

2025 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Temple Terrace Florida

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June 30, 2009**

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September 22, 2009**

Hillsborough County
City-County
Planning
Commission



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Temple Terrace Comprehensive Plan

INTRODUCTION-OVERVIEW

“The Big Picture”

What happens around the world can have direct and lasting impact on us. The outside world affects us; we are not an island. The Plan needs to build the awareness that the City is a player on a much larger playing field. Are we ready to take advantage of the opportunities that present themselves, or will we simply react after the fact and lose opportunities, or will we just let them slip by completely unrecognized? Are we ready to proactively address problems that may be headed our way or will we react to them, or will we allow ourselves to be willingly hurt and not be prepared? Change is a universal principle of organic entities, and we must understand the effects of changes at many different levels.

Global Influences

The world will always be changing. The effects of change are felt by everyone, because today we all truly live in a global village. Communication, transportation, technology, information, and economic transactions are almost instantaneous. Competition is stiff, and everyone is part of it.

Presently, we are impacted by the scarcity of such resources as oil, steel, and concrete, which drives up the cost of living and doing business locally as well as globally. Global influences affect the region's seaports, local tourism, and research at the University of South Florida, construction activity, interest rates, food supply, and immigration. All of these things are felt in Temple Terrace. The City, as it appears to have been in the past, needs to be cognizant of its place in global society, and position itself to thrive and succeed. Those city-states, for us the greater metropolitan Tampa Bay region, which will be most successful, are those who have a distinct identity, a productive nimble work force, a strong

educational and knowledge base, engaged responsible citizens, and an enviable unique lifestyle and living environment.

National Influences

No less than global influences, national influences affect Temple Terrace. Such things as national foreign policy, domestic policy, taxation rates, economic strength, and environmental and natural resource policies all shape the context within which the City considers what decisions are in its best interest in determining its future.

The City has competitors among regions and cities throughout the nation. The same qualities that make it successful in the global village make it successful within the nation. Only the scale or significance of those qualities differ.

State and Regional Influences

State and regional influences impact the City even more directly and with stronger obvious consequences. Not only are these related to the state and regional economy, but the State, through its growth management laws, has established the minimum issues through which it chooses to engage and impact the City. These are clearly expressed in the State's expectations, as addressed in its requirements for the City's comprehensive plan, its evaluation and appraisal report (EAR), and this Plan Update based on that EAR.

These State minimum issues include: schools, water supply, land use, housing, property rights, land use and land use regulation, public utilities, parks and recreation, capital improvements, intergovernmental coordination, the natural environment, redevelopment, and transportation. The change agent driving these issues is population growth. The rate of growth and the absolute growth has been large in this State, and certainly is experienced locally. These issues must be addressed by the City, in addition to the major issues and themes it has identified for itself.

Local Influences

The Overall Themes for the Temple Terrace Comprehensive Plan

One of the early realizations in the development of the Plan Update for the City was the emergence of a common theme and values. In the updated Plan that follows, these take on several expressions:

- *“A City for Living”*
- *“A Beautiful Environment Embraced by Diverse Citizens”*
- *“The Best of Humanity and the Best of Nature”*
- *“The City’s Values – Excellence, Balance, Harmony”*
- *“The Way to Get There - Sustainability, Regeneration, Interconnectedness, Systems Approaches”*

All of these capture the uniqueness and identity that is Temple Terrace.

Local Influences – the City’s Uniqueness and Identity

Why and How Was This Theme Developed?

The City’s current motto is *“A City for Living”*. During Plan Update public participation activities, and based on all the citizen comments gathered during several extensive public outreach efforts, and noting the growth that is expected over the next decade, an overarching concept or theme emerged, which is *“A Beautiful Environment Embraced by Diverse Citizens”*. This theme captures the residents’ desire to adapt and plan for expected growth, while promoting as City values: *excellence, balance, and harmony* within Temple Terrace. To effectively and efficiently fulfill this future, the City must concentrate on the way to get there, which its citizens have summarized as *“Sustainability, Regeneration, Interconnectedness, and Systems Approaches”*.

For cities to meet their goals (or theme), they must successfully master change and lead. The rewards of doing so are extraordinary. It is a challenging prospect to be resilient in the face of limited resources, and to champion constant change in the marketplace, so the municipality can distinguish itself competitively and move forward to a bright future. Building sustainable value is a constant process of mastering change. Use of the City’s overarching theme will focus limited municipal resources to meet the primary goals and desires of the residents of Temple Terrace.

Temple Terrace’s Competition

Temple Terrace is an Old Suburb – Emerging as a Sophisticated Residential Community of Urban Villages

Temple Terrace is an older, suburban, predominately single family-detached residential community, which began in the 1920’s. Its historic original city layout and distinctive Mediterranean revival architecture remain relatively intact. It is important to its citizens that this character is sustained, and, where housing stock

and business areas degrade, it is regenerated to maintain the overall harmonious quality of life in Temple Terrace reflective of its current diversity.

For Years, Surrounding Areas Were Mostly Rural and It Was Geographically Separated from Tampa

Since its beginnings in the 1920's, Temple Terrace has been relatively isolated from the other communities in Hillsborough County. No more, urban and suburban scale developments are now present on its boundaries. This poses numerous issues in the municipality's quest to meet the needs of an ever growing community. For example, as annexations become more difficult, land on which to provide affordable housing to the next generation of residents becomes scarcer and thus an ever greater issue, impacting the multi-generational roots of Temple Terrace.

Urban Development Has Been Built Around the City on Three Sides and Has Spread Further North of Temple Terrace

Urban style development has occurred to the north, west and south of Temple Terrace, with the most dense development pattern adjacent to the municipality being west of 52nd Street. There are several areas that are relatively undeveloped, generally located to the east of the municipality, which are expected to play a significant role in the future growth of Temple Terrace.

The City Does Not Have Any Distinctive Boundaries and Is Not Always Distinguishable If You Are in Temple Terrace, Tampa or Unincorporated Hillsborough County

Currently, there are not many landmarks, change in development patterns or form that would indicate to visitors that they are now entering Temple Terrace. For places to be successful, it is often important to distinguish themselves from their surroundings, the City needs to find a way to set itself apart and promote a sense of arrival when entering Temple Terrace.

There Are Newer Residential Communities (With a Larger Selection of Housing Types and Sizes) and Bigger and Nicer Shopping Districts to the North of Temple Terrace, in New Tampa and Pasco County

In many instances people tend to gravitate to the new, such as a new home or community. For the most part this is understandable. New homes need less maintenance. Fixtures tend to be more modern. But what these places often lack is a sense of place, history and a unique character. Through regeneration efforts, the City's assets - a sense of place, history and a unique character - need to be

built upon for the City to stay competitive with other communities in the Tampa Bay region.

The City Relies on Property Tax Revenue to Be Economically Viable

Since the municipality is primarily developed residentially, residential property taxes generate the greatest amount of revenue for the City of Temple Terrace. This is fine in an environment where home values rise, but if their values become stagnant or drop, it becomes ever more difficult to meet the public service needs of the community. To compound the problem, residential areas (as opposed to commercial and industrial areas) require greater public services, such as parks, libraries and police protection. Therefore, to ensure a fiscally sound municipality, it is very important to ensure that housing stock is maintained and neighborhoods are protected. It is also important to sustain a good mix of residential and non-residential development within a community for many reasons, not the least of which is to have a more diverse property tax revenue base in an ever changing economic climate.

New Tampa and Pasco County Are a Competitive Threat Because They Can Attract from the Pool of Affluent Home Buyers

Since the City is primarily built-out, the housing stock is set (without significant redevelopment) and as residents move up the economic ladder, there is less and less of a variety of housing stock for them to choose from within Temple Terrace. In order for them to meet these expectations, there is a real danger these residents will leave the community, moving to locales such as New Tampa or southern Pasco County. Through new growth and redevelopment, it is critical for the City to offer a wide-variety of housing choices to meet the needs of all economic levels.

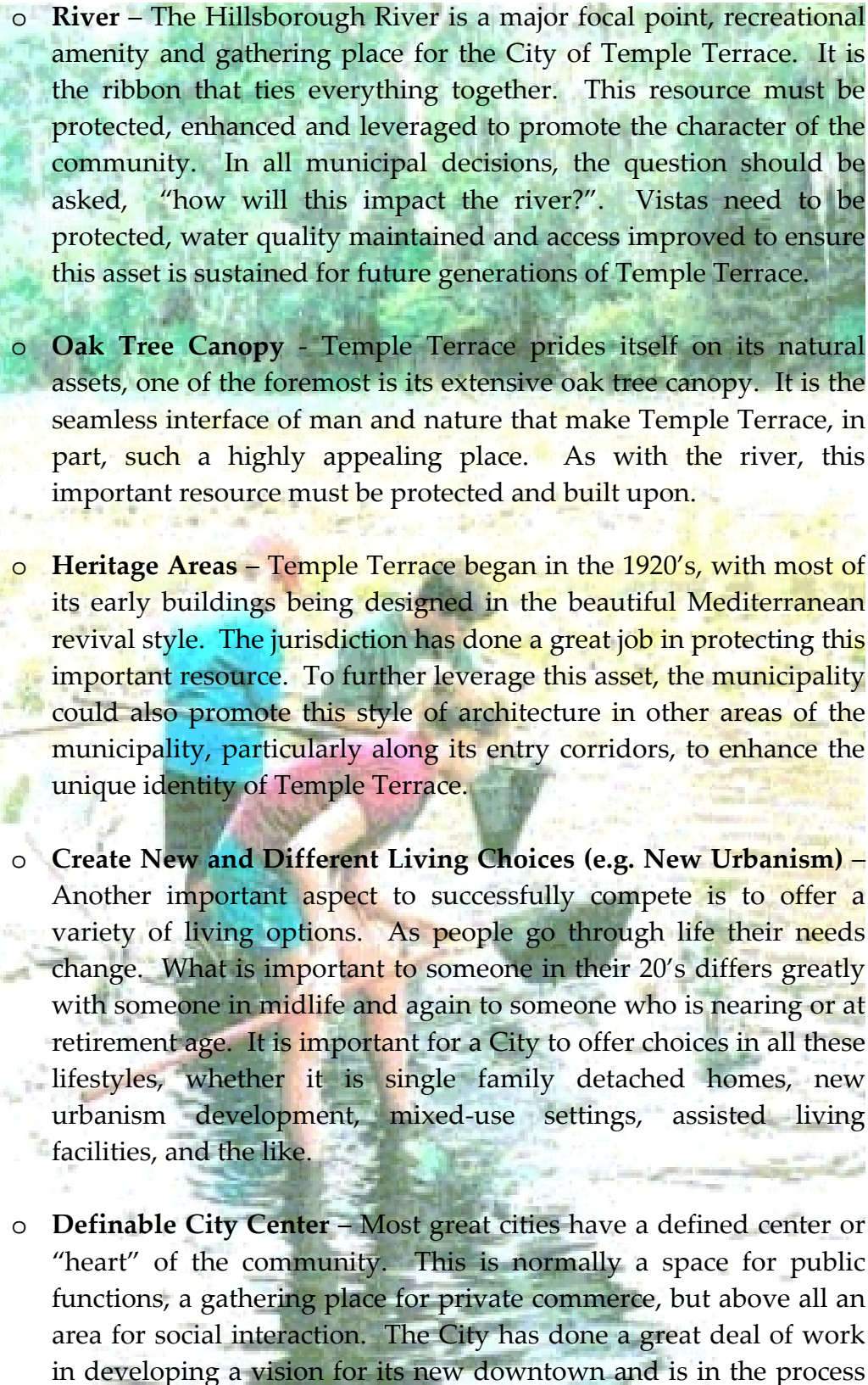
Strategic Response: Be More Competitive

Create Identified Market Niches That Give a Wide Economic Approach Through Asset-Building in Temple Terrace

To meet these competitive challenges, it is critical for the municipality to build on its assets, create niche markets and enhance its unique identity. Failure to do so will result in a community that could be anywhere USA, lacking the amenities needed to keep and attract major employers and a highly skilled workforce.

Develop and Promote a Strong Identity:

- **Strong City Form**

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- **River** – The Hillsborough River is a major focal point, recreational amenity and gathering place for the City of Temple Terrace. It is the ribbon that ties everything together. This resource must be protected, enhanced and leveraged to promote the character of the community. In all municipal decisions, the question should be asked, “how will this impact the river?”. Vistas need to be protected, water quality maintained and access improved to ensure this asset is sustained for future generations of Temple Terrace.
 - **Oak Tree Canopy** - Temple Terrace prides itself on its natural assets, one of the foremost is its extensive oak tree canopy. It is the seamless interface of man and nature that make Temple Terrace, in part, such a highly appealing place. As with the river, this important resource must be protected and built upon.
 - **Heritage Areas** – Temple Terrace began in the 1920’s, with most of its early buildings being designed in the beautiful Mediterranean revival style. The jurisdiction has done a great job in protecting this important resource. To further leverage this asset, the municipality could also promote this style of architecture in other areas of the municipality, particularly along its entry corridors, to enhance the unique identity of Temple Terrace.
 - **Create New and Different Living Choices (e.g. New Urbanism)** – Another important aspect to successfully compete is to offer a variety of living options. As people go through life their needs change. What is important to someone in their 20’s differs greatly with someone in midlife and again to someone who is nearing or at retirement age. It is important for a City to offer choices in all these lifestyles, whether it is single family detached homes, new urbanism development, mixed-use settings, assisted living facilities, and the like.
 - **Definable City Center** – Most great cities have a defined center or “heart” of the community. This is normally a space for public functions, a gathering place for private commerce, but above all an area for social interaction. The City has done a great deal of work in developing a vision for its new downtown and is in the process

of implementing that vision, which will create this critical asset needed to succeed and prosper in the 21st Century.

Create Non-Residential Economic Opportunities: The University of South Florida/Temple Terrace/Vandenberg Airport Axis As Part of Temple Terrace's Identity

There are two major economic engines on the boundaries of Temple Terrace. They are the University of South Florida to the northwest and to the southeast Vandenberg Airport. The University of South Florida is not only a place of higher education, but a major research and development facility, and as such, other supporting commercial ventures like to locate in its proximity. Temple Terrace is in a great position to capture some of these spin-off activities. However, the City needs to coordinate and understand the needs of the University and these associated supporting uses to ensure it is providing appropriately located land and infrastructure. In addition, the University and these supporting business offer high paying jobs and of course these employees will need a place to live. There is an opportunity for many of these people to reside in Temple Terrace, if the right types of housing, lifestyle and amenities are offered.

Vandenberg Airport is another unique economic engine and important emerging transportation hub near Temple Terrace. As with the University of South Florida, Temple Terrace is in a great position to capture spin-off activities from Vandenberg Airport. But the City needs to coordinate with these entities to entice these businesses to locate within Temple Terrace.

What Does This Theme Mean: The Best of Humanity - The Best of Nature - In just a few words this theme identifies the essence of what is important to the residents of Temple Terrace: to excel in all realms, balancing the needs of the manmade environment with the protection of its natural resources, thus achieving harmony.

- **The Best of Humanity** – What does this include? A highly educated population, a great place to raise a family, excellent schools, stable neighborhoods, a beautiful park system with diverse recreational opportunities, a protected heritage and distinctive local amenities (e.g. golf course), an ethnically and culturally diverse community, active citizenry with creative and tolerant people, and an accessible/responsive local government.

- **The Best of Nature** – What is meant by this? The primary components are a clean and environmentally sound Hillsborough River, a balance between active recreation and the protection of significant natural areas, and an interconnected system of green corridors, in part utilizing the extensive oak tree canopy of Temple Terrace.

Values of System, Sustainability, Regeneration, Interconnectedness. (Excellence, Balance and Harmony Are Implied)

As we come full circle, the “big picture” stresses the core values of sustainability, regeneration and interconnectedness. If the municipality can take these values to heart and plug them into its decision-making processes, the results will be a community of excellence, balance, and harmony today and for future generations.

THE VISION – “THE BIG PICTURE” EXPRESSED IN THE CITY FORM

Everything the City Does in the Future Must Promote and Further Its Themes

The Comprehensive Plan’s Role in the City Form

The City’s Comprehensive Plan is key in creating the City that Temple Terrace aspires to be. It gives expression to the Vision – The Big Picture. It contains the “Tools”, in the form of Policies, to use in achieving the City’s future.

There are a lot of ways to organize the Comprehensive Plan. State Law specifies a series of Elements, but the City is not necessarily restricted to those divisions of the Plan. One way the City’s Plan could have been organized is by 5 headings derived from the concept of the City as the “Best of Humanity” and the “Best of Nature”. From these you might have:

1. City Form
2. Natural Form
3. Infrastructure Interconnect
4. Mobility Interconnect
5. Economy Interconnect

Instead, the organization stayed with the traditional elements: Future Land Use, Housing, Recreation and Open Space, Conservation and Aquifer Recharge,

Mobility, Public Facilities, Public School Facilities, Intergovernmental Coordination and Capital Improvements.

Each of these Elements has been matched with a statement dealing with “Aiming for Success”. By way of conclusion to this Introduction and transition to the traditional elements, the following lists the Elements with the opening or relevant portion of its “Aiming for Success” statements.

CONCLUSION – AIMING FOR SUCCESS

Future Land Use Element – Aiming for Success

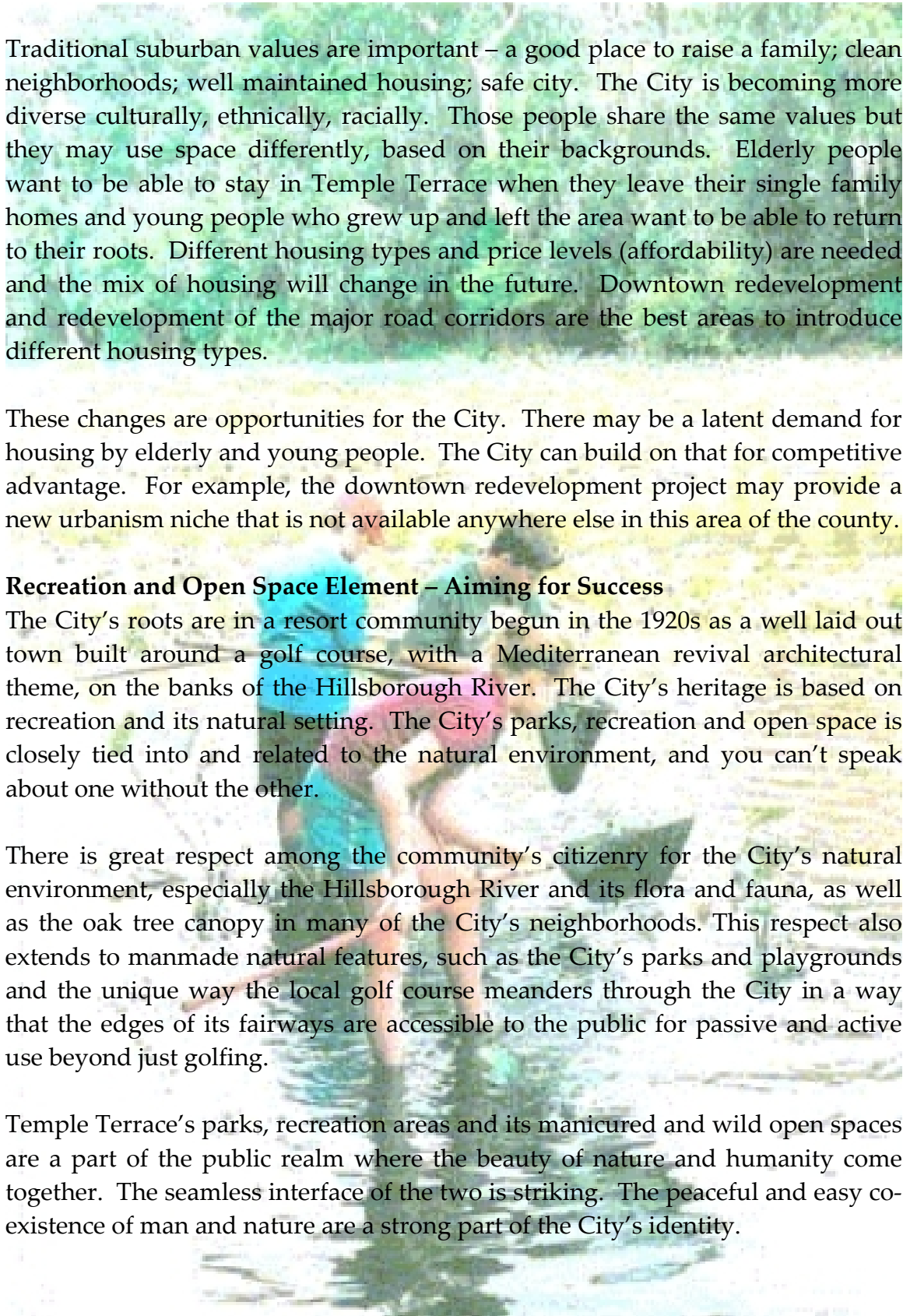
Cities, like people, have life cycles with unique stories, which is especially true of the City of Temple Terrace. One of the ways municipalities can capture and express their uniqueness is through their long-range comprehensive plans. These plans explain a lot about who a city is, where it’s going, and how it’s trying to get there. Smart cities, like people, actively use their plans to shape their unique identity in ways that make them better – leveraging the opportunities presented by change, minimizing the difficulties, and overcoming any inherent weaknesses that change may expose. Plans afford cities the means of taking charge and determining their own unique destiny, in this case the future of the City of Temple Terrace.

Success lies in crafting plans well, reviewing and assessing them periodically, and modifying them as changed circumstances may warrant. In doing so, plans allow municipalities to build on the story that is its past, and then to script that story to ensure it achieves the future that is wanted by its residents.

Success also lies in making plans that are realistic and accurately reflective of the citizenry for whom city government is the collective repository of their shared present and future. So, in many ways, a city’s comprehensive plan is the story its citizenry write for themselves, based on a past shared history and experiences, tempered by present realities, appreciative of the context and constraints of their physical and social environment, and expressive of a mutual vision for their future.

Housing Element – Aiming for Success

Temple Terrace is an older, suburban, predominately single family-detached residential community. Its historic original city layout and distinctive Mediterranean revival architecture remain relatively intact.



Traditional suburban values are important – a good place to raise a family; clean neighborhoods; well maintained housing; safe city. The City is becoming more diverse culturally, ethnically, racially. Those people share the same values but they may use space differently, based on their backgrounds. Elderly people want to be able to stay in Temple Terrace when they leave their single family homes and young people who grew up and left the area want to be able to return to their roots. Different housing types and price levels (affordability) are needed and the mix of housing will change in the future. Downtown redevelopment and redevelopment of the major road corridors are the best areas to introduce different housing types.

These changes are opportunities for the City. There may be a latent demand for housing by elderly and young people. The City can build on that for competitive advantage. For example, the downtown redevelopment project may provide a new urbanism niche that is not available anywhere else in this area of the county.

Recreation and Open Space Element – Aiming for Success

The City’s roots are in a resort community begun in the 1920s as a well laid out town built around a golf course, with a Mediterranean revival architectural theme, on the banks of the Hillsborough River. The City’s heritage is based on recreation and its natural setting. The City’s parks, recreation and open space is closely tied into and related to the natural environment, and you can’t speak about one without the other.

There is great respect among the community’s citizenry for the City’s natural environment, especially the Hillsborough River and its flora and fauna, as well as the oak tree canopy in many of the City’s neighborhoods. This respect also extends to manmade natural features, such as the City’s parks and playgrounds and the unique way the local golf course meanders through the City in a way that the edges of its fairways are accessible to the public for passive and active use beyond just golfing.

Temple Terrace’s parks, recreation areas and its manicured and wild open spaces are a part of the public realm where the beauty of nature and humanity come together. The seamless interface of the two is striking. The peaceful and easy co-existence of man and nature are a strong part of the City’s identity.

Conservation and Aquifer Recharge Element – Aiming for Success

Temple Terrace prides itself on its 'green' city. Its natural assets include the Hillsborough River, its extensive oak tree canopy and man-made natural features such as the meandering golf course and its many parks. It is the seamless interface of man and nature that make Temple Terrace, in part, such a highly appealing place in which to be.

Temple Terrace also has a highly engaged citizenry, strongly committed to volunteerism, and well-educated, caring, motivated citizenry with pride of community and who are willing to take visionary risks. The people are very protective of their natural environment. Local government decisions about the river or the oak tree canopy are debated long and hard. This commitment is a strong asset for the city.

Mobility Element (formerly Transportation Element) – Aiming for Success

Most people move around and through the City by automobile. The major roads in the City are owned by the State or County. They are congested and their capacity will not be increased. The City is forced to find other ways for moving people around. There are a few contributing assets present that suggest that alternative forms of mobility will work.

One, there is an active population this is already moving around in parks and recreation type activities. The City values its natural heritage and people get into the natural setting in a big way – boating, recreating in the parks, walking, golfing and bicycling, as examples. The community's value of parks and recreation lend itself to considering alternative forms of mobility, especially environmentally-friendly ways, such as walking and biking.

Two, the University of South Florida is a major nearby employer, and City residents can be accommodated by taking mass transit into the university.

Three, the City is beginning to focus development into activity centers, such as downtown, and it's easier to provide services to a point than to a linear corridor.

Public Facilities Element – Aiming for Success

The City has a good infrastructure system (water, sewer, drainage, solid waste) that is well maintained. Generally, all infrastructure services are available to all areas and people throughout the city. Also, the City has capacity and facilities to serve areas outside their corporate boundaries that may be part of the City one

day. Temple Terrace is well positioned with its infrastructure. This is a fundamental responsibility of local government.

Public School Facilities Element – Aiming for Success

The citizens of Temple Terrace strongly value education. Over 40% of the adult population has a college degree. The citizenry is engaged, has pride of community and is strongly committed to volunteerism. The citizens are also very knowledgeable and understand the complex relationships that underlie and shape their community.

This is an extraordinary asset set that can be used to further develop the educational quality of life in Temple Terrace. The Public School Facilities Element focuses mostly on the quantitative aspect of education, ensuring there is enough classroom space for all the present and future students. (Side note: The City took a stand during the development of this countywide element and got a percentage of future capacity in Temple Terrace schools specifically allocated for children living in Temple Terrace. It was reasoned that no child living in Temple Terrace should have to be bused out of the city for school. This was a significant effort, and underscores the importance of schools to the community.)

The University of South Florida and Florida College are two important educational assets for Temple Terrace.

Intergovernmental Coordination Element – Aiming for Success

Temple Terrace bills itself as the third largest city in Hillsborough County, or in other terms, the smallest city in the county (there are only 3 cities in Hillsborough County). Other local governments, such as the County and Tampa, along with other levels of governments and their agencies (e.g. Florida Department of Transportation, Southwest Florida Water Management District) have significant impact on Temple Terrace in their decision making.

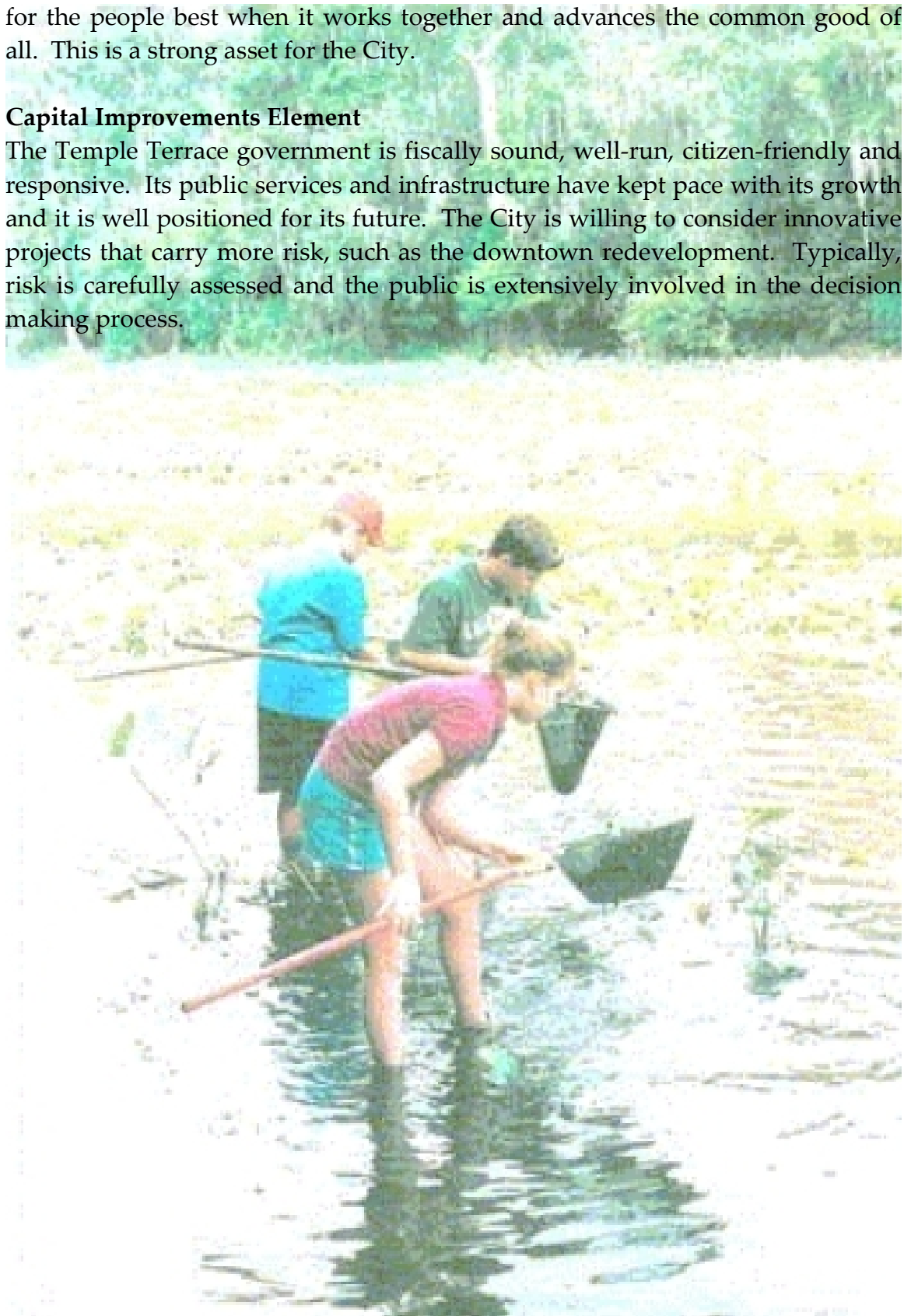
The people of Temple Terrace have shown a willingness to tackle and work through difficult civic issues with respect to all viewpoints. There is a knowledgeable citizenry that understands the interrelationships and underlying forces shaping their community, and this is reflected in their leaders.

Temple Terrace's historic approach to intergovernmental coordination has been one of collaboration, cooperation, bridge building and participation, and this bilateral approach yields better results than unilateral ones. Government works

for the people best when it works together and advances the common good of all. This is a strong asset for the City.

Capital Improvements Element

The Temple Terrace government is fiscally sound, well-run, citizen-friendly and responsive. Its public services and infrastructure have kept pace with its growth and it is well positioned for its future. The City is willing to consider innovative projects that carry more risk, such as the downtown redevelopment. Typically, risk is carefully assessed and the public is extensively involved in the decision making process.





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