

South Florida Avenue (SR 37) Master Plan Key Findings

From Ariana Street To Pine Street in Lakeland, Florida



Project Objectives

- Develop a community-based vision for desirable economic and redevelopment growth for the South Florida Avenue corridor including adjacent areas
- Develop alternative roadway reconfigurations based upon a study of current and future traffic that supports safety, redevelopment, and Complete Street policies
- Ensure options and improvements are market-based realities supported by the Market Overview which considers growth potential and impediments in different sectors (housing, employment, retail, etc.)

prepared by
Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council
Central Florida Regional Planning Council

in partnership with the
City of Lakeland
Florida Department of Transportation District I
Polk Transportation Planning Organization
Lakeland Community Redevelopment Agency

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- “Complete Streets” public design charrette
- Economic Development Analysis
- Traffic Study

“to explore roadway, economic development, infill redevelopment, and public policy improvements”

Study Area

The primary study area for the project is the 1.4 mile section of South Florida Avenue from Ariana Street to Pine Street. Analysis extended to areas both east and west of the corridor.



Key Elements: A master plan for the South Florida Avenue corridor based upon:

- A review of the land use and development regulations
- Development of a Market Overview
- Assessment of the current and future vehicular volumes on South Florida Avenue
- A community-based vision
- Coordination with all relevant agencies

Market and Economic Analysis

Plan Options and Recommendations:

Detailed Study Area Analysis of the Following:

- Every sign, structure, parking space, side walk, signal, etc. in the South Florida Ave. corridor
- Vacant and under utilized properties
- Pedestrian, bike, and transit pathways and routes

Options for Redevelopment

- Short Term
 - Implement transit signal prioritization
 - Consider greater flexibility in residential uses on South Florida Avenue
 - Develop Dixieland/CRA Shared Parking Program
- Longer Term
 - South Florida Ave. Road Diet
 - South Wabash Ave. Extension
 - Develop corridor plan for pedestrian, bike, and transit need

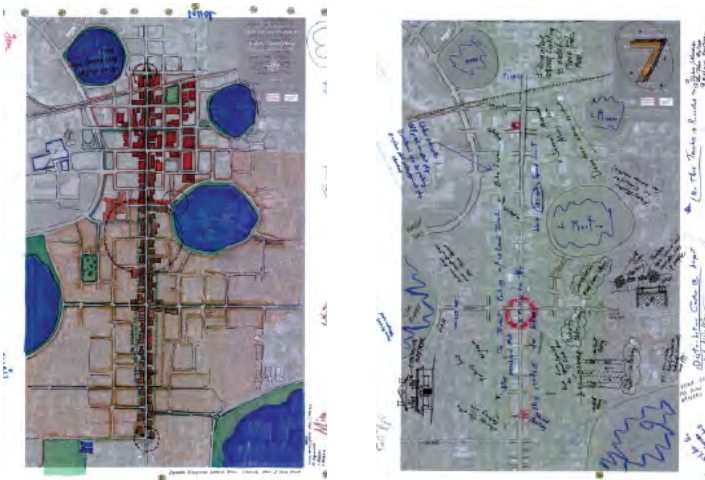
Lakeland will add
43,000
 New Residents
 in the next 25
 years for a 2040
 Population of
144,500

“Complete Streets” Public Design Charrette



- **Host Committee**
- **Pre-Charrette Interviews with 55 elected officials, business leaders, residents, community activists, and utility providers**
- **Public Workshop to shape vision**
- **Design Studio**
- **Work-in-Progress Presentation**

During the charrette week of May 14 - 20, 2016 the design team developed many drawings and analyses to help provide direction on potential improvements to South Florida Avenue.



Participants said:

- Safety is the utmost concern!
- The corridor should look like a unique area, addition of markers and aesthetically pleasing street lamps, and monuments.
- Better lighting and friendly streets to “civilize the corridor”.
- In favor of lane elimination for wider sidewalks but concerned about how the traffic would be rerouted.
- Pedestrian-friendly corridors are important!
- “There is a lot of opportunity for redevelopment, and if the corridor is done correctly, the area will just boom.”
- “The better the aesthetic solutions, the more likely we are to create a traffic environment to discourage (through) trucks.”



This broader rendering shows how the existing Terrace Hotel (at right) is connected to a conceptual residential tower (to the left) by the amenity deck. The lower level of the deck is lobby, drop-off, and garage level access.

- **Market opportunities for additional retail are contingent upon South Florida Avenue Corridor Improvements**
- **The Dixieland sub-district could add another four to seven restaurants and two bars or clubs in the next three to five years**
- **Forecasts suggest that housing growth in the study area will accelerate to 0.63% per year between 2015—2020**
- **A net demand for approximately 109,000 sq. ft. of new office space exists in the study area by 2023**
- **Hotel occupancies have remained above 65% each year for the past three years**

Traffic Study

Plan Options and Recommendations:

Prioritize Interim Improvements on South Florida Avenue

- Coordinate with the City of Lakeland, Polk County TPO, Citrus Connection, and FDOT District 1
- Require minimum clear zones on sidewalks, relocate private signage
- Prioritize relocating traffic signal and light poles from sidewalks
- Initiate a public/private shade tree planting program

Pursue a “Road Diet” on South Florida Avenue with FDOT District 1

- Provide greatest degree of physical improvements with least disruption
- Improve pedestrian and vehicular safety
- Foster an environment more conducive of retaining and attracting local businesses
- Recognize impacts to travel flow and additional congestion will be manageable

Options Considered

- One-Way Couplet
- Alleyway Expansion
- Turning-Lane Reduction
- Lane Widening/Sidewalk Reduction
- Road Diet

The Road Diet Scenario

The “Road Diet” concept would remove the outside travel-lanes (next to the sidewalk) to accommodate the following:

1. Widen the remaining travel lanes and turning lane to the appropriate widths.
2. Use the remaining space (+/- 15 feet) to widen the existing sidewalks, provide space for street trees, and improve safety conditions.

What happens if the outside travel-lanes are removed?



2,000 to 5,000



less vehicles per day



30%



less crashes

Estimated
**17 to 50
second
delay**



in peak hours

- ✓ 2,000 to 5,000 vehicle trips per day are diverted from South Florida Avenue to other roadways including Sikes Blvd., Missouri and New York Ave., and Massachusetts Ave.
- ✓ Estimates suggests up to 30% annual reduction of traffic crashes.
- ✓ The estimated average travel time increase is 31 to 39 seconds in morning peak hour and travel time increase of 17 to 50 seconds in the afternoon peak hour.



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The Master Plan Report for South Florida Avenue is a compilation of many types of drawings, market and traffic analyses, and a summary of the planning process and public involvement. The Master Plan drawings, and the detailed redevelopment scenarios and options, are meant to illustrate and test concepts developed by interaction with the public during the charrette week.

Catalytic Projects

Plan Options and Recommendations:

Encourage Development of Catalytic projects

- Pine St. and South Florida Ave.
- Terrace Hotel
- Tucker Lounge
- SunTrust Site (South Florida Ave. & E. Palmetto St.)
- Waller Plaza



Pine Street and South Florida Avenue

This aerial rendering looking south towards the intersection of North Florida Avenue and Pine Street illustrates the scale and architectural treatments that combined could transform this area into a gateway to downtown. Note the State Parking Garage to the left and in the detail provided lower right.

Terrace Hotel



This broader rendering above shows how the existing Terrace Hotel (at top right) is connected to the proposed residential tower (at top left) by the amenity deck. The lower level of the deck is lobby, drop-off, and garage level access.

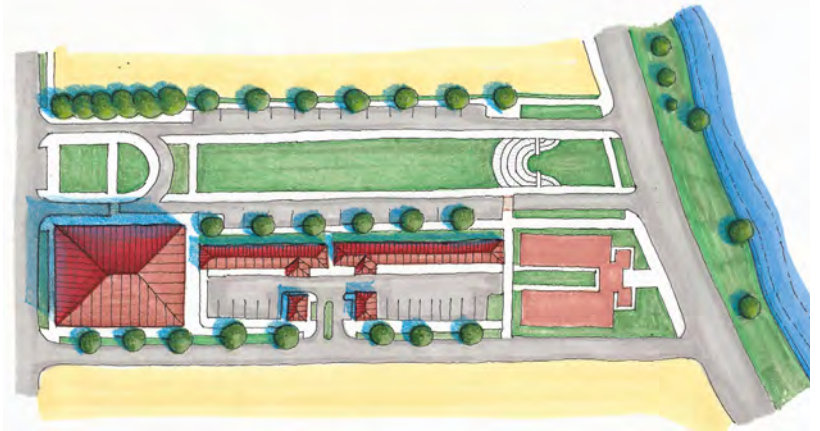


Tucker Lounge

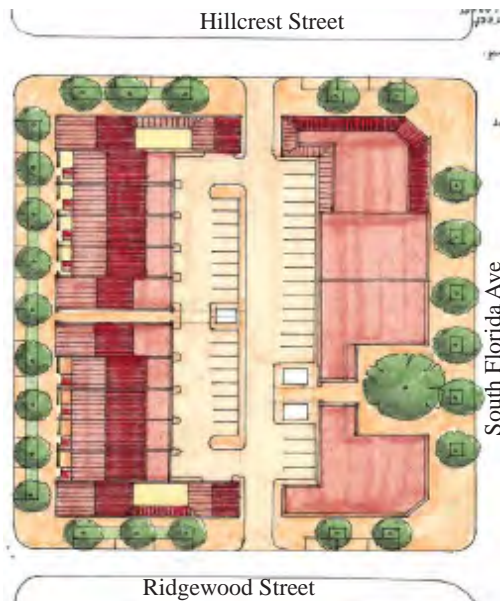
The proposed concept provides ground floor retail/commercial uses with second and third story residential units. The parking is concealed from South Florida Avenue and is accessed primarily from the alleyway. On Belmar Street, two three-story townhouse units are proposed with entries and stoops at the sidewalk.

SunTrust Site

The proposed conceptual site for the SunTrust Bank parcel is provided above. The corner of South Florida Avenue and East Palmetto Street is designed as the new primary structure with a parking court provided between it and the existing apartment building facing Lake Morton Drive. Note the new public green immediately to the north that stretches from South Florida Avenue to Lake Morton providing a dramatic view corridor to the water.



Waller Plaza



This rendering is a view taken from South Florida Avenue looking south towards the redeveloped Waller Plaza across Hillcrest Street. Note the two and three story buildings facing the corridor. In addition to the Waller Plaza site, this design includes the vacant parcel immediately north of Hillcrest Street. That design proposal is shown as an Art Deco style building on the right hand side of the rendering.



The site plan above illustrates the mixed-use buildings facing South Florida Avenue, townhouses facing the neighborhood to the west, and the majority of parking handled mid-block.