

General Physical Conditions

Ybor City retains many of its original buildings and its traditional urban street grid designed in the mid 19th Century. Because of the significant number of contributing structures (those that are historic), Ybor City has the distinction of being one of only two National Landmark Historic Districts in the entire state of Florida. (The other is St. Augustine, settled by the Spanish in the mid 16th century.) Many of the original brick streets have been restored, with the eventual goal of restoring the rest.

The original street and block pattern actually extends well beyond Ybor City to the north and east. The typical block measures 350 feet by 200 feet, with a mid-block alley running parallel to the long sides. The long sides of the blocks, and the principal orientation of the lots, face the Avenues running east and west. This historic grid is still very much in evidence near the historic core, although it does show signs of erosion. Interstate 4 is a major intrusion into the grid, and now forms the northern boundary of the Ybor City study area, an area that actually was historically seamlessly connected to the East Tampa neighborhood to the north. Over the years, the historic grid has been disrupted in several places to create superblocks, mainly by the larger institutional landowners in Ybor. A sense of this overall pattern can be seen in Figure 2.1.

Many commercial and residential buildings, including the casitas and social clubs survive as legacies of Ybor City's multicultural history. Happily, the new diversity in the area continues to mirror this rich and fortunate past. However, the condition of these buildings varies ranging from restored to marginal to neglected. It often comes down to the individual structure – some houses have been restored; some are dilapidated, and others such as townhouses, are brand new. The streetscapes along 7th, 8th, and 9th Avenues and the commercial side streets have been restored with wide sidewalks, historic lampposts, street trees, and flowers. The residential streetscapes, like the homes themselves, are less consistent in their upkeep and beautification.

The overall effect is spotty and inconsistent. There has clearly been a lot of historic restoration as well as new development, but several aspects of contemporary development patterns and realities have had a detrimental effect on the historic character. Many of the larger institutional buildings do not sensitively integrate into the historic fabric, using planning and design vocabularies more suited to suburban, campus-like environments. Figures 2.2 through 2.5 depict some typical conditions in various parts of historic Ybor City.

It should be noted that the study area extends beyond what is considered the historic core. Although the Historic District extends north of Interstate 4, it does not extend too far east of 22nd Street. Parts of the study area, particularly the southern and eastern parts, are less historic and much more industrial in character. While most of the area was originally a residential neighborhood, the proximity to the port has caused the residential character of these areas to change over the years. There are a number of active commercial and light industrial properties in this area, many of them warehouses. Despite the change in land use, the overall street grid in these areas remains reasonably intact. There is also a considerable inventory of vacant land. Figure 2.6 depicts the conditions in the outlying areas, which in many cases are only several blocks from the historic core.

Perhaps the largest modern influence on the community has been the necessity to provide parking. The historic fabric of Ybor City was created in a time when modern vehicles did not have to be accommodated, and the streets could be lined with dense, but low scale structures that covered a substantial portion of the lot area and formed continuous and consistent street frontages. Many lots that are now used for parking once were occupied by structures that complemented the historic fabric, indeed, many of these were demolished for the express purpose of providing area for parking. This pattern is repeated in historic areas throughout the country; any area with even a modicum of modern urban activity requires parking, and generally, an area equal at least to the total building area is required to provide an adequate supply of parking.

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Ybor City has recognized this reality and has taken steps to consolidate its parking supply in several large garages. While this is the correct approach, it has proven controversial because it is expensive and runs counter to the typical consumer's expectation of parking immediately adjacent to his destination. It also is contrary to the historic accuracy, but some concessions have to be made to accommodate modern conditions. Nevertheless, a significant amount of parking remains in surface lots, and as long as they are used for that purpose, they cannot be used for other development that would help to fill in the gaps in the traditional urban fabric. It seems like a mundane issue, but a comprehensive and coherent parking strategy is probably the single most important ingredient in revitalizing a historic community such as Ybor City.

Other strategies can be used to mitigate (although not significantly reduce) the parking demand, and to a large extent, they mimic the historic pattern. When Ybor City was first developed, uses were tightly integrated so that it was possible to meet many daily needs by simply walking a short distance. Public transit was also available for the longer trips. Today, Ybor City is one of the few places in the Tampa Bay region where it is still possible to live, work, and entertain oneself without having to use an automobile to move between activities. The district itself contains a diverse mix of uses located within close proximity, and it is linked via streetcar to downtown Tampa and the Channel District. Frankly, it is one of the most attractive aspects of the Ybor City experience, and one that is gaining increasing interest among a segment of the population disenchanted with modern-day patterns of development.

Yet, as Ybor City clearly demonstrates, traditional urban environments have to be carefully nurtured to survive. Policies and development regulations must be differently conceived and applied. Twenty years ago, there was little development interest in Ybor City, and liberalizing the wet zoning regulations seemed like a strategy that would bring activity to this area by allowing uses that were very difficult to permit elsewhere. This has caused a concentration of wet-zoned establishments in the district, with a corresponding imbalance in the

distribution and integration of uses. While it still retains many characteristics of a vibrant and attractive urban experience, the district is not as commercially successful or viable as it should be. This issue will be discussed in greater detail in the next section.



Figure 2.2 Seventh Avenue is the heart of the Ybor City historic district.

II. Background and Existing Conditions



Figure 2.3. Seventh Avenue, despite its charm, lacks daytime activity.



Figure 2.5. Residential infill is a growing trend.



Figure 2.4. Improvements in the historic core include the Centro Ybor shopping center and street car service to downtown Tampa.



Figure 2.6. There is considerable vacant land and industrial uses located south and east of the historic core.

B. Market Assessment

Background

An economic market analysis of Ybor City was prepared by The Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission in March of 2004. The study area was bounded by Nebraska Avenue on the west, Interstate 4 on the north, 26th Street on the east, and Adamo Drive on the south, containing about 540 acres. The report provides a valuable compilation of data on the study area. Some of the salient points include:

Residential population in 2000 was 2032, for an overall density less than that of the region, but projected to roughly double to 4300 by 2025.

Total employment in the area is 8780 and is projected to roughly double by 2025, to 16,000. The area behaves more as a commercial activity center than a residential area.

Ybor City is well located within the Tampa metropolitan area. Almost 900,000 residents live within fifteen miles, with a median household income of approximately \$43,000 per year.

Land Use is relatively diverse and includes the following:

- 1.6 million square feet of residential, of which about 1 million square feet is multi-family.
- 1.8 million square feet of warehouse and light manufacturing (predominantly warehouse)
- 2 million square feet of commercial, which includes:
 - 600,000 square feet of retail
 - 800,000 square feet of office
 - 130,000 square feet of hotel
 - 490,000 square feet of restaurants, bars, and night clubs

- 346,000 square feet of public and institutional uses
- 1.1 million square feet of parking garages
- 1.9 million square feet of vacant land and surface parking lots.

There are an abundance of wet-zoned properties, particularly on 7th Avenue. This is the highest concentration of wet-zonings in the city.

The market assessment conveys a number of positive trends occurring in Ybor City. The area is clearly in a growth mode, and will continue to attract economic activity. The analysis also makes clear that there is substantially more to the area than an entertainment district or tourist destination. This a broadly diverse neighborhood that could function much like its historic role as a fully functional community, with all necessary services and uses for daily life located in close proximity. The reasons for its current shortcomings are complex, although some can be traced back to broad socio-economic trends and policy directions that affect our nation as a whole. They can be summarized briefly as follows:

1. Since World War II, much of our growth has responded to the demographic bulge of the “baby boom,” which has for many years been focused on the suburban, single-family living environment. This emphasis has come at the expense of established inner-city areas, many of which were largely neglected.
2. An over-reliance on the personal automobile as the principal means of transportation. The tremendous demands this places on infrastructure as well as the overall development pattern is only now becoming well-understood.
3. Land use policy that tends to segregate uses into single (or limited)-purpose districts.

In practice, these broad influences have had negative effects on established developed areas such as Ybor City, since it did not fit the pattern of this new reality. In the north part of the study area, the “urban renewal” of the 1960’s caused the wholesale demolition of entire blocks of the historic development pattern. If Ybor City had not been established as a National Landmark Historic District in 1973, the erosion of the historic character would have been even more severe.

Now, however, there is a renewed interest in established urban neighborhoods as an alternative to conventional development patterns. Such areas have typically been attractive to the creative and artistic elements in our society, and the attraction has gradually spread to a broader segment of the community. Ybor City is well positioned to capitalize on this trend, but must understand its position in the development market and establish appropriate policies to support its vision.

Regional Factors

The future development of Ybor City must be cognizant of other development trends in the surrounding region. Several are noted here.

Overall Regional Growth

According to the 2000 US Census, Hillsborough County grew by 19.8% between 1990 and 2000, adding 165,000 people to end the decade with a population of 999,000. While this is fairly strong growth, it actually trails the state of Florida’s growth rate of 23.5% over the same period. As an attractive sun-belt state with a pro-business regulatory climate, growth in Florida should remain strong for the foreseeable future.

With state growth management policies increasingly concerned with conserving natural resources, overall growth patterns will place greater emphasis on infill redevelopment in established areas. The City of Tampa Comprehensive Plan already incorporates special provisions

for Ybor City, designated as both a Regional Attractor and an Urban Village, both of which offer the ability to increase the intensity of development over what would be permitted in the surrounding suburban areas. We may thus infer that, under the proper market conditions, growth in Ybor City could exceed the growth rate for the region as a whole.

Downtown Visioning and Redevelopment

Like virtually every other downtown at the center of a predominantly suburban metropolitan area, downtown Tampa seeks to evolve to be more than a daytime business district. The preliminary results of a visioning process currently underway for the downtown area is revealing several familiar desires: the need for a more diverse mix of uses to expand activity around the clock, with a particular focus on spurring additional residential development in downtown. Medium to high-density residential development is already helping to revitalize the nearby Channel District, and this trend will likely continue at a robust pace. As residential density approaches a critical mass, neighborhood service retail such as grocery and drugstores will be added to the mix.

Downtown also serves as the focus for many regional attractors such as the convention center, the aquarium, and the Forum. This helps to diversify the mix of people and activities in the area, and establishes the downtown area as more than simply a place to do business. A strong and vibrant downtown can only help Ybor City, which is close by and connected to downtown by streetcar service.

Port of Tampa

The Port of Tampa, located just to the south of Ybor City, is the largest port in Florida, accounting for about half of the total tonnage moving through all of the ports in Florida. As the region grows, port activity can be expected to increase.

The proximity to the port has caused a concentration of warehouse and light industrial uses to locate in the southern part of Ybor City. While the port will continue to grow in the future, the focus of this growth is likely to occur further to the south, where there is additional

land available, and the distance to open water is less. Ybor City lies at the northern end of the channel, where growth is geographically constrained.

The cruise industry has been growing, with new facilities located near the downtown/Channel District area. This brings additional tourists to the region and presents an opportunity for Ybor City to attract additional visitors.

Low Income Housing

A substantial number of low income housing units lay between Ybor City and downtown. Two large developments, one of public housing and one of subsidized housing, will likely encounter additional pressures to redevelop as downtown and Ybor City continue to grow. The land will become increasingly valuable; the current housing pattern is relatively low density, as well as representing an older philosophy of housing that concentrates the low income residents together. Inevitably, this area will redevelop, and the opportunity arises to intensify the development here by adding additional uses to a mixed-income housing strategy.

Hillsborough Community College

HCC has a successful, growing campus in Ybor City that serves as a focus for their creative arts programs. This forms a natural affinity with the activities in Ybor City, and further growth in the campus facilities presents the opportunity for the student activities to blend more seamlessly with the everyday activities of the area.

These regional factors should continue to place Ybor City at the center of a growing, prospering region.

Current Market Conditions in Ybor City

Based on the background information in the market assessment and our own investigations, we can draw the following conclusions about the current state of the market in Ybor City.

Residential infill development is strong. Current construction activity focuses on multi-family rental and condominium projects, townhomes, and rehabilitation of historic single-family structures. Sales prices are averaging \$160 per square foot, which is relatively strong considering the negative image and transitional nature of the area. Further growth can be expected in this market segment, concentrated primarily south of 6th Avenue as well as in the eastern portion of the study area.

The office market is quite strong. Most of the space is in smaller increments, much of it located in historic structures. Only a few buildings, such as K-Force and TECO would be considered Class A space, but lease rates nevertheless average in the \$14 to \$19 range. The space is attractive to smaller, creative businesses such as advertising, design professionals, and attorneys who like the proximity to downtown and the traditional urban character.

The hotel market, though small, is extremely successful. It is able to maintain high occupancy rates since Ybor is attractive to the leisure as well as the business traveler. Rooms are able to command a premium over comparable properties located elsewhere in the region. Additional growth could be anticipated, although assembly of a sufficiently large parcel could be a challenge. Smaller, boutique hotels and bed and breakfast establishments could do well.

The retail market is relatively weak. The best space is located in and around Centro Ybor, which has about 15% of its space vacant and many tenants paying less than optimum lease rates.

The retail environment suffers from poor tenant mix and lack of critical mass. The lack of central management and merchandising standards is fairly typical for this kind of traditional “Main Street” environment, but places it at a disadvantage to the professionally managed retail mall. Lease rates in Centro Ybor range from \$10 to \$20, while ground floor frontage on 7th Avenue ranges from \$12 to \$15 for the most centrally located blocks. Selected small spaces may exceed \$20, although this is not the norm.

Restaurants and bars are in abundant supply in Ybor City; indeed, the area is known primarily for this. The concentration of these uses is due to a liberalization of several policies that were designed to spur revitalization activity in Ybor City. In particular, the waiver of separation requirements between wet-zoned establishments and the waiver of required parking ratios made this a very attractive location for these uses. While many of these establishments continue to do well and provide much of Ybor City’s unique character, there is clearly evidence of an oversupply condition among these uses. Additionally, the concentration of these uses has displaced other uses that could provide more daytime street life and activity in the area.

Warehouse and light industrial space comprises a surprisingly large amount of the total building area in Ybor City, about one quarter of the total. Business owners cite the central location, easy access to the highway network, and proximity to the port as key factors influencing their decision to locate here. Many of those decisions were made decades ago, however, when land here was cheap. Property values (and taxes) have increased dramatically, and many of these properties will likely turn over to more intensive development as time progresses.

Future Potential

The Planning Commission’s market assessment anticipates an approximate doubling of residents and employment in the study area by

2025. The momentum is clearly positive, but the challenge remains to ensure that this growth can be accommodated within the existing urban framework while respecting the historic structures and development pattern.

It seems clear that the greatest growth pressure on existing land uses will fall on the vacant land and some of the warehousing and industrial uses. Most of this turnover is expected to happen in the southern and eastern portions of the study area. Much of the historic core around 7th Avenue is constrained by renovation limitations on historic structures, while much of the public and institutional uses in the north and west portions of the study area are established and stable.

Signs of this future transformation are already evident. The focus of residential redevelopment is currently concentrated around 4th and 5th Avenues south of the historic core, but this activity is beginning to spread to previously overlooked areas further to the south and east. Many of the industrial and warehouse properties occupy relatively large tracts, making assembly of a sizeable redevelopment parcel much easier. Some of the recent offers on these properties are beginning to take on a speculative cast, but in the long run, this should be a continuing upward trend.

The surface parking lots – some of these are really just vacant lots – will be particularly susceptible to redevelopment, but this will, of course, impact the existing parking supply. An area-wide parking strategy will be necessary to ensure that orderly infill of these parcels can occur. This is particularly important for two reasons: 1) the surface parking lots detract from the historic pattern, and 2) the provision of adequate off-site parking is almost a necessity for effective infill redevelopment of smaller, urban parcels. Strategies and incentives for a balanced parking plan will be addressed elsewhere in this report.

Some repositioning of the retail market will be required to make Ybor City a more attractive daytime destination. Some of this must happen on 7th Avenue, but the opportunity also presents itself to spread retail uses onto 8th Avenue as well. Centro Ybor, in particular, should

explore strategies to draw pedestrian traffic northward to its less successful space.

Part of the retail repositioning question, of course, gets back to the proliferation of wet-zoned establishments on 7th Avenue. Some of the current tenants are not open during daytime hours, a factor which inhibits the ability to liven the streetfront with sufficient activity to interest the shopper. Various strategies for activating these storefronts need to be explored. In particular, it will be important to have strategies in place to monitor the turnover of existing establishments with a view to replacing them with a more balanced tenant mix. While the retail environment is not especially strong today, this is more due to a lack of sufficient concentration and diversity than with any fundamental flaw in the basic design. Open air, “Main Street” retail environments have been a successful strategy of late, and Ybor City offers the real thing. Its principal disadvantage vis-à-vis the mall is the lack of consistent management and merchandising standards.

Overall, the strong growth in residential development will bring a moderating influence to the uses in the area. The commercial environment will naturally evolve to a more balanced mix that reflects neighborhood service uses as well as the regional draw of the more unique, one-off retail and workplace choices. The potential exists for Ybor City to become more like it once was: a complete functional community with all the basic needs of the resident in close proximity. Since this pattern is not the contemporary norm, however, it will require a well conceived set of regulations and incentives to achieve.

C. Existing Regulatory Environment

Current conditions in Ybor City may, in large measure, be traced to regulations and policies that were adopted in order to spur redevelopment in the area. Several decades ago, when older, inner city areas were out of favor with the development community, aggressive incentives were necessary in order to induce revitalization activity. The City of Tampa put in place several regulatory incentives that have

played a large role in shaping Ybor City today. The most important ones are discussed below.

Wet Zoning Policies.

The City of Tampa uses a fairly unique method of permitting uses for the sale of alcoholic beverages, which it terms “wet-zoning.” These provisions are documented in Chapter 3, Alcoholic Beverages, of the City of Tampa Code of Ordinances. Wet-zoning amounts to an additional right granted to a property, generally commercial, to sell alcoholic beverages. Subject to certain conditions for the proper maintenance of this right, it runs with the property and can be conveyed along with the property itself. This process is independent of the state’s licensing procedures, which are granted to the owner or the business entity rather than the property. Various designations of wet zoning are recognized, such as beer and wine only, beer, wine and liquor, restaurant (at least 51% of sales attributable to food,) and package stores.

Elsewhere in the city, wet-zoning is subject to a minimum separation distance between wet-zoned establishments. This provision was waived for Ybor City as a way to spur development activity. This, along with other incentives granted by prior administrations to bring development to Ybor City, has resulted in a proliferation of wet-zoned establishments in the area, with a notable concentration along 7th Avenue. Indeed, for many years, Ybor City was the easiest place in Tampa to get a wet-zoning designation. There are over 100 wet-zoned properties in the study area, with over 60 of them located on 7th Avenue.

Zoning and Land Use

As a National Landmark Historic District, Ybor enjoys special treatment under the City’s zoning regulations. The zoning regulations applying to Ybor City are documented in Article VIII of Chapter 27, Zoning, of the City of Tampa Code of Ordinances.

The intent of Article VIII is to establish a set of land development regulations that specifically promote and preserve the historic district

and its landmarks. To that end, the regulations contain many provisions that reflect the unique characteristics of this district, such as minimum (even zero) building setbacks, and fairly generous (compared to suburban standards) floor area ratio and building coverage standards. Building height, on the other hand, is generally limited to 45 feet.

This height limit will keep new structures in the three to four story range. This is appropriate as far as historic compatibility, although it does place a fairly hard upper limit on the development potential of a site. An increase in height in certain locations, perhaps permitted by variance only, should be considered as an incentive to further redevelopment.

In accordance with the general historic pattern, a wide variety of uses may be mixed together in the various zoning districts, especially in the historic core.

The historic fabric of Ybor City, and its distinctive status as one of only two National Historic Districts in Florida are its most exceptional features. To preserve the National designation, contributing historic structures may not, in general, be demolished nor substantially altered in exterior appearance. Interior remodeling may be fairly dramatic, but the fundamental dimensions of the original building envelope cannot be significantly increased, if at all. These regulations will preserve the designation and the inimitable character of Ybor City, but also have an effect on property valuation. At present, historic structures are being appraised at the same value as non-historic structures. This is not an equitable valuation, and thus often prevents property owners from rehabilitation of their structures. A different method of valuation for historic properties should be considered.

One of the most permissive aspects of Article VII is the requirement for off-street parking. It is not required at all in the historic core, and the minimum ratios elsewhere are quite low by contemporary standards. This effectively counters what is typically one of the biggest barriers to infill redevelopment on small, urban sites. Parking, besides

using a lot of land, is quite expensive, and relieving the developer of the need to provide it on-site is a major redevelopment incentive.

Other Ordinances

Noise. This ordinance is intended to limit the noise that can be generated by any given property. In a district where residential uses are in close proximity to late-night entertainment uses, the potential for conflict exists. The current limits for noise generation are 85 dbA and 87 dbC, measured at any point along the property line. These limits are quite high, and one would be hard pressed to find a jurisdiction that permits louder noises to be generated. Nevertheless, a number of complaints are reported on a regular basis. The culprits are usually outdoor performance and entertainment venues, particularly those on an upper level or a rooftop, and those establishments that maintain a relatively open storefront.

Solid Waste. The tight, urban layout of the buildings in the historic core of Ybor City poses a challenge for solid waste management. While the historic blocks all had alleys, many of them are quite narrow and cannot accommodate the waste containers and still maintain a passable way. The bar and night club uses are also fairly heavy generators of solid waste, and must accommodate an inordinate number of waste containers. In some cases, the containers are stored within the traditional storefront display windows, which does not make for an attractive view from the street. There have also been reports of debris from inside some establishments being hosed and swept into the storm drains, which is illegal.

Parking. Parking regulations are fairly rigidly enforced in Ybor City, with parking tickets issued on a regular basis for only slightly exceeding the permitted parking time. This appears to be one of the most efficient functions in the district, but one, alas, that has driven away many a disgruntled customer. While available parking is somewhat limited, there is

actually an abundance of parking at most times, albeit located a block or two from one's destination. For visitors accustomed to the abundance of free parking in suburbia, this requires some readjustment, but the parking situation is reasonably convenient at most times of the day.

The zoning regulations for Ybor City also establish minimum standards for parking areas. Lots that charge for parking must have adequate lighting and be attended until the last car has departed. These provisions are intended to mitigate the proliferation of the opportunistic vacant lot being used for makeshift parking, but it does not appear to be adequately enforced.

Stormwater. The City of Tampa has recently amended the stormwater detention provisions for Ybor City. Previously, detention requirements had been waived as an incentive to redevelopment. It has now become evident that flooding concerns must be addressed, and that Ybor City properties must contribute to the mitigation efforts. The amended ordinance calls for new or redeveloped properties to detain stormwater on-site or, alternatively, pay an in-lieu fee into a stormwater management fund. For many of the established properties, the latter option will be the more likely.

Panhandling and Loitering. The presence of homeless people and vagrants is an unfortunate by-product of urban life. They want to be near a concentration of other people whom they can approach for donations. While this is unpleasant for those approached, current laws can only limit persistent or aggressive panhandling.

D. Constraints and Opportunities

Many constraints and opportunities were identified in the public meetings and the discussions with stakeholders. Almost everybody

recognized the seeds of enormous potential in Ybor City, which, with new ideas, can grow organically from its history, its former identity and its well preserved urban fabric.

Yet the same people also realize that the current situation is far from what it ought to be, and that some dramatic steps will be necessary to fulfill Ybor's latent greatness. Changing many realities as well as perceptions is in order. The citizens have novel ideas for creating a neighborhood replete with culture, education, innovation, entrepreneurship, recreation, and community, much the way Ybor used to be, though now in contemporary ways. The following are the specific constraints and opportunities that emerged in discussion:

Constraints

- Negative public image. Ybor City receives persistent bad press as a result of incidents related to late-night activities. This inhibits investment and relocation of higher status uses to the district.
- Proliferation of bars and wet-zoning. Besides contributing to the negative image of Ybor City as a drinking mall for youngsters, the sheer number of these establishments displaces other uses that could be occupying the space.
- Parking availability and convenience. While parking is actually readily available at most times of the day, it is not in the usual suburban form of abundant free parking directly in front of one's destination.
- Limits on redevelopment of historic buildings. Because of the protections on historic properties, they cannot be substantially increased in area, and renovation can be quite expensive.

- Zoning limits on density and building height. These limit the intensity that a development can yield, and therefore a ceiling on the potential development value.
- Port and industrial related truck traffic. Truck traffic on 20th and 21st Streets is quite heavy and forms a virtual barrier that is intimidating for pedestrians to cross.
- Physical barriers of the surrounding highways. By their nature, these highways separate Ybor City from the surrounding neighborhoods and make it seem cut off and isolated.
- Lack of clarity in code enforcement responsibility. Many of the code enforcement gaps can be traced to a lack of coordination among City departments and confusion by the citizen as to whom to approach regarding a particular problem.
- Perception as an entertainment district inhibits broader tenant choices. The area is known for night-time entertainment, and uses that may not be compatible find it hard to attract capital and compete for available space.
- Limited availability of public funds. Public improvements generally require public funds. Further public investment in Ybor City must be justified by the promise of an eventual return on investment.
- Future retail potential based on residential growth. As residential use in the area increases, demand for additional retail, particularly neighborhood service retail, will increase.
- Growth of regional tourist traffic due to increased cruise business, convention center growth, and downtown/Channel District activities.
- Growth of HCC programs and activities. HCC is in need of more space, and should consider expanding physically into the district, especially the historic core. This will attract more daytime activity to the area, and further diversify the uses in the district. Also, HCC Radio could become a community station for all of Ybor, and expand its on-air hours.
- Unique environment defined by historic and multi-cultural roots. There is nothing else in the Tampa Bay area quite like Ybor City.
- Redevelopment of public housing as mixed-use and mixed-income neighborhood. This large reservoir of relatively low density and under-utilized land will not remain that way for long.
- Expansion of streetcar service. This provides for a stronger connection between Ybor City and downtown, and further residential development could enhance the streetcar's attractiveness as a commuter alternative.

Opportunities

- Momentum of residential redevelopment. This will likely continue at a strong pace, and will gradually change the demographic and land use demand for the area.
- Availability of vacant land. There is a considerable inventory of vacant land, with relatively few constraints on development.

Conclusion

The above chapter revealed the current situation and issues facing Ybor City, including physical conditions, a market assessment, the existing regulatory environment, and perceived constraints and opportunities.

Putting them all together, it becomes apparent that there are many different factors that must be addressed. Yet they are not insurmountable; they will simply require dedication, persistence, partnerships, government support, time, and funds. There are so many wonderfully concerned and involved parties, however, that they, working together will be able to achieve what they set out to do.