



Strategies for a
SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

OSCEOLA COUNTY, FLORIDA
2017 REPORT

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

OSCEOLA COUNTY COMMISSION

Chairman Brandon Arrington *District 3*

Vice Chairman Fred Hawkins, Jr. *District 5*

Commissioner Peggy Choudhry *District 1*

Commissioner Viviana Janer *District 2*

Commissioner Cheryl Grieb *District 4*

OSCEOLA COUNTY STAFF

Don Fisher *County Manager*

Beth Knight *Deputy County Manager*

Donna Renberg *Assistant County Manager*

Dave Tomek *Community Development Administrator*

Susan Caswell *Assistant Community Development Administrator*

Photenie Burnett *Senior Planner*

PHOTOGRAPHY

Andrew Sullivan

Carolyn Hutchins

Mark Pino

CONSULTANTS

Logan Simpson *Strategies for a Sustainable Future*

Tischler Bise *Fiscal Sustainability in Osceola County*

OSCEOLA COUNTY

Community Development Department
1 Courthouse Square, Suite 1100
Kissimmee, FL 34741



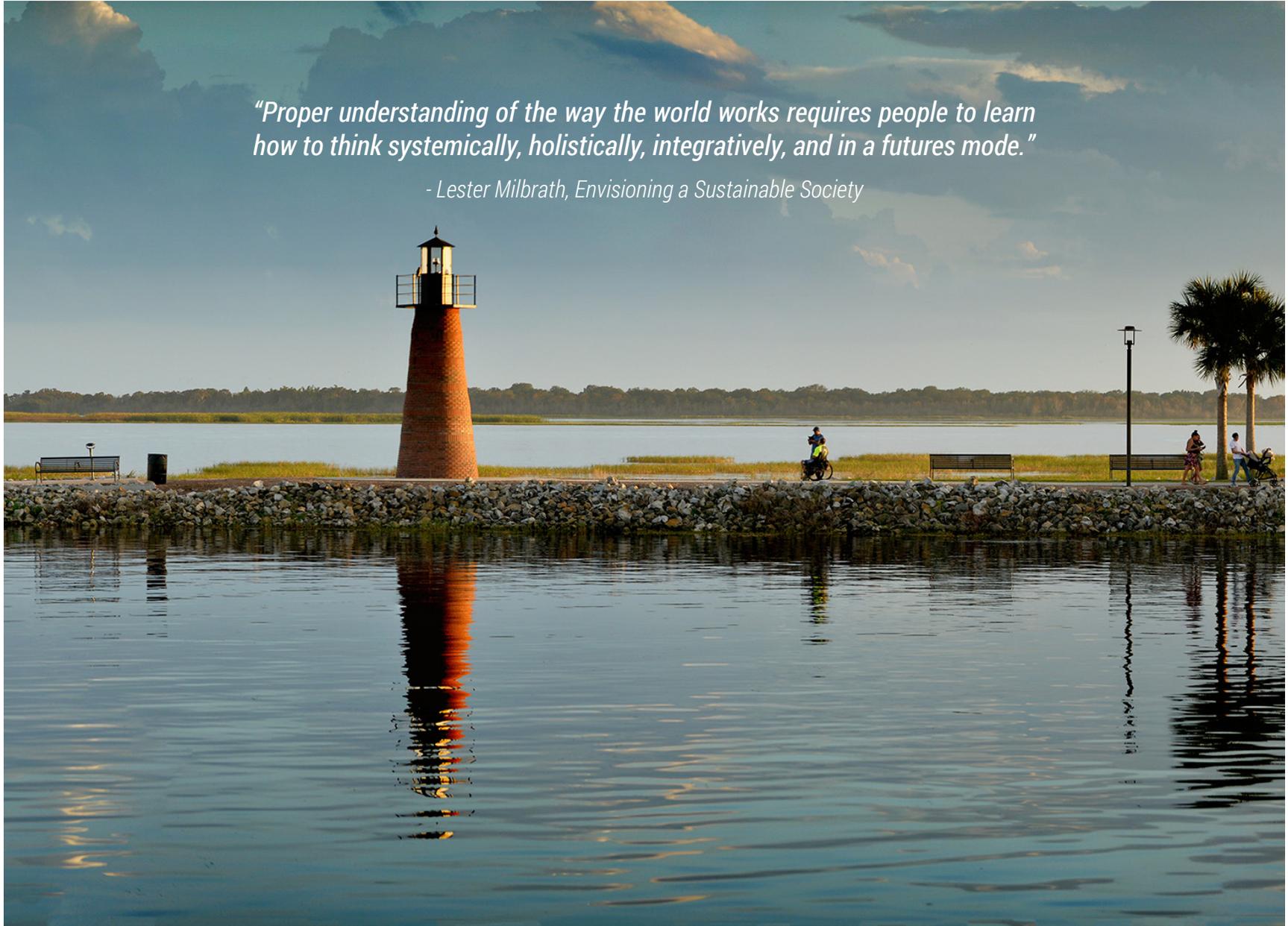


CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	5
<i>What is the purpose of this report?</i> Background	
<i>Who are we today?</i> Snapshot of Osceola County in 2017	
ACCOMPLISHMENTS	15
<i>What have we achieved to date?</i> County-wide accomplishments	
KEY ISSUES	41
<i>Where do we go from here?</i> Thinking sustainably	
NEXT STEPS	61
<i>What are the long-term recommendations?</i> Tying it all together	
SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS	71
<i>Are we headed in the right direction?</i> Measuring progress	
SOURCES AND RESOURCES	101

"Proper understanding of the way the world works requires people to learn how to think systemically, holistically, integratively, and in a futures mode."

- Lester Milbrath, Envisioning a Sustainable Society



1

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT?

Embracing sustainability means thinking differently about how we do everything. In Osceola, doing things differently has become a way of life. For the past decade or more, the County has implemented a number of innovative programs, projects, and initiatives. From the new growth model outlined in our Comprehensive Plan, to locally funded land acquisition, to adopting one of the first mobility plans in the state, to the investments in NeoCity, *innovative* is increasingly becoming the way we do things here.

The question at this point is, how do we take this to the next level? How do we know our efforts are effective? How do we ensure long-term success? We're innovative, but are we sustainable?

Sustainability often is described as having three parts: economic, social, environmental. Doing things differently means looking at these areas not in isolation, but together, recognizing their interconnectedness. This report looks at our accomplishments, analyzes key issues facing the County, and offers recommendations for moving into the future. This analysis makes clear the interconnected nature of both our systems and the issues we need to address.

In addition to economic, social, and environmental sustainability, fiscal sustainability is critically important to the County's success. A key component of this report is a fiscal analysis of the County's revenues and expenditures relative to the County's built environment. Is our development pattern fiscally sustainable? Our budget is balanced, in that ongoing revenues equal ongoing expenditures, but is it fiscally sound? Are we deferring maintenance, falling further behind every year? If so, our budget is not fiscally sustainable, and we must figure out how to develop in a way that provides the revenues needed to fund all ongoing obligations. We want to be able to afford what we are obligated to do; make decisions that are fiscally positive for the County; and prioritize our resources for maximum effectiveness.

This report ties together all the County's previous and ongoing efforts, looks at key issues and proposes solutions, and charts a course for taking the next step toward fiscal, social, economic, and environmental sustainability.



2017 SNAPSHOT OF OSCEOLA COUNTY: PEOPLE

demographics

Osceola County is growing. Fast. Growth in Osceola picked up steam starting in the 1970s with the opening of Walt Disney World, and it hasn't slowed since. Today's population of 336,015 is more than triple the County's population in 1990.

The 19th largest county in Florida, Osceola was first in percentage population growth (4.7%) and seventh in numeric growth (14,535 people, an average of 40 per day) in the State between 2015 and 2016.

Osceola mirrors Florida's population characteristics in some ways, while in others the County is very different. For one thing, we're younger –our median age is more than five years younger than the State's. In a state known as a retirement destination, our senior population percentage is significantly smaller than average.

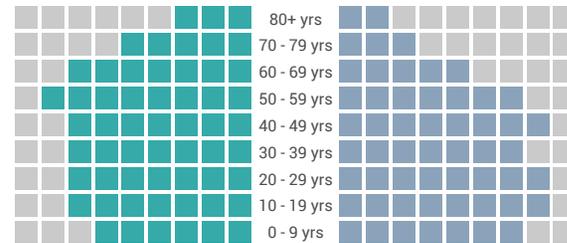
We're much more likely to have children at home. Nearly 40% of our households include children under 18, versus less than 30% of households statewide. We're also more likely to have extended family living with us, so it's not surprising that we live in bigger households (although not necessarily in bigger houses) than the State average. Despite our larger household size, however, over half (52.1%) of our households have only one or two people in them.

Osceola is diverse. Nearly half of our population is Hispanic, twice as high as Florida as a whole. Sixty percent of our Hispanic residents came here from Puerto Rico, while others migrated from Central and South America, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Mexico. It's not surprising that over 100 languages are spoken by the students in our school system.

We are more likely to live in single family homes, but less likely to own those homes. Our homeownership rate, at 60.9%, is nearly 5 points lower than the state average.

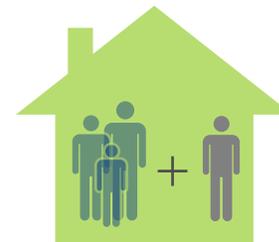
WHO ARE WE TODAY? People

OSCEOLA RESIDENTS ARE YOUNGER



Florida

Osceola County

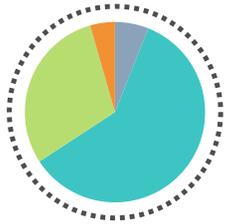


OSCEOLA HAS BIGGER HOUSEHOLDS

High percentage of family households and of people living in extended family households

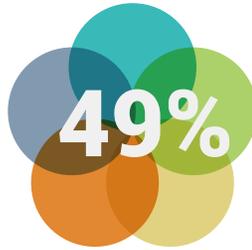


HALF OF OSCEOLA COUNTY RESIDENTS IDENTIFY AS HISPANIC

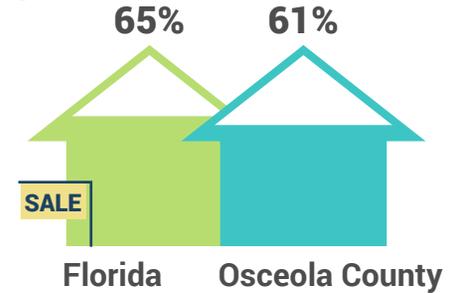


60% ARE FROM PUERTO RICO

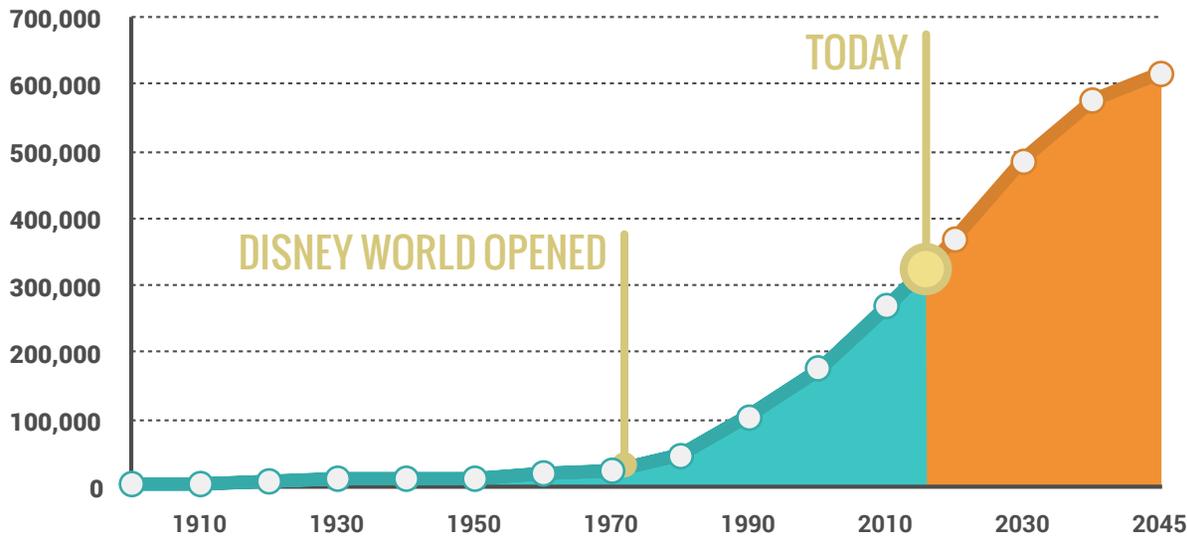
The other 40% have heritage from Central and South America, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Mexico.



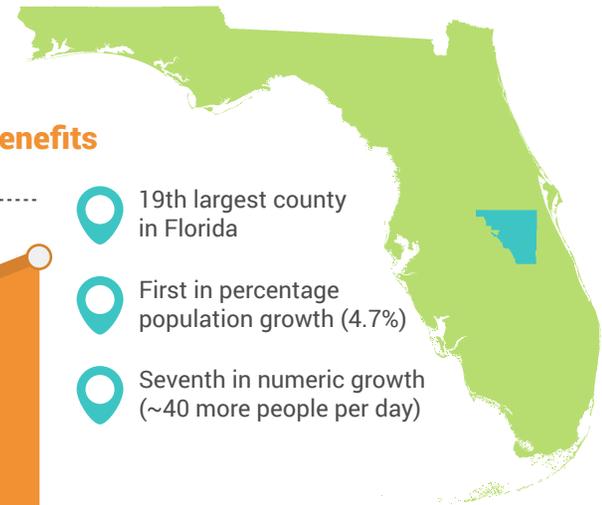
61% OF OSCEOLA COUNTY HOUSEHOLDS OWN THEIR HOME



\$45,244
MEDIAN
HOUSEHOLD
INCOME



- 19th largest county in Florida
- First in percentage population growth (4.7%)
- Seventh in numeric growth (~40 more people per day)



OSCEOLA'S POPULATION HAS TRIPLED SINCE 1990, AND WILL NEARLY DOUBLE AGAIN BY 2040

2017 SNAPSHOT OF OSCEOLA COUNTY: PLACES

neighborhoods | place types | communities

The County is not one place—it is a series of unique places that add to the County’s identity and character. There are eight places recognized by the US Census Bureau, including the cities of Kissimmee and St. Cloud and six unincorporated areas, known as Census Designated Places (CDPs): Buenaventura Lakes, Campbell, Celebration, Four Corners (also known as Citrus Ridge), Poinciana, and Yeehaw Junction. Other places in the County include Intercession City, the Reunion area, the Narcoossee area, Harmony, Deseret Ranch, Kenansville, and Holopaw.

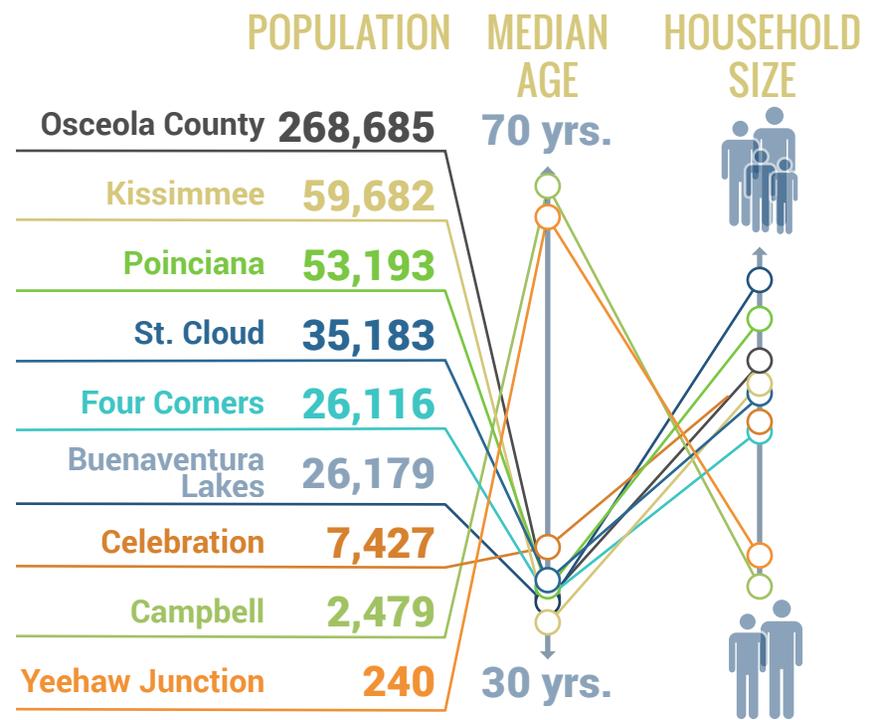
The County has a variety of *place types* throughout, including rural and suburban areas as well as urban development planned in the Mixed Use Districts (east and south of Lake Toho and the Northeast District east of Narcoossee Road at the County line). Six areas within the Urban Growth Boundary are designated *Rural Enclaves* – areas of more rural development within the suburban part of the County. As the County grows, balancing that growth with what’s already here means recognizing and preserving a community’s heritage and unique qualities, providing a variety of living environments, and integrating growth and development in a way that enhances our built environment.

The Narcoossee area is one example of a place experiencing tremendous growth pressure. The County worked closely with the community to discuss these pressures, solicit feedback on opportunities and values, identify an overall vision, and ultimately create an illustrative plan framework that physically embodies this vision.

The virtual walking tour at right provides a description of some of the County’s many places.

WHO ARE WE TODAY?

Places



Four Corners

Four Corners is located at the junction of Lake, Orange, Osceola, and Polk. The estimated 2015 population (spanning all four counties) was 32,727. In the Osceola portion, three-quarters of the housing is vacation rental units.

Reunion Area

In the Reunion/ChampionsGate area, a growing luxury home rental market is developing. Development in this area is strengthening Osceola’s reputation as the “Vacation Home Capital of the World.”

Celebration

Celebration was planned by Disney as a walkable, mixed-use New Urbanist community. Established in 1994, the community has over 4,000 homes (they can build as many as 8,000) and 7,800 residents.

Campbell and Intercession City

Campbell’s 2015 population was just over 2,500, while nearby Intercession City has an estimated population of 500. Growth has been slow, but interest in developing these areas has grown tremendously with the pending expansion of SunRail service to the nearby Poinciana Station in 2018.

Poinciana

Poinciana spans two counties, Osceola and Polk. Established in 1973, the development now has nearly 60,000 residents. While it initially was planned as a retirement community, it now is home to many working families.

Kissimmee

One of only two cities in Osceola County, as well as the County seat, Kissimmee has an estimated 2015 population over 65,000. One of Osceola’s three SunRail stops is located in Kissimmee, and downtown is transforming in anticipation of its arrival.

Buena Ventura Lakes

Established in the 1970s, this community grew through the 1980s and 1990s, when nearly 3/4 of the 7,000 homes were built. Recent focus in this mature community has been on adding parks and other amenities

Narcoossee

Narcoossee is one of the fastest-growing areas in the County. In 2010, the County worked collaboratively with the community to plan for growth while preserving the community’s heritage and unique qualities. Recommendations included establishing a “center” for the Narcoossee area to provide a focus and identity for the community and to preserve remaining historic buildings in one area.

St. Cloud

The second of Osceola’s two cities, St. Cloud’s slogan is “Celebrating Small-Town Life.” The city has an active Main Street program working to encourage restoration of the historic character and viability of downtown.

Harmony

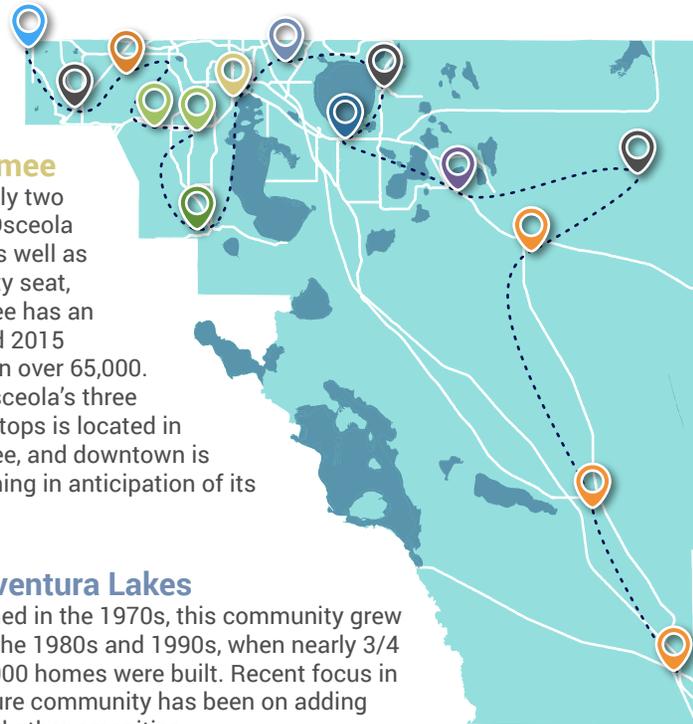
Originally approved in 1999, Harmony’s goal was to recreate an old-fashioned hometown experience and connect residents with the natural beauty of its Old Florida setting. Currently about 1,200 homes have been built. Eventually the development will include 7,200 homes.

Deseret Ranch

Spanning nearly 300,000 acres in three counties, Deseret is the largest cattle ranch in the U.S. In 2015, the County adopted the North Ranch Sector Plan, covering 130,000 acres of the Ranch. This is a long-term plan, with development not anticipated to begin before 2040.

Holopaw, Kenansville, and Yeehaw Junction

Located outside the UGB, these communities grew next to a railroad line long since abandoned. Yeehaw Junction is home to one of the few structures in Osceola included on the National Register of Historic Places – the Desert Inn. Kenansville has historic structures as well, including the historic schoolhouse (1916) and the Heartbreak Hotel (1915). Kenansville and Holopaw have community centers, which are run by community members and used extensively for community events.



jobs | economic development

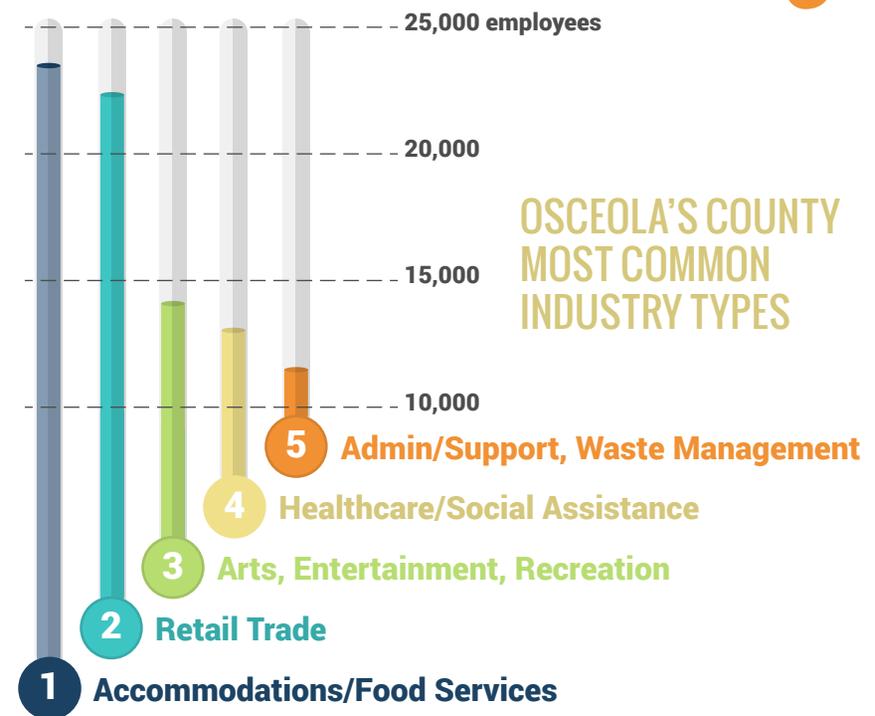
There is no doubt the tourism industry, anchored by Walt Disney World, has been the dominant influence on both the demographics and economy of Osceola County over the last fifty years. Since 1971, the County has served as neighbor to the theme parks, which annually draw 55 million tourists and thousands of workers in the tourism, entertainment, and recreation industry to the central Florida area. According to a 2016 Orlando Sentinel article, one-third of Osceola's jobs are located along the West U.S. 192 corridor, and almost half of County sales tax is collected by W192 businesses.

In addition to tourism-related jobs, other types of jobs are being created through the expansion of industries such as food production and processing, information technology, life science and health, and smart sensors and photonics. What these industries have in common is the need for a highly skilled and diverse workforce. To prepare workers for these jobs, the School District of Osceola County is coordinating with higher education institutions to promote science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), as well as other technical and vocational programs. Valencia College (which has two Osceola campuses), along with nearby University of Central Florida, offer a top incubator network capable of providing education and training for County residents.

Along with these educational investments, the County is working to create opportunities for high-wage jobs for the 52% of our resident workforce who commute to work outside the County. This effort is focused on development of NeoCity, a new high-tech district designed to attract innovative companies and become a national research and development hotspot. The district is projected to have an economic output between \$25.3 and \$28.5 billion, create more than 34,000 direct and indirect jobs, and generate tax revenues of \$830 million over the next 50 years. One of NeoCity's primary goals is to create high-paying, technology-based jobs for Osceola's workforce and to attract those on technology-based career paths into the community. The focus on STEM careers by the School District, Valencia College, and UCF make NeoCity a natural part of the economic vision for our community.

WHO ARE WE TODAY?

Economy

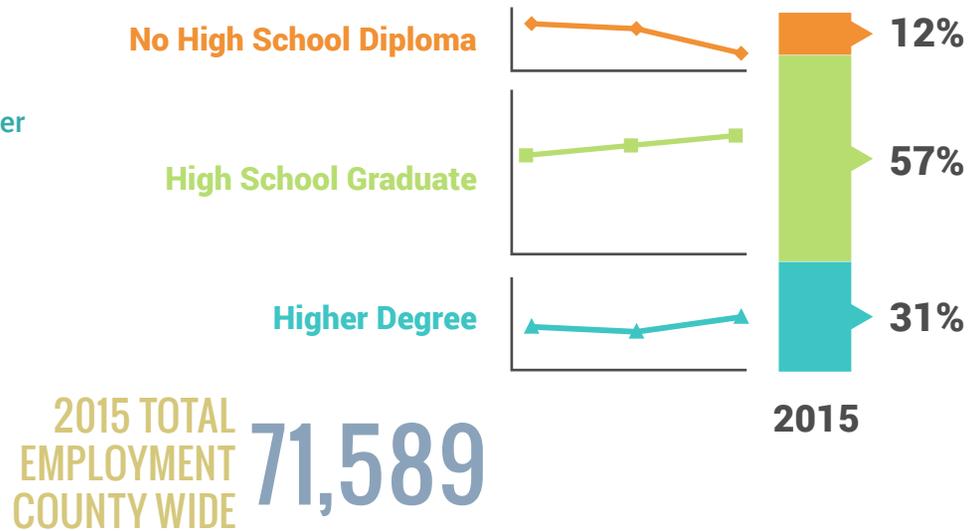


LARGEST EMPLOYERS

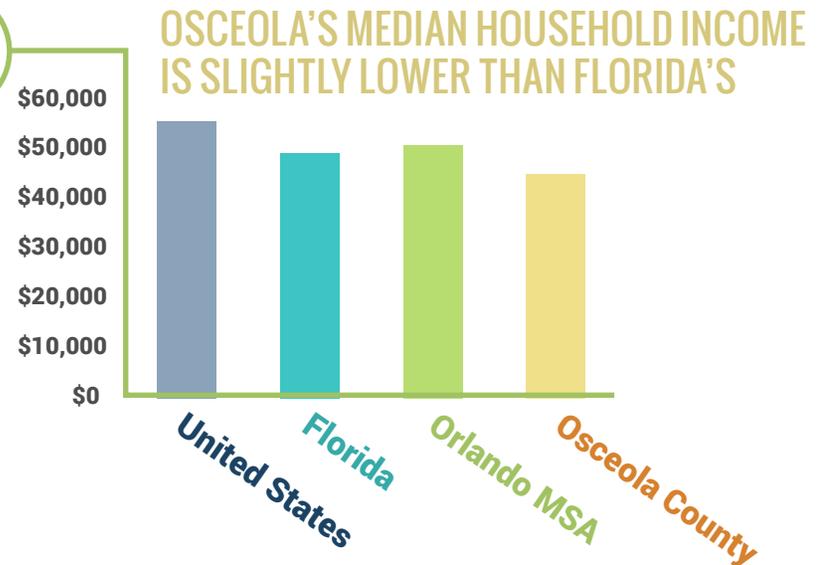


6,000	Osceola County School District
3,700	Walt Disney Company
2,730	Wal-Mart Stores
1,445	Gaylord Palms Resort & Convention Center
1,407	Osceola County Government
1,357	Osceola Regional Medical Center
1,350	Publix Supermarkets
1,300	Florida Hospital Celebration
900	McLane/Suneast Distribution Facility
750	Omni ChampionsGate Resort
607	Lowes Regional Distribution Center
600	City of Kissimmee
506	Valencia College
500	City of St. Cloud
450	St. Cloud Regional Medical Center
450	Florida Hospital Kissimmee
350	Good Samaritan Retirement Village
300	Tupperware Corporation
250	Toho Water Authority
200	Quaker Oats / PepsiCo

OSCEOLA COUNTY'S EDUCATION LEVELS HAVE BEEN RISING



OSCEOLA RESIDENTS HAVE LONGER COMMUTES



parks | trails | natural lands

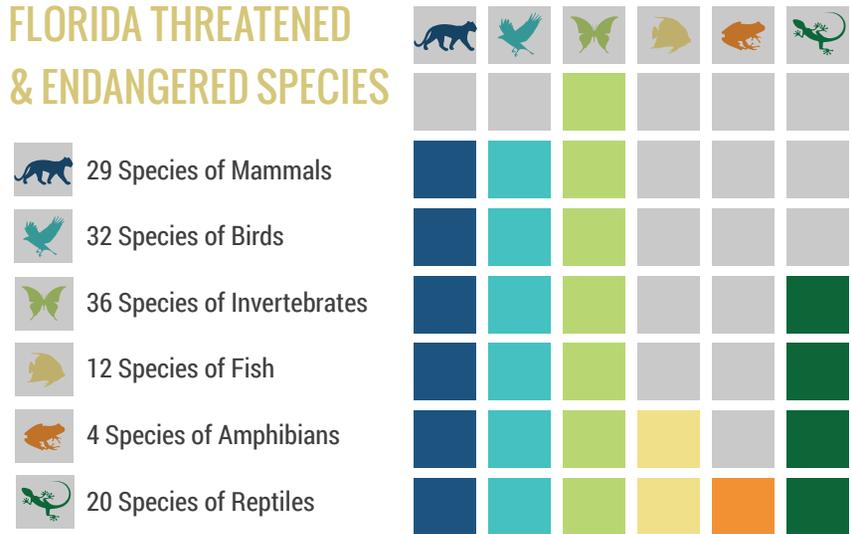
The term *parks and recreation* evokes a wide range of definitions and expectations, all of which can be described through the multiple ways Osceola County residents and visitors interact with the environment and with each other. Recreation begins at the neighborhood level, when residents simply go for a walk or a bike ride with their family, perhaps to a tot lot or conservation area. Community and regional parks offer a chance for people within a larger area to meet for organized sports, picnics, and community events. Such facilities also include ways to engage in more structured outdoor activities such as walking along a fitness trail, learning about early settlements, or cooling off at a splash pad. The most meaningful opportunities for interaction with the environment are closely tied to conservation and restoration efforts which are outlined later in this document. Osceola County provides all these resources to the current population and employs a range of strategies to ensure access to parks, trails, and natural lands in the years to come.

Along with other existing and planned boat ramps and canoe launches throughout the County, places such as Shingle Creek Regional Park and Southport Park provide connections to some of the County's most valuable assets – our lakes and rivers. Recent projects such as Brownie Wise Park at Tupperware Island not only restore the environment for flora and fauna, but also restore residents' and visitors' relationship to nature through features such as trails and observation piers.

Findings from the ongoing *Parks Master Plan* analyses show that Osceola has preserved enough land to meet regional park needs well beyond 2040; those same results show that established communities are well-served by traditional components such as community centers and ball fields. Recommendations from the Parks Master Plan and Trails Master Plan will help the County continue to provide essential facilities for future growth. Current plans for a park designed to encourage play for all children, including those with autism, also demonstrate the County's commitment to expand opportunities for interaction in our parks and natural lands system in new and creative ways.

WHO ARE WE TODAY? *Environment*

FLORIDA THREATENED & ENDANGERED SPECIES



Florida is home to a variety of protected species. The protected network of managed lands in Osceola County provides potential habitat and improved water quality for these threatened and endangered species within the County and for the surrounding areas.

Shingle Creek Regional Park: Creation of this 1,100-acre linear park was a cooperative effort among Osceola County, Kissimmee, South Florida Water Management District, Florida Communities Trust, and the Florida Trust for Public Lands. The park offers some of the finest passive recreation opportunities in Central Florida, including trails, picnic areas, playgrounds, kayak and bike rentals, a nationally recognized natural and cultural history center, and a pioneer village with original and reproductions of typical turn of the century buildings.

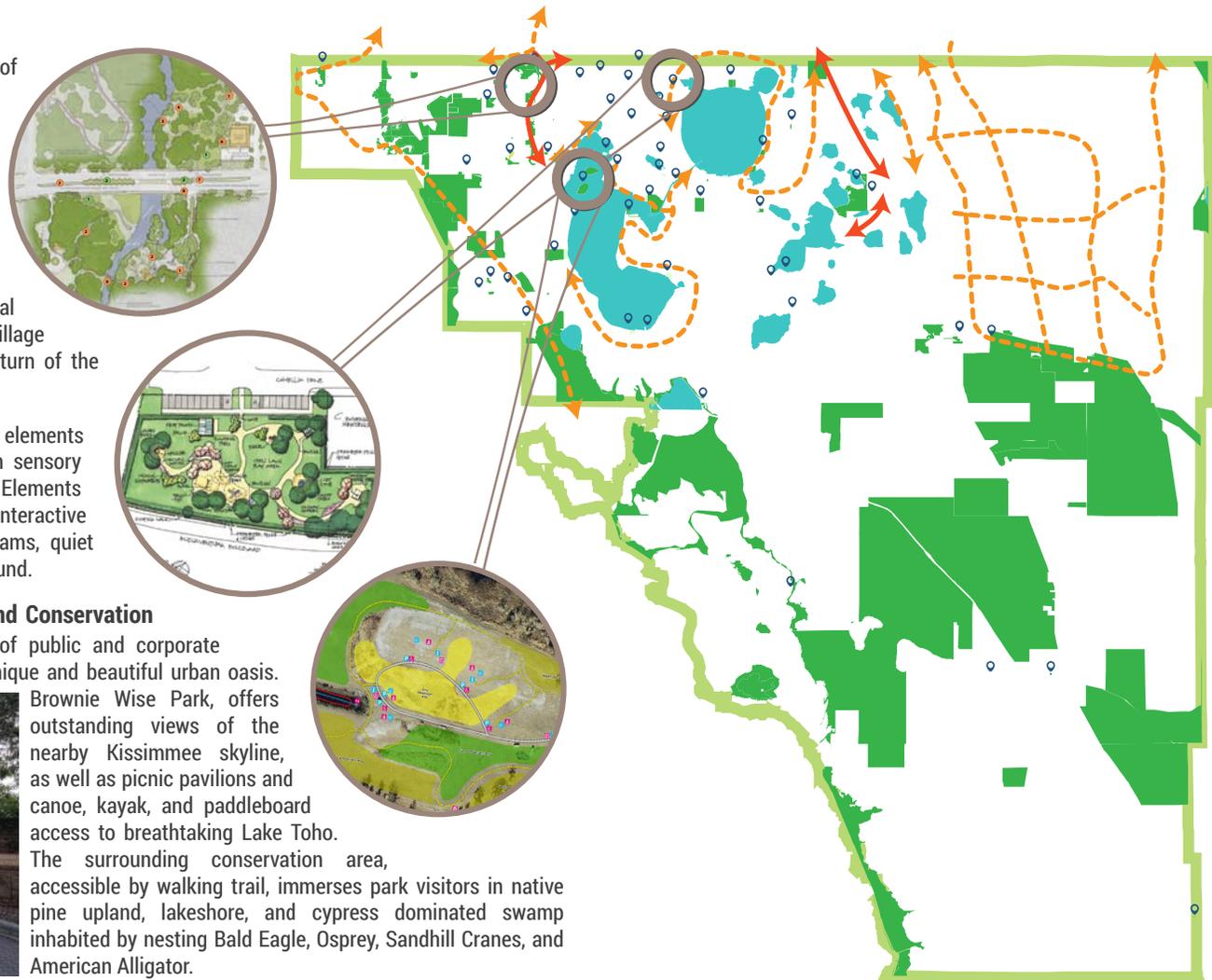
Inclusive Playground: This playground has elements specially designed to benefit children with sensory processing disorders, such as autism. Elements include sensory gardens, sand tables, interactive panels, crawl tunnels, balance walking beams, quiet space, musical instruments, and ambient sound.

Brownie Wise Park at Tupperware Island Conservation

Area: The site is an excellent example of public and corporate partnership coming together to create a unique and beautiful urban oasis.



Brownie Wise Park, offers outstanding views of the nearby Kissimmee skyline, as well as picnic pavilions and canoe, kayak, and paddleboard access to breathtaking Lake Toho. The surrounding conservation area, accessible by walking trail, immerses park visitors in native pine upland, lakeshore, and cypress dominated swamp inhabited by nesting Bald Eagle, Osprey, Sandhill Cranes, and American Alligator.



This map showcases a few of the County's park areas, as well as our existing and planned off-road trails. The County also has an extensive network of on-road trails, and the Trails Plan, currently being developed, will highlight projects that increase County alternative transportation connectivity.

-  Parks, Open Space, and Land Conservation
-  Community Park
-  Existing Regional Off-Road Trail
-  Future Regional Off-Road Trail





2

CHAPTER TWO

Accomplishments

WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED TO DATE?

Osceola County already has plans, programs, and initiatives in place that are moving the County toward a more sustainable future. The sustainability indicators contained in Chapter 5 identify elements of these plans that work to promote fiscal sustainability, environmental protection, economic development, job creation, and a higher quality of life. Using metrics to highlight current and future desired conditions for the sustainability indicators illustrates the impact from plan policies on future sustainability in the County.

Following are summaries of these plans and programs. Each summary describes the main objective of the plan or program and lists accomplishments or policies that support the sustainability indicators in the plan.

Included are summaries of the following:

- Comprehensive Plan
- Mixed Use Districts
- Land Development Code
- NeoCity
- Transportation Funding Initiative
- W192 Redevelopment
- Osceola Energy Initiative
- Natural Resource Management
- Consolidated Plan
- Strategic Plan

OSCEOLA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2025

All Florida local governments are required to adopt comprehensive plans. The Osceola County Comprehensive Plan provides guidelines through goals, objectives, and policies to create a healthy and balanced comprehensive long-range approach to living, working, and playing in Osceola County.

The last major update to the Comprehensive Plan was in 2007. The significance of this update was that it introduced a new growth model for the County. Prior to this time, much of the County was still rural, and growth was suburban in nature, responding to the economic growth of neighboring counties. This Plan update introduced a growth model that provides for an urban environment. Through establishment of the Urban Growth Boundary, Mixed Use Districts, and transfer of development rights, the County provided for urban, suburban, and rural areas, properly spaced and located.

The urban model, represented in the Mixed Use Districts, plans for a mix of uses; higher densities and intensities; and a highly connected, multi-modal transportation network. Benefits address multiple components of a working city for example complete communities, higher quality of life, and financial sustainability.

In existing suburban areas, the Plan allows for nodes of community-serving non-residential uses. Subsequent code changes enhance connectivity in these areas. They promote walkability and help build neighborhood communities. Rural area components include a Transfer of Development Rights program that strives to maintain open areas, and conservation subdivisions require that minimum of 50% of the land area be

set aside for conservation, agriculture and recreational open space.

Elements in the County's Comprehensive Plan represent broad topics that characterize a range of conditions within Osceola County and provide a framework for the goals, objectives, and policies therein.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

- **Comprehensive guidance on sustainable and equitable development and conservation**
- **Health and safety**
- **Intergovernmental collaboration**
- **Addressing needs for all demographic types**

THE ELEMENTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Future Land Use: Focus is placed on growth management, increasing density through urban infill and expansion of urban areas within the urban centers of Osceola and increasing density in the rural enclaves. The Future Land Use Element also addresses sustainable development goals, objectives and policies such as the use of transfer of development rights (TDR) to preserve large areas of rural lands as greenbelts, resource conservation, renewable energy, and traditional neighborhood development to name a few. Definitions of future land use categories and implementation and the Land Development Code application within the future land use can also be found. Finally DRIs (Developments of regional impact), and overlay or special use development standards such as schools, historic preservation, redevelopment, hazard mitigation policies are identified.

Mixed Use Districts: Each Mixed Use District Element describes the development framework and implementation. Tables then describe the desired development program and buildout, by urban center, by community center, by employment center and special district, and by neighborhood. More detail about the mixed use districts can be found in the Mixed use District Category.

Urban Growth Boundary 2025



Transportation: The Transportation Element includes automobiles, the airport, public transportation and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The goals, objectives, and policies center on intergovernmental coordination, best practices, and the establishment and maintenance of a multimodal transportation system.

Housing: The Housing Element addresses affordable housing, housing inventory, housing diversity, funding and public awareness of housing programs for groups who need assistance. This element also addresses resource conservation in housing, historic preservation, and construction standards.

Conservation: The conservation element is targeted for the region identifying programs that are tailor made for Osceola County as well as best management practices. These programs include groundwater protection, potable water supply, transfer of development rights, erosion control, and exotic species. Best management practice topics include floodplain management, air quality, intergovernmental coordination, mining, land acquisition, and recreation.

Potable Water: To ensure there is enough potable water for Osceola residents into the future, there are several policies protecting and conserving potable water resources and a work plan for prioritization of future system improvements including the mixed use areas.

Sanitary Sewer: With the goal of providing effective treatment and disposal of wastewater now and into the future, the sanitary sewer element identifies coordination efforts, private sewer systems, onsite treatment systems, and planning for future growth.

Solid Waste: Similar to other services, the solid waste element aims to provide consistent service through facilities, coordination with municipalities, financial feasibility now and in the future. In addition the Solid Waste element addresses household chemical waste materials.

Stormwater Management: The primary goal is to protect people and property from flooding and protecting the natural groundwater aquifer, while protecting water quality all to promote health and safety for

residents. As a part of flood control, Osceola County has identified level of service standards for all different types of potentially affected facilities such as bridges. The element also addresses financial feasibility, intergovernmental coordination, and stormwater utilities.

Natural Groundwater Aquifer Recharge: Planning for the protection of aquifer recharge areas is critical to meet the current and future potable water demands and to protect natural resources. To do this policies are identified to support hazardous waste storage facilities, protection mechanisms, funding, environmental assessments, and monitoring.

Parks and Recreation: To serve the communities within Osceola County with parks and recreational facilities, they have established level of service standards to ensure existing and new developments have access to recreational facilities. Other focus topics of the element are natural resource protection, public access including shoreline access, tourism, historic resources, land acquisition, greenways and trails, maintenance, funding, and intergovernmental coordination.

Intergovernmental Coordination: As mentioned in several of the other elements, coordination between adjacent governments and agencies to serve communities across jurisdictional and municipal boundaries.

Capital Improvement: As Osceola County grows, it is important to maintain the level of service for public facilities. This element lists funding for potable water, sewer, stormwater, parks and open space, schools, fire stations, and transportation capital improvement projects.

Economic Development: The primary objective of this element is to attract and recruit high wage industries to the area as well as assisting low income areas. These aims can be achieved by marketing locally, nationally, and internationally as a great place for businesses to locate. Policies listed to reach economic development goals include recruitment strategies, supporting land uses, capitalizing on tourism, business retention, and an educated workforce.

Fire: Part of maintaining a safe community with a high level of service includes evaluating emergency response system and non-emergency response services and ensuring a high service standard. Another component is public education about the services provided and safety issues.

Want to Learn More? [Osceola County Comprehensive Plan](#)





MIXED USE DISTRICTS

In 2008, the County approved three new Conceptual Master Plans that encompass a total of 45,795 acres.

Mixed-Use Districts (MXD), with their associated Conceptual Master Plans (CMPs), provide specific design and implementation policies for the areas that will accommodate most of the new development within the County's Urban Growth Boundary. Conceptual Master Plans for each of the Mixed Use Districts must be developed to, "explore a range of build-out opportunities and their relationship to the size and form of future centers, the layout and interconnectedness of future transportation networks, and the spatial arrangement of the mix of uses with the intent of maximizing internal trip capture" (Future Land Use Element Policy 1.3.3). This policy encourages high standards for sustainability and quality growth.

SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS OF MIXED USE DISTRICTS

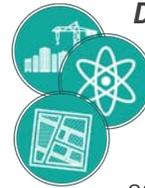


Water Quality + Natural Lands: The majority of land area in the three mixed-use districts is adjacent to water bodies, wetlands, and protected waterways that form the headwaters of the Everglades. Roughly 57% of these districts will be preserved as open space to protect habitat and water quality. The Lake Toho Protection Area (LTPA) provides for additional buffers to Lake Toho within the two Mixed Use Districts bordering this lake. The LTPA requires a minimum 250-foot, average 500-foot buffer to Lake Toho.



Connectivity + Pedestrian Environment: A highly connected transportation network, along with a mix of land uses, provides a pleasant and safe walking environment as well as destinations to walk to. Street trees, on-street

parking, and continuous sidewalks create a comfortable pedestrian environment and encourage walking and biking as easy transportation alternatives.

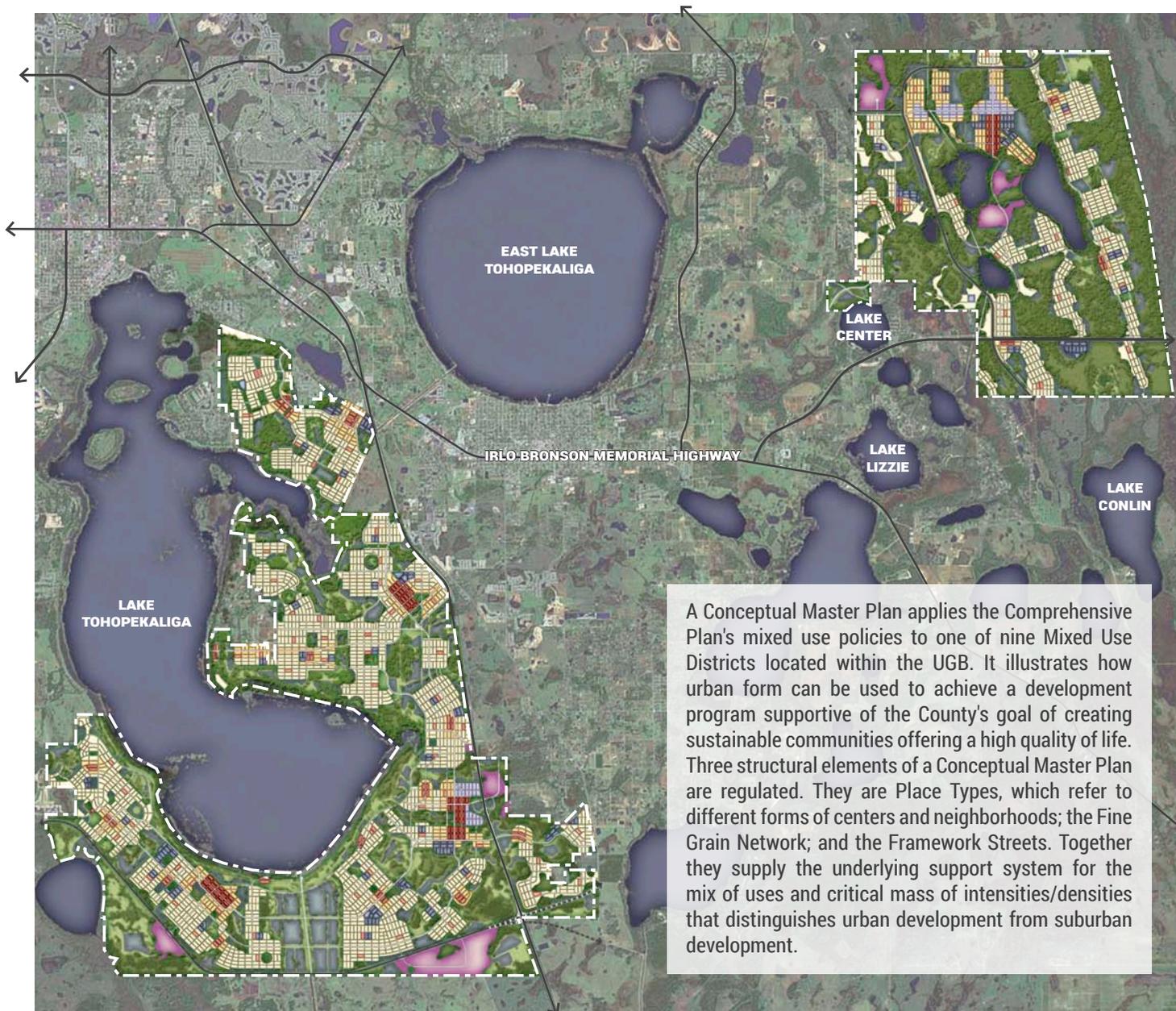


Density + Centers + Land Area Mix: A range of land uses includes a diversity of housing types ranging from 5 to 25 dwelling units per acre, with neighborhood centers to provide community focal points. Housing is supported with appropriately scaled retail, service, and office uses as well as parks, schools, and places of worship. Densely populated centers with public spaces reduce auto dependency and promote connectivity between day-to-day needs.

The level of detail in the Mixed Use District Comprehensive Plan elements is unusual. It represents a shift toward prescribing the location, character, and form of development, changing the nature of planning from management and mitigation to proactive, goal-oriented development that promotes healthy living and economically vibrant communities.

The MXD land use/zoning requires the developer to be responsible for construction of local roads and to provide interconnectivity between developments. This will lessen the burden on the framework roads and ultimately reduce the amount of new road lane miles required to promote and maintain growth.

Want to Learn More? [Mixed Use Districts](#)



A Conceptual Master Plan applies the Comprehensive Plan's mixed use policies to one of nine Mixed Use Districts located within the UGB. It illustrates how urban form can be used to achieve a development program supportive of the County's goal of creating sustainable communities offering a high quality of life. Three structural elements of a Conceptual Master Plan are regulated. They are Place Types, which refer to different forms of centers and neighborhoods; the Fine Grain Network; and the Framework Streets. Together they supply the underlying support system for the mix of uses and critical mass of intensities/densities that distinguishes urban development from suburban development.

LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE

A complete overhaul of the Land Development Code (LDC) was designed to streamline the code and incorporate smart growth principles.

The LDC overhaul began in 2011 with the reduction of chapters from 21 to 5; clarification and expansion of permissible uses within each zoning district; and an overall reduction of zoning districts. The Mixed Use (MXD) Code, adopted in 2013, combines high-intensity and high-density development with open space for walkable communities. Adoption of the MXD standards, coupled with the administrative rezoning of approximately 50,000 acres of land, meet the intent of MXD policies in the Comprehensive Plan. The MXD Code also includes roadway cross-sections that prescribe specific criteria for each roadway type.

The County is currently working on including Habitat Conservation and Management Plan (HCMP) requirements into the Code. The County developed a Species Educational Guide in 2012, which was designed to assist developers and residents to understand the various species native to the area and the habitat to conserve.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

- **Regulate development to serve the future needs of Osceola residents**
- **Promote a diverse land use mix**
- **Protect public health and safety**

SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS



Job Creation + Centers + Pedestrian Environment: Article 3.13.2, Place Type Function, identifies percentages for land use mix that meet the needs of a diversifying economy while promoting quality of life for residents. Place type function and Article 4.6 Lot & Block Standards, specifies special districts which accommodate developing economic catalyst sites.



Land Use Mix + Density + Connectivity: Article 3.2.2, Residential District Descriptions, promotes housing types and land use mixes for all socio-economic populations and regulates responsible development in environmentally sensitive and historic areas. Descriptions of neighborhood types in Article 3.13.2, Place Type Function, also identify design standards that require sidewalks and pedestrian connectivity.

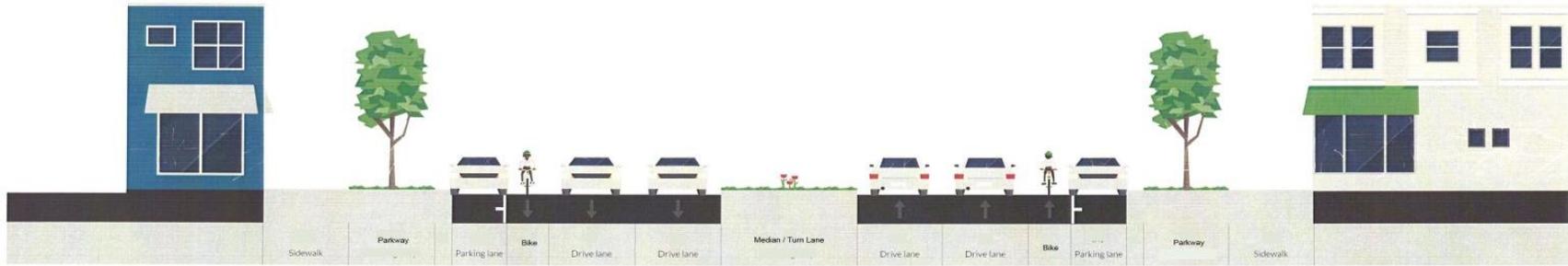


Natural Lands + Recreation: Aside from environmental protection provisions, the LDC also incorporates transfer of development rights (TDR) in Article 2.9. The TDR program is incentive-based and works to preserve the County's historic and cultural heritage, reduce incompatible land uses, and protect agricultural lands. In addition, trails, parks, and open space are listed in several articles as elements that should be included to promote healthy living and ecosystems.



Connectivity: Cross sections are listed that encourage multimodal systems on future development. New transportation systems also target a highly connected network for all modes of travel.

Want to Learn More? [Land Development Code](#)



(Above) The Land Development Code contains typical cross sections for a variety of roadways, including alleys, local streets, avenues and boulevards, multimodal corridors, and transit corridors. This is the cross section for a four-lane avenue/boulevard with a turn lane, median, and on-street parking.

(Right) Example of a typical street cross section with on-street parking, landscape buffers, and sidewalks.



TRANSPORTATION FUNDING INITIATIVE

The Transportation Funding Initiative evaluated current and potential revenue sources to resolve existing roadway deficiencies and deteriorating road conditions, as well as to increase transit service and provide for other modes of transportation.

Levels of investment for transportation infrastructure, both capital and operating costs, have not kept pace with needs to serve existing development nor the impacts created by new growth. Historic and projected growth, along with visitation trends, creates substantial impacts on transportation infrastructure. This initiative's purpose was to develop a multimodal transportation system to serve existing residents and new growth; create a mix of development (smart growth) that results in places where people live, work, and play, while at the same time diversifying the tax base and increasing property values per acre; and develop stable and consistent sources of funding for capital and operating costs to maintain and expand the transportation system.



RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS:

- **Eliminate transportation impact fees**
- **New growth dedicated ad valorem tax (DAT) increment**
- **Existing base dedicated ad valorem tax increment**
- **Charter county and regional transportation system (CCRTSS)**

SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS



Transportation: The study included a list of multi-modal transportation projects planned over the next 30 years, with seven different scenarios for revenue and expense. Following this plan, the County adopted a transportation funding mechanism that combined a newly adopted mobility fee and additional gas tax with the dedicated ad valorem tax (the DAT), which was adopted several years ago.

The County's new approach to planning and development – moving away from a policy-driven, mitigation-based approach to character-based development standards – is accompanied by changes in evaluation of transportation funding and improvements. Funding is based on evaluation of the increased value associated with plan-implementing development instead of prepayment of anticipated impacts through development fees.

The Transportation Element and policies promote refining the policy framework to determine priority capital investments based on adopted planning priorities instead of boilerplate management practices that coincide with current development, thus allowing long-term visionary planning for transportation and land use that work together. This allows for walking and bicycling as primary short trip modes of travel and additional bus and commuter rail opportunities for long distance travel.

Want to Learn More? [Mobility Fee Study](#)

NEOCITY

NeoCity is a global site for technology research and development anchored by a consortium known as BRIDG (Bridging the Innovation Development Gap). The master plan includes site planning and design, economic development, and job creation efforts for the 500-acre site between Kissimmee and St. Cloud.

NeoCity is a 483-acre technology district inspired by an ethos of collaboration designed to transform the way we create and innovate. Here burgeoning concepts will gestate into mature technologies, from smart sensors and photonics to software applications and process improvements in science, engineering, and technology. It is envisioned as an innovation epicenter and a source of high-quality jobs and as a mixed-use research and technology destination of regional, state, national, and global impact.

The NeoCity Master Plan project brings the master planning, design, economic development, and job creation efforts for Osceola County into sharp focus. It galvanizes planning efforts of County-owned land between Kissimmee and St. Cloud, on the edge of Lake Toho. NeoCity is anchored by BRIDG, a not-for-profit, industry-friendly consortium focused on manufacturing development of advanced technologies in smart sensors, imagers, advanced devices, and 2.5D/3D chip integration. BRIDG is located in a new state of the art facility, recently opened within NeoCity. Creating a mold-breaking 21st Century model for mixed-used, R&D public-private industry partnership developments is the priority for this comprehensive master plan for long-term development of the site over the next 50 years. NeoCity is anticipated to be a leader in sustainable development, integrated into an increasingly interconnected network of growing population centers south of Orlando, FL.

NeoCity will become the most significant and comprehensive global center for smart sensor, photonics, and nano-technology

research and development, big data/predictive analytics, and workforce talent concentration. As the focal point for technology development for the State of Florida, NeoCity will catalyze job creation and talent development in Osceola County. Implementation of the Master Plan will allow the physical development and research commercialization potential of NeoCity to support each other.

SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS



Job Creation: The creation of high-quality and innovative jobs is NeoCity's key priority. NeoCity is working to serve partners such as corporate entities for sensor research and development; collaboration of international university research centers; big data and predictive analytic firms; and the Department of Defense, Department of Energy, and Homeland Security partnerships. Areas to explore include ramping up skill development to meet near-term workforce requirements of early tenants, as well as capacity-building with UCF, Valencia College, and corporate partners to ensure a long-term pipeline of skilled employees at all levels.



Density: The primary goal is to promote responsible density and avoid sprawl. Block sizes are planned at approximately 400' by 400'. Master planning of the site allows for future expansion and development of facilities.



Land Area Mix: A land use balance is being achieved by developing a spectrum of uses from highly interactive public spaces to private and secure lands within unique neighborhoods.



Transit: Connections are essential to site development, and include access to the new SunRail and expressways, and interior connections with a focus on pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.



Natural Resources: As the headwaters of the Everglades, this site strategically includes a large body of water that provides recreational trails, creates learning opportunities, and supports native wildlife and wetland animals. A variety of low-impact design features are included.

Want to Learn More? [NeoCity](#)

OSCEOLA COUNTY

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

NEOCITY

NeoCity is Osceola County's 500-acre master-planned technology and research campus. NeoCity will be the region's driving economic engine for technology research and innovation – a global center of advanced research, pilot manufacturing, design, and commercialization of sensor-related technologies.

BRIDG (BRIDGING THE INNOVATION DEVELOPMENT GAP)

BRIDG is a consortium led by Osceola County, the University of Central Florida and the Florida High Tech Corridor Council, offers the opportunity to share equipment and conduct research needed to profitably access the next-generation sensor economy. (Formerly known as the International Consortium for Advanced Manufacturing Research, or ICAMR.)

IMEC

Imec is a world-leading R&D and innovation hub in nanoelectronics and digital technologies. Headquartered in Belgium, the company has opened imec Florida, focusing on photonics and high-speed electronics Integrated Circuit (IC) design based in Osceola County.

CENTER FOR NEOVATION

Center for Neovation is the first component of NeoCity. Operated by BRIDG, the Center is one of the most technologically advanced manufacturing research centers in the western hemisphere. (Formerly known as the Florida Advanced Manufacturing Research Center, or FAMRC.)



W192 REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

The W192 Redevelopment Plan is designed to guide one of the largest redevelopment projects areas in the nation: a 15-mile corridor from the Osceola County Line east to Kissimmee. The plan identifies programs and projects to enhance the area's appeal to the leisure tourism market and attract new investment.

West US Highway 192, a predominately tourism-based hotel and entertainment corridor, has been designated a Community Redevelopment Area to improve the area's look and feel, encourage property investment, and increase public safety. The W192 Redevelopment Plan provides an overall community-supported vision for the corridor. Developed through a focused outreach program involving area property owners, business owners, residents, and priority stakeholders, the Redevelopment Plan serves as a blueprint for improvements and projects led by the Development Authority, to ensure successful renaissance of the corridor.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

- **Identify programs and projects that can enhance the area's appeal to the leisure tourism market and attract new investments**
- **Create a vision and supporting activities through a public process**
- **Identify actions that best strengthen the Corridor's economic position**
- **Ensure future investments address the problems and strategies identified by the West 192 Economic Advisory Committee**

SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS



Land Use: The plan aims to diversify the corridor's mix of land uses by targeting other tourism-related activities for key catalyst properties. These uses will include a richer variety of entertainment venues, restaurants, and other supporting facilities or activities vital to attracting additional tourism development and creating a cohesive tourist destination. In the neighborhood district, housing, neighborhood-oriented services, mixed-use developments, employment, and targeted tourist uses are encouraged. New residential development includes housing types that appeal to the Corridor's residents and workforce.

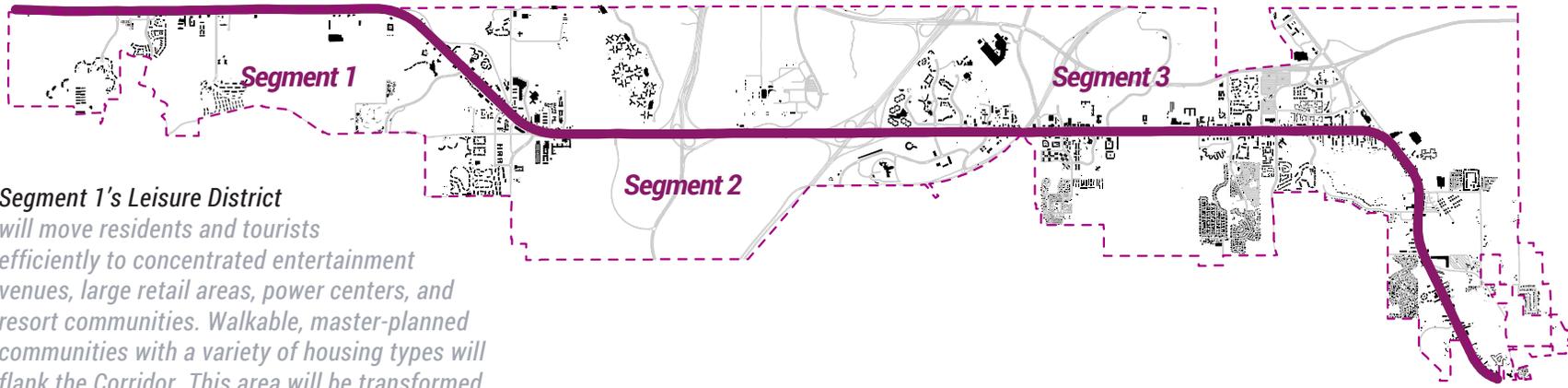


Economic Development: Osceola is working to improve the physical and regulatory environment to encourage reinvestment in the W192 Corridor. Gateway features, signage regulations, beautification initiatives, and branding are all working to create a unique identity and market the corridor as a key destination. These efforts will increase the number and quality of restaurants, lodging, and entertainment venues, spurring additional redevelopment and creating jobs.



Transportation: Transit, connectivity, and the pedestrian environment are addressed in the plan through efforts to improve transit stations, shuttles, and continuous sidewalks to activate the pedestrian environment. Transportation upgrades phased over time will provide additional mobility, transportation hubs, regional connections, and integration with ongoing transportation plans.

Want to Learn More? [W192 Redevelopment Plan](#)



Segment 1's Leisure District will move residents and tourists efficiently to concentrated entertainment venues, large retail areas, power centers, and resort communities. Walkable, master-planned communities with a variety of housing types will flank the Corridor. This area will be transformed into high-quality, vehicular-focused, retail centers, and neighborhoods oriented to residents and tourists.

Segment 2's Destination District will include a diversity and concentration of high-quality tourist uses oriented toward the largest market segment, while promoting a positive image inviting to tourists. Tourist venues include entertainment, lodging, dining, and shopping experiences oriented toward a broad array of tourists.

Segment 3's Neighborhood District will be a cohesive neighborhood business district consisting of a diverse mix of high-quality, market-rate housing, community-oriented services, and tourist-supportive uses. Neighborhood uses will include high-density housing options against the Corridor and improved street connections to adjacent residential developments. Local restaurants, international eateries and stores, outdoor eating areas, and retail stores will serve both residents and visitors.



OSCEOLA ENERGY INITIATIVE

The Osceola Energy Initiative (OEI) is designed to guide growth of the community in a responsible and balanced way. The plan outlines a social, economic, and environmental approach to future development.

Osceola County and St. Cloud were awarded a \$2.4 million grant by the Florida Energy and Climate Commission for this project. Additional partners included local utility companies, Workforce Central Florida, University of Florida (UF), and local and national financing entities. The County and City developed Energy Efficiency Action Plans to guide the transition to overall energy efficiency and carbon reduction.

The initiative implemented an Energy Finance Program, providing access to low-interest loans for energy efficiency upgrades. Training on energy efficiency upgrades was provided to contractors, residents, and businesses through the University of Florida. Through the partnership with Workforce Central Florida, qualified persons were trained and placed in jobs to gain experience. St. Cloud was retrofitted with a 58kW rooftop solar system, and a real-time, interactive monitoring kiosk was installed in City Hall to educate the public on energy savings.

Traffic light synchronization was implemented, with the goal of reducing carbon emissions and traffic congestion. This included re-timing of traffic signals for approximately 44 lane miles on two major corridors in the County: John Young Parkway and Osceola Parkway.

This initiative brought sustainable improvements to Osceola County through energy-efficient upgrades to homes, public buildings, and other infrastructure; created green jobs; and enabled training that facilitated a market for sustainability in Osceola County.

SUMMARY OF INITIATIVES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Utility Energy Audits offered by Orlando Utilities Commission (OUC), Progress Energy (PE), and Kissimmee Utility Authority (KUA).
- Energy Efficient Finance Program provides a \$5,000,000 loan program to residential properties within the 7-county Central Florida region.
- Training and job placement program to train Osceola County residents in energy efficiency and conservation efforts.
- Installation of two solar photovoltaic (PV) systems and a solar education center at City of St. Cloud facilities.
- Development of a County-wide web-based mapping tool for energy consumption at a census-block level.
- Traffic light synchronization of 44 lane miles within Osceola County.
- Implementation of an internal County recycling program.
- Updates to the Land Development Code and Comprehensive Plan to include energy efficient considerations.
- Installation of energy-saving LED bulbs in traffic lights still utilizing incandescent bulbs.
- GHGI (Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory) to be used as a benchmark that works to develop emission goals.
- CFI (Carbon Forest Inventory) to identify the amount of carbon sequestered by native vegetation.
- WMBFA (Wetland Mitigation Banking Feasibility Analysis)
- SAP (Sustainability Action Plan) strategic objectives and initiatives.

- Obtained Florida Green Building Coalition (FGBC) SILVER Certification for Osceola County operations.
- Developed both Osceola County and City of St. Cloud sustainability websites.
- Provided County residents access to Home Energy Rating System (HERS) audits for residential properties.
- Obtained United States Green Building Council (USGBC) membership for the County.
- County employees trained for and obtained Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certification.
- County employees trained for and obtained HERS Rater Certification.



Water Quality + Natural Lands + Trails: The primary intent is to reduce energy use, save taxpayer dollars, curb greenhouse gas (GHG) and particulate emissions, and decrease dependence on non-renewable energy. The plan seeks to increase the sustainability land index by 5% by 2019.

Want to Learn More?
[Osceola Energy Initiative](#)



SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS

The OEI provides overall direction to managing, implementing and communicating a variety of sustainability initiatives and data.



Job creation: The intent of enhanced institutional capacity is to improve the County’s human, programmatic, and financial resources to better implement sustainability initiatives. This focus area could directly help support new jobs within the County and also indirectly foster new jobs by promoting the County’s efforts to regional and national firms.



Transportation: An objective of the plan is to reduce per capita travel time by 5% by 2019.

NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION

In 2004, Osceola County voters approved the Environmental Lands Conservation Program. The Program acquires and manages environmentally significant lands in Osceola County. Through a voter-endorsed assessment, the County has purchased 3,300 acres of environmentally significant lands for resource and habitat protection, resource-based passive recreation, and public green space.

Through the Environmental Lands Conservation Program, established with Resolution 04-055R, the County acquired nearly 3,300 acres that will remain in preservation in perpetuity. The land acquisitions and their associated acreages are, by virtue of the purchase criteria, highly susceptible areas for development and also have high environmental values for upland and scrub habitat, wetlands and surface water protection, and/or flood protection. The program currently manages ten passive parks.

In addition to the purchase of properties, the Lands Conservation Program requires the development and implementation of Natural Resource Area Master Plans. Management plans have been completed for each park, including: Camp Lonesome Ranch, Cherokee Point, Lake Lizzie, Lake Runnymede, Shingle Creek, and Twin Oaks.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

The following points are general overall objectives for these management plans. More specific goals are listed in each management plan.

- **Provide resource-based recreational public access**
- **Maintain and enhance the natural resources, such as wetland and habitat restoration, exotic species eradication, plantings, interpretation, etc.**
- **Establish a program to maintain perpetual management of these properties**

SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS



Natural Lands: The County has been working diligently to acquire properties, through a number of funding partners, along the Shingle Creek Corridor. These acquisitions have resulted in the Shingle Creek Regional Park, which is one continuous corridor from the Orange County line to Lake Toho. Currently it is just over 200 acres and at completion, it will comprise of over 500 acres.



Water Quality: Water features, such as creeks, lakes, and wetlands, are key features of the natural lands that the County is proactively protecting. Osceola strives to improve water quality through restoring wetlands, installing culverts and ditch blocks, implementing upland management programs, and constructing boardwalks in marshy areas.



Trails & Bikeways: With the goal to provide additional public access and recreational opportunities in these natural lands, Osceola is expanding their trails and bikeways network. Natural lands offer hiking, biking, and equestrian trails, primarily on the interior of the sites. Additional recreational opportunities throughout the natural lands include water recreation, such as paddle sports and fishing, wildlife viewing, and picnicking.



PASSIVE PARKS

Camp Lonesome Conservation Area:

- Purchased: November 2007
- Location: 4257 N. Canoe Creek Road, Kenansville, 34739
- Size: 2,443 acres
- Previous Use: Cattle production
- Environmental Significance: Supports several imperiled or rare ecological communities and wildlife species
- Open to the public for passive recreational use (primitive camping, hiking, equestrian riding), accessible by reservation only

Cherokee Point Conservation Area:

- Purchased: June 2012
- Location: 2501 Cherokee Road, St. Cloud, 34772
- Size: 183 acres
- Previous Use: Residential farm, cattle ranching
- Environmental Significance: Protects picturesque shoreline of Lake Tohopekaliga's littoral zone with wet pastures and an upland peninsula, and serves as a conservation area for native wildlife and vegetation habitat. The site serves as an important habitat or migratory stop for a variety of bird species, including: the endangered Everglades snail kit, Sandhill crane, Bald Eagle, white pelican, and several waterfowl species.
- Open to the public for passive recreational use (bank fishing, canoe/kayak, hiking, wildlife viewing)
- 100-person pavilion for public use

Lake Lizzie Conservation Area:

- Purchased: 2008
- Location: 6495 Old Melbourne Hwy, St. Cloud, 34771
- Size: 1,076 acres
- Previous Use: Silviculture, cattle grazing
- Environmental Significance: Protects a range of ecological communities including: lakes, wet prairies, freshwater marsh, wetland hardwood swamp/bay swamp, scrubby pine flatwoods, imperiled sand pine scrub, and xeric oak scrub. Owing to the range of habitat represented within the LLCA, a diversity of wildlife and protected indigenous species utilize the area. A conservation area for native wildlife and vegetation habitat.
- Open to the public for passive recreational use (primitive camping, hiking, equestrian riding, wildlife viewing)



Lake Runnymede Conservation Area:

- Purchased: 2007
- Location: 4600 Rummel Road, St. Cloud, 34771
- Size: 43 acres
- Previous Use: Cattle grazing, community of Wharton established in 1885
- Environmental Significance: The wetland habitats (hardwood forest, upland scrub, freshwater wetlands, and lakeshore) support several listed species, including Sherman's fox squirrel, Bald Eagle, Gopher tortoise, Sandhill crane, and wading birds. The site is also home to a native ferns, air plants, and a xeric landscape with plant species such as the prickly pear cactus; and protects a Native American shell midden.
- Open to the public for passive recreational use (primitive camping, hiking, picnicking, wildlife viewing)

Twin Oaks Conservation Area:

- Purchased: June 2010
- Location: 2001 Macy Island Road, Kissimmee, 34744
- Size: 370 acres
- Previous Use: Cattle ranch and sod production
- Environmental Significance: Provides protection and enhancement of water resources, flood storage, and wildlife habitat along Lake Tohopekaliga; and is characterized by live oak hammocks, wet prairies, freshwater marshes, shrub wetlands, and remnant cypress. (Initial land restoration required 45,000 new native plants be introduced by hand.) Provides a conservation area for native wildlife.
- Open to the public for passive recreational use (primitive camping, hiking, equestrian trails, fishing, paddling, picnicking, wildlife viewing)

Shingle Creek Regional Park – Babb Landing Location:

- Established: 1914
- Location: 2491 Babb Road, Kissimmee, 34746
- Size: 160 acres
- Previous Use: Citrus grove and harvest operation (still visible today)
- Environmental Significance: The parcel is home to pine flatwoods, wet and dry prairies, oak hammocks and hardwood wetlands; and protects Bald eagle, Sandhill crane, swallow-tailed kite, and Eastern bluebirds.
- Open to the public for passive recreational use (fishing, hiking, picnicking, paddling, wildlife viewing, historic structures)
- Shingle Creek Regional Park–Bass Road Location:
 - Location: 925 Bass Road, Kissimmee, 34746
 - Size: 40 acres
 - Previous Use: Citrus grove and harvest operation (still visible today)
 - Environmental Significance: The southern terminus of the protected northern section of the Shingle Creek corridor, and sanctuary to the state threatened Gopher tortoise, a keystone species that over 350 other species depend on for survival.
 - Open to the public for passive recreational use (hiking, picnicking, wildlife viewing, dog park, pavilion, playground)

Shingle Creek Regional Park – Ruba Location:

- Purchased: 2006
- Location: U.S. 192 & Yates Road, Kissimmee
- Size: 16 acres
- Previous Use: Citrus grove and harvest operation (still visible today)
- Environmental Significance: Provides a key component

to the Shingle Creek Regional Park’s vision of protecting wildlife habitat

- Open to the public for passive recreational use (hiking, picnicking, wildlife viewing, pavilion, playground)

Shingle Creek Regional Park – Steffee Homestead Location:

- Established: 1911
- Location: 4280 W. Vine Street, Kissimmee, 34746
- Previous Use: Home to Judson and Mollie Steffee, whose son married the daughter of famous steamboat captain, Clay Johnson; and caretaker Henry Haines’s cabin (still visible today)
- Open to the public for passive recreational use (hiking, pavilion, picnicking, historic structures)

Shingle Creek Regional Park – Steffee Landing Location:

- Location: 4266 W. Vine Street, Kissimmee, 34741
- Previous Use: 1890 Shingle Creek Cabin, originally used as a family hunting and fishing camp along the creek bank (restored and still visible today) and adjacent to the Florida Midland Railroad
- Open to the public for recreational use (bank and pier fishing, hiking, biking, canoe/kayak/paddleboard launch, paddling center with guided tours, pavilion, interpretive signage, historic structures)

Want to Learn More? [Passive Parks](#)

3,300 Acres
OF NATURAL LANDS

CONSOLIDATED PLAN

The 5-Year Consolidated Plan serves as the planning guide for use of the annual federal allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds that Osceola County receives as an entitlement community under the Community Planning and Development Program.

The Consolidated Plan is a detailed illustration of community and economic development issues, needs, and proposed funding activities in unincorporated Osceola County and City of St. Cloud. The plan identifies community needs and proposes strategies for meeting these needs using CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) and HOME (Home investment partnership program) funds, along with other complementing federal, state, and local funding.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

- **Provide an assessment of housing and community development needs**
- **Provide a strategic plan for addressing these needs**
- **Provide specific Annual Action Plans for use of the HUD grant funds**
- **Provide decent and affordable housing**
- **Address homeless needs**
- **Address non-housing community development needs**
- **Address special needs populations**

SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS



Job Creation & Economic Development: Plan goals include providing training, education, and job creation opportunities County-wide for lower income persons to increase employment and employability, aimed at alleviating poverty and reducing homelessness; and providing public facility and infrastructure

improvements to targeted areas (lower income neighborhoods that have a high percentage of minority residents).



Redevelopment & Centers: Community priorities and objectives for the 5-Year Consolidated Plan include: increasing the range of housing options and related services for people with special needs; increasing supply and quality of affordable rental housing; increasing availability and quality of affordable owner housing, for low income households; and increasing the quality and quantity of public facilities and infrastructure in targeted areas. A variety of programs and projects will be implemented to remove blight, provide decent and affordable housing, empower residents, and improve quality of life. Efforts to strengthen neighborhoods will include streetscape beautification, sidewalks improvements, lighting and open space improvements, recreation facility and neighborhood center improvements, and stormwater and water facility upgrades.



Job Creation, Jobs to Housing Balance: Two primary concerns for Osceola County at the moment are higher paying jobs and housing. Housing assistance to lower income households includes rental housing assistance, down payment assistance for home purchase, and housing rehabilitation services.

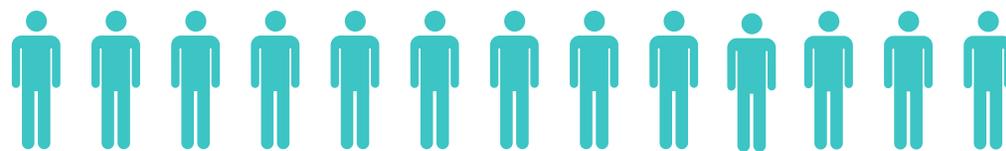
As part of the strategic planning process, the County has identified economic development as a high priority to improve the quality of life for low-income residents. Programs are needed to address unemployment and underemployment; these programs include access to technical assistance for businesses, appropriate job training and skill development, and adequate transportation to employment destinations.

Want to Learn More? [Consolidated Plan](#)



(Above) Cameron Preserve: An innovative public-private partnership among Osceola County, the Parramore Construction Company, Inc. and the Florida Housing Finance Corporation, Cameron Preserve will include 100 one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments to be leased to families at or below 80 percent of Osceola County’s median income. In 2015, the County Commission entered into a public-private partnership to purchase the “Yates Property” for the Cameron Preserve housing project, as part of a Housing First strategic initiative that prioritizes providing permanent housing to people, thus ending their homelessness and serving as a platform from which they can pursue personal goals and improve their quality of life.

GOAL: SUPPORT 1,567
HOUSEHOLDS IN ONE YEAR



GOAL: SUPPORT 1,799
HOMES IN ONE YEAR



STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2019

The Strategic Plan is designed to guide the work of Osceola County to achieve its stated goals.

Developing strategies involves diagnosing a situation, setting goals and policies to provide direction, and taking action to achieve goals. The County has policy documents, including the Comprehensive Plan, that provide guidance; the annual Strategic Plan sets priorities and actions that move toward meeting those goals.

Many of the priorities set in the Strategic Plan align with sustainability goals. NeoCity is a top priority, with education and training close behind – the goal is to diversify the economy with high-paying jobs and educate residents for those jobs. Osceola has long been a bedroom community for the jobs in neighboring Orange County, so balancing out jobs and housing is an important goal here at home. Other goals address water quality, affordable housing and homelessness, transportation, and fiscal sustainability.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

- ***Growing and diversifying the County's economy***
- ***Upgrading the County infrastructure and transportation network***
- ***Creating great neighborhoods for the future***
- ***Ensuring cost-effective and high-performing County government***

SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS



Job Creation: Osceola County is preparing the economy for future trends while addressing current issues through education and training, supporting manufacturing and research facilities, expanding Valencia College, identifying opportunities to capitalize on tourism, and identifying housing and job trends to target future land uses that support a balanced economy. Specifically, this plan identifies space for unions and trades, and recommends a study to identify academic programs and industry partnerships needed to increase high-tech and industry partnerships.



Water Quality: Top priorities include updating the Storm Water Plan (strategic action item #5) to meet the EPA's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). To support environmental health in existing neighborhoods, the County plans to initiate a lake and beach cleanup program to implement best management practices, aquatic plan management, and manage recreation. Transportation priorities include road maintenance and paving, sidewalk systems, and transit.



Jobs to Housing Balance: Housing affordability is a concern, particularly as homeless families continue to reside in motels along W192. The County recently acquired land and partnered with a developer to build Camden Preserve, 100 units of affordable housing near the W192 corridor. But additional work is underway to identify prime locations for affordable housing and develop partnerships to provide it.

Want to Learn More? [Strategic Plan](#)

COUNTY PLANS AND SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS

Each of these County plans addresses multiple sustainability elements, and sustainability efforts in each plan will, in turn, support policies in the other County plans. More information about these sustainability indicators can be found in Chapter 5.

PLAN	Land Area Mix	Density	Centers	Redevelopment	Job Creation	Jobs to Housing Balance	Connectivity	High Frequency Transit	Pedestrian Environment	Water Quality	Natural Lands	Trails	Fiscal
Comprehensive Plan 2025													
Mixed Use Districts													
Land Development Code													
Transportation Funding Initiative													
Consolidated Plan													
NeoCity													
W192 Redevelopment Plan													
Osceola Energy Initiative													
Natural Resource Conservation													
Strategic Plan 2015-2019													





3

CHAPTER THREE

Key Issues

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Moving toward sustainability will involve implementing the recommendations of the plans and initiatives summarized in the previous chapter. These plans chart a path toward communities where land uses are better integrated; more transportation options are available; natural lands are preserved; and redevelopment is encouraged. Policies call for increasing energy efficiency and curbing greenhouse gases, as well as directing state federal funding to improve targeted areas of the County.

Key issues facing the County at the present time include fiscal sustainability, lack of affordable housing and homelessness, and jobs-housing balance. These issues are addressed in this chapter, with recommendations including fine-tuning and augmenting the strategies in our plans and programs. Fiscal sustainability is influenced by many things, including land use, density and intensity, development patterns, and road connectivity. Comprehensive Plan policies and land development codes addressing these items should be modified based on the results of the fiscal analysis to achieve more fiscally favorable results. Changes to land use and transportation will, in turn, affect housing availability and affordability, so the housing analysis provides additional guidance for changing the Comprehensive Plan and land development code.

FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY

Florida municipalities are required to pass balanced budgets each year. But a balanced budget isn't always one representing a sustainable spending plan. At the most basic level, a sustainable operating budget is one where normally occurring revenues are equal to normally occurring expenditures. The County's budget is balanced, but if maintenance and replacement of capital facilities and equipment is being deferred, it may not be fiscally sustainable.

Under Florida's growth management laws, local government's main consideration has been financial feasibility – the determination of whether they could afford to make adequate infrastructure investments to accommodate new growth. This is a short-term measure, defined in state growth management law as having funds adequate to maintain levels of service in the five-year capital improvements schedule. Whether something is financially feasible over the short term, however, bears little relation to whether it's fiscally sustainable over the long term – whether the development pattern generates adequate revenue to provide public services and maintain infrastructure over time. To determine whether the County is fiscally sustainable, it is necessary to understand how growth and development affects the fiscal picture so we can maximize revenues and minimize financial obligations.

For decades in Florida rapid growth was the norm, which meant local governments had a continuously increasing tax base and relatively new infrastructure. The recession halted growth for several years and dealt a hard blow to local governments, a blow from which many haven't fully recovered. It also served as a wake-up call. New growth had been adding to the tax base without requiring the same level of infrastructure maintenance as existing areas, so funding appeared adequate to cover costs.

When growth stopped, this relationship became apparent. Decreasing revenue resulted in massive cuts to capital budgets, as well as delays in maintenance and replacement of infrastructure and equipment. Deferred maintenance remains an issue today, years after the recovery.

Florida's infrastructure as a whole is relatively new – in older areas of the nation, infrastructure is failing at a rapid rate. Every four years, the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) grades the condition of American infrastructure. Grades are based on physical condition and needed investments for improvement. The comparison below shows Florida generally rates better than the country as a whole and better than states where the infrastructure tends to be older (such as New York).

2015 ACSE INFRASTRUCTURE REPORT CARD

2015 ACSE Infrastructure Report Card	FL	NY	US
Bridges	B	D+	C+
Drinking Water	C+	C	D
Roads	C	D-	D
Wastewater	C	D	D+
Transit	C	C-	D-

A=Exceptional; B=Good; C=Mediocre; D=Poor; F=Failing

OSCEOLA'S DEVELOPMENT (AND THEREFORE INFRASTRUCTURE) IS RELATIVELY NEW – ONLY 6% OF THE COUNTY'S HOUSING HAS REACHED THE 50-YEAR MARK. BUT THE COUNTY ALREADY FACES BACKLOGS IN INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE.

Osceola's development (and therefore infrastructure) is newer – only 6% of the housing has reached the 50-year mark (by comparison, 69% of New York's housing is at least 50 years old). For Osceola, the issue of aging infrastructure will begin to peak as development reaches the 50-year mark. More than 80% of the County's development occurred in the 1980s and the following two decades, which means infrastructure maintenance requirements will increase considerably starting in 2030. As the County already faces significant delays in infrastructure maintenance, the takeaway here is that the already sizable revenue shortfalls for infrastructure maintenance could, in time, become much worse.

During budget season, when the focus is on balancing the budget, a local government's primary options generally include raising revenue (by increasing millage rates, other taxes, and fees) or lowering expenditures (by cutting services or deferring maintenance and replacement of facilities and equipment). Fiscal sustainability offers other options. The County could raise revenue by how we develop – by increasing value rather than millage. Understanding how development patterns affect value and revenue per acre will help the County make decisions and set priorities in this regard. Instead of cutting services, the County could provide services more efficiently – both by requiring a more efficient development pattern and by encouraging development in areas with unused infrastructure and service capacity.

FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

Virtually every local government service is provided within the built environment. The cost of many of these services is geographically dependent – that is, the development pattern affects the efficiency of providing the service, and therefore its cost. But generally, local governments don't plan, permit, or charge for services on this basis. Fire stations are planned based on response time, not number of properties or people they serve. Garbage collection costs the same whether the layout of a neighborhood allows 10 pickups in an hour or 50. Even the efficiency of mosquito control services depends on the development pattern – in 2016, when the County experienced a considerable increase in service requests because of the Zika virus, staff found they could canvass a neighborhood on foot much more quickly if the road network was well-connected rather than primarily cul-de-sacs.

While charging for services based on geographic factors such as development pattern likely is not feasible, planning for development with this knowledge in mind is essential. Road connectivity alone has considerable effect on the cost of services. Therefore, it is critical that the County understand the true costs of development and development patterns, based upon operations and maintenance, infrastructure capacity and use, and the nature of development.

The County recently contracted to conduct a fiscal analysis that included value/revenue per acre and cost of services for various place types.

The first phase of this analysis was an evaluation of place types in the County, with a detailed examination of property values and revenue potential per acre. The second phase was a more complete investigation into fiscal impacts of development patterns and growth in the County, including revenues and costs. The study estimated operating and capital costs to serve existing development as well future growth in three geographic

areas: an established area, largely built out (West); a rapidly developing greenfield area (East); and an area planned for mixed use that is just beginning to develop (Central).

While the West and Central areas are comparable in size, the East area is smaller; consequently, information is shown on both a net and per-acre basis. Services modeled include Fire/EMS, Sheriff, Corrections, Human Services, Public Works (roads, transit), Animal Control, and Parks.

FROM THE FISCAL ANALYSIS:

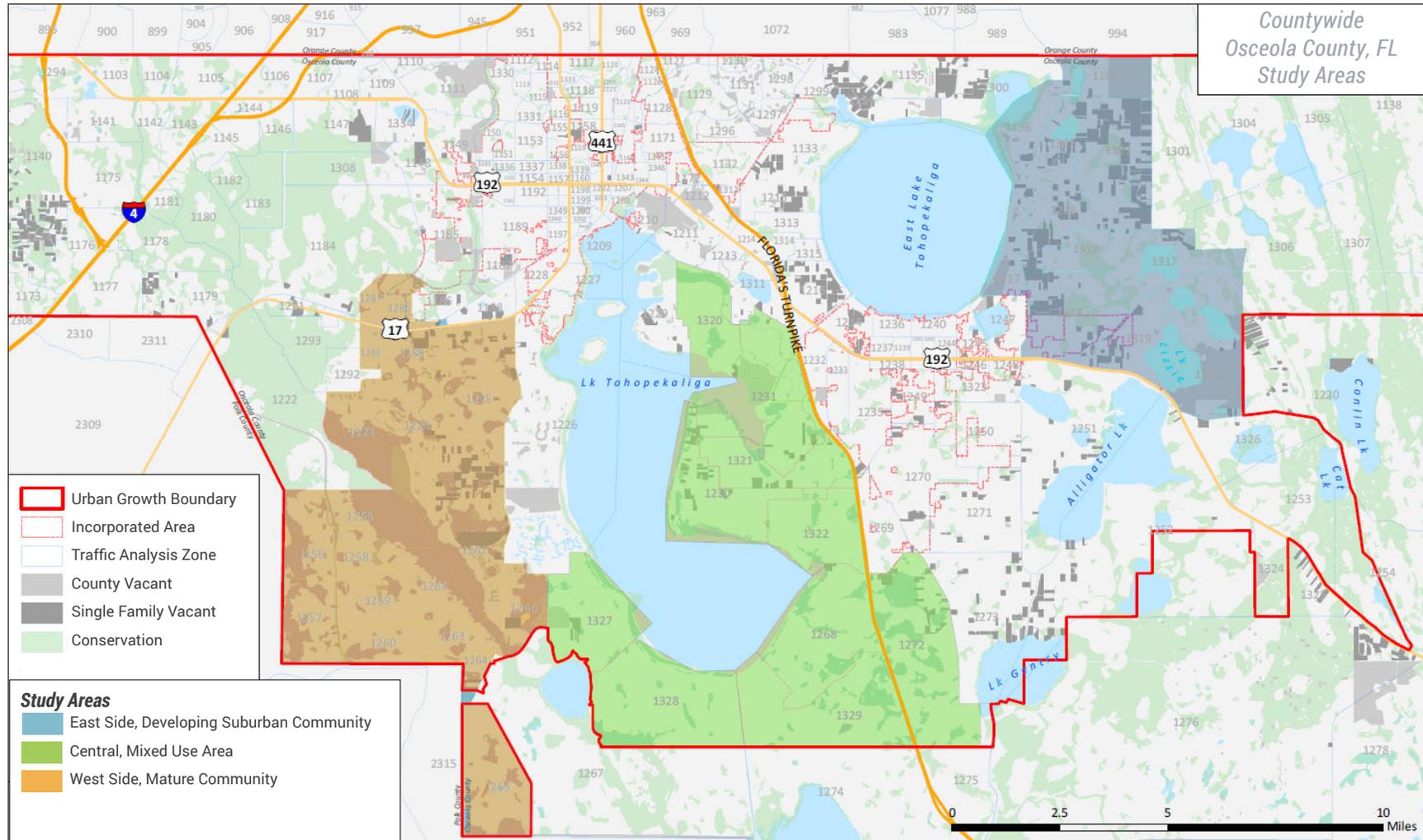
“A fiscal impact analysis (FIA) goes beyond the annual budget to clarify the longer-term financial effects of land use and development decisions and related public infrastructure and service costs in order to help ensure that local officials understand the short- and long-term fiscal effects prior to making such land use and development decisions.

A fiscal impact analysis projects net cash flow (revenue generation and operating and capital costs) to the public sector due to development. In simple terms: Revenues (generated from property taxes, sales and use taxes, charges for service) minus expenditures (costs to provide public services such as police, fire, recreation programs, library, etc.) equals the fiscal impact. In other words, are sufficient revenues available to cover the resulting costs to provide services and infrastructure?”

Cumulative Fiscal Impact Results	DEVELOPING AREA (East)		MIXED USE AREA			MATURE AREA (WEST)	
	<i>Base Year</i>	<i>Total at Year 25</i>	<i>Base Year</i>	<i>Total at Year 25</i>	<i>Total at Buildout</i>	<i>Base Year</i>	<i>Total at Year 25</i>
Single Family Units	5,700	9,152	6,809	22,245	37,400	17,936	17,940
Multifamily Units	27	1,146	17	9,133	36,150	214	1,506
TOTAL UNITS	5,727	10,298	6,826	31,378	73,550	18,150	19,446
<i>Net Increase by Subarea</i>		4,571		24,552	66,724		1,296
POPULATION	13,280	26,587	12,211	85,027	199,303	49,612	54,131
<i>Net Increase by Subarea</i>		13,307		72,816	187,092		4,519
Retail SF	197,346	1,294,825	1,139,451	5,715,654	6,020,000	1,092,894	1,425,337
Office SF	138,389	1,681,175	416,576	1,628,276	8,200,000	960,169	1,412,705
Industrial SF	74,638	591,778	186,387	1,966,038	4,240,000	506,700	641,150
Hotel SF	6,600	6,600	202,412	850,154	2,940,000	40,800	40,800
TOTAL SF	416,974	3,574,378	1,944,826	10,160,123	21,400,000	2,600,563	3,519,991
<i>Net Increase by Subarea</i>		3,157,405		8,215,296	19,455,174		919,429
JOBS	1,013	9,391	4,236	21,669	50,746	6,451	8,894
<i>Net Increase by Subarea</i>		8,378		17,433	46,510		2,443
PERSON MILES OF TRAVEL (PMT)	23	75,867,756	50	164,137,339	0	40	131,950,081

This analysis assesses the fiscal impacts of development based upon the development’s location, land use mix, and development density and intensity. It compares the revenue generated by the development with the costs of serving the development, including trips, street maintenance, and services required.

FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS FOR OSCEOLA COUNTY STUDY AREAS

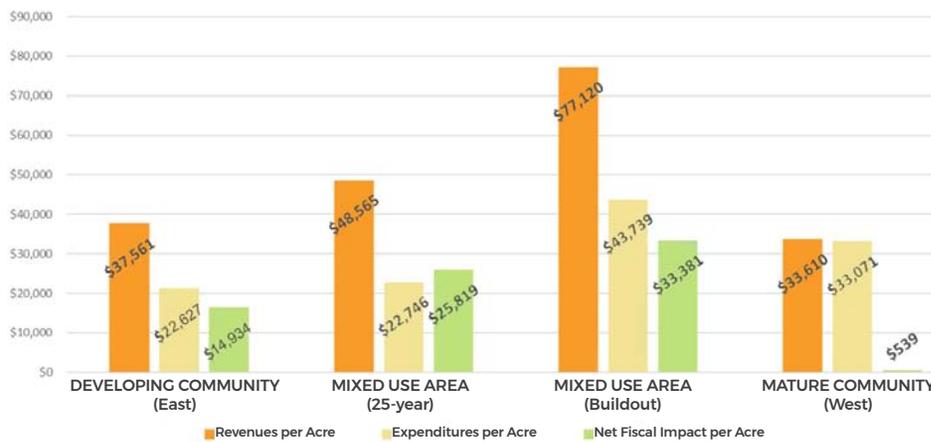


CUMULATIVE FISCAL IMPACT

Cumulative fiscal impact results reflect total revenues generated during the analysis period minus total operating and capital expenditures for all revenues and expenditures included in the study. As shown in the figure below, over the 25-year period for all areas, the mixed-use area performs better fiscally than the other two areas.

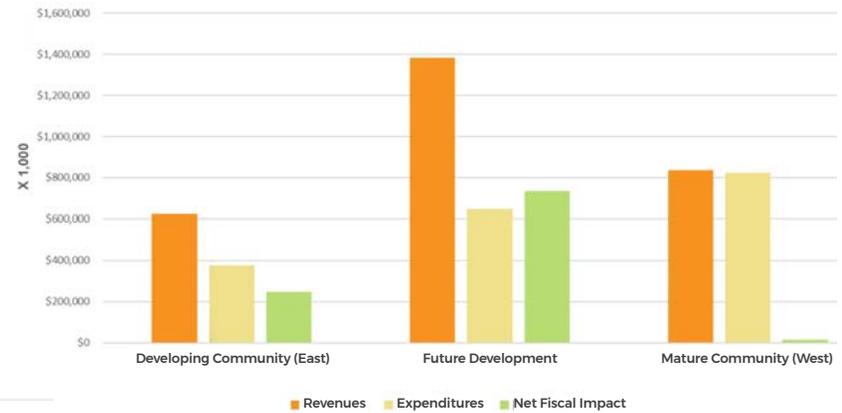
The chart below shows the net fiscal impacts for each area.

**Cumulative Results per Acre Scenario Comparisons
Osceola County Fiscal Impact Analysis**



Cumulative Results Per Acre Scenario Comparisons	Developing Community (East)	Central (25 year)	Central Buildout	Mature Community (West)
Revenues per acre	\$37,561	\$48,565	\$77,120	\$33,160
Expenditures per acre	\$22,627	\$22,746	\$43,739	\$33,071
Net fiscal Impact	\$14,934	\$25,819	\$33,381	\$539

**Cumulative (25 year) Net Fiscal Impacts Scenario Comparisons
Osceola County Impact Analysis**



Cumulative Net Fiscal Impact Scenario Comparisons	Developing Community (East)	Central (25 year)	Mature Community (West)
Revenues	\$622,309,636	\$1,069,520,649	\$835,753,424
Expenditures	\$374,884,859	\$647,431,874	\$822,353,132
Net	\$247,424,776	\$734,902,648	\$13,400,293

The East area is smaller, so the per-acre chart will be more useful for assessing the fiscal impact of this area. Comparing the Central and West areas, the Central area costs less to serve, so even if the revenue was the same as West area, the Central area still would have a more positive fiscal impact. The revenue for the mixed-use area, however, is considerably higher. Because this analysis does not take into account the effect a well-connected road network has on the efficiency of service delivery, the fiscal benefit of the mixed-use area is most pronounced in the revenue side, a reflection of greater density and a mix of uses. The benefit likely is underestimated on the cost of services side.

Fiscal impact results are next shown per acre. Total acres in each area are used as the base—regardless of whether the land is vacant or developed. Per acre, the net fiscal impact is more than twice as high in the mixed-use area as the East area at buildout. The West area has a negligible positive fiscal impact.

CONSIDERATIONS

Note that this analysis is limited in what it covers. While it takes into account an area’s density, intensity, population, and land use mix, it does not consider the difference in cost of services when the road network is so well connected and the mix of uses is so integrated. Therefore, in all likelihood, the fiscal impact of the Central area, if built as planned, would be more positive than shown.

The analysis also assumes no unplanned major events (hurricanes, recessions) and it assumes that the areas do not decline. Any neighborhood or area can experience decline – in some respects, it is part of the normal evolution of many communities. Areas in decline might require more services (code enforcement, law enforcement) even as their property values stagnate.

CONNECTIVITY

Relative to the connectivity of an area’s road network, studies have related connectivity to lower initial and long-term infrastructure costs as well as better emergency response time. *Building Better Budgets*, a 2013 study conducted by Smart Growth America, compared areas similar to the County’s Mixed-Use Districts (with higher development densities and intensities, a more integrated mix of uses, and a highly connected street network) and areas similar to the East side suburban development (homes, schools, and businesses separated, and areas designed primarily for driving). The study concluded, the mixed-use development cost one-third less for upfront infrastructure. Similar to the Smart Growth study,

the Osceola analysis takes into account total transportation spending in the three areas, concluding that the mixed-use area is projected to have significantly less spending per capita than either of the other areas, at both the 25-year point and buildout, as shown to the right.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

With respect to emergency response time, a study conducted by Charlotte, North Carolina looked at emergency response time in three neighborhoods with varying levels of street connectivity. They found that a fire station in the most interconnected neighborhood could provide service to more than three times as many commercial and residential units as a station in the least connected neighborhood. Charlotte fire stations served from a high of 27,000 households to a low of 5,800 households, with the number related directly to the level of connectivity.

Projected revenue per acre in the Central (mixed-use) area, shown in the table below, is more than double the revenue generated in either the East or West area.

<i>Projected Transportation Operation and Maintenance Expenditures Per Capita</i>				
AREA	EAST	CENTRAL 25-YEAR	CENTRAL BUILDOUT	WEST
<i>Total Expenditures</i>	\$25,637,467	\$35,630,574	\$53,374,584	\$68,882,574
<i>Per Capita</i>	\$964	\$419	\$268	\$1,273

<i>Projected Revenue by Acre</i>			
AREA	ACRES	GENERAL REVENUE	REVENUE PER ACRE
<i>East</i>	16,658	\$622,309,635	\$37,561
<i>Central (25 Year)</i>	28,464	\$1,382,334,523	\$48,564
<i>Central (Buildout)</i>	28,464	\$2,195,125,646	\$77,119
<i>West</i>	24,866	\$835,753,424	\$33,610

Cumulative Net Fiscal Impact - Scenario Comparisons				
Category	DEVELOPING AREA (East)	MIXED USE AREA		MATURE AREA (WEST)
	<i>25-Year Cumulative Total</i>	<i>25-Year Cumulative Total</i>	<i>Total at Buildout</i>	<i>25-Year Cumulative Total</i>
GENERAL FUND				
<i>General Fund Revenues</i>	\$390,201,797	\$763,494,757	\$1,148,730,547	\$485,548,641
<i>General Fund Expenditures</i>	\$170,915,274	\$207,328,757	\$360,631,776	\$465,978,323
GENERAL FUND NET FISCAL IMPACT	\$219,286,524	\$556,166,001	\$788,098,771	\$19,570,319
SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS				
<i>Special Revenue Fund Revenues</i>	\$155,047,446	\$313,127,082	\$474,149,368	\$255,150,674
<i>Special Revenue Fund Expenditures</i>	\$91,909,028	\$136,521,288	\$214,394,038	\$217,601,821
SPECIAL REVENUE FUND NET FISCAL IMPACT	\$63,138,417	\$176,605,794	\$259,755,329	\$37,548,853
CAPITAL				
<i>Capital Revenues</i>	\$77,060,393	\$305,712,683	\$572,245,731	\$95,054,109
<i>Capital Expenditures</i>	\$133,012,756	\$306,437,339	\$678,106,894	\$250,115,081
CAPITAL NET FISCAL IMPACT	-\$55,952,364	-\$724,656	-\$105,861,163	-\$155,060,972
GRAND TOTAL NET FISCAL IMPACT	\$226,472,577	\$732,047,139	\$941,992,937	-\$97,941,801

REDEVELOPMENT

Another long-term consideration relates to an area's ability to redevelop over time. It is not unusual for areas to experience decline and resurgence as they age. However, if redevelopment is not viable, a declining area will continue to decline, which negatively affects tax revenue.

The ability to change parcels incrementally is a prerequisite to redevelopment, because a relatively minor risk on the part of one investor to redevelop a parcel results in increasing land value on neighboring parcels. Increasing land value, along with the potential to develop something more intense than the current use, makes redevelopment viable. The development pattern can inhibit this process by limiting the ability to change uses or develop more intensely. Low-intensity retail on major road corridors is an example of property that may not be viable for redevelopment. Many auto-oriented areas are over-retailed, so there often is little market for redeveloping a vacant retail center, and many such parcels are not appropriately situated for other uses. Road connectivity and a mix of uses, on the other hand, allows for incremental redevelopment. Whether and how an area can evolve over time is critical to its fiscal health.



An annual cattle drive has become the traditional opening of the RAM National Championship Finals Rodeo, which has been held in Osceola County for the past three years.

MAXIMIZING FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY IN DIFFERENT TYPES OF AREAS

All communities have fiscal contributors and recipients. The County's goal should be achieving a balance of uses, areas, and patterns throughout the County. The fiscal analysis showed more positive impacts for the mixed-use area of the County than for either a mature community or growing suburban development. Given the findings, strategies for these areas are summarized below.

MATURE AREA

Areas where the development pattern is set and relatively little new development or redevelopment is occurring can present a challenge. The infrastructure is aging, and if property values are not increasing, the revenue/cost ratio could decline. Strategies in these areas include infill development that complements land uses (non-residential in residential areas, for example), as well as community enhancements. Studies show that walkability adds value to communities. Consumer preference also trends toward walkable communities, and local examples of mixed use walkable communities show a marked increase in value over suburban development. Walkable communities have destinations to walk to, and pleasant, safe ways to get there, so in addition to complementary uses, sidewalks, street trees, and bike paths or trails can do much to increase a community's value.

DEVELOPING AREA

This area shows a more positive revenue/cost ratio than the mature area, but that could change as the area ages. The ratio is less positive than that of the mixed-use area. The area is developing in a suburban pattern, much of it single-family residential. For this area, strategies include identifying opportunities to diversify land uses (identifying areas where

centers can be planned with a variety of housing types, as well as non-residential development). Ensuring the area road network is well-connected likely will lower the cost of providing services while also helping to preserve the area's ability to redevelop over time.

MIXED-USE AREA

This area has the best revenue/cost ratio of the three types studied. Investing in and otherwise facilitating development in such areas should be a high priority. It is vital to ensure the principles for development of the County's mixed-use areas (mix of uses, development pattern, connectivity, etc.) are upheld through the development approval process. As this development pattern is less common in Florida than suburban development, the County should work with landowners in the area to educate and provide resources as they market their property for development, and work with the development community to address challenges with development in the area.



Mixed use neighborhood center example rendering



Mixed use residential neighborhood example rendering



Mixed use community center example rendering

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

For the past several years, news stories have identified the Orlando metro area as an increasingly less affordable housing market. This year's *Out of Reach* report (an annual report by the National Low Income Housing Coalition documenting the gap between wages and the cost of housing) ranks this area third nationally for its lack of affordable housing for extremely low-income residents, with a shortage twice as severe as the nation as a whole. Based on the federal standard that housing should cost no more than 30% of a household's income, many households pay too much for housing. Some are even living in motels, while others are homeless. According to the National Coalition for the Homeless, "Two trends are largely responsible for the rise in homelessness over the past 20-25 years: a growing shortage of affordable rental housing and a simultaneous increase in poverty." Homelessness in Osceola County does appear to be closely related to a lack of affordable housing.

Lack of affordable housing is not a new problem. The County has been addressing this issue for years with plans, programs, incentives, regulations, and funding. In general, local governments can do many things to increase the supply of affordable housing, including allowing a variety of housing types; simplifying land development regulations; and streamlining the permitting process. The County has accomplished this, and it continues to provide subsidized housing with state and federal funding. But the amount of housing that can be provided with this limited funding is small, and despite allowances and streamlined permitting, little affordable housing is being built for low-income groups without funding assistance. The County has done nearly everything the Comprehensive Plan calls for. The land development code has been amended to allow all types of housing, and the development review process has been streamlined. Still the situation persists.

Local government is not a large-scale housing provider, housing is provided almost exclusively by the private market. This analysis looks more in depth at the needs in the community compared to the housing provided by the market. The findings provide insight into adjustments that could help the market do what it does – provide housing – for a larger segment of the community.

HOUSING NEEDS

The federal standard used to measure affordability is housing that costs no more than 30% of a household's income. Households paying more than that are considered cost-burdened. By that measure, nearly half of Osceola's households are cost-burdened.

BASED ON THE FEDERAL STANDARD THAT HOUSING SHOULD COST NO MORE THAN 30% OF A HOUSEHOLD'S INCOME, NEARLY HALF OF OSCEOLA'S HOUSEHOLDS (45%, 41,312 HOUSEHOLDS) ARE COST-BURDENED

Almost half of those (19,718 households) are considered severely cost-burdened – that is, they pay more than half of their income for housing. (It is important to note – these statistics do not count families living in motels.)

The chart at the right shows households by income level and cost burden. At lower-income levels, the number of households exceed the affordable inventory, so having cost-burdened households at lower income levels is not surprising. By the \$50,000 level, the affordable inventory exceeds the number of households, so the percentage of cost-burdened households falls off significantly.

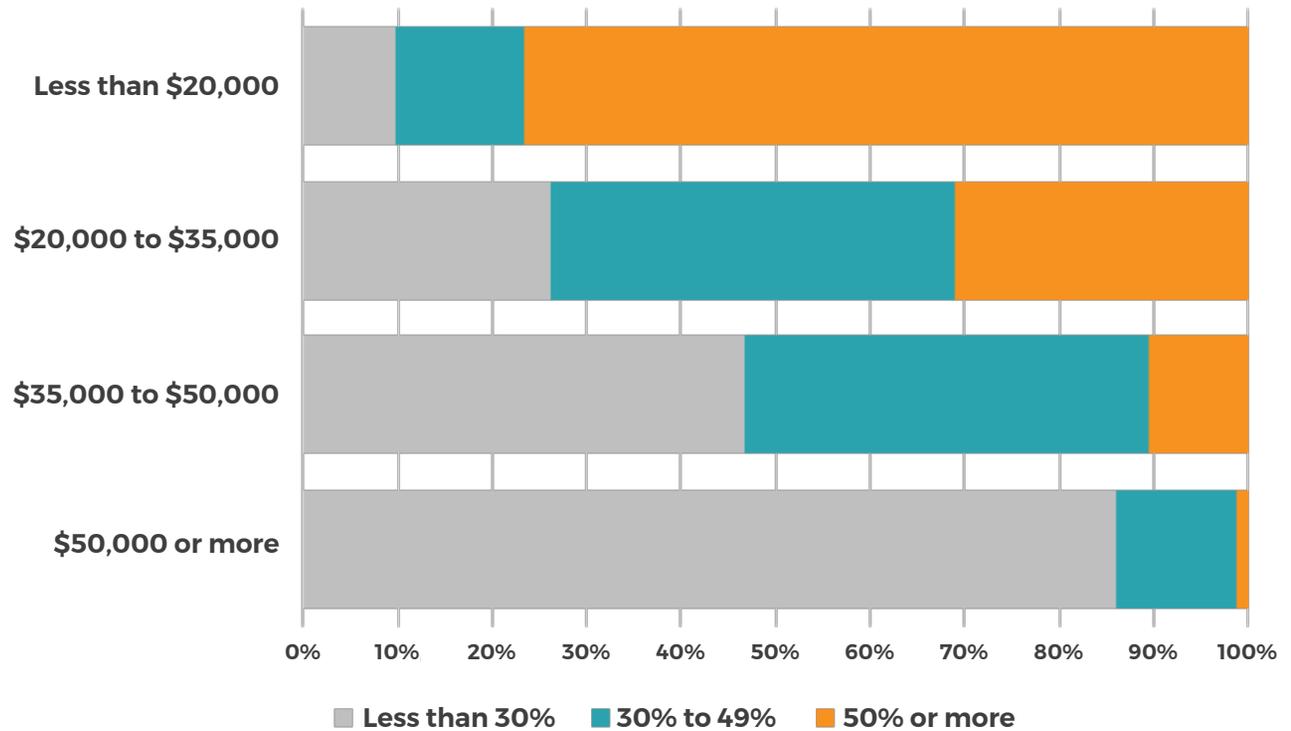
LESS THAN \$20,000: Not surprisingly, 90% of this group is spending more than 30% of their income for housing, with the majority spending half of their income or more. Affordable payment: up to \$500 per month.

\$20,000 TO \$35,000: Three-quarters of these households spend more than 30% of their income, but a far smaller percentage are severely cost-burdened (paying more than half their income for housing). Affordable payment: \$500 to \$875 per month.

\$35,000 TO \$50,000: Although more than half of these households are technically cost-burdened, the level of severe cost burden has dropped dramatically, and about one-third of the cost-burdened households pay only between 30 and 35% of their income. Additionally, at this income level, homeowners outnumber renters. Finally, the market does provide product affordable to this group, particularly at the upper end. Affordable payment: \$875 to \$1,250 per month.

MORE THAN \$50,000: The inventory of housing affordable at this level exceeds the number of households, so only a small percentage of households at this income level spend more than 30% of their income for housing. Affordable payment: \$1,250 per month and up.

HOW MUCH OSCEOLA HOUSEHOLDS PAY FOR HOUSING



Looking at households earning less than \$35,000 per year, which in Osceola is approximately 27,030 households (29% of total households), allows a closer look at the characteristics of that group. Osceola households that tend to fall disproportionately into lower income ranges include households at both ends of the age spectrum (under 25 and over 65), single-person households, single-parent households, and tourist workers.

- ***The County's median household income in 2016 was \$44,254, while the median for a single-person household was \$25,488.***
- ***More than half of the County's households have only one or two people (20% 1-person, 32% 2-person).***
- ***Elderly households tend to be smaller (37% of one-person households and 41% of two-person households are elderly). For this reason, it is not surprising that 46% of one-person households and 32% of two-person households have no workers.***
- ***More than half (52%) of elderly households and three in five young households (householder under age 25) earn less than \$35,000 per year.***
- ***Nearly three-fourths of single parent households earn less than \$35,000 annually.***

Smaller housing units could meet some of this need – the median rent for one-bedroom units in Osceola is approximately \$780, nearly \$160 less per month than the median rent for two-bedroom units. But while more than half of the County's households are one or two-person, only 8% of the County's housing inventory is efficiency or one-bedroom units. Last year, 83% of the County's housing construction was single-family.

While the County's Future Land Use Map (shown on the right) includes land designated for low-, medium-, and high-density residential uses, the majority of residential land use is low-

density, which is three to eight units per acre. Construction in these areas tends to be large subdivisions, typically with one type of housing. High-density housing (up to 40 units per acre) is allowed in tourist commercial areas, such as along West 192, but little housing construction has taken place in that area, despite the need for affordable housing near tourist sector jobs. The Mixed-Use Districts allow for and encourage a variety of housing types, but development in these areas is just starting to occur.

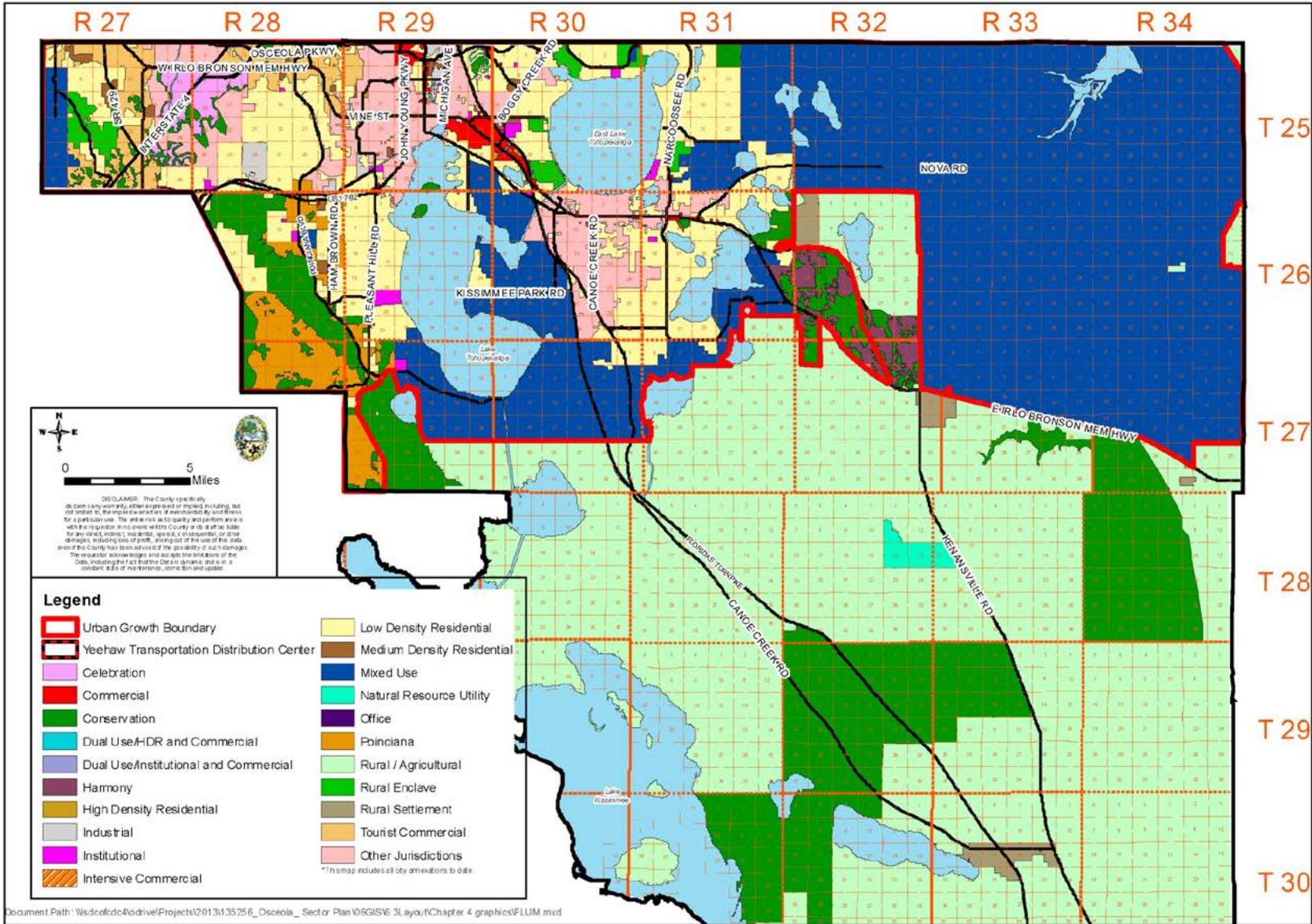
MEETING OSCEOLA'S HOUSING NEEDS

Households earning more than \$50,000 per year can find housing in the existing market. Subsidized housing generally is provided for households earning less than \$20,000, but funding is not adequate for meeting all the needs. So there's a gap in the housing market for Osceola's households. Narrowing that gap may be possible through a combination of strategies designed to decrease housing costs and increase household income and/or ability to pay.

DECREASING HOUSING COSTS

Strategies to decrease costs involve diversifying the housing product being provided. At the present time, the vast majority of housing being constructed is single-family, garden apartments, and some townhomes. Other housing types, sometimes referred to as "missing middle" housing, could provide more affordable products. Accessory units (garage apartments); small multi-family (duplexes, triplexes, etc.); bungalow courts (a grouping of small homes around a common green space); flats with townhomes above; tiny homes; and microunits, among other housing types, could provide more affordability. These products, however, generally are not provided in suburban subdivisions. There is an opportunity to diversify housing in the Mixed-Use Districts, as well as in any centers the County designates on the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) in low-density residential areas.

OSCEOLA COUNTY FUTURE LAND USE MAP



In addition to amending the FLUM in response to changing demographic trends, the County should incorporate a variety of housing types into the land development code.

To the extent these housing types are unfamiliar to area builders, builders from outside the area could be identified. Building the capacity of local developers to provide such housing also could help to diversify the County’s housing product.

INCREASING INCOME AND ABILITY TO PAY FOR HOUSING

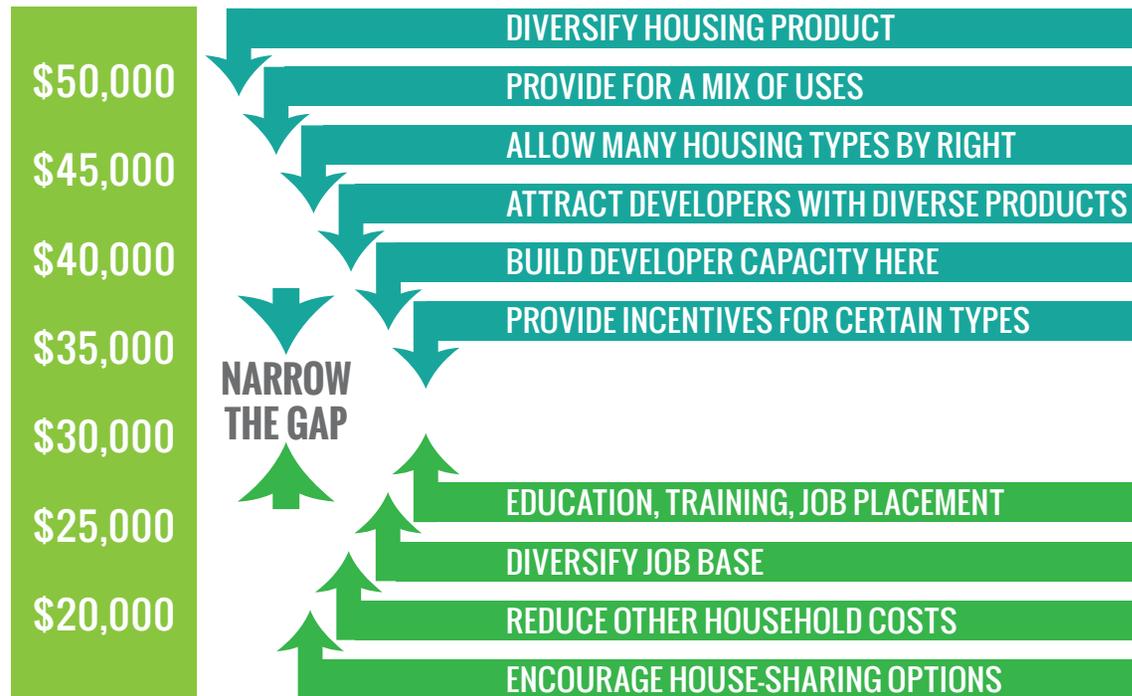
For some households, increasing income and/or ability to pay for housing could be an effective strategy. The County is working to diversify the job base, local agencies and educational institutions are providing and education, training, and job placement services to help households increase their income.

In addition to increasing income, decreasing other household expenses would leave more money to pay for housing. One of the largest household expenses – for many, second only to housing – is transportation. Osceola residents tend to commute long distances, which increases their transportation costs, making our market less affordable overall than other areas where housing is much more expensive (see chart at right).

Not surprisingly, data for the County show a correlation between vehicle availability and workers per household: one worker, one vehicle; two workers, two or more vehicles; three workers, three or more vehicles. Commuting to work appears to be nearly impossible without a vehicle, which may be one of the reasons some tourist sector workers live in motels along W192 close to their jobs. (The bus routes along this corridor have the highest ridership rates in the County.)

Lowering transportation costs also could be achieved by changing the development pattern. A mix of residential, service, and employment uses increases accessibility, lowering vehicle miles traveled and perhaps even allowing households to get by with fewer cars. Higher densities and intensities make transit more viable, and a well-connected, walkable street network with sidewalks and bikeways encourages alternative modes of transportation.

CLOSING THE HOUSING AFFORDABILITY GAP



Given that transportation costs in Osceola are nearly as high as housing costs, these strategies could be highly effective for increasing affordability.

Other major expenses include utilities, child care, and health care. Finding ways to lower any of these expenses would help a family more easily afford housing.

ASSISTING ELDERLY HOUSEHOLDS

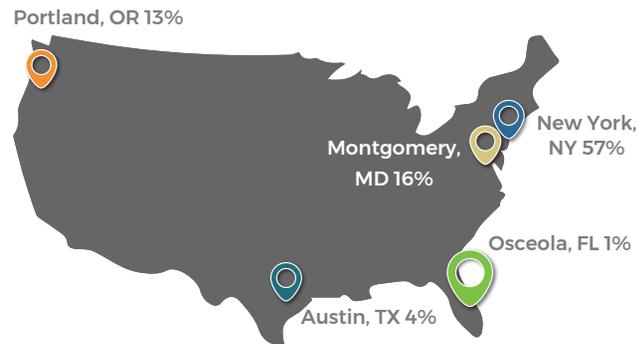
Elderly households in Osceola have an interesting combination of demographic characteristics. One-third of elderly households are one-person households. Nearly 30% of the households earning less than \$35,000 annually are elderly, but the homeownership rate for households where the householder is 65 or older is 77%. The high homeownership rates combined with low incomes, severe cost burden, and percentage of elderly who live alone likely indicates changing life conditions that make aging in place increasingly difficult. A home that once was the right size and price may have become too big and too expensive for a single

person with one income. Strategies to help this group might involve something as simple as a roommate matching service. Other intergenerational solutions pair elderly people with families in need of child care, providing reduced rent for the elderly and reduced child care costs for families in need of child care.

1/3 OF THE MOST SEVERELY COST-BURDENED ARE ELDERLY HOUSEHOLDS.

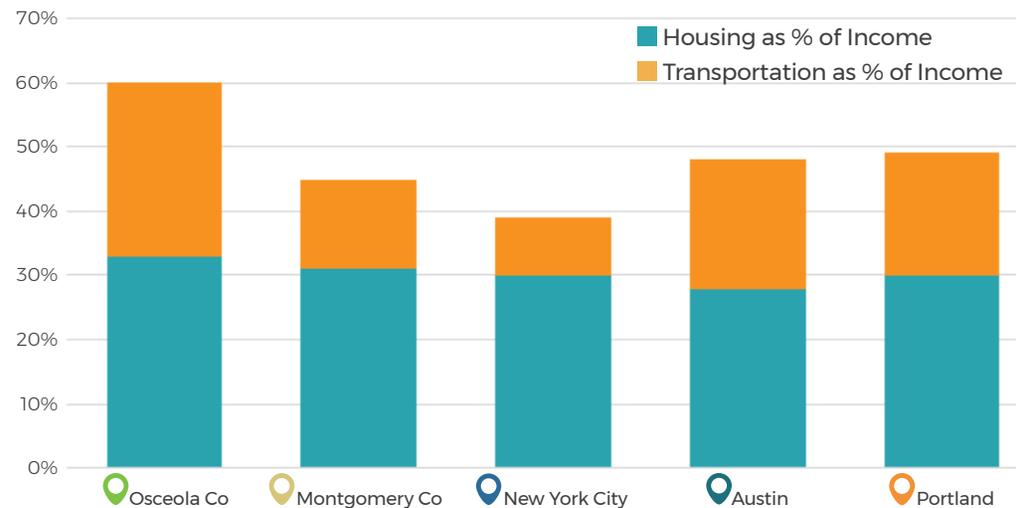
For Osceola households in need of affordable housing, the County should use a combination of strategies to create communities with jobs, a diversity of housing, and more transportation options. This, along with working with community partners to provide educational and training opportunities and support services, could effectively begin to address the County’s housing needs.

PERCENT OF WORKERS USING TRANSIT



Transit is much less expensive than owning a car, but in a low-density, suburban environment, transit often is not a viable option.

HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION COSTS AS A % OF INCOME



JOBS HOUSING BALANCE

Jobs-housing balance refers to the relationship between jobs and housing units within a geographic area. It has two components – the number of jobs and housing units, and wages paid compared to housing costs. In general, a healthy job-housing balance falls between 0.75 to 1.5 jobs per housing unit, while the County’s ratio is currently 0.6.

Jobs-housing balance often is raised in conjunction with discussion of traffic issues and commute times – the premise is that low-density, use-segregated development patterns have lengthened commute distances, resulting in increasing traffic congestion. For Osceola County, however, the issue also relates to the effect of a heavily residential development pattern on the tax base. The County’s tax base proved to be highly vulnerable to the recent recession. Residential property taxes were a high percentage of the County’s tax base – taxes decreased with the decrease in property values, and because of Save Our Homes, they haven’t returned to previous levels, even as property values recovered.

Indeed, among the benefits typically attributed to having a jobs-housing balance are lower expenditures on public facilities and services (which could be attributed to a more mixed-use development pattern, as noted in the fiscal analysis) as well as a more stable tax revenue generation.

JOB-HOUSING IMBALANCE TYPES

TYPE OF IMBALANCE	JOBS	HOUSING	AREA
Type 1	Too many low-wage	Too few low-end	<i>Suburban employment centers (edge cities)</i>
Type 2	Too many high-wage	Too few high-wage	<i>Downtown employment areas in central cities</i>
Type 3	Too few low-wage	Too much low-end	<i>Older suburbs and central-city neighborhoods</i>
Type 4	Too few high-wage	Too much high-end	<i>High-income bedroom communities</i>

BENEFITS OF JOBS-HOUSING BALANCE:

- Reduced driving and traffic congestion
- Fewer air pollution emissions
- Lower costs to businesses and commuters
- Lower public expenditures on facilities and services
- Greater family stability
- Higher quality of life
- Stable and fiscally sustainable tax revenue generation

Communities can have different types of jobs-housing imbalance (as shown in the table below). Osceola is somewhat unique, in that the County has elements of three of the four types. Type 1 easily describes Osceola County, with its abundance of tourist sector jobs and the shortage of housing affordable to households earning less than \$35,000 annually. This is exacerbated by the jobs and lack of affordable housing in neighboring Orange County, where half of Osceola’s resident workforce commutes to work. But the County has started to experience an issue with Type 2, as NeoCity attracts high-wage employees who are having difficulty finding the type of living environment they’re used to and want. But although NeoCity has brought this issue to the forefront, the County does not yet have enough high-wage jobs, so elements of Type 4 can be seen here as well.

Source: Jerry Weitz, Jobs-Housing Balance, American Planning Association.

Jobs-housing balance should be addressed on several fronts, with strategies that are job-based (diversifying the job base in the County), people-based (providing education, training, and job placement for residents), and place-based. Place-based strategies (placemaking) are critically important, especially in the new economy. Placemaking refers to the planning and design of communities around what people need and want for their quality of life. As the economy has changed from industrial/manufacturing to technology, economic development strategies must be updated to attract a different type of worker. (See table at right)

To attract businesses and workers to NeoCity jobs, the County must provide for the types of places such workers want to live in. The Mixed Use Districts appear to offer the opportunity to create this living environment for NeoCity's workforce. Additionally, the Mixed Use Districts include plans for their own employment centers. Projections for buildout of the East of Toho and South Lake Toho Mixed Use Districts include approximately 65,900 jobs.

As mentioned above, this imbalance is regional, in part the result of job growth in neighboring Orange County and the relatively more affordable cost of housing in Osceola. (The median home value in 2015 in Orange County was \$163,800, compared to \$132,100 in Osceola.) Osceola's challenge is to provide housing for both lower-wage workers and the high-tech, high-wage workers anticipated to arrive as NeoCity grows, while continuing to diversify the job base. Additionally, the County must ensure the value of housing is commensurate with neighboring areas, and continue to coordinate with Orange County on regional housing initiatives to ensure that throughout the region, housing is provided close to jobs.

CHARACTERISTICS OF OLD AND NEW ECONOMY

OLD ECONOMY	NEW ECONOMY
<i>Inexpensive place to do business was key</i>	<i>Being rich in talent and ideas is key</i>
<i>Attracting companies was key</i>	<i>Attracting educated people is key</i>
<i>A high-quality physical environment was a luxury, in the way of attracting cost-conscious businesses</i>	<i>Physical and cultural amenities are key in attracting knowledge workers</i>
<i>Success = fixed competitive advantage in some resource or skill; the labor force was skills-dependent</i>	<i>Success = organizations and individuals with the ability to learn and adapt</i>
<i>Economic development was government-led</i>	<i>Partnerships with business, government and nonprofit sector lead change</i>
<i>Industrial sector (manufacturing) focus</i>	<i>Sector diversity is desired and clustering of relation sectors is targeted</i>
<i>Fossil fuel-dependent manufacturing</i>	<i>Communication-dependent but energy smart</i>
<i>People followed jobs</i>	<i>Talented, well-educated people choose locations first, then look for a job</i>
<i>Location mattered, especially relative transportation and raw materials</i>	<i>Quality places with a high quality of life matter more</i>
<i>Dirty, ugly and poor-quality environment were common outcomes that did not prevent growth</i>	<i>Clean, green environment and proximity to open space and quality recreational opportunities are critical</i>
<i>Connection to global opportunities was not essential</i>	<i>Connection to emerging global opportunities is critical</i>

Source: Michigan State University, *Placemaking as an Economic Development Strategy*, 2012.





4

CHAPTER FOUR

Next Steps

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

The County has accomplished great things in the past decade that set a path toward sustainability. These include the new growth model laid out in the Comprehensive Plan and Mixed Use Districts; our streamlined land development code; a holistic approach to transportation funding; economic diversification with NeoCity; and programs addressing natural resource conservation, energy conservation, affordable housing, and redevelopment of our tourist corridor. Continuing to implement these plans is a critical step toward sustainability.

Through the fiscal impact analysis, we can see how the development pattern affects both revenue generation and the cost of providing services. But the pattern also affects the market's ability to provide affordable housing, as well as the feasibility of providing a multi-modal transportation system (which, in turn, affects the ability of our residents to afford housing, as well as our fiscal bottom line). The following recommendations recognize these linkages and provide a more holistic direction for moving toward sustainability, thinking beyond traditional local government roles such as regulation to more proactive roles, forming partnerships; thinking more long-term, with return on investment in mind; and thinking beyond obvious and direct solutions to a broader range of approaches, including more indirect, but potentially no less effective, strategies.

Specific recommendations include updating our Comprehensive Plan and land development code based on findings from the fiscal analysis and the analysis of our housing market; implementing strategies to maximize fiscal sustainability throughout the County; and addressing housing delivery as a system, adopting strategies to close the gap between what the market provides and what our households need.

Finally, to implement this plan, the County should consider how smart cities strategies can help us identify efficiencies in service provision, provide data to guide decision-making, and use technology to monitor performance. Sustainability indicators, as shown in Chapter 5, can help track our progress in meeting these goals.

IMPLEMENTING COUNTY PLANS AND PROGRAMS

Summary: The plans and programs described in Chapter 2 set a strong foundation for achieving sustainability. Implementing these plans is key to reaching our goal.

STRATEGIES

1. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE. Every seven years, each local government in Florida must complete an evaluation of the Comprehensive Plan to determine whether the plan needs to be amended to reflect changes in state requirements or local conditions since the last plan update. This evaluation process offers the opportunity to review the Comprehensive Plan to identify changes in direction and strategy. The County's Evaluation and Appraisal Report, submitted to the state in July 2017, identified a number of changes to be made.

a. Future Land Use Element

- Review urban infill activity center policies (determine whether they should be amended to make activity center development easier)
- Review areas for consideration of land use changes (adding nodes of higher density residential and non-residential/mixed uses along appropriate corridors in low density residential areas)

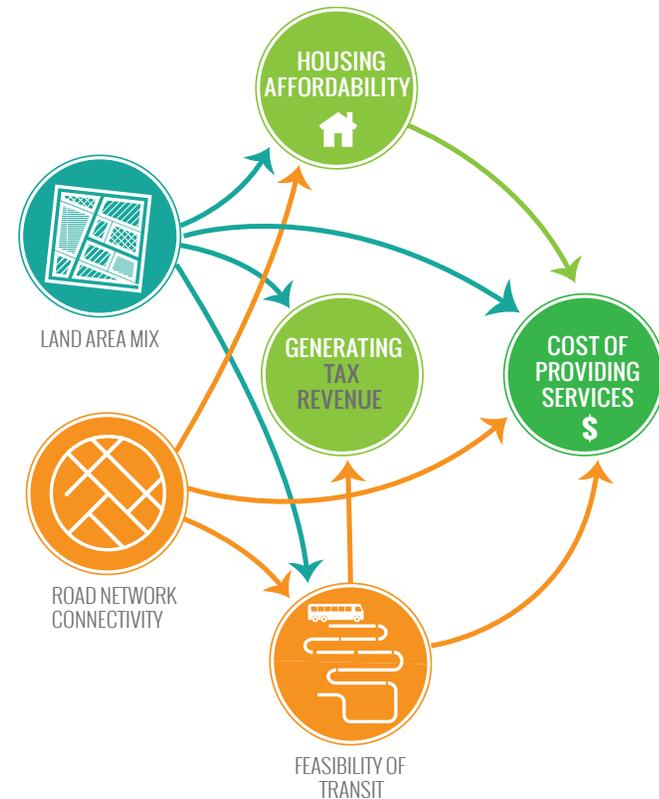
b. Mixed Use Districts

- Update the East of Lake Toho Conceptual Master Plan (CMP) to reflect designation of the Twin Oaks Conservation Area
- Develop a CMP for Mixed Use Districts 5 and 6

c. Housing Element

- Update policies to reflect completed studies or initiatives
- Consider incentives or programs to encourage/require affordable housing development
- Evaluate policy direction – add goals and policies addressing new strategies as appropriate (mix of housing types and densities)

Understanding the connections between issues will help us to formulate more holistic strategies. The development pattern (land area mix, road connectivity) affects both revenue generation and the cost of providing services. But the pattern also affects the market's ability to provide affordable housing, as well as the feasibility of providing a multi-modal transportation system (which, in turn, affects the ability of our residents to afford housing, as well as our fiscal bottom line).



2. LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE UPDATE. Changes to the land development code are proposed to further facilitate development of affordable housing as well as to ensure development of a well-connected and fiscally sustainable road network.

a. Incorporate housing types into the Code

- Add specific housing types to the code proactively [develop list of likely types – tiny homes, bungalow courts, shipping container housing, tandem housing, various types of accessory apartments, various types of multifamily housing (apodments, single room occupancy, micro units) cohousing, etc]. Include locational criteria and site development criteria
- Consider requiring a mix of types in larger subdivisions
- Consider requirements for orientation of buildings to framework streets

b. Other changes as needed to result in more sustainable development pattern

- Review roadway connectivity requirements
- Consider limiting cul-de-sacs
- Consider limiting gated communities

3. NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT. The County acquired natural lands, developed management plans, and provided access to the public. The program resulted in protection of more than 3,300 acres of property and creation of a number of natural parks for the County’s residents and visitors to enjoy.

Equally important to the County’s future is protection and enhancement of urban natural resources. The benefits of trees and other natural features within the urban environment are only recently becoming fully understood. Far from being an amenity – something nice to have, but not necessary – urban trees provide economic, social,

environmental, and health benefits in the community. An Urban Forest Management Plan would provide a comprehensive, County-wide framework for planning and managing our systems of trees, other vegetation, and water within the urban area to achieve specific purposes or functions.

a. Open remaining properties to the public

- Complete restoration activities at conservation areas
- Open remaining natural lands to the public

b. Develop an Urban Forest Management Plan

- Assess urban forest attributes (tree canopy survey)
- Create a vision reflecting community values
- Determine the current status of various components
- Identify gaps between vision and current status
- Develop strategies for closing the gaps
- Implement and monitor the plan

4. OSCEOLA ENERGY INITIATIVE (OEI). As part of the Osceola Energy Initiative, the County developed a five-year Sustainability Action Plan (SAP 2014-2019). Plan goals include enhancing the County’s human, programmatic, and financial resources to better implement sustainability initiatives; reducing energy expenditures, curbing GHG and particulate emissions, and decreasing dependence on nonrenewable energy; and conserving environmentally sensitive lands, optimizing public transportation, and reducing the solid waste stream.

a. Continue implementing the Plan

b. Build on the Plan to develop a comprehensive Climate Change Strategy

FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY

Summary: Fiscal sustainability means a local government has adequate revenue to take care of ongoing obligations over the long term. For years under the State's growth management laws, local government's main consideration was financial feasibility, which focuses on accommodating new growth for the short term. Whether something is financially feasible over the short term, however, bears little relation to whether it's fiscally sustainable over the long term.

To determine whether the County is fiscally sustainable, three areas of the County were analyzed: a mature, older community, almost built out; a growing area, developing generally in a suburban pattern; and an area just beginning to develop, where the development pattern is more urban, with higher densities and intensities, a mix of uses, and a well-connected road network. Results of the analysis show a significantly better fiscal impact from the mixed use development.

Recommendations for achieving fiscal sustainability include developing an infrastructure strategy for catching up on deferred maintenance, as well as area-specific strategies to add value to developed areas, adjust developing areas to be more fiscally sustainable, and prioritize and facilitate development in the mixed use areas.

STRATEGIES

1. OVERALL

a. Infrastructure condition/maintenance

- Develop strategy for catching up on backlog/deferred maintenance (identify revenue sources, review CIP priorities)
- Review policies for road development. (Many areas are limiting cul-de-sacs and gated communities, others are allowing cul-de-sacs but not accepting them for maintenance.)

b. Conduct more detailed cost-of-services analyses for specific services and facilities (use results to identify changes to LDC)

- Fire Rescue
- Roads (etc)

- Identify potential for complementary land uses.
- Identify potential to improve connectivity.
- Assess how well the area has maintained its value relative to other parts of the County. Identify enhancements that could be made in the community to help it maintain/increase in value.
 - Parks
 - Tree canopy (Urban Forest Management Plan)
 - Code enforcement
 - Other

2. BY AREA

a. Past (mature areas) Not much new development, aging infrastructure and facilities – area shows negative ROI (revenue/cost ratio), will cost more over time as infrastructure reaches useful life and needs replacement. For these areas, determine whether there are changes that would improve the fiscal snapshot.

b. Present (developing areas) Unlike the mature area, this area shows a positive ROI, but that could change as the area ages. The ROI is smaller than in the mixed-use area. Developing in a suburban pattern, much of it single family residential, no multi-family, not much non-residential. Strategies include identifying opportunities to diversify uses, preserve the ability to evolve over time

- Require connectivity
- Look at modifying land uses to provide for a variety of housing types and of non-residential/mixed use development

c. Future (mixed use areas) This area has the best revenue-cost ratio of all. Investing in and otherwise facilitating development in this area should be a high priority.

- Prioritize investment in these areas to encourage development
- Work with landowners in the area to educate and provide resources as they market their property for development
- Ensure the principles for development of the mixed-use areas (mix of uses, development pattern, connectivity, etc.) are upheld through the development approval process
- Work closely with the development community to address challenges with development in the area
- Showcase success stories (as part of an education process for landowners, developers, and builders about the requirements)
- Monitor the mixed-use areas as they develop to validate fiscal analysis (smart cities)



HOUSING

Summary: *In Osceola, the housing market generally provides housing products that meet the needs of households earning more than \$50,000 annually, and the market even provides for most households earning between \$35,000 and \$50,000. But tourist sector wages tend to be low, and many households, especially those with incomes below \$35,000, have difficulty finding housing they can afford.*

As tourism is a major sector in the County's economy, ideally the market would provide a product to meet their needs, but the current market does not.

The County has been addressing the lack of affordable housing for years with plans, programs, incentives, regulations, and funding. But the amount of housing that can be provided with our limited funding is small, and despite incentives, allowances, and streamlined permitting, the only affordable housing being built for low-income groups is with funding assistance. The County's programs are necessary, but they are not enough.

Understanding the housing delivery system in the County and assessing market gaps would allow us to take steps to enable the market to provide a wider diversity of housing, thereby narrowing the gap (providing more housing for households earning under \$35,000, which would allow us to use state and federal funding on the lowest income households).

The County should continue to implement our housing programs and services as per the Consolidated Plan. We should review the Housing and Future Land Use elements of the Comprehensive Plan to determine whether additional strategies (such as inclusionary zoning, linkage fees, community land trusts, and changing land use designations) are appropriate.

In addition, we should take steps to narrow the housing market gap – to enable the market to provide housing affordable to working households earning less than \$35,000 per year. Strategies are outlined below to decrease housing cost; to increase household income/ability to pay for housing; and to increase home sharing options. We also should consider demonstration projects to incorporate new housing types and to combine housing with support services.

STRATEGIES

1. CONTINUE EXISTING HOUSING PROGRAMS. Continue providing housing assistance as called for in the Consolidated Plan, using state, federal, and local funding.

2. UPDATE THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN. Evaluate the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use and Housing elements and work with the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee to determine whether and where additional strategies (such as inclusionary zoning, linkage fees, community land trusts, and future land use changes) are appropriate.

3. NARROW THE HOUSING MARKET GAP. Take steps to close the market gap – enable the market to provide housing affordable to working families earning less than \$35,000 per year.

a. Decrease the cost of housing

- Diversify housing products. The market currently provides a limited number of housing types – primarily single family, duplex, townhomes, and garden apartments. There are many other types that could be provided more affordably, given the right circumstances:
- **Future land use and zoning.** *Low density residential future land use spread over a large segment of the urban area will encourage continued development of single family housing.*

In the Mixed Use Districts, through the development pattern (fine grain network, mix of place types and uses), a mix of housing can be provided. During the Comprehensive Plan update, consider incorporating nodes of non-residential, mixed use, and higher density residential at appropriate locations to provide opportunity for different housing types.

- **Land development code.** *Incorporate standards for a variety of housing types into the code to avoid delay when new products are proposed. Types could include bungalow courts, shipping container housing, accessory apartments and flats, single room occupancy (SRO) units, micro units, tiny homes, etc.*
- **Consider housing types and impacts during impact fee calculations.** *For example, accessory apartments, SROs, and even micro units are unlikely to have school impacts and likely have lower transportation impacts.*
- **Attract developers from places where diverse products are being built.** *Many of the products mentioned above are being built throughout the country. Developers familiar with these product types are coming here to build, when they can find places set up with land use, zoning, and codes that allow it.*
- **Build developer capacity here.** *Schedule/host workshops for local developers. (Small Developer Boot Camps offer an opportunity for participants to bring an actual project in front of seasoned small developers. In small groups, participants work through exercises like digesting their zoning code, drawing a basic site plan, creating a financial pro forma model, and creating a pitch package for investors, all applied to their own specific project.)*

b. Increase household income/ability to pay for housing.

- **Diversify the job base and provide education and training for the workforce** (a number of initiatives already underway, including NeoCity and partnerships with SDOC, Valencia, TECO, Community Vision, Impact Families, etc)
- **Lower other major household expenses to leave more income for housing costs**
 - **Transportation.** *If households can get by with fewer cars, their expenses are significantly lower. Providing housing in areas with transit, a mix of land uses, and a well-connected street network means households can take fewer trips and shorter trips, which makes alternative modes of transportation more feasible.*
 - **Child care.** *The expense of child care can be an obstacle to both education and employment. Explore options for providing child care during both working and evening hours (especially in conjunction with training programs).*
 - **Utilities.** *Through the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Program, a number of states offer additional points for energy-neutral housing. The County should advocate for this change to Florida's LIHTC Program. Other programs that offer opportunities for increasing energy efficiency (such as solar) should be marketed to lower income households and reviewed to determine whether up-front costs can be subsidized or otherwise deferred.*
 - **Health care.** *In partnership with Florida Hospital, the Osceola Health Department recently established a mobile dental clinic designed to serve people in rural areas. The County should coordinate with the Health Department to determine whether services also could be provided at affordable housing facilities and to explore whether a similar initiative for medical services is possible.*

- Develop a more holistic approach to educational support for residents of County-subsidized housing. Offer (through Human Services) a variety of classes on budgeting, financial assistance, home maintenance and housekeeping, employment, etc.

c. Increase home sharing options

- More than half of Osceola's households are one- or two-person households, yet most housing is built with larger households in mind. The median income of one-person households is half the County median, and about one-third of one-person households are elderly. While many elderly people want to age in place, health or affordability issues may make that difficult, and likely they live in larger housing units than a one-person household needs. Home sharing programs provide income for homeowners and affordable homes for renters. Often elderly will room with people their age, but newer program models pair elderly people with college students who, in exchange for affordable rent, will provide maintenance services around the house, enabling the elderly person to age in place.
- County strategies to encourage this model could include:
 - *Providing a match/screening service for homeowners (in cooperation with the Area Agency on Aging and Valencia College)*
 - *Publicize apps such as Nesterly, which matches elderly with young people*

d. Demonstration projects

- Permanent supportive housing development. The strategies described above could be demonstrated in an affordable housing project aimed at tourist sector workers, particularly workers living in motels along the W192 corridor.
 - *Affordable, energy-efficient housing near transit*
 - *Support services (such as child care)*
 - *Classes offered by Human Services*
 - *Education, training, and job placement, in partnership with organizations mentioned above*
- Innovative housing. New housing types are being introduced in the market all the time. The County should take the lead in exploring the feasibility of these housing types, ensure codes allow these types of housing, identify appropriate location characteristics, and work with builders as opportunities arise. Examples include granny pods, bungalow courts, flat-pack or ready-to-ship homes, shipping container homes, co-housing, etc.



IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Summary: *To implement this plan, the County should consider how smart cities strategies can help to identify efficiencies in service provision, provide data to guide decision-making, and use technology to monitor performance. Sustainability indicators can help track our progress in meeting these goals, and a website with a dashboard should be developed to monitor these indicators. Finally, a coordinated effort on the part of County staff will be required for successful implementation of this plan.*

STRATEGIES

1. SMART CITIES STRATEGY

- a. Identify opportunities to use smart cities strategies to monitor, measure success, identify efficiencies in service, etc.*
- b. Develop databases to guide decision-making. Examples we already have include:*
 - Pavement condition study/management report
 - Housing location suitability model (being developed by UF for the County)
- c. Identify opportunities to use technology to monitor performance of developed areas*

2. DEVELOP A STRUCTURE FOR IMPLEMENTING THIS PLAN

- a. Staffing*
- b. Timeline*

3. DEVELOP A WEBSITE FOR MONITORING

- a. Develop a website for the Sustainability Plan*
- b. Include a dashboard for monitoring indicators*
- c. Develop a schedule for monitoring and updating indicators*





5

CHAPTER FIVE

Sustainability Indicators

INTRODUCTION

in·di·ca·tor

/ 'in-də-,kā-tər /

noun

- 1. a thing, especially a trend or fact, that indicates the state or level of something.*
- 2. a device providing specific information on the state or condition of something, in particular.*

These sustainability indicators help to clarify existing and desired conditions by measuring key elements and trends. These elements and trends were chosen because they are influenced by County plans and policies that target sustainable growth. Each indicator was chosen because it is representative of other conditions such as community health, environmental health, financial health, and overall quality of life.



Land Area Mix

Land Use INDICATORS



A diverse mix of land uses supports homes, jobs, services, and recreation within a walkable distance or short commute from each other. If one land use is too dominant, people will drive long distances for other uses. The existing land use mix for this indicator was based on the County's zoning categories and the future desired condition comes from the Comprehensive Plan.



Land Area Mix



LAND AREA MIX

	RESIDENTIAL	EMPLOYMENT	MIXED USE DISTRICT
existing condition:	88%	11%	2%
desired future condition:	46%	13%	41%

Contributing Sub-Area Sample

Composition of a Mixed Use Community:



- Mix of neighborhood types
- Variety of employment centers
- Small blocks and gridded street network
- Walkable neighborhoods
- Integrated open space



Density

Land Use INDICATORS



A mix of residential densities is important to support people with different incomes and in different stages of life. The overall density per acre illustrates the average residential density. The existing density was calculated using the U.S. Census to determine the number of dwelling units within unincorporated Osceola County. The desired future condition of three dwelling units per acre is found in the Osceola Comprehensive Plan.



Density

AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL DENSITY (DU/ACRE)

existing condition:

1

goal:

increase

desired future condition:

3



Contributing Sub-Area Samples (DU/ACRE)

5.9

EAST OF LAKE TOHO

5.1

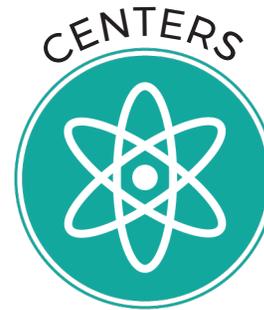
SOUTH LAKE TOHO

5.1

NORTHEAST DISTRICT

Centers

Land Use INDICATORS



Centers are active places with walkable destinations and a mix of uses that lend themselves to community events and activity. The existing centers counted here are in unincorporated Osceola County. The number of future centers in the Mixed-Use District, coupled with the existing centers, provides the desired future condition.

From the Comprehensive Plan: “Community Centers provide retail and office developments that are generally more intense than Neighborhood Centers. In addition to the permitted uses in the Neighborhood Centers, the Community Centers may also include shopping centers with grocery stores. They are intended to function as a center of community focus and not simply as a community shopping center.”

“Urban Centers are primarily intended for urban-scale commercial, office or employment center activity. More specifically, Urban Centers provide for very large developments that are more intense than that allowed within Community Centers in addition to allowing uses similar to that permitted in Neighborhood and Community Centers.”



Centers

NUMBER OF COMMUNITY AND URBAN CENTERS

existing condition:

5 *community centers*

3 *urban centers*

desired future condition:

24 *community centers*

10 *urban centers*



Contributing Sub-Area Samples

	EAST OF LAKE TOHO	SOUTH LAKE TOHO	NORTHEAST DISTRICT
<i>community centers:</i>	4	9	4
<i>urban centers:</i>	3	3	1

Redevelopment

Economic INDICATORS



Redevelopment provides an opportunity to update land use, increase density, and generate new catalyst activity sites. This acreage number excludes incorporated areas and residential development within the urban growth boundary. The County currently has a redevelopment district along West U.S. 192 and a community redevelopment area (CRA) on East 192, where NeoCity is located. The redevelopment indicator includes areas within the (CRA) as well as other unincorporated areas with a high likelihood for redevelopment by 2040.



Redevelopment

REDEVELOPMENT AREAS
SINCE 2006

763 acres



DESIRED ADDITIONAL
FUTURE REDEVELOPMENT

1,336 acres

Job Creation

Economic INDICATORS



High wage jobs support a diversity of income levels, enhancing the overall economic health of an area. Osceola County is currently working to develop more high tech areas such as NeoCity to attract higher-wage jobs. This estimate uses the U.S. Census for existing number of employees and land use to predict the future number of high-wage employees.



Job Creation

% OF HIGH WAGE JOBS

31% 2014

19% 2004

NUMBER OF HIGH WAGE JOBS

existing condition:

23,877

2040 desired future condition:

63,206

Contributing Sub-Area Sample

NORTHEAST DISTRICT: 13,600



Jobs : Housing

Economic INDICATORS



The ratio of jobs to housing is a good indicator of whether residents need to travel for work; as well as whether the densities of housing are supporting the workforce and vice versa. The measure helps to identify retail leakage to adjacent communities, residential property taxes, and sales tax generators.



Jobs to Housing Balance



existing
condition 2014:

53,656

88,856

.6

desired future
condition 2040:

189,619

221,833

.9

Contributing Sub-Area Sample

NORTHEAST DISTRICT: **> 1.2 jobs / housing ratio**

Connectivity

Transportation INDICATORS



Pedestrian connectivity creates vibrant walkable environments that do not force residents to drive longer distances. Counting the number of road intersections or “nodes” divided by the square miles within unincorporated Osceola County provides the average nodes per square mile. Neighborhoods with culs-de-sac have very few intersection points (nodes) and are more easily navigated in a car, whereas a neighborhood grid with short blocks is easier to navigate on foot from origin to different destinations. The future desired condition looks at examples from the mixed-use areas and connected pockets of existing development within the County.



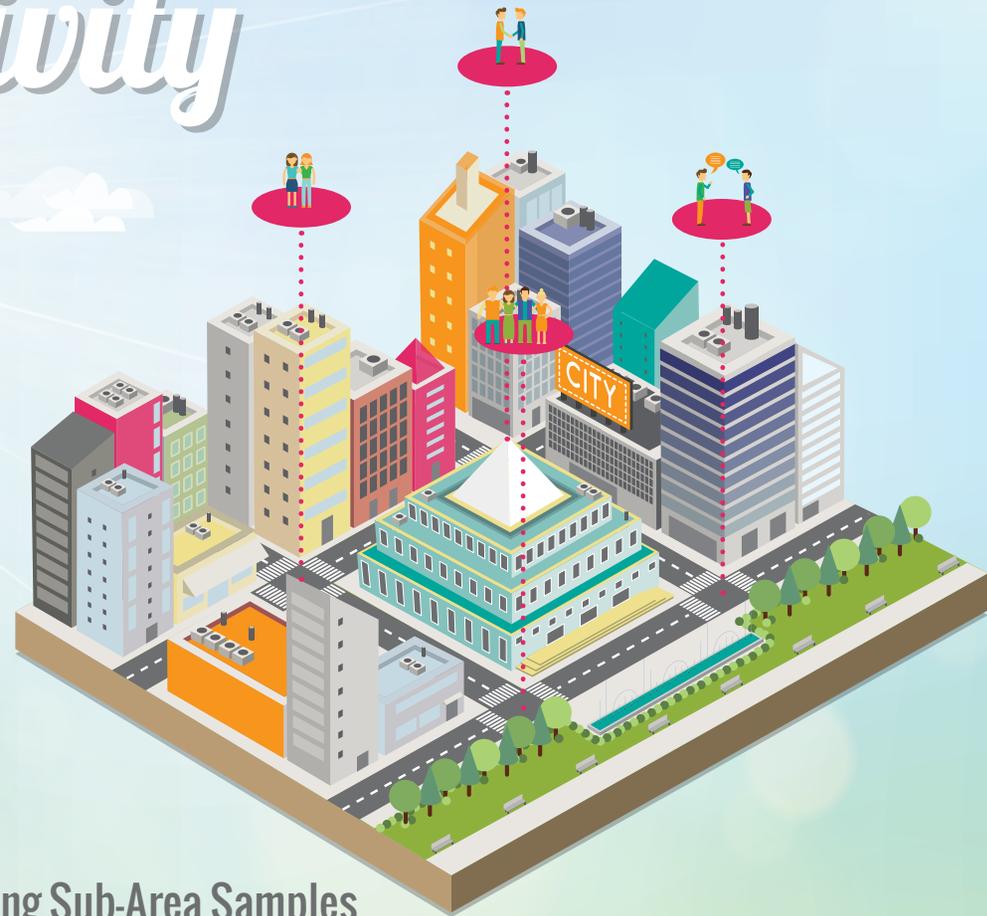
Connectivity

NUMBER OF LOCAL STREET INTERSECTIONS PER SQ. MILE

existing condition: **70**

goal: **increase**

desired future condition: **150+**



Contributing Sub-Area Samples

231

EAST OF LAKE TOHO

218

SOUTH LAKE TOHO

240

NORTHEAST DISTRICT

Transit

Transportation INDICATORS



High-frequency transit provides more transit options throughout the day, making it more accessible and easier to use. High-frequency transit is generally more attractive to users, because of its speed and frequency, than local bus-only options. When high frequency transit takes cars off the road, it reduces stand-still traffic congestion, which in turn reduces vehicle emissions.



High-Frequency Transit



MILES OF PREMIUM TRANSIT

existing condition: **28 miles**

desired future condition: **+190 miles**



MILES OF COMMUTER RAIL

existing condition: **14.6 miles**



MILES OF HIGH SPEED RAIL

desired future condition: **7.8 miles**

Ped Environment

Transportation INDICATORS



Sidewalk coverage is an indicator of how easy it is for people to get around in the community. While the pedestrian environment is a combination of sidewalks and trails, this indicator looks at sidewalks within the built environment. Existing condition data from 2012 shows that 50% of all roads in unincorporated Osceola County's urban growth boundary have sidewalks. The desired future condition assumes that every new road in the mixed-use areas will be built with sidewalks.



Pedestrian Environment

PERCENT OF STREETS WITH SIDEWALKS



existing condition:

50%

goal: *increase*



desired future condition:

60%



Water Quality

Natural Resources INDICATORS



Lakes are a pivotal cultural and environmental component of Osceola County; lake health is indicative of overall environmental health. The source for the current and desired water quality metric is the federal list of impaired lakes. Currently, all four lakes in Osceola County are on the list. Measures are being taken to clean the lakes to create a desired future condition of zero impaired lakes.



Water Quality

FEDERAL LIST OF IMPAIRED LAKES: 303(d)

existing
condition:

4/4 impaired lakes

desired future
condition:

0/4 impaired lakes

Natural Lands

Natural Resources INDICATORS



All natural land acquisitions planned under the land acquisition program are complete. The County is now completing management plans for each to ensure there are programs in place for the various needs they serve. There are currently 3,948 acres of natural lands and with 343 more acres of land in the works for a total desired number of 4,291 acres of managed lands. These lands provide trails for recreation and health, open areas for recreation and clean air. They also provide habitat and space for wetland fluctuation during the wet seasons. Increasing the number of managed lands allows for expanded recreation diversity.



Natural Lands

NATURAL LANDS

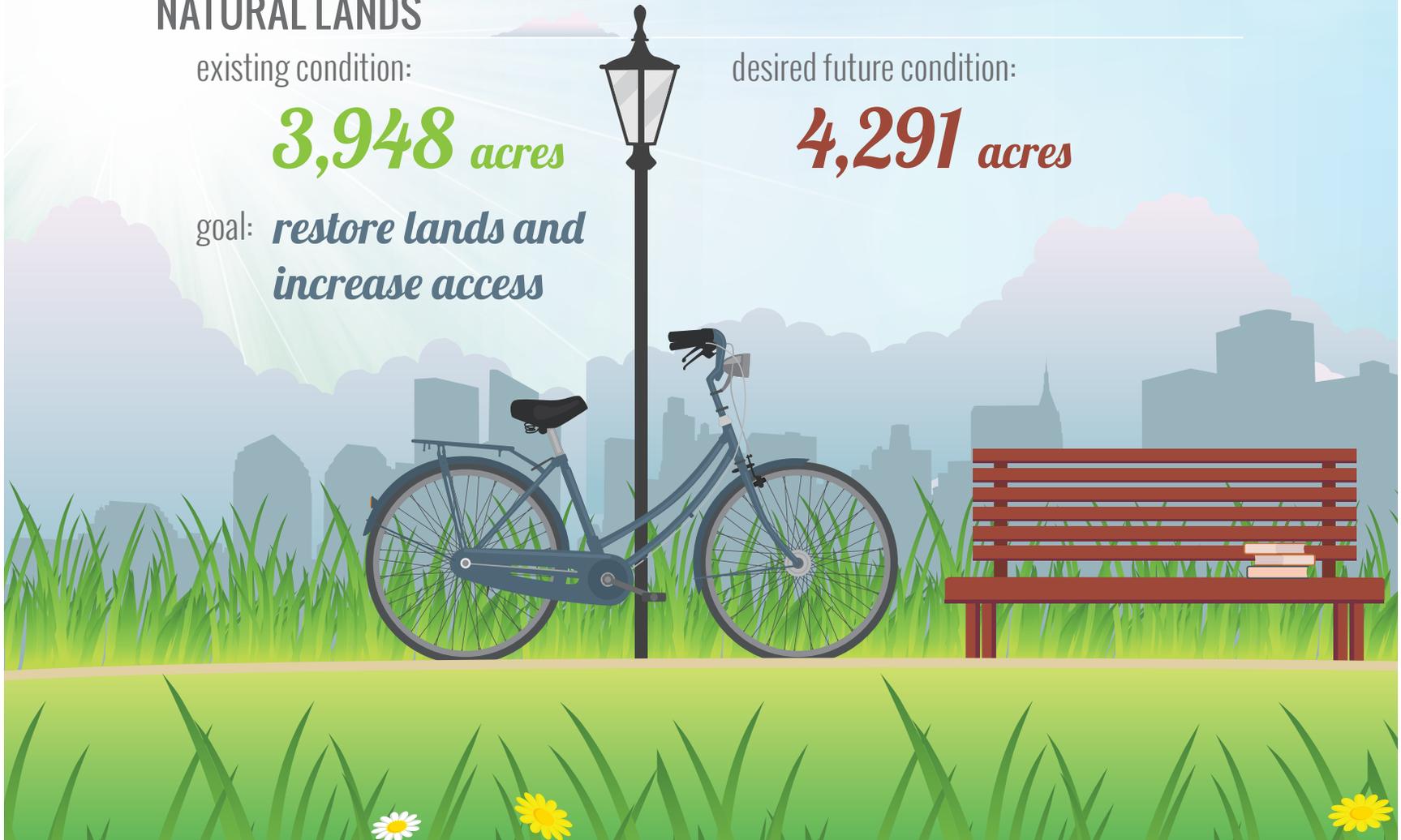
existing condition:

3,948 acres

goal: *restore lands and
increase access*

desired future condition:

4,291 acres



Trails & Bikeways

Natural Resources INDICATORS



In addition to providing recreational opportunities and fostering better overall health and well-being, trails allow for pedestrian and bicycle connections, effectively reducing the need for automotive travel between land uses. The number of existing and future miles of trails comes from the County's GIS layer of trails for unincorporated areas within the urban growth boundary. Trail types include multi-use/equestrian, multi-modal corridors, off-street trails, on-street bicycle trails, and on-street multi-use routes.



Trails & Bikeways



Revenue/Cost Ratio

Fiscal INDICATOR



To be fiscally sustainable, the County should ensure that development patterns result in a positive ratio between revenue generated and cost of providing services, meaning for every dollar it costs to provide services, development generates at least a dollar in revenue. Recent analyses of existing development, newly developing areas, and areas for future development in the County clearly demonstrate a positive relationship between increased housing density, a mixed-use ratio of at least 20 percent non-residential to residential uses, and higher revenue/cost ratios for providing basic services. These factors create a positive fiscal impact because per-acre revenue generation is higher, and increased densities and a mix of land uses makes more efficient use of infrastructure.

Strategies to achieve fiscal sustainability mirror and support other indicators.



Revenue/Cost of Services Ratio

existing condition:

\$1.30 [\$1.30 IN REVENUE GENERATED FOR EVERY DOLLAR SPENT PROVIDING BASIC SERVICES]

goal:

increase

desired future condition:

\$1.60



Contributing Sub-Area Sample

MATURE COMMUNITY COSTS PER CAPITA AT EXISTING LEVEL OF SERVICE

\$1.02

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COSTS PER CAPITA AT EXISTING LEVEL OF SERVICE

\$1.76

MONITORING *Indicators*

The indicators represent current conditions and the future desired conditions in 2040. The plans described in this document have built in goals, strategies, recommendations and policies to achieve the desired condition. Monitoring the changes to the indicators will illustrate the impact of those plans in pushing conditions towards the desired future condition for each indicator.

DRAFT MONITORING PLAN

Reference the Indicator Methodology to identify how each indicator was measured. To the best extent possible, use the same information in monitoring efforts to gauge the change in conditions. It is recommended that a quick calculation of the change in condition is completed every year for each indicator. A full re-calculation should occur every five years at 2020, 2025, 2030, 2035, and 2040 to be sure to capture updated ten year census data.

MONITORING LAND USE



Land Area Mix: The mix of land uses is not likely to change unless there is a major zoning update, mixed use area is developed or if there is a major annexation.



Density: Following the next major census count (2020), the population numbers and future population projections should be completed. Major changes are likely to occur after the completion of a major development or annexation. For the intent of this indicator only areas in unincorporated Osceola County should be considered.



Centers: Updates for centers should occur at the development of new centers or redevelopment into community centers. There are so few, that any addition or removal of a center would have an impact.

MONITORING NATURAL RESOURCES



Water Quality: Several water quality improvement measures are in place now. The Lakes Management Plan describes anticipated expenditures of \$448,000 for 16 years starting in 2009. Therefore, aside from the regular environmental testing, 2025 would be an important year to identify the effectiveness of the water improvement actions.



Natural Lands: In the event of any change in managed natural lands, exchange of land use type to or from natural lands, this indicator should be updated. Data should be updated every five years and calibrated at each census year, 2020, 2030, 2040. The level of service in the comprehensive plan should be referenced to determine the number of acres required for the current and expected future populations to gauge the level of service in acres of natural lands to 1,000 people.



Miles of Trails: Just like natural lands the miles of trail should be calculated every year and re-calibrated at each census year, 2020, 2030, 2040 to identify the level of service in miles of trail to every 1,000 people. Because the number currently includes on-street bike paths and on-street multiuse, the number of miles will likely increase steadily with new developments and street updates.

Park Type or Recreational Facility	Level of Service Standard by 2010	Level of Service Standard by 2020
Regional Parks	5 acres per 1,000 total population	6 acres per 1,000 total population
Community Parks	2 acres per 1,000 total population	4 acres per 1,000 total population
Recreational Trails	1 mile per 1,500 total population	1 mile per 1,500 total population

MONITORING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Redevelopment: The W-192 redevelopment plan identifies funding for 25 years to 2038. The status of redevelopment should be assessed every year as well as around the 2038 milestone. Any other major redevelopment effort will impact the acres of redevelopment within the unincorporated county.



Job Creation: Job creation should be checked every year in comparison to adjacent communities to identify opportunity for people to live close to where they work. Several efforts are being made to create jobs locally such as the development of Judge Farms.



Jobs to Housing Balance: As the number of dwelling units and the number of jobs are being assessed every year, use the numbers to also assess the jobs to housing balance.

MONITORING TRANSPORTATION



Connectivity: Street connectivity is not likely to experience any measurable change until the mixed use neighborhoods or other large annexations are developed. Once developed, reassess the unincorporated area's nodes per square mile.



High-Frequency Transit: The land use element of the County's Comprehensive Plan identifies the proposed roadway networks in 2025, 2040, and 2080. With those milestones in mind, the miles of high frequency transit should be analyzed in 2020, 2025, 2035, and 2040 to identify progress towards the goal milestone years and the progress made at the milestone years.



Pedestrian Environment: As sidewalks are added to redeveloped areas, new development, and mixed use areas, the percentage is likely to go up annually.



Fiscal Monitoring: The Fiscal Study identified several indicators and sub-indicators which should be monitored regularly as the cost of services changes. Monitoring should also occur as additional developments change either the coverage of service or densities of areas receiving services, as this will cause the cost of service per capita.



6

APPENDICES

Sources and Resources

Links to Plans and Programs. The plans and programs described in Chapter 2: Accomplishments are available on the County's website for anyone wishing to learn more about these programs, plans, and initiatives.

Sustainability Indicator Methodology. To measure progress over time, the County has developed a number of indicators. Using the methodologies described here, we can track progress using a consistent set of measures.

PLANS AND PROGRAMS

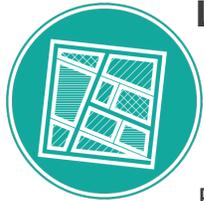
- A. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 
- B. LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE 
- C. STRATEGIC PLAN 
- D. NEOCITY 
 - *NeoCity main page*
 - *NeoCity Master Plan*
 - *BRIDG main page*



- E. ENVIRONMENTAL LANDS CONSERVATION 
- F. LAKES MANAGEMENT 
 - *Lakes Management Plan*
- G. OSCEOLA ENERGY INITIATIVE 
 - *Sustainability Action Plan*
- H. NARCOOSSEE COMMUNITY PLAN 
- I. W192 DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY 
 - *W192 Redevelopment Plan*
- J. E192 COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY 
- K. OSCEOLA COUNTY: GROWING SMARTER 
- L. URBAN LAND INSTITUTE ADVISORY SERVICES PANEL
OSCEOLA COUNTY FLORIDA: VISION AND GROWTH STRATEGY 



OSCEOLA SUSTAINABILITY INDICATOR METHODOLOGY



LAND AREA MIX

A diverse mix of land uses supports homes, jobs, services, and recreation within a walkable distance from each other. If one land use is too dominant, people will drive long distances for other uses. The existing land use mix for this indicator was based on the zoning categories in the County’s current GIS Zoning file; each zoning district was assigned a category. These calculations were only conducted for the unincorporated portions of Osceola County. Retail and institutional zoning were rolled into employment and agricultural was not included.

Zoning Categories	Employment <i>(Including retail and industrial)</i>	Residential	Mixed use	Acres
Residential		1.09		1.09
Agricultural				NA (91,001)
Commercial	1,364.77			1,364.77
Development of County Impact		1,214.45		1,214.45
Estate		5,499.25		5,499.25
Industrial	768.35			768.35
Industrial Airport	14.33			14.33
Institutional	1,787.91			1,787.91
Mobile Home Park		61.54		61.54
Multi-Family		481.24		481.24
Plan Commercial Development	359.74			359.74
Plan Development		59,794.34		59,794.34
Plan Industrial Development	10.17			10.17
Plan Multi-Use Development			1,957.84	1,957.84
Plan Residential Development		1239.75		1,239.75

Zoning Categories	Employment <i>(Including retail and industrial)</i>	Residential	Mixed use	Acres
Reedy Creek Improvement Development	5,199.35			5,199.35
Residential		9362.11		9,362.11
Residential Professional Business	34.71			34.71
Rural		5,486.89		5,486.89
TBD (residential)		125.9		125.9
Tourist Service Center (retail)	397.93			397.93
Travel Trailer Park (retail)		50.38		50.38
Acreage breakdown	9,937.26	83,316.94	1,957.84	95,212
	10%	88%	2%	100%

The same methodology was applied to the future land use acreage, from the Osceola County Comprehensive Plan 2025. This calculation combines retail with employment and excludes agriculture and natural resource categories.

Future Land Use Categories	Employment <i>(Including retail and industrial)</i>	Residential	Mixed use	Acres
Celebration		3,653.88		3,653.88
Commercial	3,654.98			3,654.98
Conservation				NA (19,170.63)
Harmony			3,435.82	3,435.82
High Density Residential		162.73		162.73
Industrial	2,158.68			2,158.68
Institutional	1,707.49			1,707.49
Low Density Residential		67,529.69		67,529.69
Medium Density Residential		1,604.74		1,604.74
Mixed Use			53,306.39	53,306.39
Natural Resource/Utility				NA (107.20)
Office	45.59			45.59
Poinciana			12,520.65	12,520.65
Rural Enclave		4,500.74		4,500.74
Rural Settlement		0.84		0.84
Rural/Agricultural				NA (26.40)
Tourist Commercial	1,4893.54			14,893.54
Acreage breakdown	22,460.27	77,452.61	69,262.86	169,175.75
	13%	46%	41%	100%



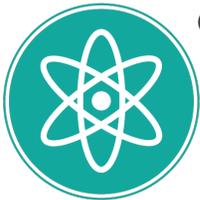
DENSITY:

A mix of residential densities is important to support people with different incomes and in different stages of life. The overall density per acre illustrates the average residential density. The existing density was calculated using the U.S. Census to determine the number of dwelling units within both the unincorporated and incorporated areas of the County. The number of housing units was divided by the number of zoned residential acres. To calculate the density in the unincorporated County, the total housing units in Kissimmee and St. Cloud were subtracted from the overall number for the County. The total acreage for residentially zoned unincorporated County equals 83,316.94 acres.

	Osceola County (total)	Kissimmee City	St. Cloud City	Unincorporated Osceola County
Housing Units 2015	132,185	26,080	16,098	90,007

$$\frac{90,007 \text{ housing units}}{83,316.94 \text{ acres}} = 1.08 \text{ households per acre}$$

The desired future condition of 3 dwelling units per acre and the mixed-use densities are found in the Osceola Comprehensive Plan 2025 and Mixed-Use Elements.



CENTERS:

Centers are active places with walkable destinations and mix of uses and lend themselves to community events and activity. Based on the definition of a community center and urban center from the mixed-use elements of the Comprehensive Plan, an aerial scan was conducted to find existing centers within the unincorporated urban growth boundary.

“Community Centers provide retail and office developments that are generally more intense than Neighborhood Centers. In addition to the permitted uses in the Neighborhood Centers, the Community Centers may also include shopping centers with grocery stores. They are intended to function as a center of community focus and not simply as a community shopping center.” -Page 20 of the Comprehensive Plan

“Urban Centers are primarily intended for urban-scale commercial, office or employment center activity. More specifically, Urban Centers provide for very large developments that are more intense than that allowed within Community Centers in addition to allowing uses similar to that permitted in Neighborhood and Community Centers.” -Page 20 of the Comprehensive Plan

The number of future centers in the mixed-use district coupled with the existing centers provided the desired future condition.



WATER QUALITY:

Lakes are a pivotal cultural and environmental component of Osceola County; lake health is indicative of overall environmental health. The source for the current and desired water quality metric is the federal list of impaired lakes. Currently, all four lakes in Osceola County are on the list. Measures are being taken to clean the lakes to create a desired future condition of 0 impaired lakes.



NATURAL LANDS:

Natural lands provide habitat, ecosystem services that clean the water and air, and provide recreational opportunities. The beautiful lands in Osceola are a key component of the quality of life and preserving and maintaining them is of great importance to the future generations of the County. Source of existing and future desired lands is from Osceola County (Sept 23rd 2016 E-mail).



MILES OF TRAILS:

In addition to providing recreational opportunities, trails allow for pedestrian and bicycle connections reducing the need for automotive travel between land uses. The number of existing and future miles of trail comes from the County's GIS layer of trails, for areas within the unincorporated urban growth boundary.

There are currently 43.54 miles of built trails, and the County is anticipating another 378.8 miles trails for a trail system with a total of 422.3 miles.



REDEVELOPMENT:

Redevelopment provides an opportunity to update existing land uses, increase density, and generate new catalyst activity sites. Acres of current redevelopment come from parcels with building permits (year 2000-present) that have been built since 2006. This number excludes residential development within the urban growth boundary and also excludes incorporated areas.

The acres of desired future redevelopment were extracted from currently underutilized (underutilization happens when the value of the built structure is less than the value of the parcel) parcels with an employment oriented land use. In addition to the underutilized parcels, developable parcels in the CRA within the unincorporated urban growth boundary were also added.

Trail Type and Status	Total Miles
Multi Use/Equestrian	50.044507
Planned	50.044507
Multi-Modal Corridor	22.812249
Future	22.812249
Off Street Trail	182.419733
Built	0.09946
Future	181.981956
Shingle A	0.338317
On Street Bicycle	29.14648
Built	11.356517
Future	17.789963
On Street Multi	137.979085
Built	32.104629
Future	105.874456



JOB CREATION:

High wage jobs support a diversity of income types and the overall economic health of an area. Osceola County is currently working to develop more high tech areas such as Judge Farms to promote new higher wage jobs. For this exercise, high wage was considered to be above \$3,333 per month or \$40,000 a year. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) estimates that a living wage in Florida is around \$21,000/year for an individual. So this wage estimate is considered double the living wage. The 2014 Census indicates that 31 percent of Osceola residents made \$3,333 or more. Assuming that roughly 31 percent of future jobs are high wage, the table below indicates the total jobs created by the mixed-use areas and the Judge Farms development as well as the number of those that are likely to be high wage jobs by 2040. The mixed-use numbers were created using the number of expected dwelling units in the mixed-use areas and the expected jobs to housing ratio.

	Total Jobs	New High Paying Jobs
Judge Farms		250
Northeast District	44,130	13,680.3
South Lake Toho	41,310	12,806.1
East of Lake Toho	28,770	8,918.7
Total	114,210	35,655.1

31% of future jobs + existing jobs paying over \$3,333 per month = 63,206 assumed high wage positions

As a cross reference, the BEBR predicted future jobs of 189,619 multiplied by 31% = 58,781, which only shows a 4,425 difference between the 63,206 estimate.



JOBS TO HOUSING BALANCE:

Jobs to housing balance is a good indicator of whether residents travel for work; if the densities of housing are supporting the workforce and vice versa; and tells the story about tax revenue sources. To calculate existing conditions, the number of existing jobs was extracted from the 2014 Census within unincorporated Osceola urban growth boundary. Existing households are from the 2014 Census for the County excluding households in St Cloud and Kissimmee. Households from 2014 rather than from 2015 were used to match the source for jobs (2015 is not yet available) in Osceola County, knowing the number of homes went up in 1 year but that the ratio between jobs and homes is close.

Desired future comes from the BEBR Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) future household and job forecast shown below:

Unincorporated Osceola County	Single Family Housing Units	Medium Density Housing Units	High Density Housing Units	Total
Housing Units 2040	107,206	55,877	58,750	221,833
Jobs 2040				189,619



CONNECTIVITY:

Pedestrian connectivity creates vibrant walkable environments that don't force residents to drive longer distances. The existing number of connection points or nodes per square mile was created using the GIS intersect function to find all of the connection points between two intersecting roads within developed unincorporated areas in the County's urban growth boundary.

Counting the number of road intersections or nodes in a sample area and dividing that by the square miles within the sample to get the average nodes per square mile calculated the sub-area samples. The future desired condition looks at good examples from the mixed-use areas and pockets of existing development from the County. See on the next page:



HIGH-FREQUENCY TRANSIT:

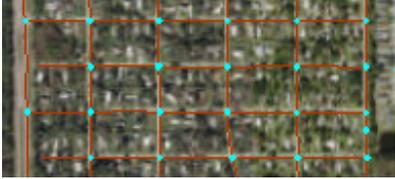
High frequency transit provides more options throughout the day and is generally more attractive because of its speed and frequency than local bus-only options.

Existing miles and future miles for were provided by the Transportation Master Plan Geospatial Data.



PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT:

While the pedestrian environment is a combination of sidewalks and trails, this indicator looks at sidewalks within the built environment. Existing condition data from 2012 shows that 50% of all roads have sidewalks within unincorporated areas in the urban growth boundary. The desired future condition adds all of the roads from the mixed-use areas and assumes that every new road in the mixed use areas will have sidewalks.

	Nodes	Sq. Mile	Connectivity
Emerald Island Blvd 	25	0.4	62.5
Sand Hill Rd and N Old Lake Wilson Rd 	37	0.4	92.5
North Poinciana Blvd and Pam Rd 	56	0.22	254.5
Forest Ln and Arrow Ln 	12	0.11	109.1



FISCAL:

Providing the people of Osceola County with public service is critical to health and safety. Increasing the density and connectivity of the neighborhoods and work places will require the same service coverage area with a greater number of residents. An increase in population density would lower the cost per capita with a similar level of service, increasing the overall efficiency of County services. The average value per acre was created by looking at the total cost divided by the unincorporated acres of land in Osceola County. Similarly for cost per capita, the total operating cost for the mature community was divided by the number of total residents in the community, and for a mixed use community based on 2025 populations and expected revenue expenditures.

Page intentionally blank.



OSCEOLA COUNTY

Community Development Department

1 Courthouse Square, Suite 1100

Kissimmee, FL 34741