

Building Our Legacy: A Livable City

Foreward

“Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men’s blood and probably will themselves not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will not die.”

-Daniel H. Burnham, American Architect and Urban Planner, 1846-1912



The City of Tampa faces new and different challenges as it moves forward into the 21st century. Approximately 92,000 more people will call Tampa home and more than 132,000 people will work here in the next 20 years. It is a significant challenge to build housing for the new residents and the businesses for the new employees. There is not enough vacant land in the city to do this. There are few options left for the city to annex raw, undeveloped land. For the first time Tampa’s history, the city’s future will be driven by redevelopment of the existing built city.

The temptation is to say there should be no more growth, but that will not stop growth from coming and the development pressures that go with it. The wise choice is to plan for it, and take steps now to ensure growth will occur in a way beneficial to the city. Growth will bring opportunities, and the City must be ready to take advantage of them.

One opportunity is to plan where growth will go and set in place the means to direct it to those areas. Generally, this plan directs most growth into business centers, mixed use corridor villages and transit stations within three planning districts. This strategy will relieve growth pressures and help stabilize urban villages and the residential neighborhoods both inside and outside the planning districts.

Another opportunity growth will bring is the opportunity to make Tampa a very livable and appealing city. Tampa is largely a suburban city, and most people are automobile dependent to move around the city to meet their daily needs. Tampa’s future will have different choices for how we move around (such as rail), and there will be parts of the city where it will be easy and pleasant to walk to where we need to go.

Tampa is an economic powerhouse in the region, and more people living and working here can help make the city more globally competitive, giving the people who live here more prosperity.

Achieving all of this requires a careful balance of competing interests (for example, neighborhood protection and business expansion). The plan strikes that balance through its growth management strategy and policy directives addressing many different topical issues.

The planning process that led to this comprehensive plan took 5 years to complete. Extensive citizen participation was conducted to understand, at a fundamental level, “what are the most important things to the citizens of Tampa about their future”. Those are explained in Chapter 1. The public input taught staff several valuable lessons that have been carried throughout the plan:

- ◆ The current comprehensive plan is not relevant to most people.
- ◆ Long-range planning is too often started from a negative-based approach and this results in reactionary, rather than visionary, planning.
- ◆ Long-range planning should use an asset-based approach never forgetting the things from the past and present that make this a great city.
- ◆ People understand very well the complex relationships of our changing world, and the issues should be framed in that context.
- ◆ The comprehensive plan needs to be structured around those things that matter most to the people of Tampa.
- ◆ The comprehensive plan must be able to show a balance and integration of all systems that make Tampa a healthy and thriving city.

It is hoped that the reader finds the *Tampa Comprehensive Plan* creates an exciting future in which we can all participate and the plan never loses sight of the lessons we have learned.

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