.

A total of 121 industrial buildings, including 24 manufacturing facilities, 88 warehouses and nine distribution buildings operate in

multiple locations throughout Plant City. Almost 7.1 million square feet of industrial space, with the largest share being comprised of warehouses, is located in industrial parks along Park and County Line Roads, and around Plant City Airport. With a negative net absorption of over 817,300 square feet, the jurisdiction's industrial inventory was significantly impacted by the recession of 2007-2009. This resulted in a sizable increase in vacancies, from 8% in 2008 to over 15% in 2009. Warehouses and manufacturing facilities were hit hardest during this period, with vacancies peaking at almost 17% and 24%, respectively. Since 2014, however, this industrial market has strengthened, with almost 480,000 square feet of positive net absorption within Plant City. This has reduced overall vacancies from 7.5% to 3.3%. Notably, distribution and manufacturing facilities are effectively full, with vacancy rates of 0% and 1.5%, respectively. Warehousing is the only sector of the industrial market with any significant vacancy rate and that is only 5%, indicating stabilization. Currently in 2018, there are several recently-completed, under construction or planned projects for either owner-users or speculative/multi-tenant buildings totaling more than 1.5 million square feet within the planned industrial areas of Plant City.

#### Workplace: Retail

Today there are approximately 1.45 million square feet of general retail space in 61 centers or properties across Plant City. This includes a range of retail types, such as small retailers on freestanding pads along commercial corridors, neighborhood commercial strip centers, and community retail centers, which are typically anchored by grocery stores such as Plant City Crossing anchored by Publix. Over the past 10 years, the data suggest limited activity in the retail inventory of Plant City. The City has experienced limited new construction and net absorption averaging only 4,400 square feet per year and increasing to 13,400 square feet per year since 2013. Vacancy rates, which

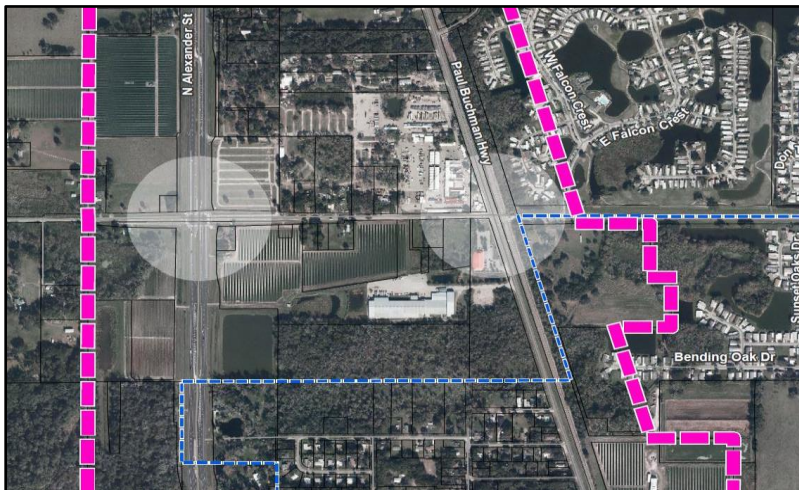
peaked at 9.3% at the end of the 2007-2009 recession, have declined to stabilized levels of 5% in 2017. Most notably, average retail rents have declined from a peak of \$18.73 per square foot to current levels of \$10.39. This is indicative of an aging retail market with limited amounts of new construction totaling only 19,600 square feet of new retail space since 2008.

#### Site Analysis and Suitability

Future population growth is expected in the study area through voluntary annexation, provided with public utilities and other services by Plant City. The consultant noted that future development north of Interstate-4 was described as 'inevitable' during stakeholder interviews in August 2017. This appears logical because as population projections noted elsewhere in this report, forecasts over 70,000 residents by 2040. To accommodate this growth, there is limited zoned/entitled lands inside Plant City limits or in close proximity in unincorporated Hillsborough County. Also, there is a limited roadway network connecting northbound arterials (such as North Alexander Street) to east/west connectors except for major intersections at East Sam Allen and Knights Griffin Road. Roadway capacity will be increased with the widening of Sam Allen Road between Park Road and Paul Buchman Highway in 2018/19. As the local transportation network is improved to "complete the grid or roadway layout" it will foster growth for almost all uses with hotel and office development more likely to locate near Interstate-4.

Other factors which influence development are available utilities and infrastructure, particularly in unincorporated Hillsborough County. Utility infrastructure will be critical for subsequent development along North Alexander Street. The study area includes two interchanges of Interstate-4 at North Alexander Street and Paul Buchman Highway. Average annual daily traffic counts along Interstate-4 generally range from 95,000 vehicles per day to almost 120,000.

By any measure, the level of exposure to passing vehicles translates into significant commercial development potentials. For example, many chain-affiliated retail and restaurateurs consider 25,000 vehicles per day as a minimum requirement when considering store locations. With over four times that amount, prime commercial development opportunities should abound at the interchanges along Interstate-4. However, wetlands and a public cemetery limit these opportunities within the study area for North Alexander Street. Other potential issues include available site depths along the two northbound roadways, Paul Buchman Highway and North Alexander Street. Also, land use potentials on the east side of North Alexander Street are likely to be shaped by its relationship with the convergence of Paul Buchman Highway.



Potential Activity Nodes along Sam Allen Road

### Impact of Logistics and Distribution

As noted above, average daily traffic counts are one of the critical determining factors for potential commercial development. Potentials for new development are also influenced by the study

area’s competitive position in both Plant City and other locations in the region, such as the adjacent (and thriving) market for industrial space along Park and County Line Roads. The study area combines multiple factors that generate growth in logistics, such as:

- Central geographic location and proximity to Tampa and Orlando;
- Excellent regional access provided by major interstate highways (i.e., I-4 and I-75);
- Proximity to agricultural production areas requiring just-in-time shipments;
- Relatively low land values in and around Plant City;
- An available large, skilled workforce, and;
- Local government policies that are both proactive and pro-business.

These conditions are critical to sustaining the regional economy, particularly due to the decline of the phosphate industry and the challenges to citrus production from insects and diseases in this part of central Florida. Moreover, links to rail corridors not only continues the City’s legacy as a railroad community, but also ties it into a regional and super-regional rail network that serves the eastern portions of the United States. CSX Transportation has determined that it is more efficient to consolidate transfer terminals than continue to operate separate rail spurs connected to industrial and distribution buildings such as those being constructed in Polk and Hillsborough Counties. This suggests that truck-based transfers from production and/or receiving/distribution centers will take an increasing role in the movement of goods. Capitalizing on this market opportunity, one stakeholder observed that Lakeland “is several years ahead of Plant City”. In terms of spillover effects, some of this regional economic activity may translate into development potentials along North Alexander Street and Paul Buchman Highway.

Plant City (and by definition - North Alexander Street) is proximate to the Port of Tampa, which is tied into an initiative to upgrade port facilities to address the development of much larger cargo ships that can pass through the expanded Panama Canal. Lower rents/land costs and easy highway access into Port of Tampa are two key advantages for Plant City. Smaller parcel sizes will require careful coordination to assure that logistics tenants/users requiring smaller floor-plates or buildings are made aware that such attributes could be provided in the study area, with direct access to Interstate-4. While Atlanta has emerged as the major distribution hub, Florida is positioned to become its own market center and indications are that neighboring Lakeland and Plant City may be positioned to be major distribution centers, providing these services at a lower cost than those originating in Atlanta. As such, the study area is well-positioned to become an area for logistics facilities if sites of twenty acres or more are available or can be assembled near North Alexander Street. While Plant City lost two major distribution centers during the last recession, Albertson's (replaced by Gordon Foods) and Smithfield Industries, since that time the warehousing/distribution/logistics industry has proven to be strong and growing in Plant City.

Due to increased occupancies and recent new development, there are fewer available buildings and vacant parcels along County Line Road, and growth is continuing in both Plant City and in neighboring Lakeland. The immediate proximity to Interstate-4 at Alexander Street and Paul Buchman Highway may not work easily for highway-oriented consumer businesses (such as retail, restaurants and hotels), but proximity to sites within a few miles that have direct access to Interstate-4, adds value to parcels and blocks of land, particularly for logistics functions such as those now expanding along County Line Road.

## Intersections and Development

The *Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan* includes an intensity bonus (1.0 FAR) for locations within ¼ mile radius surrounding the interchanges of Interstate-4. In the study area, these development nodes are located at Paul Buchman Highway and North Alexander Street. In addition, these intensive-development nodes meet locational criteria requirements, therefore non-residential uses may be considered within one-third of a mile of the interchanges of Paul Buchman Highway and North Alexander Street. Other nodes that would meet the requirements of locational criteria (though to a lesser scale) if annexed into Plant City include: Paul Buchman Highway/Sam Allen Road, North Alexander Street/Sam Allen Road, North Alexander Street/Paul Buchman Highway and North Alexander Street/Knights Griffin Road. The southern portion of the study area (see Figure 3) is also within the I-4 Tech Corridor Overlay, which provides for special land use considerations and potential increased intensities for designated technology-oriented uses that would be expected to provide higher salaried employment opportunities in Plant City.

At first glance, the interchange at North Alexander Street appears to have significant opportunities for future development/redevelopment with its excellent proximity and visibility to Interstate-4. However, upon closer inspection the northwest quadrant (located above the access road) is largely wetlands with limited access to Interstate-4. Similarly, the northeast quadrant has some wetlands as well, bounded on the south by North Franklin Street. Another site of interest as a redevelopment opportunity, in part because there is a vacant building (a former truck stop), is a parcel at the corner of Monroe Street and Paul Buchman Highway. However, for this site, there are two key issues requiring further evaluation and research: 1) Will the site require any environmental remediation? and 2) Will it be cost effective if land assemblage is needed? In conclusion, while there are several locations available for more intensive development in the southern sector of the study area, most are either

seriously constrained (due wetlands/floodplains/cemetery) or have potential cost implications that would make redevelopment difficult.

### Market Potential and Implementation

This market study has been tailored to respond to multiple areas of interest, including three overarching objectives:

- To identify and evaluate market/development potentials across various land uses for parcels likely to be voluntarily annexed;
- To identify activity nodes with the greatest potential for development as commercial/mixed-use centers that will serve as community/neighborhood focal points; and
- To evaluate the best use of acreage and most desired land use pattern to accommodate future population and household growth in Plant City.

### Market-Rate Housing

The demand analysis measures market potentials for new housing citywide as well as in the North Alexander Street study area between 2017 and 2040. The analysis considers the following scenarios:

- Scenario #1—Utilizes an annual (“straight-line”) growth rate of 1.96% per year consistent with historic population growth rates in Plant City between 1990—2016.
- Scenario #2—Utilizes an annual growth rate of 2.69% per year based on the 2040 population growth forecast of 71,523, as identified in the *Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan*.

Both scenarios illustrate the capture rate required to accommodate the 3,423 housing units in the study area based on future land use and densities if the area is annexed by Plant City. The analysis also illustrates the required capture necessary to accommodate the 2,407 housing units at an assumed overall density of 4.0 DU/GA. In each scenario, proposed residential projects include: Varrea at 2,640 units,

North Park Isles at 1,350 units, recently annexed lands near Walden Lake projected at 700 units and 310 units expected in Midtown - Phase 1.

As noted in the demographic profile, the population of Plant City increased by 14,981 new residents over the past 26 years. If the pace of growth continues at this historic rate of 1.96% per year, it would yield an additional 21,260 new residents and almost 7,500 new households assuming an average household size of 2.84. This would translate into an annual demand of 325 units per year, by comparison, actual annual housing starts between 2001 and 2016 totaled 158. As a result, Scenario #1 conservatively assumes that these four projects are developed as proposed, which thereby reduces gross demand—from 7,500 to less than 2,400 units. If the study area is developed to its maximum future land use designation of 3,423 dwelling units (5.7 du/ga) on 600± acres, this will necessitate a required capture rate of fully 143%. By comparison, assuming an overall density of 4.0 units per gross acre yields 2,407 units, which would necessitate capturing 101% by 2040. Moreover, there may be other residential projects such as additional phases of infill redevelopment in Downtown or as part of Midtown. This would further reduce the number of available unallocated units, thereby increasing the required capture necessary to fully develop residential units along North Alexander Street.

Scenario #2 utilizes the compound annual growth rate necessary for the City to achieve a 2040 population of 71,523, as identified in the *Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan*. This will necessitate a sustained annual growth rate of 2.69% per year through 2040. While not as high a rate of growth as the 1990s, this forecast is higher than its historic growth rate of 1.96% per year over the past 26 years and significantly greater than the 1.4% annual growth rate achieved during the 2000s.

This would yield almost 33,700 new residents in 11,860 new households (i.e., housing units) assuming average household size of 2.84. Moreover, to achieve this growth level, average annual housing starts will have to reach a threshold of over 500 units per year, far higher than the 158 a year from 2001 to 2016. Scenario #2 also assumes that Varrea, North Park Isles, the annexation areas near Walden Lake and Midtown are developed as proposed, which thereby reduces gross demand from 11,860 units to approximately 6,760. If the North Alexander Street study area is developed to its maximum future land use designation of 3,423 dwelling units on 601± acres, this will necessitate a required capture rate of approximately 51% of the remaining/unallocated unit demand by 2040. By comparison, assuming an overall density of 4.0 units per acre yields 2,407 units, which would necessitate capturing 36% of all future residential growth by 2040. This is a more reasonable penetration of future growth based on the assumptions and facts identified above in Scenario #1.

### Workplace/Office

Knowledge-based industries like finance, software development, business management, consulting services, market and communications, and professional/business services such as accountants, legal and medical facilities house most of their employees in commercial office buildings. The first step in measuring support for new multi-tenant/speculative office space in the study area examines market potentials and demand in Plant City and Hillsborough County. The analysis translates employment forecasts (2016 to 2024) among specific industry sectors as prepared by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO). The analysis also considers demand generated by other market factors, such as vacancy adjustments, part-time/self-employed individuals (who may or may not occupy multi-tenant office space), and cumulative replacement; these estimates either increase or reduce future demand for office

space. Since the last recession, businesses have been reducing office occupancies, in some cases by significant amounts. Historically, the commercial real estate industry has used an average occupancy factor of 250 square feet of office per employee. However, according to a study by REIS, Inc., the amount of office space per employee has steadily declined in each successive business cycle after the recession, like the one in 2007-2009. Data indicates that, in the national economic expansion of the late 1990s, a new office employee was typically associated with approximately 175 square feet of office space, by the mid-2000s, this dropped to approximately 125 square feet and now stands at only about 50 square feet since 2010. This is particularly notable in space-efficient industries like software and professional/business services, which have been the strongest growing sectors in this business cycle. Moreover, hoteling and remote work-arrangements, where employees share space rather than having dedicated offices or cubicles, enables companies to accommodate even more workers in a given amount of occupied space. Analysis indicates there is a gross demand for 8.93 million square feet of office space across Hillsborough County between 2016 and 2024. From a financing perspective, some portion of Hillsborough County's existing 7.3 million square feet of vacant office space would need to be leased before new office space could be financed. It is also not known how much of the remaining existing vacant inventory suffers from physical and/or functional obsolescence but serves to reduce the vacancy rate and lowers demand generated by job growth in office-using sectors to approximately 5.27 million square feet of net new space by 2024.

The next step in the analysis estimates opportunities for new office development based on the Plant City's current share of employment (see Appendix). With an estimated 21,300 employees working in Plant City, their share is estimated at roughly 3.4% of all of Hillsborough County. Under this "fair share" analysis, Plant City would continue to

capture 3.4% of future countywide job growth, or approximately 2,900 new employees by 2024. Assuming similar proportions of office-using jobs and occupancy factors translates into gross demand for roughly 253,300 square feet of office space over the next eight years. However, there are approximately 64,600 square feet of vacant office space today in Plant City. Since the City is considered a tertiary office location (and comprised primarily by smaller office buildings), the analysis conservatively assumes that up to 75% of existing vacant office space would need to be leased before financing is provided for new construction. In other words, locations like Plant City are considered riskier for multi-tenant/speculative office buildings. This effectively reduces the City’s current office vacancy rate from 7% to 2%. This yields net demand for almost 205,000 square feet of new office space by 2024.

In addition, based on trends over the past 10 years, net absorption (leasing activity) among office buildings in Plant City has averaged only 11,000 square feet per year since 2008. At this pace, it would require 11 years to absorb/lease 93% of the 205,000 square feet of demand generated by job growth in office-using sectors. From a financing perspective, office absorption at this pace is too low to justify investment viability and financing of new, speculative office buildings in Plant City. That is, near term office development is likely to remain focused on small, owner-user buildings of less than 10,000 square feet in size.

Under the current land use scenario, approximately 72± acres of land would be dedicated for “commercial” uses at a maximum density of 0.35 (potential bonus near interchanges of up to 1.0 FAR). This would allow for approximately 1.1 million square feet of commercial space in the study area for North Alexander Street. If 50% is office (and 50% retail), this yields over 524,200 square feet of office space, significantly more than the market analysis suggests is supportable

through 2024. With the pending redevelopment of Midtown as well as continued growth of small-scale office buildings on commercial corridors and near key anchors such as South Florida Baptist Hospital, it is highly unlikely the study area will capture a sizable portion of net office demand through 2024. The long-range implications of Midtown suggest that supportable, small-scale professional office development should be encouraged in Downtown, rather than along North Alexander Street.

**Table 6: Workplace/Office Potentials 2016-2024**

Industry Sector	2024 Demand (in Square Feet)
<b>Total Citywide Employment</b>	<b>21,302</b>
<b>As % of Hillsborough County</b>	<b>3.40%</b>
<b>Fair Share Analysis</b>	
2016-2024 Employment Growth (if Fair Share Maintained)	2,889
% Office-using Jobs	44%
Square Foot Occupancy Factor	199
<b>2024 Gross Demand (in Square Feet)</b>	<b>253,300</b>
Less 75% of Existing Vacant Office Space	-48,419
<b>2024 Net Demand (in Square Feet):</b>	<b>204,900</b>
Average Annual Absorption-Citywide (2011-2016)	17,200
Required Years to Achieve 93% Occupancy	11

Future commercial development in the study area may incorporate a limited number of small professional services businesses (i.e.,



accounting, legal or small medical/health-related practitioners). The character and pace of resident population growth in and adjacent to the study area will only support a limited number of such small-scaled offices. Currently, we do not see future market support for a corporate office park in the study area of North Alexander Street. To reinforce the “hometown charm” village concept, development of resident serving office/professional services tenants would best be located in Midtown/Downtown, or eventually in the proposed Northeast Village Center at Midway Road/Charlie Taylor Road. The only possible exception would be a corporate headquarters campus, whose location would not be purely market-driven, and would also be considered an exceptional circumstance generated as part of a specific business recruitment effort.

#### Workplace/General Industrial

The first step in measuring support for new, general industrial space in the North Alexander Street study area is to exam market potentials for industrial use countywide and allocate demand to Plant City. The analysis translates employment forecasts (2016-2024) among specific industry sectors in Hillsborough County. Employment forecasts from DEO are issued only in eight-year periods for “Workforce Development Areas”, such as Hillsborough County, which is Workforce Development Area #15. Warehousing/distribution, light assembly/manufacturing, freight/logistics and “flex” (combination of industrial and office) uses are defined as “General Industrial.” The accepted industry-standard occupancy factor per employee for general industrial space range from 500 to 1,000 square feet. Unlike office occupancy factors, which are declining, occupancy factors for industrial employees are growing due to the significant increase in warehousing and distribution/logistics functions associated with large-scale employers such as Amazon. For purposes of the analysis, a low factor of 475 and a high factor of 705 square feet per employee

was considered to account for the blend of industrial businesses and manufacturers scattered across Hillsborough County. Demand generated by other market factors, such as vacancy adjustments, part-time/self-employed individuals (who may or may not occupy space), and cumulative replacement were also considered by WTL+a. The analysis indicates gross demand ranging from 7.5 million to 11.0 million square feet of general industrial space across Hillsborough County, between 2016 and 2024. From a financing perspective, however, some portion of the existing 4.1 million square feet of vacant industrial space would need to be leased before new space could be financed in Hillsborough County. For purposes of this analysis, the consultant conservatively assumed that 35% of the vacant industrial inventory needed to be leased before financing is provided for new construction. This would reduce the vacancy rate to roughly 3% and lowers demand in industrial-using sectors to a range of 6.1 million to 9.6 million square feet of net new space by 2024.

This analysis allocates opportunities for new general industrial space in Plant City based on the current share relative to Hillsborough County, which is estimated at 9%. Under this “fair share” analysis, Plant City would continue to capture 9% of future general industrial space generated by job growth in industrial-using sectors in Hillsborough County. Over the next eight years, assuming similar proportions of industrial jobs and occupancy factors translates into gross demand ranging from a low of 675,000 to a high of 985,000 square feet of general industrial space in Plant City.

However, today there is a nominal 234,800 square feet of vacant industrial space in Plant City. As the degree of functional and/or physical obsolescence is not known, the analysis assumes that 35% of the existing vacant industrial space is leased before financing is provided for new construction. In other words, absorbing some portion of existing, vacant space would thereby reduce the vacancy rate to only 1%, thereby making new construction financially feasible in Plant City. This yields a demand in the range of 592,200 to 902,600 square feet of new general industrial space by 2024. Approximately 487,800 square feet of new industrial space was built in Plant City, in 2016 and 2017. Accounting for this newly-delivered space yields unallocated supportable demand for 104,400 to 414,800 square feet and with another 893,600 square feet of industrial space in plan review, this will require an increase in the current fair share allocation from 9% to 10.5% for Plant City.



**Table 7: Workplace/General Industrial Potentials (2016 to 2024)**

<b>Existing Industrial Inventory</b>		
Hillsborough County	79,130,950	
Plant City	7,078,238	
As % of Hillsborough County ("Fair Share")	9%	
<b>Existing Vacant Industrial Space-Citywide</b>		
Vacant Space	234,784	
Lease-up Required @ 35%	-82,200	
<b>Remaining Vacant Space:</b>	<b>152,600</b>	
<b>Percent Vacant:</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	
<b>Allocation to Plant City</b>	<b>2024 Demand (in Square Feet)</b>	
	<b>Low</b>	<b>High</b>
2024 Gross Demand-Hillsborough County	7,539,500	11,010,000
If City maintains Fair Share @	9%	9%
<b>2024 Gross Demand-Citywide:</b>	<b>674,400</b>	<b>984,800</b>
<b>2024 Net Demand (in Square Feet)</b>	<b>592,200</b>	<b>902,600</b>
Completed Speculative Industrial Projects (2016-2017)	-487,800	-487,800
<b>Total-Unallocated Demand:</b>	<b>104,400</b>	<b>414,800</b>
Planned Speculative/Multi-tenant Industrial Projects	<b>893,600</b>	<b>893,600</b>
<b>Required Fair Share Capture (From 9%):</b>	10.5%	---

There are approximately 78± acres of general industrial uses in the study area based on the land use scenario of the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan*. Additional voluntary annexations would allow a total of 1.7 million square feet of industrial space in the study area for North Alexander Street. With both acreage and utilities along Park and County Line Roads to accommodate new manufacturing/warehousing/logistics functions, it is likely these locations are adequate to meet the near-term needs for general industrial space in Plant City. Available parcel sizes in the triangle between North Alexander Street and Paul Buchman Highway are sufficiently large enough to accommodate industrial uses, but this allocation would require reducing the amount of land dedicated to future residential development noted in the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan*.

### General Retail

Market potentials for general retail uses were also evaluated for the study area of North Alexander Street. Among commercial land uses such as workplace office and workplace/industrial, retail is distinct in its reliance on both resident and visitor markets. Retail is also particularly sensitive to the scale and qualities of the nearby competitive retail supply in Plant City. Generally, the United States has too much retail to be supported by available consumer expenditures, even in an economy that is heavily dependent on consumer spending for its stability and growth. According to the Census and other sources, there is approximately 23.5 square feet of retail space for every person in the United States. This contrasts with the United Kingdom (the next in ranking of developed countries), which has 9.0 square feet of retail per capita.

Market potentials for retail in the North Alexander Street study area were analyzed from several different perspectives:

- What is total available spending power from the most proximate consumer markets, particularly existing and future residents in the immediate area?
- What is the character and locational relationship to these markets, framing the competitive context within the larger trade area, and where is competitive retail located?
- Are other locations better positioned to attract and/or sustain additional retail uses?

The retail analysis is based on the following key assumptions: The trade area to the west of the North Alexander Street corridor is largely served by the cluster of stores and businesses around Thonotosassa Road or in other parts of Plant City. Existing development densities will remain generally low to the west of the study area for North Alexander Street. Also, significant wholesale volumes and sales are generated by the Plant City Farm & Flea Market, at Sam Allen Road and Paul Buchman Highway. To the east, future new housing projects, includes Varrea and North Park Isles. In the trade area, existing population and workplace densities are low and retail offerings are limited, which suggests that a large share of total household/consumer spending by residents/households is occurring elsewhere in and around Plant City.

To identify an appropriate mix of businesses, selected demographic characteristics were considered. As discussed previously, demographic characteristics of the trade area include: A population of more than 5,700 in almost 2,400 households. Age distribution is weighted toward ages 65-74 and 75+ (at 17% and 18%). Over the next five years, forecasts suggest that the trade area's population will increase to roughly 6,000 residents in 2,475 households. Those 65-74 years old are expected to have the highest rates of growth at 2.9% per year and elderly residents' consumer spending behavior is among the lowest of all age cohorts.

This profile indicates that, while the trade area's current population is older, a younger population is possible in the future, particularly if new housing is developed in such projects as Varrea (as a Traditional Neighborhood Development) and North Park Isles. For example, based on current entitlements, the Varrea project could add 2,640 units at buildout, while North Park Isles may increase its unit count to 1,350.

As noted, the *Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan* identifies a total population of 71,000+ by 2040. If this growth materializes, it would add over 32,800 new residents in almost 11,600 new households over the next 23 years. This would necessitate a sustained annual growth rate of 2.69% per year, well above the historic annual growth rate of 1.96% per year since 1990.

When demand is greater than supply, there is an apparent opportunity for additional retail space in that category. By comparison, when demand is less than supply, there is a surplus of sales in that retail category. Analysis indicates that households in the trade area spend over \$51 million per year and store sales generate a limited \$8.75 million per year within the study area of North Alexander Street. Additional retail sales occur at the multi-faceted Plant City Farm & Flea Market, located on Sam Allen Road between North Alexander Street and Paul Buchman Highway. In addition to a public flea market, this is also a large wholesale farmers market with 100+ vendors on over 10 acres of land. Over \$40.6 million per year in retail leakage occurs from trade area households; this represents an apparent recapture opportunity for new retail development in the study area for North Alexander Street. There are multiple merchandise categories where apparent recapture opportunities due to leakage may be possible, if better retail offerings were available, such as General Merchandise (\$10.7 million), Food Service and

Drinking Places (\$5.6 million), and Food and Beverage Stores (\$8.9 million).



Plant City Farm & Flea Market

It should be noted that, while available (uncaptured) sales for a specific retail category can be substantial, there is an anomaly in assuming that lost sales will be sufficient for a particular store type. For example, recapture opportunities for department store and other general merchandise stores totals almost \$11 million per year. However, the size and operating requirements for a department store are considerably higher than \$11 million will support. For example, a full-service Kohl's department store is typically between 80,000 and 90,000 square feet and would need sales of \$20 to \$25 million per year to be considered a viable store location. In other words, existing trade area household sales in the general merchandise (department store) category are only half the required baseline. The existence of

unmet sales demand does not guarantee that certain store types are feasible, alternatively almost \$3 million in available sales could potentially be captured by several smaller businesses at locations in and around North Alexander Street.

#### Supportable Retail by Category

Annual sales volumes in the retail industry are tracked as sales productivity per square foot. For example, a 1,500 square foot retail store (including all occupied space) selling merchandise for \$675,000 per year would have annual sales productivity of \$450 per square foot. Sales productivity is an indicator of performance within a retail category (i.e., measuring actual sales, but then comparing sales productivity with similar store types). Sales productivity is also a relative measure of how much rent a retailer can afford to spend per square foot, and therefore whether a retail building can collect enough rent to make the real estate investment feasible for the owner, whether its new construction or a commercial building renovation.

As a rule, retailers can afford to spend between 8% and 12% of gross annual sales on rents. By averaging rent at say, 10% of annual sales, the retailer above could pay \$37.50 per square foot. Sales productivities (and profitability) vary within retail categories, so total ‘available’ sales must be further analyzed by productivity requirements to understand how much space is theoretically ‘supportable’.

Total available market support for all retail categories generated from the trade area population suggests that approximately 121,000 square feet of additional space could be supported by recapturing leaking retail sales. However, this also assumes that fully 100% of all available spending will be recaptured (which is unlikely), and that all sales by category would be spent in the study area. Notably, the

“oversupply” of specialty food most likely reflects retail food sales generated by the Plant City Farm & Flea Market. Revenues generated by the flea market’s wholesale operations (with sales to local restaurants, grocers and roadside stands) are by far the largest share of total “retail” sales (wholesale sales were excluded in this analysis).

The key findings from our analysis of retail potentials for the study area is that the existing—primarily rural—trade area is underserved in most retail categories. Over the long-term, potentials will be significantly affected by the introduction of new housing that will serve to add spending power to strengthen opportunities for new retail development. However, it will be equally important to cluster any new retail development at intersections and within small, convenience-oriented retail complexes rather than in scattered sites along Paul Buchman Highway and North Alexander Street.

## Section 4: Conclusions, Recommendations and Next Steps

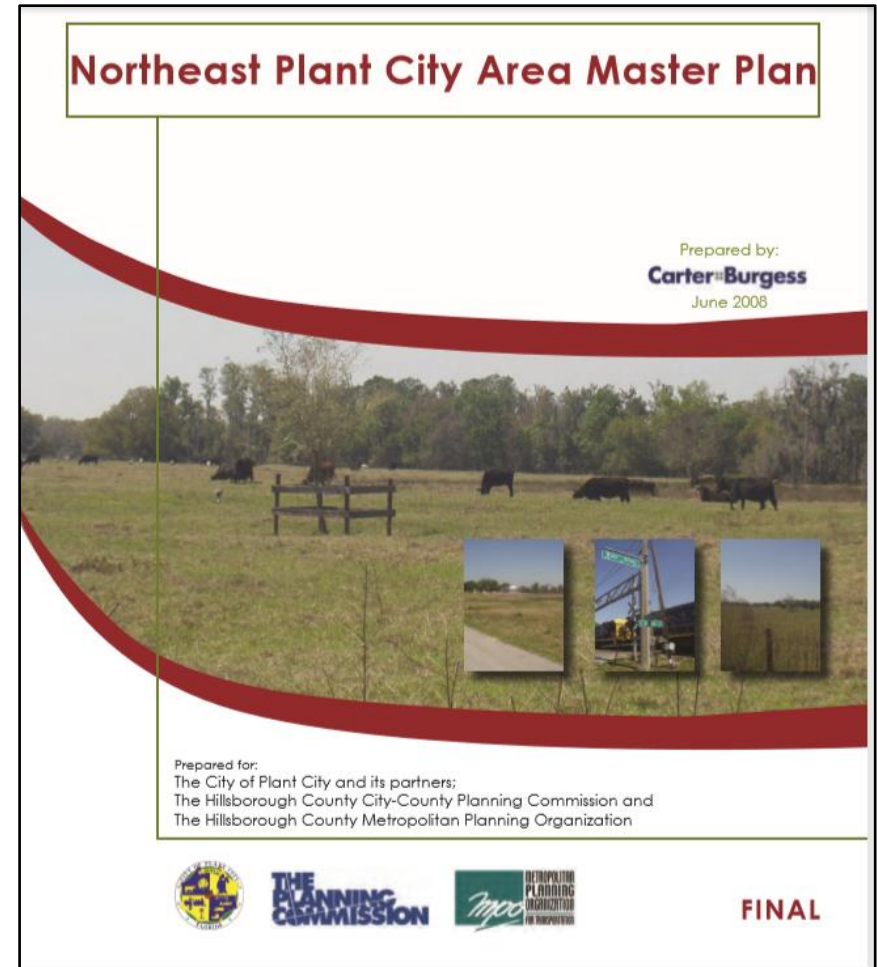
The construction of North Alexander Street has greatly improved the local transportation network within the study area and eastern Hillsborough County. One of the major benefits of this facility is to improve the flow of truck traffic by providing another north/south corridor that bypasses the historic downtown of Plant City. As a byproduct, this new roadway provides additional opportunities for compact mixed-use growth, particularly as it relates to retail, distribution and residential development along North Alexander Street.

It is not expected this corridor will achieve the same level of growth that is anticipated in some other parts of Plant City. For example, a greater magnitude of mixed-use development is expected along the southern limits of James L. Redman Parkway, more homes are

projected in North Park Isles and Varrea, and the study area will not contain a logistics and distribution hub to the scale of what is occurring on County Line Road. However, as noted in this report, the corridor contains many assets, which overtime will attract businesses and residents to this area that has convenient access to Interstate-4.

At times this growth will appear unorganized and haphazard, as the boundaries and total land area of the municipality is anticipated to only expand through voluntary annexations. Therefore, it is critical to have an overarching “vision” in advance of this growth that is desired and supported by the residents along and around North Alexander Street. One such way to implement this “vision” is through a preferred land use scenario and supporting policies that will guide the City Commission and staff of Plant City.

Based in the analysis of this report, Planning Commission staff updated the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan* – Preferred Land Use Scenario (see Table 8 and Figure 9) and provided several recommendations that will help guide growth in an efficient and effective manner as property owners voluntarily annex lands into Plant City.



**Table 8: Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan Updated Preferred Land Use Scenario Acreage**

Recommended FLUE (NEPC Changes)	Existing Preferred Land Use Scenario	% Of Total	Recommended Preferred Land Use Scenario	% Of Total	Acreage Change
Commercial	72.39	7%	207.18	19.5%	134.79
Industrial	78.32	7%	132.91	12.5%	54.59
Light/Commercial Office	0	0%	20.12	2%	20.12
Natural Preservation*	223.53	22%	0.84	<1%	-222.69
Public/ Semi Public	16.5	2%	62.35	6%	45.85
Residential-4	381.15	37%	168.59	16%	-212.61
Residential-6	124.91	12%	301.96	28%	177.05
Residential-9	0	0%	36.31	3%	36.31
Residential-12	95.73	9%	112.36	10.5%	16.63
Recreation Open Space	39.51	4%	18.08	1.5%	-21.43
<b>Total</b>	1,060.70	100%	1,060.70	100%	
For corresponding map see Figure 9. *Depicted as Environmentally Sensitive Area Overlay.					



As the analysis provided in this report covers more than 1,000 acres, the land use scenario is a broad indicator of what the preferred development pattern should be, which will need to be augmented with a more in-depth analysis conducted in concert with the process of amending each parcel's future land use and zoning, approved through a public hearing process before the Plant City Commission. Below are several recommendations for the North Alexander Street study area that should be evaluated by the City of Plant City.

### Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan - Recommendations

- The Hillsborough County Planning Commission is currently in the process of projecting population and employment growth in all of Hillsborough County, including the Cities of Tampa, Temple Terrace and Plant City. Based on the analysis of this study, the Planning Commission will reevaluate and determine if it is reasonable to expect a population of 70,000+ for Plant City by 2045. Updated population and employment projections will be closely coordinated with Plant City's Planning and Zoning, Engineering and Utilities Departments, as well as the City Manager and City Commission.
- To guide the future character of the area and to provide for sustainable growth patterns, incorporate the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan – Updated Preferred Land Use Scenario* (see Figure 9) into the *Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan*. This would require a plan amendment initiated by Plant City.
- Based on the final alignment of North Alexander Street and the geometrics of extending Joe McIntosh Road from Paul Buchman Highway to North Alexander Street, it is no longer deemed to be needed and is recommended to be removed from both the *Imagine 2040: Plant City Comprehensive Plan* and the *Northeast*

*Plant City Area Master Plan*. This would require a plan amendment initiated by Plant City.

### Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan - Recommendations

- Increase the total land area within the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan* by 28± acres to, in part, fully recognize a major commercial node and future activity center at the intersection of Knights Griffin Road, Paul Buchman Highway and North Alexander Street.
- As shown in Figure 9, refine the generalized land use pattern of the Preferred Land Use Scenario of the *Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan*.
- To provide for a more efficient use of the land and to stimulate economic opportunities, increase the base line densities of the study area to Residential-6. Also, as an older population is expected in this area, this will increase the opportunities for age-restricted communities, as well as assisted living facilities (ALFs).
- To create community focal points and protect existing and future neighborhoods from the negative impacts generated by growth, higher residential densities and retail commercial/office opportunities should be clustered at activity nodes, for example at the intersections of Sam Allen Road with Paul Buchman Highway and North Alexander Street.
- To provide local employment, provide a limited amount of light manufacturing and distribution opportunities on the east side of North Alexander Street, near the intersections of Knights Griffin Road and Paul Buchman Highway.

## Other Recommendations

- As the study area appears to be a location where compact mixed-use growth can be encouraged that is adequately served by municipal services, continue to encourage land owners to voluntarily annex into Plant City.
- As the area becomes more urban through voluntary annexation, Plant City should continue to meet and coordinate this transition on a regular basis with Hillsborough County.
- To discuss residential growth and potential student generation rates for this area, Plant City should meet annually with the Hillsborough County School District.
- To protect local environmental amenities, continue to include the Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County as a member of Plant City's Development Review Committee. Potential impacts to floodplains should be assessed by the Plant City Engineer and Southwest Florida Water Management District.
- To ensure level of service standards are maintained on the local transportation network, Plant City, Hillsborough County and the Florida Department of Transportation should continue to study and focus on this area through the committees and processes of the Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).
- To ensure other needed public services are addressed, Plant City should conduct preliminary long-range analysis on how to serve the area at buildout, with such services as Utilities, Solid Waste, Parks, Police and Fire Protection.
- To promote future commercial and industrial opportunities and to encourage private investment in the study area, present the findings of this study to the members of the Plant City Economic

Development Corporation and the Greater Plant City Chamber of Commerce.

- To improve the flow of freight and protect residential areas, request Hillsborough County and the Florida Department of Transportation evaluate and if warranted improve local signage that encourages through truck traffic to use North Alexander Street not Paul Buchman Highway.
- The Planning Commission and Plant City should further analyze the land uses within the neighborhood (currently within Plant City) on the westside of Paul Buchman Highway (east of North Adams Street) between Monroe Street and Terrace Drive.



## Appendix

### Figure Series

Figure 1: Aerial and Study Area Boundaries

Figure 2: Existing Land Use

Figure 3: Adopted 2040 Future Land Use

Figure 4: Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan – Preferred  
Land Use Scenario

Figure 5: 2010 Local and Federal Roadway Functional  
Classification

Figure 6: 2010 Roadway Level of Service

Figure 7: North Plant City Area Master Plan –  
Recommended Roadway Improvements

Figure 8: North Alexander Street Trade Area

Figure 9: Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan – Updated  
Preferred Land Use Scenario

Postcard announcing an Open House on May 23, 2018

Land Use Market Analysis – North Alexander Street  
Corridor [Supplied Upon Request]