

FINDING OF NECESSITY



for creating the

West Tampa Community Redevelopment Area

Prepared by the
City of Tampa Planning & Urban Design Division
February 17, 2015

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Introduction.....	2
Community Redevelopment Act	2
Finding of Necessity for Blighted Areas	4
Study Area	5
Project Methodology	6
Study Area Description	7
Study Area Image Summary	11
Analysis of Blight Factors.....	15
Defective/Inadequate Transportation Facilities.....	16
Depreciating Assess Property Values	22
Faulty Lot Layout	23
Unsanitary/Unsafe Conditions	26
Site Deterioration	30
Building Density Patterns	35
Falling Lease Rates.....	37
Tax or Special Assessment Delinquency.....	37
Vacancy Rates	37
Crime Incidents.....	38
Fire/Emergency Medical Service Calls.....	40
Florida Building Code Violations.....	41
Diversity of Ownership or Defective or Unusual Conditions of Title.....	41
Governmentally Owned Property with Adverse Environmental Conditions.....	42
Findings and Conclusions	43
Data Sources.....	45

List of Tables

Table 1: Blight Factors Required by Statute and Indicators 6
Table 2: Selected Economic & Social Characteristics 8
Table 3: Existing Land Use 9
Table 4: Roads Operating Below LOS “D” 17
Table 5: Pavement Conditions 17
Table 6: Sidewalk Coverage 19
Table 7: Annual Assessed Property Values 22
Table 8: Faulty Lots 23
Table 9: Residential Building Conditions – Private 27
Table 10: Traffic Accident Data 28
Table 11: Top 10 Code Violations (2012-2015) 30
Table 12: Code Violations – Study Area vs. City of Tampa 30
Table 13: Total Development Build-Out by Zoning Category 37
Table 14: Number of Crimes Reported by TPD Grids and Citywide (2012 & 2013) 38
Table 15: Number of Fire and Emergency Service Calls (2012 & 2013) 40

List of Figures

Figure 1: Study Area 5
Figure 2: Existing Land Use 10
Figure 3: Visual Survey Key 14
Figure 4: Study Area Access 12
Figure 5: Pavement Conditions 18
Figure 6: Sidewalk Deficiencies (Transportation Conditions) 20
Figure 7: Transit Routes 21
Figure 8: Block Configuration 24
Figure 9: Sidewalk Deficiencies (Unsafe Conditions) 26
Figure 10: Traffic Accidents 28
Figure 11: Topography/Floodplain 29
Figure 12: Code Violations 31
Figure 13: Stormwater Flood Risks 33
Figure 14: 2013 Reported Crimes 39
Figure 15: 2013 Fire / EMS Calls 40

Executive Summary

In November 2014, the Tampa City Council authorized the preparation of a Finding of Necessity Study for an area along the Hillsborough River that may benefit from the creation of a Community Redevelopment Agency. In accordance with the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969, Chapter 163 Part III, Florida Statutes, a local government must make an area assessment and generate a “finding of necessity”, based on data and analysis, in order to make a determination that “slum” or “blight” exists within the study area. This study describes the physical and the regulatory requirements within the study area that are associated with blight, as defined by Florida Statutes. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that the area is in decline and would greatly benefit from the assistance of a Community Redevelopment Agency.

The study area boundary runs along Columbus Avenue from the Hillsborough River, west to Armenia Avenue, then south to Kennedy Boulevard, and east to the Hillsborough River (omitting the property tax exempt parcels owned by Tampa General Hospital and the University of Tampa). This area, consisting of approximately 964 acres, was identified as being physically, economically and aesthetically distressed.

Per Section 163.340(8), Florida Statutes, in order for an area within a city to be considered a Community Redevelopment Area, two or more of the following blight factors must be present. The table illustrates the blight factors identified in the West Tampa study area. Eight (8) factors were analyzed in depth and met the criteria for blight (✓), two were not met (✗) and for four factors, the data was inconclusive (•••). The findings indicate the study area would benefit from establishing a Community Redevelopment Agency to implement redevelopment activities.

	Blight Factor Required by Statute	Meets Criteria
163.340(8)(a)	Defective/Inadequate Transportation Facilities	✓
163.340(8)(b)	Depreciating Assessed Property Values	✗
163.340(8)(c)	Faulty Lot Layout	✓
163.340(8)(d)	Unsanitary/Unsafe Conditions	✓
163.340(8)(e)	Site Deterioration	✓
163.340(8)(f)	Building Density Patterns	✓
163.340(8)(g)	Falling Lease Rates	•••
163.340(8)(h)	Tax or Special Assessment Delinquency	•••
163.340(8)(i)	Vacancy Rates	•••
163.340(8)(j)	Crime Incidents	✓
163.340(8)(k)	Fire/Emergency Medical Service Calls	✓
163.340(8)(l)	Florida Building Code Violations	✗
163.340(8)(m)	Diversity of Ownership or Defective or Unusual Conditions of Title	•••
163.340(8)(n)	Governmentally Owned Property with Adverse Environmental Conditions	✓

Introduction

On November 11, 2014, the Tampa City Council approved a motion to create a Community Redevelopment Area for the West Tampa/West River area (Map 1). The first step in creating a Community Redevelopment Area is to undertake a “finding of necessity” to determine if this area would benefit from the creation of a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA).

This report has been prepared to fulfill a “finding of necessity” in accordance with the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969, Chapter 163 Part III, Florida Statute. This “finding of necessity” is based on field observation and data and analysis, in order to make a determination that “slum” or “blight” exists within the study area. This report includes an assessment of blight factors, as identified in Section 163.340, Florida Statutes, and a conclusion of findings, associated data and analysis, and photo documentation of the study area.

Community Redevelopment Act of 1969

The Community Redevelopment Act of 1969 (“Act”), Chapter 163 Part III, Florida Statutes, authorizes local governments to establish community redevelopment agencies to improve slum and blighted areas within their jurisdiction. The Act sets forth the legal process by which local governments may establish community redevelopment agencies and provide financing and regulatory processes to undertake the complex task of overcoming the conditions that contribute to the causes of slum and blight in declining areas of the City.

- **Section 163.335, F.S.** requires local government desiring to establish a community redevelopment agency to adopt, by resolution, a finding that one or more “slum” or “blighted” areas exist within its jurisdiction and that the rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment of such areas is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals or welfare of the residents in the area. Upon adoption of a redevelopment plan, the City’s redevelopment agency can begin implementing the plan, including the creation of a tax increment trust fund for the redevelopment area. The following paragraphs discuss “slum” and “blight” as defined in the Florida State Statute:
- **Section 163.335(1), F.S.** ... slum and blighted areas which constitute a serious and growing menace, injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and welfare of the residents of the state; that the existence of such areas contributes substantially and increasingly to the spread of disease and crime, constitutes an economic and social liability imposing onerous burdens which decrease the tax base and reduce tax revenues, substantially impairs or arrests sound growth, retards the provision of housing accommodations, aggravates traffic problems, and substantially hampers the elimination of traffic hazards and the improvement of traffic facilities; and that the prevention and elimination of slums and blight is a matter of state policy and state concern in order that the state and its counties and municipalities shall not continue to

be endangered by areas which are focal centers of disease, promote juvenile delinquency, and consume an excessive proportion of its revenues because of the extra services required for police, fire, accident, hospitalization, and other forms of public protection, services, and facilities.

- **Section 163.335(2), F.S.** ... certain slum or blighted areas, or portions thereof, may require acquisition, clearance, and disposition subject to use restrictions, as provided in this part, since the prevailing condition of decay may make impracticable the reclamation of the area by conservation or rehabilitation; that other areas or portions thereof may, through the means provided in this part, be susceptible of conservation or rehabilitation in such a manner that the conditions and evils enumerated may be eliminated, remedied, or prevented; and that salvageable slum and blighted areas can be conserved and rehabilitated through appropriate public action as herein authorized and the cooperation and voluntary action of the owners and tenants of property in such areas.
- **Section 163.335(3), F.S.** ... powers conferred by this part are for public uses and purposes for which public money may be expended and police power exercised, and the necessity in the public interest for the provisions herein enacted is declared as a matter of legislative determination.
- **Section 163.335(4), F.S.** ... tourist areas or portions thereof which are deteriorating and economically distressed due to building density patterns, inadequate transportation and parking facilities, faulty lot layout, or inadequate street layout, could, through the means provided in this part, be revitalized and redeveloped in a manner that will vastly improve the economic and social conditions of the community.
- **Section 163.335(5), F.S.** ... the preservation or enhancement of the tax base from which a taxing authority realizes tax revenues is essential to its existence and financial health; that the preservation and enhancement of such tax base is implicit in the purposes for which a taxing authority is established; that tax increment financing is an effective method of achieving such preservation and enhancement in areas in which such tax base is declining; that community redevelopment in such areas, when complete, will enhance such tax base and provide increased tax revenues to all affected taxing authorities, increasing their ability to accomplish their other respective purposes; and that the preservation and enhancement of the tax base in such areas through tax increment financing and the levying of taxes by such taxing authorities therefore and the appropriation of funds to a redevelopment trust fund bears a substantial relation to the purposes of such taxing authorities and is for their respective purposes and concerns. This subsection does not apply in any jurisdiction where the community redevelopment agency validated bonds as of April 30, 1984.

- **Section 163.335(6), F.S.** ... there exists in counties and municipalities of the state a severe shortage of housing affordable to residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly; that the existence of such condition affects the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of such counties and municipalities and retards their growth and economic and social development; and that the elimination or improvement of such condition is a proper matter of state policy and state concern and is for a valid and desirable public purpose.
- **Section 163.335(7), F.S.** ... prevention or elimination of a slum area or blighted area as defined in this part and the preservation or enhancement of the tax base are not public uses or purposes for which private property may be taken by eminent domain and do not satisfy the public purpose requirement of s. 6(a), Art. X of the State Constitution

Finding of Necessity for Blighted Areas

The following paragraph provides the definition of “blighted areas” as defined in Section 166.340(8) of the Florida State Statute, and which are the basis for a Finding of Necessity for a blighted area:

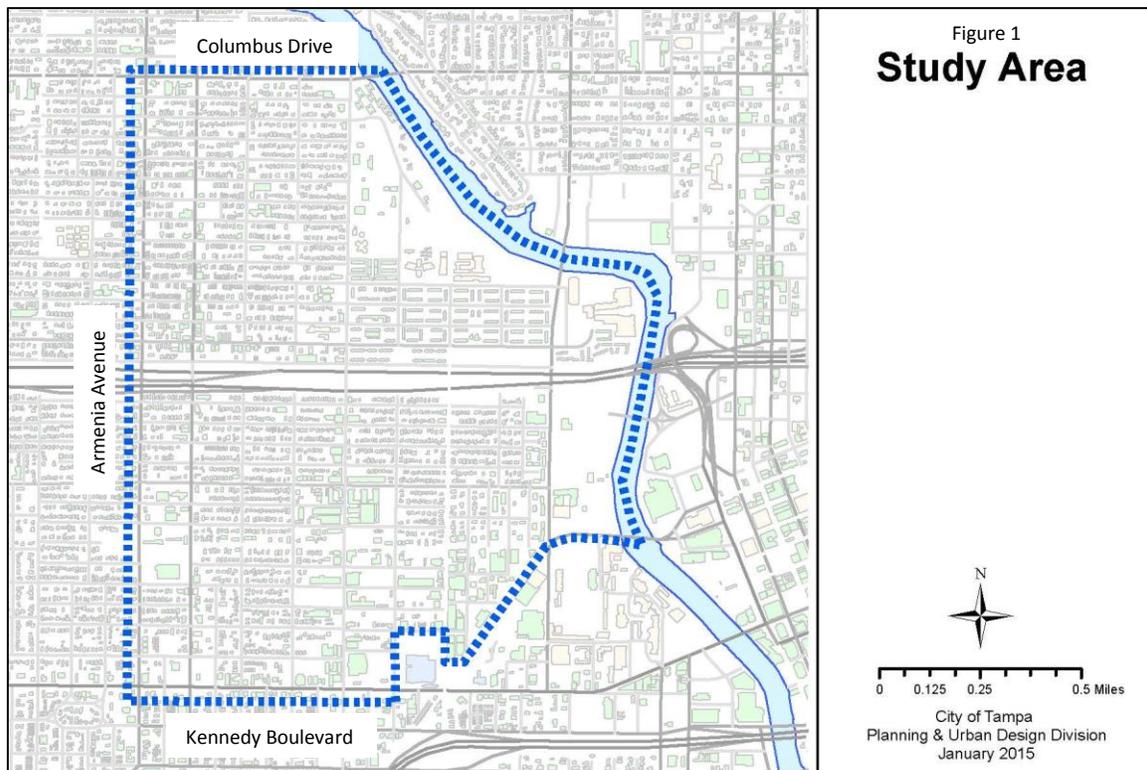
Section 163.340(8), “Blighted area” means an area in which there are a substantial number of deteriorated, or deteriorating structures, in which conditions, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies, are leading to economic distress or endanger life or property, and in which two or more of the following factors are present:

- (a) Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, bridges, or public transportation facilities;
- (b) Aggregate assessed values of real property in the area for ad valorem tax purposes have failed to show any appreciable increase over the 5 years prior to the finding of such conditions;
- (c) Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness;
- (d) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions;
- (e) Deterioration of site or other improvements;
- (f) Inadequate and outdated building density patterns;
- (g) Falling lease rates per square foot of office, commercial, or industrial space compared to the remainder of the county or municipality;
- (h) Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land;
- (i) Residential and commercial vacancy rates higher in the area than in the remainder of the county or municipality;
- (j) Incidence of crime in the area higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality;
- (k) Fire and emergency medical service calls to the area proportionately higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality;

- (l) A greater number of violations of the Florida Building Code in the area than the number of violations recorded in the remainder of the county or municipality;
- (m) Diversity of ownership or defective or unusual conditions of title which prevent the free alienability of land within the deteriorated or hazardous area;
- (n) Governmentally owned property with adverse environmental conditions caused by a public or private entity.

Study Area

The Study Area is generally bounded by Armenia Avenue on the west, Columbus Drive on the north, Hillsborough River on the east and Kennedy Boulevard on the south. Lands owned by the University of Tampa and Tampa General Hospital are not included. The study area consists of approximately 964 acres.



The Study Area is described as that Part of:

Sections 13, 14, 23 and 24, Township 29 South, Range 18 East, all lying within the City of Tampa, Hillsborough County, Florida, lying within the following described boundaries to wit:

Beginning at the intersection of the centerline of Armenia Avenue (Armina Avenue) and the centerline of Columbus Drive (Michigan Avenue), said intersection lying in Section 14, Township 29 South, Range 18 East; thence Easterly along said centerline of Columbus Drive and its Easterly projection, to and along the centerline of the Columbus Street Bridge, to its intersection with the centerline of the Hillsborough River, said centerline lying between the Easterly and Westerly combined Pierhead and Bulkhead Lines of said River as determined by the Jacksonville District, Corps of Engineers of the Department of the Army, and shown on their drawing of the U.S. Harbor Lines, Tampa Harbor, Florida, Hillsboro River and Hillsboro Bay, Sheet No. 3, File 45-20, 641; thence meandering Southeasterly, Easterly and Southerly along said centerline of the

Hillsborough River, across the North Boulevard Bridge (Holtzinger Bridge), across Interstate Highway 275 (State Road 400) and across the Laurel Street Bridge (Fortune Street Bridge), to its intersection with the South boundary of Section 13, Township 29 South, Range 18 East; thence continue Southerly along said centerline of the Hillsborough River, to its intersection with the centerline of the Cass Street Bridge, said intersection lying in Section 24, Township 29 South, Range 18 East; thence Westerly along said centerline of the Cass Street Bridge and its Westerly projection, to and along the centerline of Cass Street, to its intersection with the centerline of North Boulevard (10th Avenue); thence continue Westerly along said centerline of Cass Street to and along the centerline of the C.S.X. Railroad (S.F.R.R.) in a Southwesterly direction, parallel with the Northwesterly boundary of the University of Tampa Campus, to its intersection with the Easterly projection of the centerline of North "A" Street"; thence Westerly along said Easterly projection and centerline, to its intersection with the centerline of Willow Avenue (15 Avenue); thence Northerly along said centerline of Willow Avenue, to its intersection with the centerline of North "B" Street; thence Westerly along said centerline of North "B" Street, to its intersection with the centerline of Oregon Avenue (Seventeenth Avenue); thence Southerly along said centerline of Oregon Avenue, to its intersection with the centerline of Kennedy Boulevard (John F. Kennedy Boulevard (Grand Central)); thence Westerly along said centerline of Kennedy Boulevard to its intersection with the centerline of Armenia Avenue; thence Northerly along said centerline of Armenia Avenue, to its intersection with the centerline of Columbus Drive, said intersection being the Point of Beginning.
Containing 964.33 acres, more or less.

Project Methodology

Each of the 14 blight factors were evaluated using data obtained from City Departments, compiled through the City’s Geographical Information System databases or U.S. Census (2014 American Communities Survey). A windshield survey was undertaken on January 16, 2015 by City of Tampa Planning & Urban Design staff to visually document and photograph conditions. The following table summarizes the data elements and indicators that were compiled and assessed in evaluating the need for redevelopment in the study area.

Table 1

Blight Factor Required by Statute		Indicator / Data
163.340(8)(a)	Defective/Inadequate Transportation Facilities	Site Access Roadway LOS Parking Conditions Pavement Condition Index Street Lighting Sidewalk Presence & Connectivity Transit Service
163.340(8)(b)	Depreciating Assessed Property Values	Assessed Property Values
163.340(8)(c)	Faulty Lot Layout	Block Configuration
163.340(8)(d)	Unsanitary/Unsafe Conditions	Sidewalk Presence & Connectivity Street Lighting Residential Building Conditions Traffic Accidents Brownfields Sites Topography & Floodplain
163.340(8)(e)	Site Deterioration	City Code Violations Fencing Stormwater and Flooding Building Structure Conditions Windshield Survey
163.340(8)(f)	Building Density Patterns	Land Use Code Compatibility Allowable Development Potential
163.340(8)(g)	Falling Lease Rates	Data Not Available

163.340(8)(h)	Tax or Special Assessment Delinquency	Data Not Available
163.340(8)(i)	Vacancy Rates	Data Not Available
163.340(8)(j)	Crime Incidents	Crimes Reported (TPD)
163.340(8)(k)	Fire/Emergency Medical Service Calls	Emergency & Fire Calls (TFR)
163.340(8)(l)	Florida Building Code Violations	Code Violations
163.340(8)(m)	Diversity of Ownership or Defective or Unusual Conditions of Title	Data Not Available
163.340(8)(n)	Governmentally Owned Property with Adverse Environmental Conditions	Site Review

Study Area Description

The population of the study area is estimated at 9,374 persons (2.7% of the city population), with 3,434 households. The average household size is 2.73 persons per household. Males account for 47.3% of the population, with females representing 52.8%. The median age is 28.6 years. The study area population is 66.7% African-American, 25.3% White and the remainder comprised of Other races. Persons of Hispanic origin represent 20.7% of the population.

The study area is bisected by I-275 and is comprised of low-density, residential development, with commercial uses along the major corridors of Howard Avenue, Armenia Avenue, Rome Avenue, Willow Street, Columbus Drive, Cypress Street, Cass Street and Kennedy Boulevard. The Hillsborough River forms the eastern boundary, adjacent to Tampa’s Central Business District. The study area is located in close proximity to Hillsborough Bay.



The study area contains an estimated 4,017 housing units (not including 832 public housing units). Approximately 47.2% of the housing units are classified as single-family detached housing. Another 2.2% are single-family attached housing. The remaining 50.6% of the housing

units are comprised of multi-family units distributed fairly evenly in structures with 3 to 50+ housing units. More than half (52.6%) of the housing units were built before 1959.

According to 2013 American Community Survey, there are 3,434 occupied housing units. Of these units, 29.2% are owner occupied and 70.8% renter. This composition is considerably different from the citywide composition of 50.9% owner occupied and 49.1% renter occupied. In the study area, the median home value is \$121,516 and the median contract rent is \$530. Citywide, the median home value is \$162,000 and the median monthly rent is \$940.

Approximately 69.5% of the population has a high school diploma or greater, compared to 89.5% citywide. The top four occupations of the estimated 2,748 civilian employed population are Food Preparation and Serving Related (17.1%), Sales and Related (13.0%), Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance (12.3%) and Office and Administrative Support (10.3%). The top four industries in which the civilian population is employed are Health Care and Social Assistance (17.2%), Accommodation and Food Service (14.7%), Retail Trade (13.0%) and Educational Services (12.6%).

The median household income is \$18,856, less than half the citywide median household income of \$43,242. Within the study area, 46.8% of the population has an income equal to or below the poverty level. In the past 12 months, 10.4% of the population received public assistance income, 46.7% received Food Stamps/SNAP assistance and 37.4% of the households had one or more persons with disability.

The following table summarizes key economic and social characteristics for the Study Area and City. In all cases, conditions within the study area fall below city averages, indicating residents face several economic and social challenges that could benefit from targeted redevelopment.

Table 2

Selected Economic & Social Characteristics		
Characteristic	Study Area	Citywide
Owner Occupied Housing Units	29.2%	50.9%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	70.8%	49.1%
Median Home Value	\$121,516	\$162,000
Median Rent	\$530	\$940
High School & Better Education	69.5%	89.5%
Median Household Income	\$18,856	\$43,242
Public Assistance Income	10.4%	5.3%
Received Food Stamps/SNAP	46.7%	18.6%

In terms of the physical assets, the study area is home to the 23 acre Julian B. Lane Riverfront Park, five schools (Blake High School, Stewart Middle School, Just Elementary, Dunbar Elementary and Tampa Prep), Martin Luther King, Jr. city recreation complex and pool, Hillsborough County’s Neighborhood Service Center, West Tampa Library, Tampa Housing Authority’s North Boulevard Homes and Mary Bethune Towers, several light commercial

businesses, historic cigar factories and new multi-family develop occurring along Rome Avenue (south of Cypress Street). Just outside the study area is the University of Tampa, Tampa General Hospital and the Central Business District.

The intersection of Main Street and Howard Avenue is the center of the historic West Tampa commercial center. West Tampa, founded in 1892, grew to become a vibrant community, centered on the cigar industry. Over time the cigar industry declined and the commercial district fell into disrepair. In recent years, there has been some new investment, but in general, the commercial district struggles.



Main Street in West Tampa, 1895



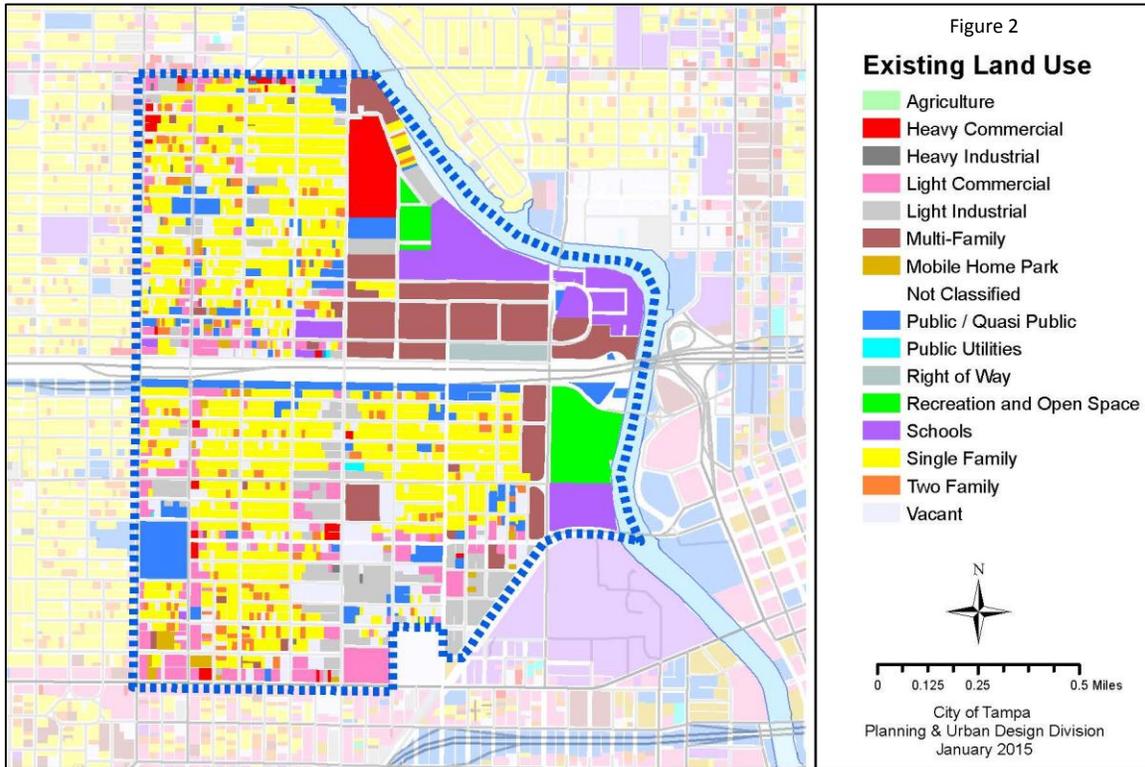
Main Street Today

The existing land use pattern of the study area features a full range of uses. After right-of-way and streets, the top three land uses are single-family uses (20.75%), public/institutional uses (11.75%) and multi-family uses (7.79%). Total residential uses account for 31.45% of the study area. Nearly two-thirds of the study area is right-of-way or residential uses, with the remaining 34.11% being comprised of 10 land uses. Approximately 4.6% of the study area is vacant.

Table 3

Existing Land Use			
Land Use	Parcels	Acres	%
Right-of-Way / Streets		334.71	34.11%
Single Family	403	200.02	20.75%
Public / Institutional	102	54.28	11.75%
Multi-Family	27	81.39	7.79%
Schools	12	54.62	5.67%
Commercial	172	82.64	5.64%
Industrial	83	48.40	4.82%
Vacant	214	44.33	4.60%
Recreation & Open Space	4	26.99	2.66%
Two Family	129	21.43	2.22%
Not Classified	98	7.19	0.75%
Mobile Home Park	33	6.63	0.69%
Public Utilities	4	0.71	0.33%
Agriculture	1	0.64	0.20%
Total		964.00	100.00%

In general, the single-family uses are located west of Rome Avenue and South of I-275. The major concentrations of multi-family uses is found north of I-275, east of Rome Avenue and along North Boulevard. Commercial uses are found along the major arterials – Kennedy Boulevard, Howard Avenue, Armenia Avenue, Cass Street and Columbus Drive. The large commercial use north of I-275 represents the City of Tampa vehicle storage yard. Industrial uses are found south of I-275, along Rome Avenue and north of the University of Tampa. Educational uses are situated along the waterfront. There are numerous vacant parcels (214) that are distributed throughout the site.



Over the years, there have been attempts to stabilize the neighborhood and encourage reinvestment. A portion of the Study Area is preserved through a designated National Historic District. The City established a Commercial Overlay District for the West Tampa commercial area to preserve the character of the area and guide future development. Much of the Study Area is located in a State Enterprise Zone, which provides tax credits for businesses creating certain jobs in the area. The Study Area also has several CDBG eligible census tracts providing a priority for certain federal funds. The Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission completed the West Tampa Economic Development Plan and in 2014, the Tampa Housing Authority and City of Tampa completed the West River Redevelopment Plan. While all of the efforts have had positive impacts, the Study Area still suffers from conditions of blight as outlined in this report.

Study Area Image Summary

The West Tampa Study Area is comprised of a broad mix and range of uses, densities and development character. The images on the following pages provide examples of the type of development that is found in the study area. The map on page 14 provides a key to the location of these images.



1. Main Street and Howard Avenue Intersection



2. Main Street West of Howard Avenue



3. Cigar Building Along Howard Avenue



4. Commercial Building on North Howard



5. Commercial & Residential Uses Along Armenia



6. Residential Uses east of Howard Avenue



7. North Boulevard Homes



8. Light Commercial South of Cass Street



9. Willow Street looking North



10. Commercial Area East of Willow Street



11. Rome Avenue, South of Cass Street



12. NoHo Flats (Rome Avenue, south of Cass St.)



13. North Hyde Park (North A Street)



14. North Hyde Park (Albany Street)



15. Vacant Commercial Building on Rome Avenue



16. Commercial Uses Along Rome Avenue



17. Kennedy Boulevard Looking West



18. Kennedy Boulevard Looking East



19. West Riverfront (Nassau Street)



20. West Riverfront (Grace Street)



21. Cypress Street, West of Rome Avenue



22. Spruce Street, East of Rome Avenue



23. Pine Street (east of Rome Avenue)



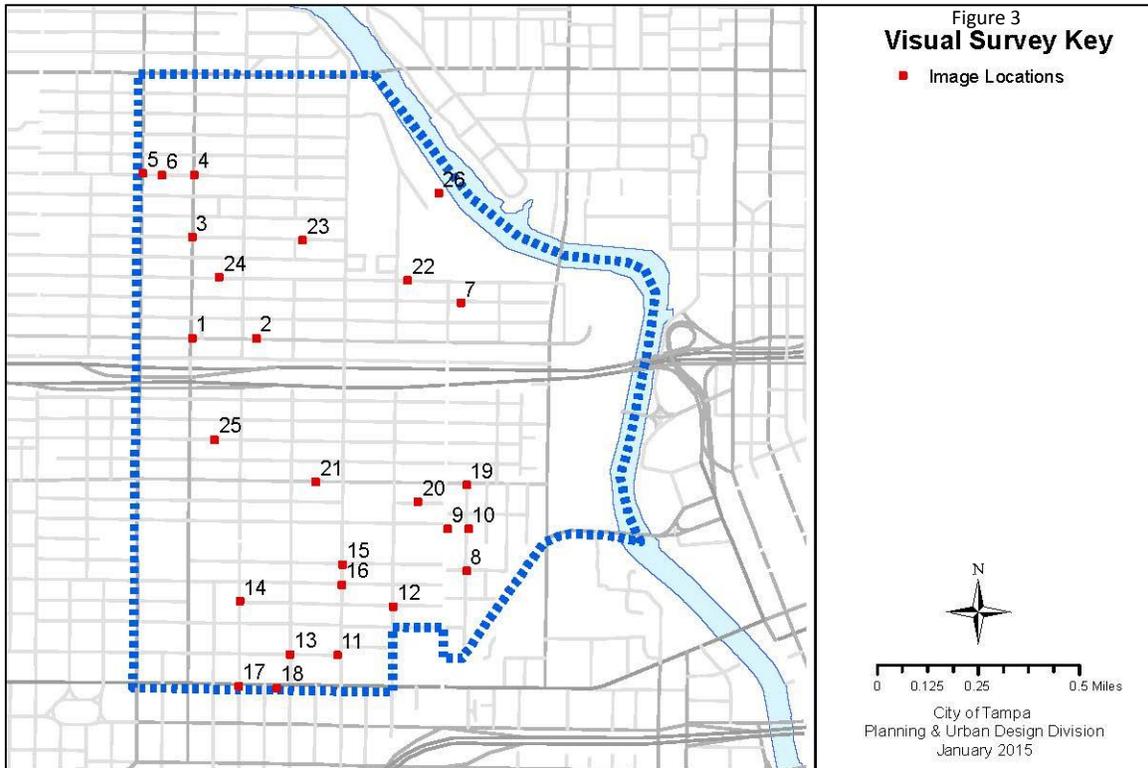
24. Spruce Street (east of Howard Avenue)



25. Arch Street (east of Howard Avenue)



26. Near Ricks on the River

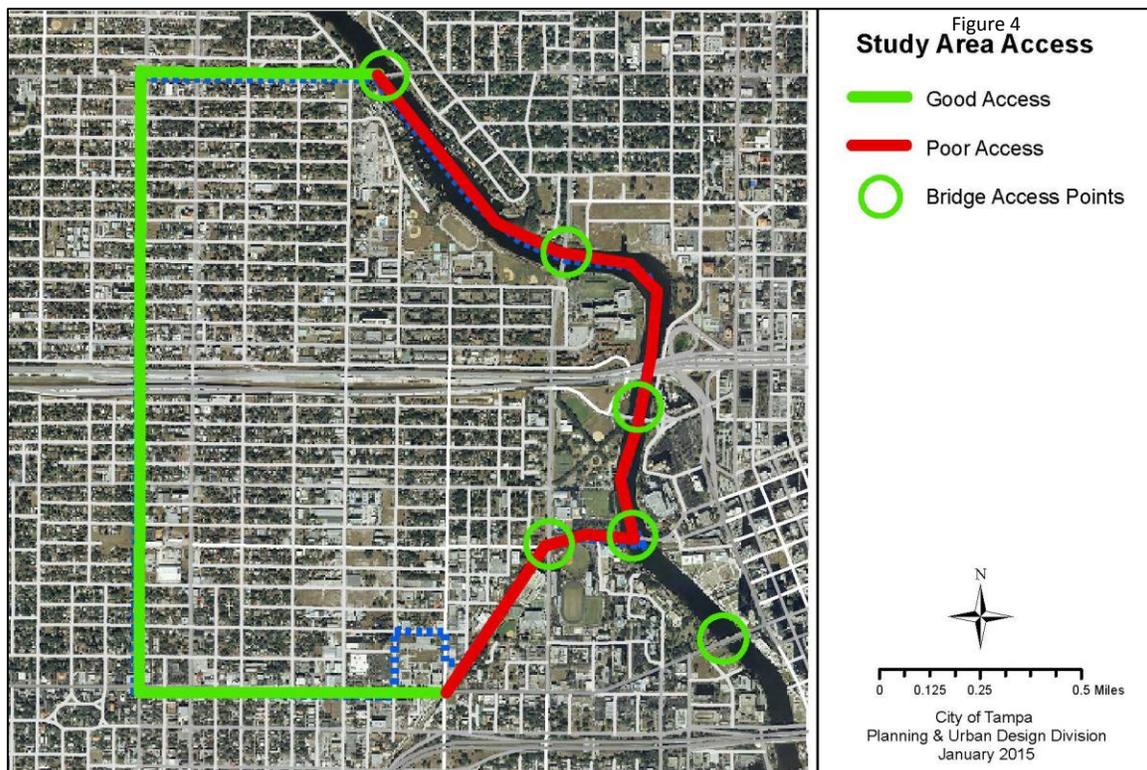


Analysis of Blight Factors

Blight Factor (a) Defective/Inadequate Transportation Facilities ✓

Section 163.340(8)(a), F.S., *Limited access, failing roadways, inadequate parking, deteriorating roadways, lack of street lights, lack of sidewalks and poor public transit service was evident in the study area. The culmination of this inadequate infrastructure is evidence of blight.*

Roadway Connections / Study Area Access: The study area is bounded on three borders by arterial streets - Columbus Avenue, Armenia Avenue and Kennedy Boulevard. The established grid pattern of the street network provides 38 access points into the neighborhood from these arterials. The Hillsborough River limits access from the east side of the study area through only five points, via the bridges at Columbus Street, North Boulevard, Laurel Street, Cass Street and Kennedy Boulevard. Lack of access can hinder economic development and create inefficient traffic circulation.



Street Operation: Over 16 miles of classified roads exist in the study area and approximately 56% of the roads operate below level of service D standard. These roadways include Columbus Avenue, Armenia/Howard Avenues and a portion of Kennedy Boulevard, the three main arterials framing the study area. Internally, the network has capacity; however, according to the City's Transportation Division, due to development under construction and anticipated future development, Rome Avenue (currently a local road) may need to be upgraded to a collector road standard to accommodate traffic demands.

Within the study area, the key issues that have been brought to the attention of the Transportation Department from the public have been minor in nature - such as requests for “No Parking” signs, “No Truck” signs, additional “Speed Limit” signs, etc.

Table 4

Roads Operating Below LOS “D”		
Roadway	From	To
Armenia Avenue	Columbus Avenue	Kennedy Boulevard
Howard Avenue	Columbus Avenue	Kennedy Boulevard
Kennedy Boulevard	Armenia Avenue	Willow Street
Cass Street	Armenia Avenue	Howard Avenue

Parking Facilities – Many businesses front parking along major corridors, like Cypress Street, Kennedy Boulevard and Howard Avenue. This causes an overabundance of asphalt to be the first thing people see as they drive through the area. Some businesses have insufficient asphalt to accommodate parking. There is a high incidence of parking on grass areas. The Transportation Division reports receiving complaints of a lack of parking around the University of Tampa.



Parking In Front of Buildings



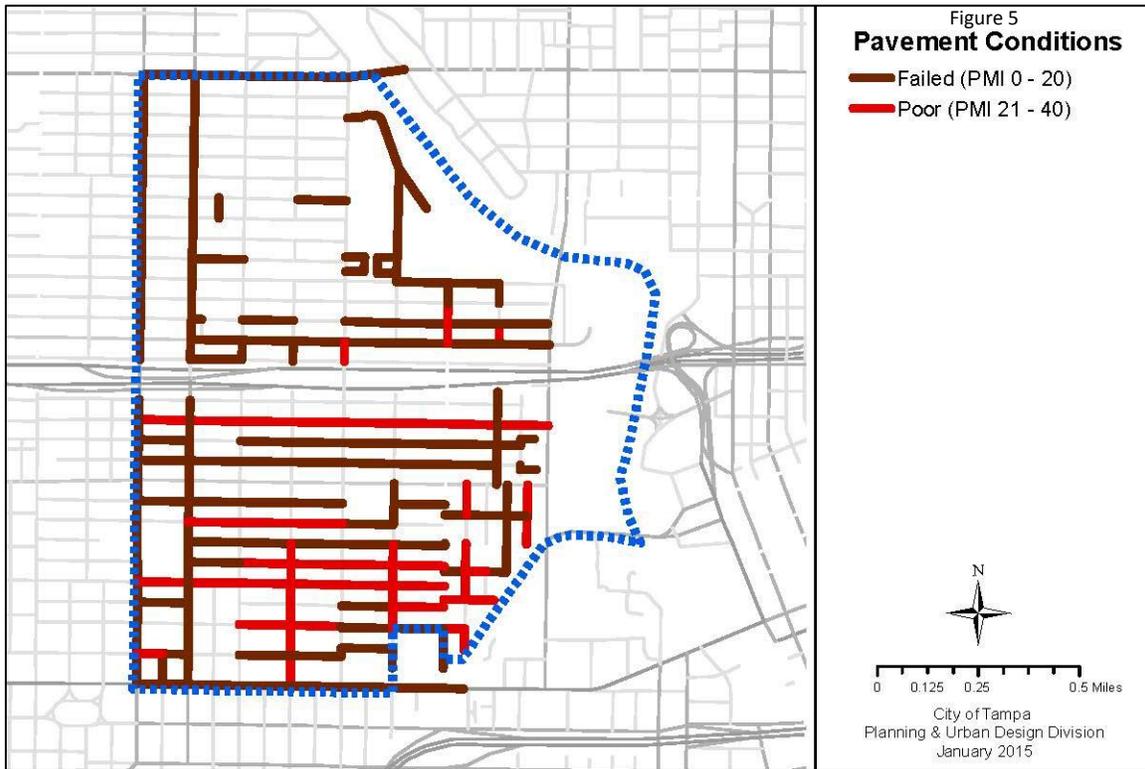
Cars Parked in Grassy Areas

Street Condition – According to the Pavement Condition Index (PCI) on city roadways, as reported by the City’s Transportation & Stormwater Department, approximately 33% of all roadway segments within the study area have a PCI rating of “Failed” and 12% have a rating of “Poor”. Roadways are evaluated based on their current conditions using the PCI scale, where a PCI above 80 is a roadway in good condition and a PCI below 20 is in failing condition.

Table 5

Pavement Condition	%
Excellent	5%
Good	28%
Fair	22%
Poor	12%
Failed	33%

Much of the 17.47 miles of roadway that is rated Poor/Failed is located south of I-275.



Pavement Condition Examples



Deteriorating Curb



Pavement Washing Out



Pavement Wear



Pavement Patching



Excessive Pavement Wear



Pothole Formation

Street Lighting: According to the City’s Transportation & Stormwater Department, the study area is missing approximately 250 streetlights in order to meet current lighting standards. A lack of street lighting is a sign of an inadequate transportation network.

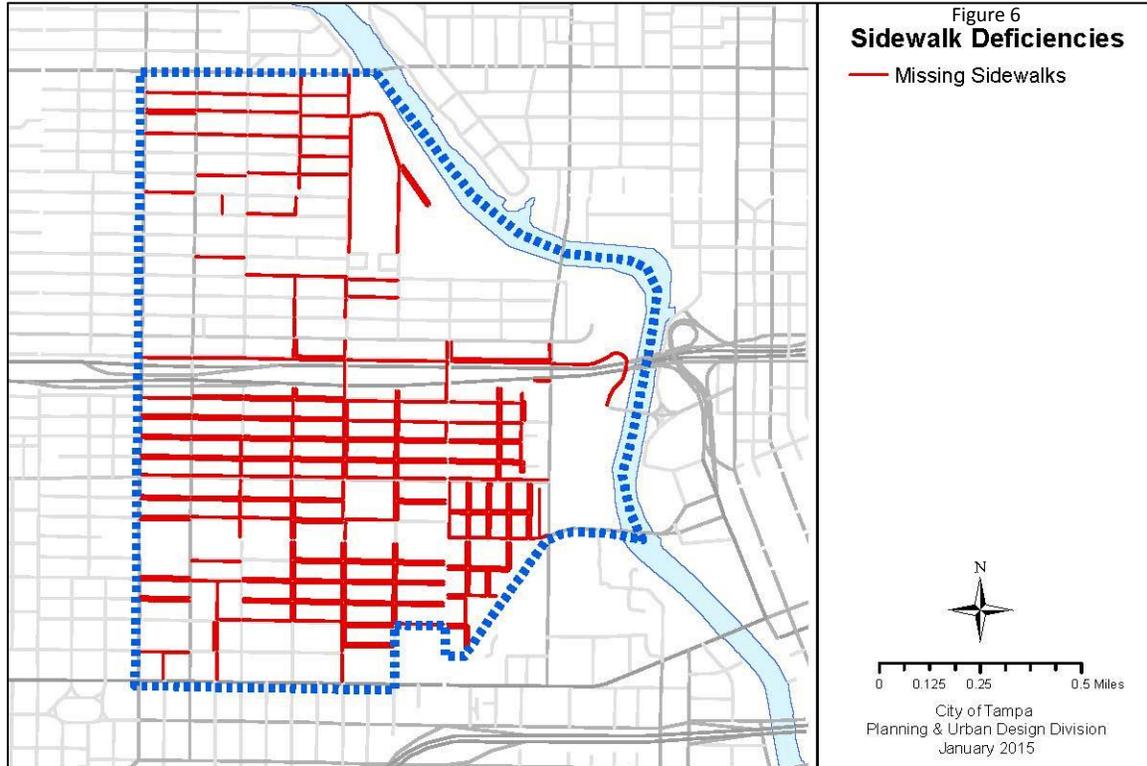
Sidewalks – Within the study area, approximately 56.4% of the classified public roadway network has a sidewalk. This compares favorably to the citywide average of 50.81%. However, within the study area, the coverage is not uniform. The area south of I-275 is significantly unserved (39.41%) in comparison to the overall study area and the City average. Note that the area east of Rome Avenue and north of I-275 lacks streets (and corresponding sidewalks) which is not included in the estimate of sidewalk service.

Table 6

Sidewalk Coverage (In Linear Feet)				
Study Area vs. Citywide	Study Area	%	Citywide	%
Existing Sidewalks	183,653	56.40%	7,825,577	50.81%
No Sidewalk	141,945	43.60%	7,576,127	49.19%
Total Linear Feet	325,598	100.00%	15,401,704	100.00%

Table 6 (continued)

Sidewalk Coverage (In Linear Feet) Within the Study Area				
Within the Study Area	South of I-275	%	North of I-275	%
Existing Sidewalks	68,440	38.95%	115,213	76.87%
No Sidewalk	107,268	61.05%	34,677	23.13%
Total	175,708	100.00%	149,890	100.00%



Sidewalk Deficiencies - Examples



Missing sidewalk – forces pedestrian to the street



Damaged Sidewalk



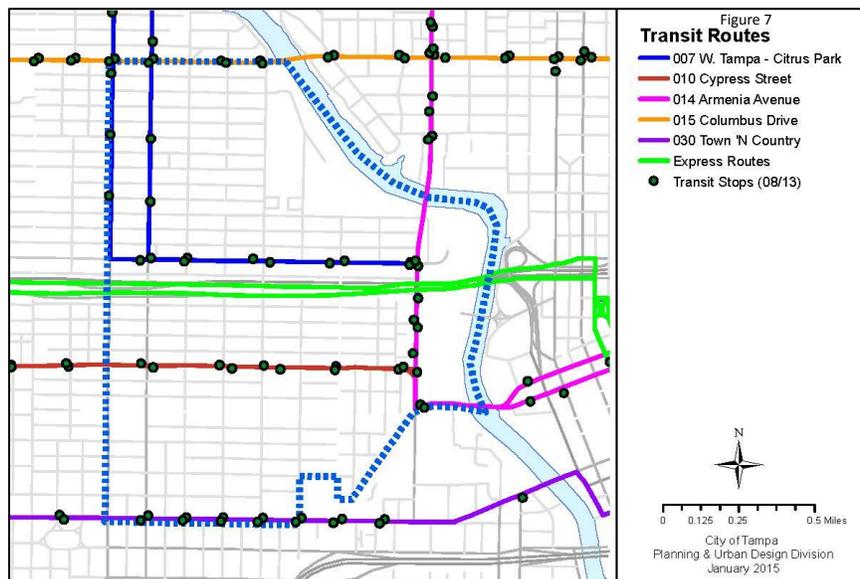
Sidewalk dead ends on a parcel



Interrupted Sidewalk

Transit – Transit service through the study area is provided by HART on four local bus routes. Two express routes travel through the area, with access to these routes in downtown Tampa at the Marion Street Transit Center. The HART **Bus Route 7** runs along Main Street between the Marion Transit Center and Citrus Park at 30 minute headways. **Route 14** runs along North Blvd, at 1 hour headways, between the Marion Transit Center and the Yukon Transfer Center on Busch Blvd. **Route 15** is accessible from the northern portion and runs east/west along Columbus Drive at 30 minute AM/PM headways. **Route 10** traveling through the center of the study area along Cypress Street at 60 minutes headways. And finally, **Route 30** runs along the southern boundary of the study area at 30 minutes headways.

While transit level of service of 30 minute headways is considered average for the City of Tampa, 21.9% of the workers in Census Tract #43 rely on bus transit for their means to work. The large numbers of transit riders is one reason why employees in Census Tract #43 have a relatively high mean travel time to work of 30.2 minutes (2014 American Community Survey).



Blight Factor (b) Declining Property Values



Section 163.340(8)(b), F.S., *Aggregate assessed values of real property in the area for ad valorem tax purposes have increased within previous five years.*

Prior to 2013, assessed property values within the study area were declining; however, for the past two years, assessed property values have increased. This has mirrored a pattern seen citywide for the same time period, and reflective of the larger national recession and subsequent recovery. Since 2013, assessed property values in the study area have increased at a higher rate than observed for the City, thus the criteria is not met. The average parcel assess value is \$233,082. Approximately 1,463 parcels (54.0%) have an assessed value less than \$50,000.

Table 7

Annual Assessed Property Values				
	Study Area		City of Tampa	
Year	Assessed Value	% Change	Assessed Value	% Change
2014	\$630,536,057	15.64%	\$39,193,697,760	6.10%
2013	\$531,917,268	5.42%	\$36,802,950,046	7.85%
2012	\$503,083,194	-3.64%	\$33,915,455,374	-1.13%
2011	\$521,393,917	-5.17%	\$34,297,286,207	-3.93%
2010	\$548,359,934		\$35,646,120,430	

Blight Factor (c) Faulty Lot Layout



Section 163.340(8)(c), F.S. - *Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness is observed in the study area, particularly east of Rome Avenue and north of I-275.*

The size of parcels has a significant impact on the redevelopment potential for any proposed property. Typically, older platted subdivisions and commercial properties are too small for development and exhibit non-conformance with current zoning regulations.

Inconsistencies between lot sizes and lot size requirements can be identified by comparing the minimum lot area requirements contained in the zoning code to the existing lot parcel sizes. As illustrated in the following Table, 6.13% of the lots do not meet the minimum lot area requirements of the City's Land Development Code.

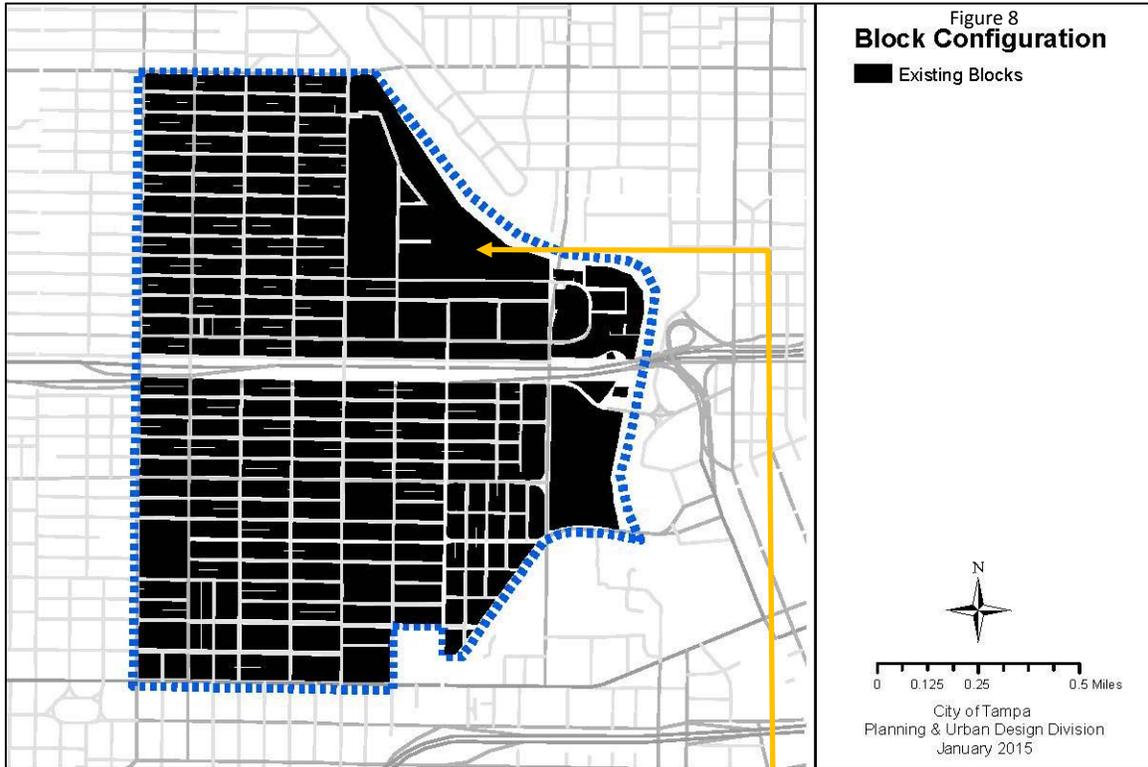
Table 8
Faulty Lots

Zoning Districts	Parcel Count	Minimum Lot Area (SF)	# of Lot	%
RS-50	1,171	5,000	49	4.18%
RM-16	614	5,000	20	3.26%
RM-24	74	5,000	12	16.22%
RO	1	5,000	0	0.00%
OP-1	1	10,000	0	0.00%
CN	7	5,000	0	0.00%
CG	113	10,000	24	21.24%
CI	311	10,000	46	14.79%
IG	145	5,000	15	10.34%
PD [4]	270	Per Adopted Site Plan	0	0.00%
Total Parcel Count	2,707 ^[1,2,3]		166	6.13%

NOTES:

- [1] The proposed CRA boundary includes 2707 parcels (total parcel count by folio number). Source: Hillsborough Property Appraiser.
- [2] 2300 of the 2707 total parcels are located within the boundary of the West Tampa Overlay District.
- [3] The West Tampa Overlay (Ordinance 2004-2) was adopted on January 8, 2004. The Overlay includes a "lot of record" provision, which permits development of substandard sized lots, so long as they were platted or created by a legally recorded deed prior to January 1, 2004.
- [4] 270 of the 2,707 total parcels are zoned "PD" or "PD-A." These parcels are deemed in compliance with minimum lot area requirements, based on the associated site plan adopted by Tampa City Council.

Block Configuration – For the most part, the study area is comprised of 100' x 200' blocks arranged in a grid pattern, which is highly walkable. However, as can be seen in the illustration below, the area east of Rome Avenue and North of I-275 is comprised of larger, oversized blocks, with little connectivity and poor walkability. New, smaller blocks featuring a grid pattern of streets would make this area more developable.



The image to the right shows the area east of Rome Avenue. The presence of the city's vehicle maintenance and storage yard and the configuration of the schools effectively wall off the waterfront and limit public access to the water.



Existing Block Pattern – The image below shows the irregularity of the existing block pattern and its effect on transportation circulation and connectivity. The current block pattern creates several dead-ends, which impedes access to potential development parcels. (Source: West River Redevelopment Plan)



Potential Block Pattern – Below is potential modification of the streets and block configuration which creates smaller, more developable blocks, while improving connectivity. The revised block pattern also improves access to the river. (Source: West River Redevelopment Plan)

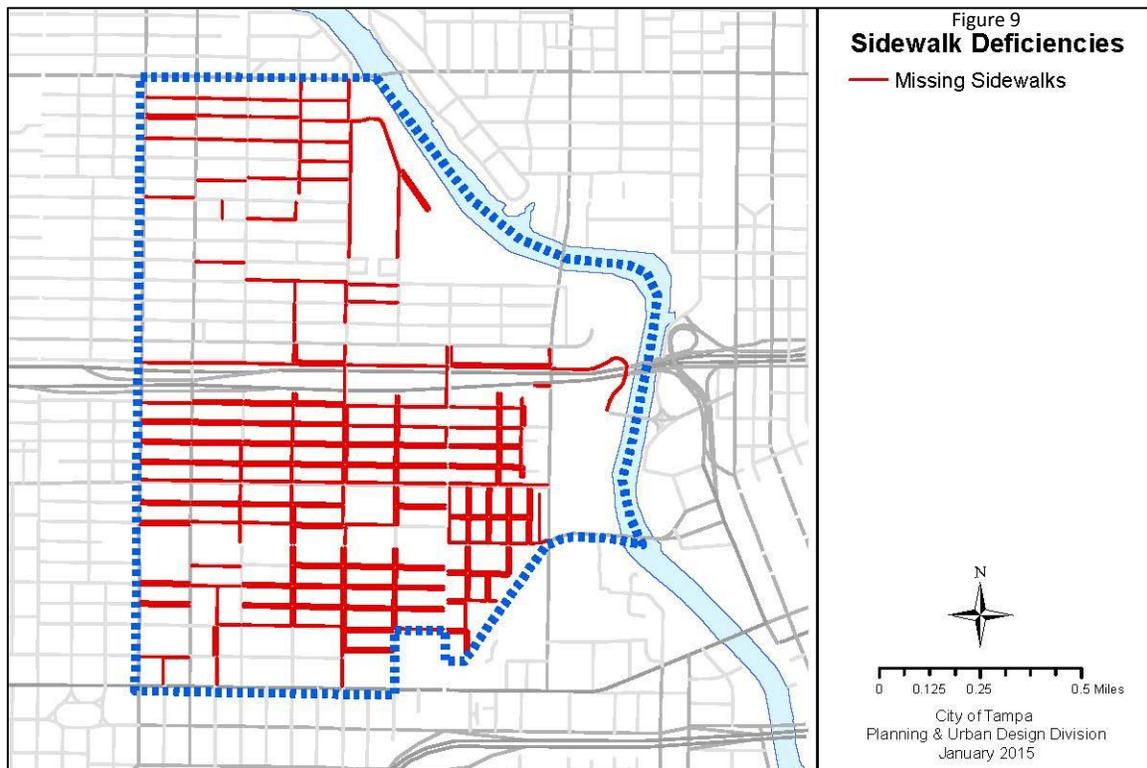


Blight Factor (d) Unsanitary or Unsafe Conditions



Section 163.340(8)(d), F.S., *Unsanitary or unsafe conditions are evident in the study area with inadequate sidewalk connections, deficient street lighting, conditions of buildings, rate of traffic accidents, and presence of brownfields and risk of flooding.*

Sidewalks - Sidewalks provide increased safety and mobility to pedestrian and motorists. South of I-275, 61.9% of the network does not have a sidewalk. When sidewalks are not present, pedestrians are forced to use the roadway shoulder, private property or the roadway itself to reach their destination, which creates for an unsafe environment.



Wastewater – No known active septic systems have been recorded in the study area. Generally, sewer service is available, but there are approximately 190 empty lots, some of which will not have existing lateral connections to sewer. The Wastewater Department reports no issues that would cause unhealthy or unsafe conditions for the residents, however.

Street Lights - Street lighting increases safety for motorists, pedestrians and property owners. Studies have shown that darkness results in a large number of accidents and fatalities, especially those involving pedestrians. A lack of street lighting is often reflected in areas with increased crime. According to the City's Transportation Division, the study area is missing approximately 250 streetlights in order to meet current lighting standards.

Brownfields - According to a memo provided by Tierra, Inc. for the West River Redevelopment Plan, there are a number of historical and existing sites within the study area that pose potential environmental concern, such as: auto service stations, dry cleaners, and leaking underground storage tanks (LUST). These sites require further review to determine their potential level of impact to the site.

Residential Building Conditions – According to data obtained from the Hillsborough County Property Appraiser, approximately 5.39% of the residential structures in the study area were rated in “Fair” or “Poor”, more than double the citywide rate of 2.16%. The percent of units rated “Poor” is 0.80%, again twice than the citywide average of 0.35%. These rates do not include the 832 public housing units at North Boulevard Homes and Mary Bethune Towers, in which the Tampa Housing Authority reports being outdated and obsolete, and for which the Housing Authority has applied for a demolition permit to replace the housing.

Table 9

Residential Building Conditions - Private				
Condition	Study Area		City	
	#	%	#	%
Excellent	11	0.52%	649	0.54%
Good	247	11.68%	9739	8.11%
Average	1,537	72.71%	103,008	85.73%
Fair	97	4.59%	2,159	1.80%
Poor	17	0.80%	432	0.36%
N/A	205	9.70%	4,163	3.46%
Total	2,114	100.00%	120,150	100.00%

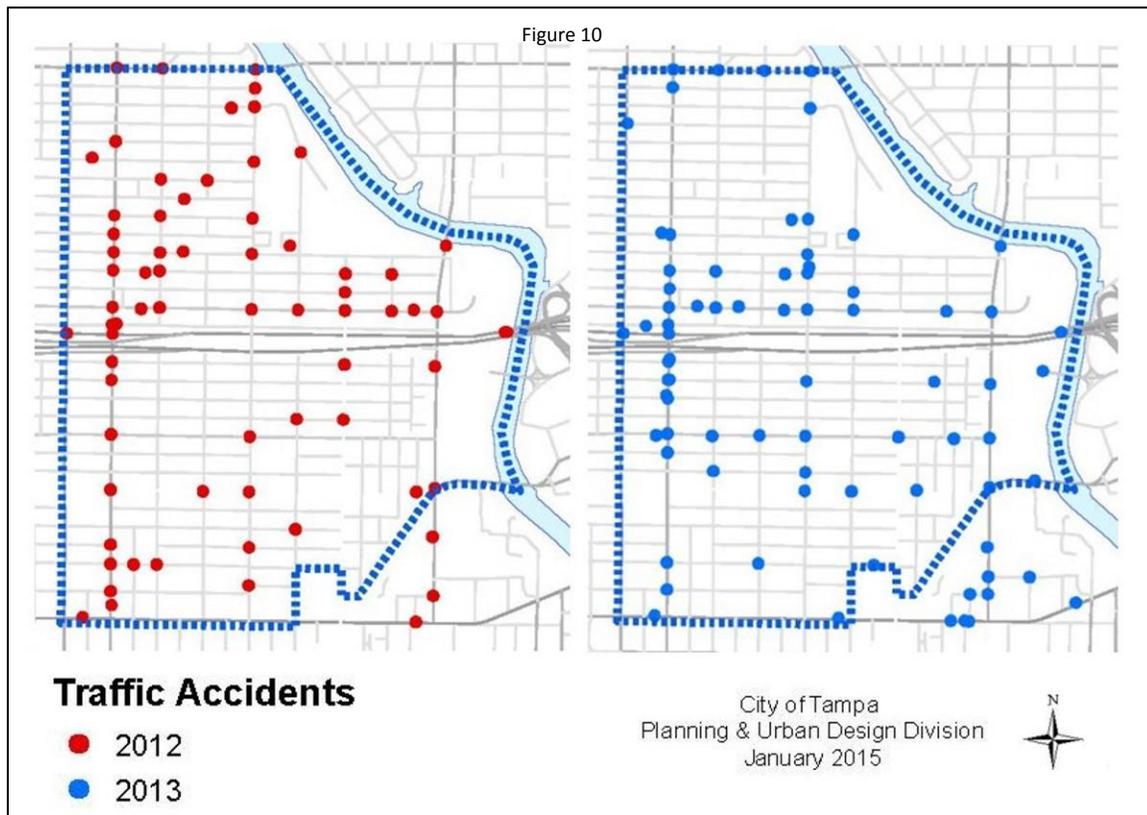


Example of North Boulevard Homes, which has been deemed beyond Repair by the Tampa Housing Authority and will be demolished in 2016.

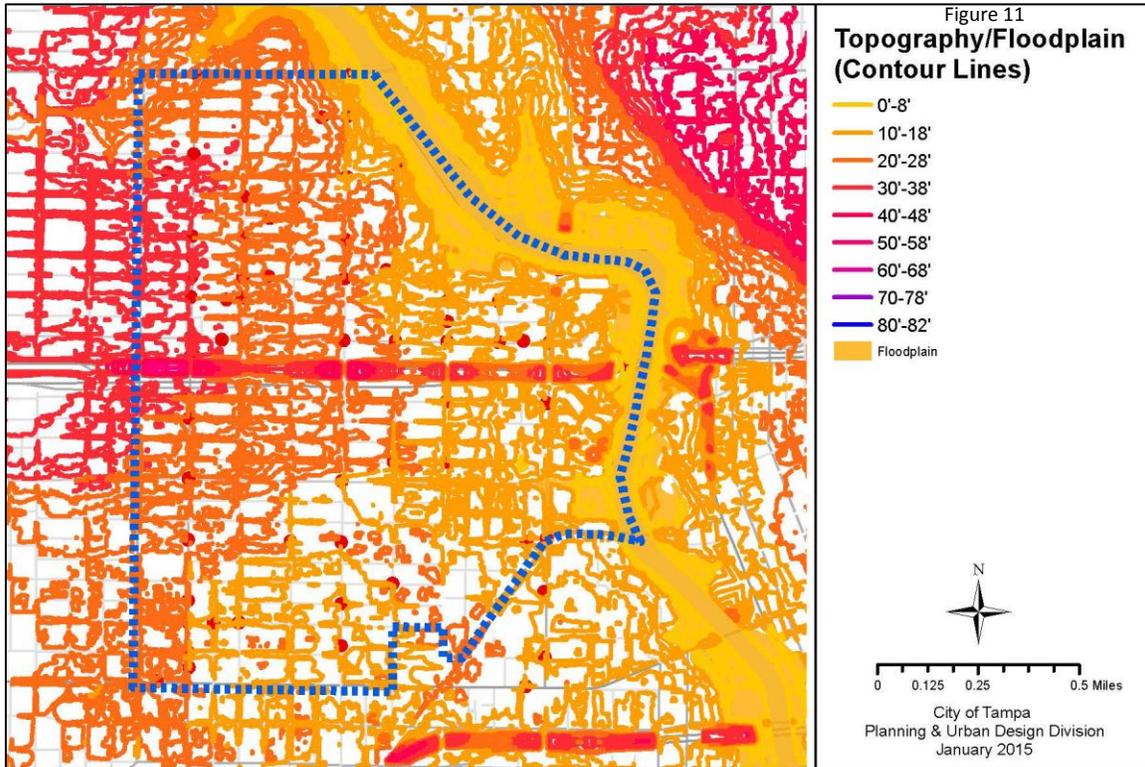
Traffic Accidents – In 2013, 153 traffic accidents were recorded within the study area, an increase of 34.5% over the 2012 mark of 113 accidents. The 34.5% increase is higher than the 13.8% increase in citywide traffic accidents for the same period. Looking at accidents on a per acre basis reveals a higher rate in the study area when compared to citywide data. In 2013, the study area had a 0.158 accident/acre rate, nearly double the citywide rate of 0.091. Portions of Howard Avenue, Cypress Street, Cass Street, Rome Avenue and Columbus Avenue, shown in the following map, have recorded the highest incident of traffic accidents in the study area (See Map on following page).

Table 10

Traffic Accident Data				
	Study Area		Citywide	
	Total	Per Acre	Total	Per Acre
2012	113	0.117	5,731	0.080
2013	152	0.158	6,522	0.091



Topography and Floodplain: The topography of this study area ranges from a low of 0 feet above sea level along the river bank, to 32 feet at west portion of the study area. The area below the Tampa Interstate is much higher, however, reaching 54 feet at some locations. According to FEMA flood data, the 100-year floodplain encroaches into the site along the banks of the Hillsborough River, and extends further into the site in the area of Stewart Middle School. Approximately 9.3% of the study area (89.8 acres) resides in the floodplain. In times of heavy rains, the low lying areas are subject to flooding, which can pose hazards to property and human safety.



Left – Example of potential hazardous conditions that can occur in the study area during times of severe heavy rainfall. (Image courtesy of North Hyde Park Business Association).

Factor (e) Site Deterioration



Section 163.340(8)(e), F.S., Deterioration of site or other improvements was evident in the study area in an assessment of code violations, fencing, landscaping, flooding and appearance of the study area.

Site Conditions / Code Violations – An examination of the recorded city code violations since January 1, 2012 reveals 2,423 violations in the Study Area and 71,744 violations citywide. Of all violations, 87% fall into ten categories shown below. *Accumulations and Overgrowth* account for more than 50% of the violations. Citywide, *Trees and Overgrowth* account for the top two violations in the City.

Table 11
Top 10 Violations in the Study Area
2012-2015

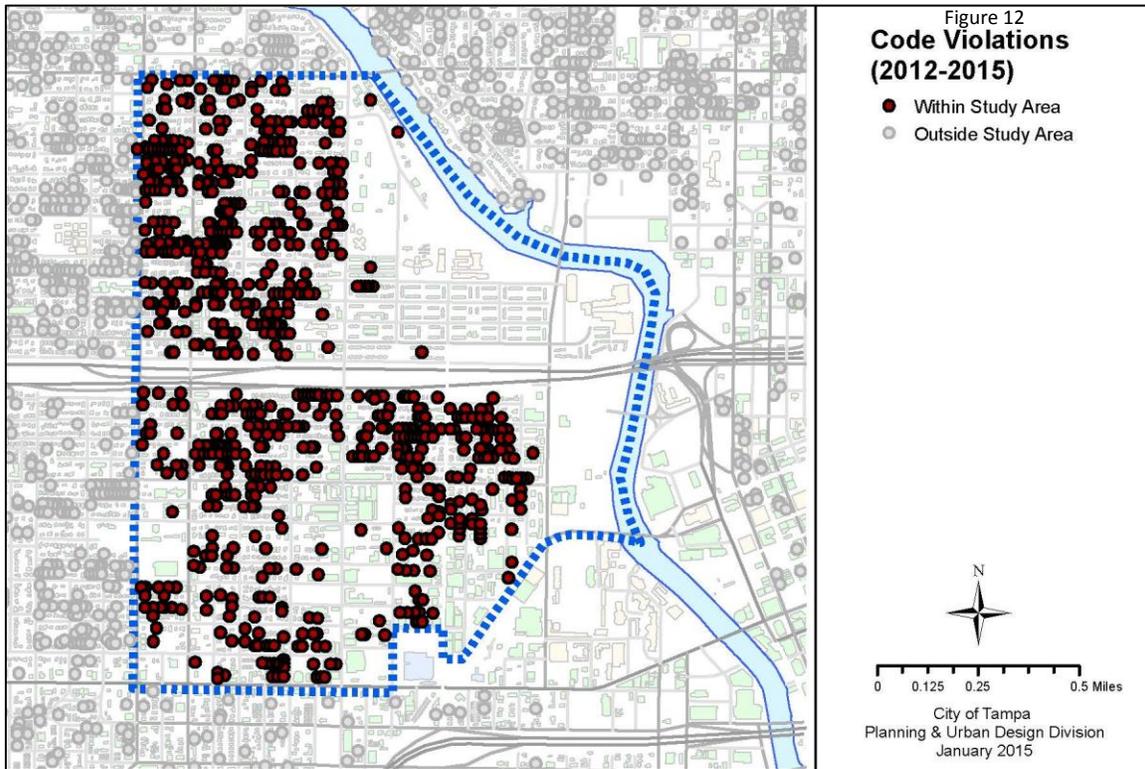
Rank	Violation	#
1	Accumulations	720
2	Overgrowth	631
3	Trees/Bushes/Vines	204
4	Inoperative Vehicles	154
5	Zoning-Land Use	154
6	Deteriorated Equipment	65
7	Sound With Minor Repairs	44
8	Structure	44
9	New Housing Certificate of Compliance	43
10	Deteriorated/Vacant Structure	61
	Total	2,210

Comparing the number of violations per structure and acre reveals a higher incidence of code violations in the study area than found citywide. Since January 1, 2012, there have been 2.51 code violations per acre in the study area, compared to 0.54 violations per acre in the City. On a per structure basis, in the study area, there have been 0.967 violations per structure, more than 10 times the citywide rate of 0.093 violations per structure. On a per capita basis, again the study area has a higher rate of violations of 0.258 per capita, compared to 0.114 per capita for the entire city.

Table 12
Code Violations – Study Area vs. City of Tampa
2012-2015

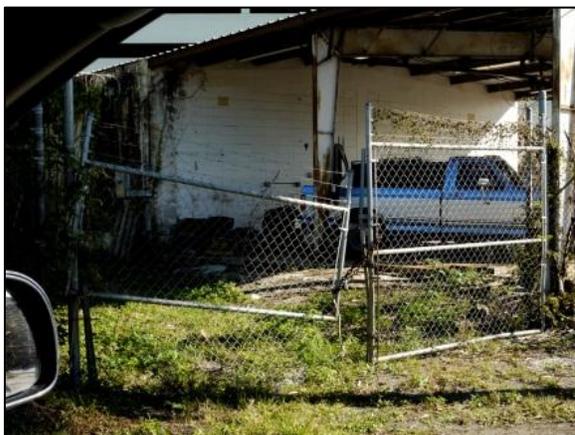
Area	Violations (Vio)	Acres	Vio/Acre	Structures	Vio/Structure	Population	Vio/Capita
Study Area	2,423	964	2.51	2,506	0.967	9,374	0.258
Citywide	39,254	71,744	0.54	421,308	0.093	343,768	0.114

The violations are evenly split with respect to the Interstate-275 with 1,277 violations occurring north of I-275 and 1,146 south of the interstate. More than 1,800 violations occurred west of Rome Avenue, with 613 violations occurring east of Rome.



Fencing – There is a noticeable incidence of chain link fences in the study area, many of which detract from the aesthetic quality of the community. Some are in disrepair. Since January 1, 2012, there have been 37 code violations related to fencing in the study area (1.5% of all recorded violations in the study area).

Examples of chain link fences in the study area



Fence in Disrepair



Unappealing Fence



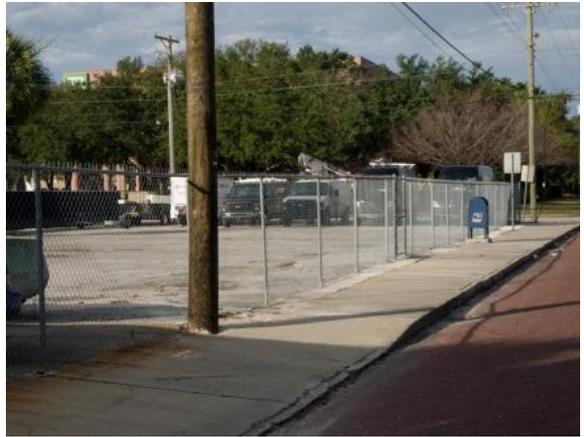
Fenced In Parking Lot



Residential Uses with Chain Link Fence



Fenced-In Parking Lot



Another Fenced-In Lot

Boarded Structures - Two boarded homes were found during the windshield survey on January 16, 2015.

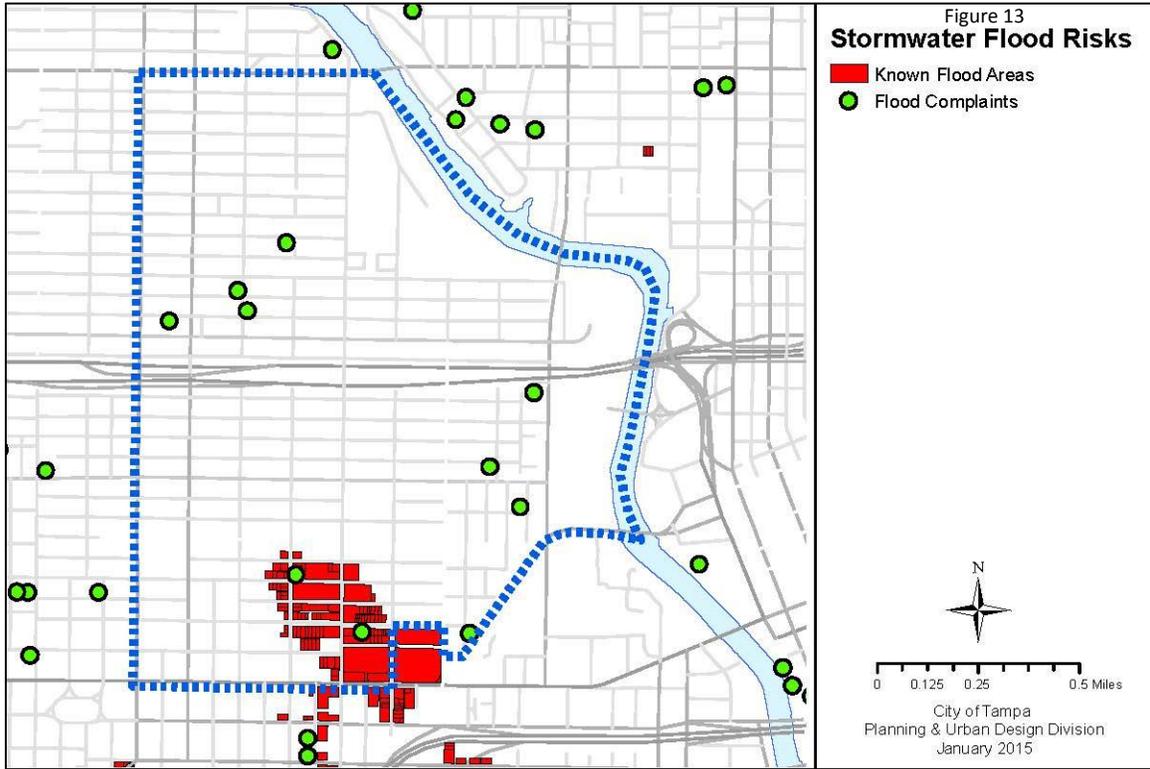


1107 North Delaware Street



1101 Grace Street

Stormwater – Approximately 29.9 acres (3.1%) has been mapped by the City’s Stormwater Department as having known stormwater flooding problems. Since 2006, the Stormwater Department has recorded flooding complaints registered by residents. Of the 1,588 complaints received, 10 (0.63%) were within the study area. Persistent flooding can be indicator of a degraded stormwater system.



Stormwater Deficiencies - Examples



Rain Water Accumulation



Water Spilling Over Sidewalks



Intersection Inundation



Water Accumulating in Alley



Street and Sidewalk Under Water



Example of Street Flooding



Culvert Overwhelmed by Flooding



Example of Street Flooding

(Images of stormwater flooding provided by North Hyde Park Business Association)

Blight Factor (f) Building Density Patterns



Section 163.340(8)(f), F.S., *Inadequate and outdated building density patterns and intensity limits were observed in the study area.*

Density is defined as the number of residential units permitted per acre. Density is determined by dividing the total number of units by the total site area less right-of-way. Future Land Use is the preferred future vision of the development of land as it relates to use and density. Zoning regulates the current use of the land and development in relation to building size, bulk, density and the way land is used.

An analysis of the area east of Rome Avenue and north of I-275 for the *2014 West River Redevelopment Master Plan (page 25)* revealed several conflicts between what is entitled on the land and the desired redevelopment program. The Plan recommends changes to the future land use categories and the zoning code to correct the following:

1. The maximum height of the RM-24 zoning district (60') is not enough to accommodate the existing Mary Bethune Tower much less any new mid-rise residential products for river-front or senior housing.
2. The overall maximum entitled residential density of 24 du/acre is not sufficient to accommodate the density of the planned development program.
3. Parking ratios required by the City may be higher than what would typically be considered market standard for urban format development that is positioned to rely more directly on urban walkability and transit. In fact, many businesses report difficulty in meeting current parking requirements, as the parcels are too small or existing buildings were sited at a time when parking was not an issue.
4. Other urban design standards may need to be negotiated or developed to accommodate the needs of an urban infill development.

The images on the next page illustrate the disparity between the existing density requirements and the desired future pattern of development.



Main Street looking west towards Rome Avenue showing existing low and moderate density development permitted under existing land use and zoning regulations.



Same view, but with a desired density that exceeds the current RM-24 future land use and zoning requirements (2014 West River Redevelopment Plan).

Non-residential development is measured by the ratio of the total building area to the total land area. This measure is called the *Floor-Area-Ratio (FAR)*, and for four of the five non-residential zoning categories, the current development is less than 65% of the maximum build-out (see next page), indicating a substantial amount of development entitlements that are not being utilized. The Neighborhood Commercial (CN) zoning category is fully built-out, indicating a need for additional land to be zoned at this category.

Table 13

Total Development Build-Out by Zoning Category					
	Zoning District				
	CG	CI	CN	OP-1	IG
Maximum FAR	1.5	1.5	0.35	3.5	0.75
Existing FAR	0.26	0.3	0.36	0.32	0.48
Existing Area (SF)	1,453,597	2,726,420	55,321	493,970	2,210,234
Maximum Building Area (SF)	2,180,396	4,089,631	19,362	7,409,556	1,657,676
Existing Building Area (SF)	375,645	827,006	19,720	160,163	1,062,307
% Build-Out	17.23%	21.22%	101.85%	2.16%	64.18%

Blight Factor (g) Falling Lease Rates ●●●

Section 163.340(8)(g), F.S., *Falling lease rates per square foot of office, commercial, or industrial space compared to the remainder of the city could not be verified with available data.*

Not Analyzed.

Blight Factor (h) Tax/Special Assessment Delinquency ●●●

Section 163.340(8)(h), F.S., *Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land could not be verified with available data.*

Not Analyzed.

Blight Factor (i) Vacancy Rates ●●●

Section 163.340(8)(i), F.S., *Residential and commercial vacancy rates higher in the study area than in the remainder of the city could not be confirmed.*

American Communities Survey data indicates there is a higher residential vacancy rate in the study area; however commercial vacancy rates could not be confirmed with available reports or documentation at the time this report was prepared; therefore the data is considered inconclusive.

Blight Factor (j) Crime Incidents



Section 163.340(8)(j), F.S., *The incidence of crime in the study area was shown to be higher than observed on a citywide basis.*

The percentage of crime in an area can be a strong indicator of deteriorating conditions. Data obtained from the Tampa Police Department indicates that overall crime in the study area was 1.5 times higher than the citywide rate. In 2013, there were 0.122 crimes per capita within the study area, compared to 0.079 crimes per capita for the City as a whole. Part 1 was 0.041 per capita in the study area, while the city had a lower rate of 0.031 per capita. Part 2 crime reached 0.081 per capita in the study area, again much higher than the 0.048 rate for the city. While crime is down both in the city and the study area from previous years, the current crime rate in the study area is still significant.

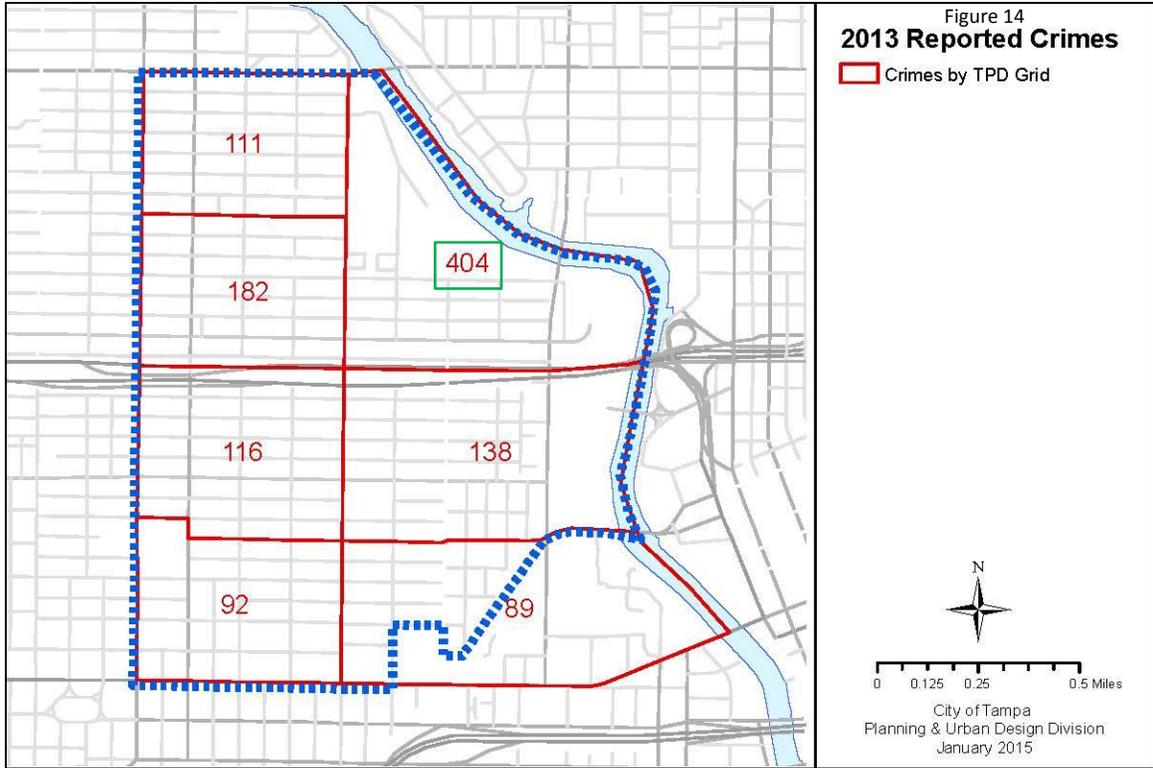
Table 14

Number of Crimes Reported by TPD Grids and Citywide (2012 & 2013)											
YEAR	114	123	124	138	139	154	155	TOTAL	CPC	CITYWIDE	CPC
								L		E	
2012 Part I	39	61	122	42	41	51	51	407	.043	11,864	.035
2012 Part II	58	150	284	82	76	34	36	720	.077	15,716	.046
Total I & II	97	211	406	124	117	85	87	1,127	.120	27,580	.080
2013 Part I	43	55	117	29	58	45	40	387	.041	10,531	.031
2013 Part II	68	127	287	87	90	47	49	755	.081	16,446	.048
Total I & II	111	182	404	116	138	92	89	1,142	.122	26,977	.079

CPC = Crimes Reported Per Capita

Source: Tampa Police Department, All crimes for TPD Grids 114, 123, 124, 138, 139, 154 and 155

The high percentage of crime in an area may discourage the private sector of investing in redevelopment. Crime is closely related to deteriorating conditions including high unemployment rates, high vacancy rates, and unsafe and unsanitary conditions. Left unaddressed, the crime rates will most likely continue to escalate, making a less desirable environment for growth and development. The following map illustrates the number of calls by TPD Grid, showing the highest numbers of crimes occurring in Grid #124 with Grid #123 having the second highest number of reported crimes.



Blight Factor (k) Fire/EMS Calls



Section 163.340(8)(k), F.S. - Fire and emergency medical service calls were shown to be proportionately higher in the study area than observed in the remainder of the city.

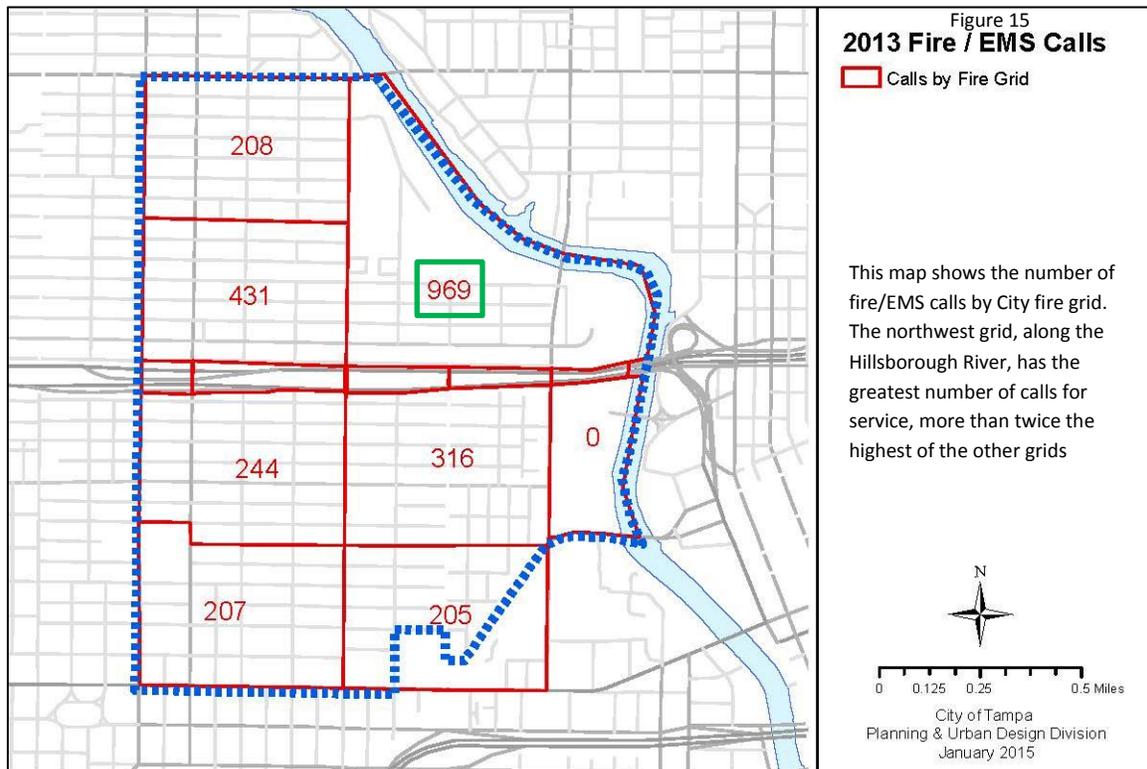
The percentage of fire and emergency medical service calls can be a strong indicator of a blighted area. A total of 0.343 calls per capita were reported within the study area in 2013, compared to 0.210 calls per capita citywide. The numbers were similar for 2012. On a per capita basis, the 2013 rate for the study area is 63.3% higher than for the City. This indicates that the study area has a higher incidence of fire and emergency needs and would be considered a higher risk area.

Table 15

Number of Fire Emergency Service Calls (2012 & 2013)					
Year	Type	Study Area	CPC	Citywide	CPC
2012	Fire	326	0.035	8,817	0.026
	EMS	2,782	0.297	63,630	0.185
	Total	3,108	0.332	72,447	0.211
2013	Fire	335	0.036	8,324	0.024
	EMS	2,876	0.307	63,821	0.186
	Total	3,211	0.343	72,145	0.210

CPC = Calls Per Capita

Source: Tampa Fire Rescue, TFA CAD AS400 Incident History File for TFR Grids: 114, 123, 124, 138, 154, And 155.





On February 2, 2015, the New Salem Missionary church located at 405 North Oregon Street was destroyed by fire.



Blight Factor (l) Florida Building Code Violations



163.340(8)(l), F.S. *A greater number of violations of the Florida Building Code in the area than the number of violations recorded in the remainder of the city (Florida Building Code Violations) could not be verified.*

An examination of the code violations for condemned structures, deteriorating structures and dilapidated structures reveals 108 violations in the study area since January 1, 2012, representing 4.46% of all violations occurring in the study area. Citywide, the rate of violations falling into these categories was 5.8%. The incidence of such violations in the Study Area is not high enough to meet these criteria.

Blight Factor (m) Unusual Conditions of Title



163.340(8)(m), F.S. *Diversity of ownership or defective or unusual conditions of title which prevent the free alienability of land within the deteriorated or hazardous area could not be verified.*

Analysis of the Property Appraiser's ownership data indicated a diversity of ownership. Full title searches were not conducted due to time restrictions and unavailable resources. The data is therefore deemed inconclusive.

Blight Factor (n) Governmentally Owned Property with Adverse Environmental Conditions ✓

163.340(8)(n), F.S. *Governmentally owned property with adverse environmental conditions caused by a public or private entity does exist in the study area.*

Governmentally owned property in the study area accounts for approximately 174.13 acres owned by the City of Tampa, Hillsborough County, Tampa Housing Authority, Hillsborough County School District and the Florida Department of Transportation. As part of the West River Redevelopment Master Planning effort, Tierra, Inc., a full service consulting geotechnical, structural, forensics, environmental and construction materials testing engineering firm conducted a high-level environmental review of readily available documents such as historic maps, aerial photos and brownfield databases to determine potential contamination sites in and immediately surrounding the West River study area. Tierra also conducted limited site observations to better assess site conditions. Two sites owned by the City of Tampa, noted below, raised concerns.* The combined 12 acres represent 6.9% of the government owned land in the study area.

1. **West Saint Louis BF Area – US BROWNFIELDS: BF291204000** (1506 W. St. Louis Street, Tampa, FL 33607). This site is used primarily by the City of Tampa Water Distribution and Wastewater Departments for office, training, equipment storage, with limited maintenance activities. Historical use has included City Sanitary Sewer Maintenance and Construction Yards.
2. **City of Tampa DPW Fleet Maintenance Division – LUST Facility ID: 8625669** (2609 N. Rome Avenue, Tampa, FL 33607) The facility was noted as an operational vehicle maintenance, service and repair facility. One 10,000-gallon diesel UST, two 10,000-gallon unleaded gasoline USTs and one 500-gallon waste oil UST were all installed in July 1979 and removed in July 1996. The facility currently maintains two 8,000-gallon ASTs containing diesel and unleaded gasoline that were installed in July 1996 and are in service. A discharge was reported in July 1996 and cleanup was required. Limited site assessment has been performed. The current work status is “inactive” while cleanup of a petroleum discharge is “pending”.

**Although conducted in a manner consistent with the ASTM E 1527-05, Standard Practice for Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (Phase I ESA) the Initial Contamination Screening Report, dated July 5, 2013 was intended as a screening tool and should not be used in place of an ASTM Phase I ESA report format for specific properties.*

Findings and Conclusions

This study has identified and documented persistent conditions in the West Tampa Area that are consistent with the definition of blight contained in the Florida Statutes. Government maintained demographic and economic statistics highlight a prevailing level of enduring economic distress. Low per capita income, high poverty rates, high unemployment rate, low educational attainment levels, lower median home values compared to the City are strong indicators of this distress. The distressed economic conditions combined with the deteriorated physical environment confirm the continued existence of blight.

Sustained conditions of blight can have negative impacts on a community including:

- Depressed property values, resulting in lower local tax revenues;
- Strain on city services- police, health, fire, building code;
- Increased fire hazard potential because of poor maintenance, faulty wiring and debris;
- Increased code enforcement demands;
- Concentration of low-income populations and marginal businesses with decreased potential for investment to reverse the blighting conditions;
- Creation of an environment that attracts criminal activity;
- Creation of a poor market environment, where existing businesses relocate to other, more stable areas and new businesses do not replace them;
- Cost to existing home owners- higher insurance premiums, low appraisals for homestead properties.

Presence of Blight

The analysis indicates that the West Tampa / West River Area contain at least eight of the fourteen conditions indicative of a “blighted area” listed in the Florida Statutes. The following is a summary of findings that support a declaration of blight for the Study Area:

Defective/inadequate Transportation Facilities

- Restricted access to the study area due to the Hillsborough River.
- 56% of the roads operate below LOS “D” standard.
- Overabundance of paved parking lots facing streets and a lack of paved parking to serve some businesses.
- 33% of roadways have a pavement condition index of “Failed”.
- 250 street lights below desire service levels.
- Large, unserved areas without a sidewalk.

Faulty Lot Layout

- 6.13% of the lots in do not meet minimum lot area requirements of the zoning code.
- Presence of oversized blocks that limit connectivity, redevelopment and walkability.

Unsanitary or Unsafe Conditions

- 61.9% of the area south of I-275 is without a sidewalk.
- Below standard street lighting poses crime and safety risks.
- 5.39% of all structures rated “Fair” or “Poor”, twice the city average of 2.16%.
- 832 housing units at North Boulevard Homes and Mary Bethune Towers are being readied for demolition due to being outdated and beyond repair.

- 0.117 traffic accidents per acre, higher than the city average of 0.080.
- 9.3% of the study area within the 100 – Year Floodplain.

Site Deterioration

- 0.967 code violations per structure, more than 10 times the city average of 0.093 violations per structure.
- 0.258 code violations per capita, twice the city average of 0.114 violations per capita.
- High incidence of chain link fences.
- Presence of Boarded Structures (2).
- 52.6% of the housing units were constructed before 1959.
- 3.1% of the study area having known flooding problems. Several images documenting street and sidewalk flooding during severe rain events.

Building Density Patterns

- Existing land use and zoning regulations do not support desired future plans for a portion of the study area.
- High incidence of underutilized non-residential parcels, as existing developments uses only 64.2% of allowable entitlements.

Crime Incidents

- 0.122 crimes per capita, 1.5 times higher than the city average.
- 0.041 Part 1 crimes per capita, compared to 0.031 Part 1 city crime rate.
- 0.081 Part 2 crimes per capita, compared to 0.048 Part 2 city crime rate.

Fire / EMS Calls for Service

- 0.343 calls for service per capita, 1.5 times higher than the city calls for service
- 0.036 calls for fire service per capita, compared to 0.024 fires per capita citywide.
- 0.307 calls for EMS service per capita, compared to 0.186 EMS calls per capita citywide.

Governmentally Owned Property with Adverse Environmental Conditions

- 6.9% of the government owned land in the study area has documented environmental conditions that need to be addressed.

The purpose of the Community Redevelopment Act is to provide local governments the ability to combat deteriorating urban conditions which retard development of the area. The intent of the legislation is to reduce or eliminate the conditions found in the West Tampa / West River Area.

Redevelopment is by nature more costly than developing vacant land. Improved property is invariably more expensive than vacant property as the cost of demolition and the preparation must be factored in. Additionally, it is often necessary to assemble more than one parcel of land. Redevelopment activity also triggers thresholds for mandatory compliance with more costly, modern development standards. Often environmental clean-up is required which adds expense.

The higher costs associated with property redevelopment will have significant implications for attempts to redevelop portions of the West Tampa Area. The private sector is not likely to absorb the risks and costs of such an undertaking alone. Therefore, the creation of a Community

Redevelopment Agency is the most appropriate tool for the City of Tampa to use when planning, designing and participating with the private sector to revitalize the West Tampa Area.

Data Sources

1. 2013 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates.
 - Population, Social and Economic Estimates
2. City of Tampa Fire Rescue
 - Fire and EMS calls for service
3. City of Tampa Neighborhood Enhancement Department
 - Code Violations
4. City of Tampa Planning and Urban Design Division
 - Faulty Lots
 - Windshield Survey (Conducted on January 16, 2015)
 - Block Configuration
 - Land Use Requirements and Density Allocations
 - Topography and Floodplain
5. City of Tampa Police Department
 - Traffic Accidents
 - Crime Incidents
6. City of Tampa Transportation & Stormwater Department
 - Level of Service of Roads
 - Pavement Condition Index
 - Street Lighting Deficiencies
 - Sidewalk Deficiencies
 - Stormwater Complaints and Known Flood Areas
7. Hillsborough County Property Appraiser
 - Annual Assessed Property Values
 - Building Conditions
8. Hillsborough Area Transit Authority
 - Transit Routes and Operating Headways
9. Tierra, Inc.
 - Brownfields Sites
 - Government Sites with Environmental Issues

