



AGENDA

Apopka Visioning Steering Committee Meeting

**March 07, 2016
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Fran Carlton Center
11 N Forest Avenue
Apopka, Florida 32703**

- I. Welcome & Introduction**
- II. Overview of Meeting Purpose**
- III. Presentation & Discussion of the DRAFT "Grow Apopka 2016 Vision Plan".**
 - a) DRAFT - Grow Apopka 2025 Vision
- IV. Overview of Next Steps**
- V. ADJOURNMENT**

GR W APOPKA

2025 VISION

MARCH 2016

DRAFT



PREPARED FOR THE
CITY OF APOPKA BY:



KEITH & SCHNARS
ENGINEERS • PLANNERS • SURVEYORS

Acknowledgments

In June of 2015, the Apopka City Council engaged Keith and Schnars (K&S) to prepare a strategic vision plan. The project was branded “Visioning Apopka”. An important goal for the City Council was to ensure that everyone would have an opportunity to participate and a voice in deciding how Apopka will look and function during the next ten years and beyond. The visioning process empowered those who live and work in the community to share what is important to them about Apopka: What makes the community special? What can be done better? What should the future look like?

Representatives from the City, the Steering Committee, business owners, residents, civic, institutional, non-profit organizations, and other interested parties joined together and dedicated many hours of hard work in the development of the resulting vision plan: *Grow Apopka 2025*. We would like to thank everyone for their excellent work and commitment to the future of the City of Apopka.

The Visioning Apopka Project Team

CITY COUNCIL

- Mayor Joe Kilsheimer
- Vice Mayor Bill Arrowsmith
- Commissioner Billie Dean
- Commissioner Diane Velazquez
- Commissioner Sam Ruth

STEERING COMMITTEE

- Suzanne Kidd, Chair
- Pat McGuffin, Vice Chair
- Vernon Brown
- Eric Coleman
- Lou Haubner
- David Hoffman
- Terri Morrell

CITY STAFF

Glenn Irby, City Administrator

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Pam Barclay | Robert Hippler |
| Susan Bone | Maureen Lewis |
| Brian Bowman | Merry Lovern |
| Lee Bronson | Ray Marsh |
| Kevin Burgess | Robert Manley |
| David Burgoon | Mike McKinley |
| Chuck Carnesale | David Moon |
| Jay Davoll | Jessica Pugh |
| Bob Elmquist | Sarah Ryan |
| Randy Fernandez | Robert Sargent |
| Linda Goff | Kyle Wilkes |
| Cindy Hall | |

VISIONING APOPKA PROJECT TEAM

Project Management

Project Manager: Debbie Love, AICP, Director of Planning and Public Outreach, Keith and Schnars

Deputy Project Manager: Bob Cambric, Principal, The Cambric Group

Visioning and Facilitation

Lead Facilitator: James Anaston-Karas, Vice President of Community Solutions, Keith and Schnars

Keith and Schnars

Debbie Love, AICP Brad Benmoshe'
James Kahn, AICP Raul Gavela
Kenneth Wenning Rene Azcarreta
Harry Fullwood

The Cambric Group

Bob Cambric

Media Relations Group

Alicia Gonzalez, Principal
Jorge Sotolongo
Alicia Torrez
Valerie Tutor
Jorge Valens

Urban Design

Keith and Schnars

Debbie Love, AICP
Brad Benmoshe'
Shea Hanson, LA

Design2Form

Zamarr Brown, AIA, Principal/Architect
Joelle Flowers, AIA, Architect

Website Development

Chase Marketing

Heather Chase, Principal

Table of Contents

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

SECTION I.

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

“The relevant question is not simply what shall we do tomorrow, but rather what shall we do today to get ready for tomorrow.”

- Peter Drucker

The City of Apopka undertook a planning process used successfully by military, corporations, not-for-profits and local governments alike to focus strategic efforts on shared priorities. This Plan report (Sections 1 and 2) summarizes principles and value of strategic planning, the planning and facilitation methods used, and sources consulted. Section 3 is the essence of the Plan driven by an inspirational vision, which is: **“It’s in our nature; where healthy food, children, jobs, people, and minds are growing in a safe and unified community amid a slice of natural Florida.”**

The Plan should drive other planning efforts as an umbrella strategy, and emphasizes results with accountability by including performance measures with progress reports at least twice a year. The Plan is based on a combination of an assessment of the most pressing challenges and opportunities, professional experience and judgment, research of prior planning efforts, and detailed input from the Council and Senior Staff. While the City’s Budget and 5-year Capital Improvements Plan ultimately determine fundable projects and achievable deadlines, this Plan is intended to become part of the FY 2017 Budget to guide future city planning efforts and prioritize corresponding budget decisions.

The Plan’s value will be enhanced if all agenda items coming before the Council are scored for relative compliance with the Plan, thus enabling the City to remain focused on its mutually agreed upon strategic goals. Recommended annual Plan updates will allow for unforeseen dynamics and ever changing priorities.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

SECTION II.

Why Have a Vision?

Why Have a Vision?

“Strategic planning is worthless — unless there is first a strategic vision.” - John Naisbitt

Communities today face any number of pressing concerns, including requests for rezoning, demands for affordable housing, or the loss of a major employer. Unfortunately, decisions about these issues are frequently made in the absence of a real vision of how residents want their community to look in the future.

Visioning is a process by which a community comes together to think about and plan for the future by evaluating and answering four key points:

- *Where Are We Now?*
- *Where Are We Going?*
- *Where Do We Want to Be?*
- *How Do We Get There?*

The process involves direct and multiple input from citizens, business and property owners, and representatives of community-based and faith-based organizations to envision the future it wants and then plans how to achieve it. This input identifies the Vision for the future, which is implemented through goals and strategies.

The term “vision” is often bandied about without clear and consistent understanding. In the business or government planning area, professionally its succinctly defined as: “A picture on the mind’s eye.” Thus it usually involves physical design as well as policy and programs.

It is aspirational, should be closely tied with the City’s existing or new brand, and inspiring.

In the visioning process, people often mix goals, guiding principles/values, objectives, action items (strategies), and performance measures. Hence a well-done vision separates such components leading to better success.

Clear and aspirational community vision has long-been sought in comprehensive planning efforts by local communities. Those comprehensive planning efforts often fell short. Today’s Florida law requires that comprehensive plans be based upon, among other input, a community’s goals and visions.¹ However local government vision plans are not mandated by state law, but are recognized

¹ According to Florida Statutes, Sec. 163.3177 (1) (f) “All mandatory and optional elements of the comprehensive plan and plan amendments shall be based upon relevant and appropriate data”

as important management and policy setting tools. To enable Apopka's improved management, responsiveness to community goals, and accountability the Vision Plan is intended to be enveloped into Apopka's Budget and Capital Improvements Plan beginning in 2016.

A community vision plan with strategies provides important policy guidance to spending decisions with a long-term (10-year) perspective indicative of well-managed municipalities. This is in contrast to cities which too often govern only from crisis to crisis or year to year and lack longer-term vision.

As shown in **Figure 1** the Vision sits atop the pyramid and drives the rest of the plan components, and visa-versa. So each strategy is an action selected to achieve objectives and goals. Goals in turn allow the City to accomplish the mission while pursuing the Vision. Not

pictured are performances measures, which are the means by which progress toward accomplishing each strategy is gauged. A vision is "A picture on the mind's eye." It is aspirational, should be closely tied with the City's existing or new brand, and must be inspiring. People often mix goals, guiding principles/values, objectives, action items (strategies), and performance measures while they construct a future scenario K&S knows how to clear the confusion.

The K&S team knows how to diplomatically focus stakeholders into logical categories for each idea. It ensures that everyone's ideas are heard and categorized so they can be later evaluated in the totality of the emerging plan. This expertise is essential at facilitated discussions where hundreds of differing views are shared. Our Team is experienced at cataloging and synthesizing such volume of ideas into themes and stitching the components into a coherent and manageable plan following the "planning pyramid."



Figure 1: Planning Pyramid

an analysis by the local government that may include, but not be limited to, surveys, studies, **community goals and vision**, and other data available at the time of adoption of the comprehensive plan or plan amendment." [emphasis added]

Many local governments use strategic planning to establish priorities and guide their corresponding budget decisions and work plan. While not a cure-all, strategic planning is considered a valuable approach. “Strategic planning can be a useful and even an instrumental tool in achieving better government. Therefore, strategic planning takes its place among other management systems, old and new, that seeks to make public sector entities excel.”

“Strategic planning ... is based on the premise that leaders and managers of public and nonprofit organizations must be effective strategists if their organizations are to fulfill their missions, meet their mandates, and satisfy constituents in the years ahead.”

Common characteristics of strategic planning are:

- Vision—Developing a common “vision for the future” or a “conceptualization” of where an organization wants or desires to be in the long-term.
- Assessment — Appraising or determining where an organization is currently vis-a-vis its goals, objectives, activities, and results.
- Strategies — identifying how an organization will actually realize its mission, goals and objectives via concrete and predetermined actions, including budgetary decisions.
- Measurement — evaluating the progress of an organization in the implementing its action strategies.

Not using a strategic plan typically leads to extra work efforts and random results. This strategic plan aspires to bring predictability and continuity to city decision-making, thus helping the business community work and invest in partnership to help local economies and quality of life.

SECTION III.

Appopka's History

Apopka's History

"History cannot give us a program for the future, but it can give us a fuller understanding of ourselves, and of our common humanity, so that we can better face the future." - Robert Penn Warren

<UNDER CONSTRUCTION>



SECTION IV.

How Was the Plan Formulated?

How Was the Plan Formulated?

Many means of analysis and input were used to formulate the Plan. Above all, broad-based approaches were used to reach thousands of persons, interest groups and community leaders, and receive guidance along the way from a Steering Committee, Staff and the City Council. These means are summarized below, largely in chronological order through the project's duration.

Opportunities and Challenges

At the project initiation meeting, K&S designed and facilitated an opportunities and challenges exercise with staff and the Steering Committee, which is a powerful method of quickly identifying and consolidating the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the community. Using advanced collaborative facilitation methods, many perspectives and ideas were synthesized and then ranked to yield the results in **Figures 2 and 3**, below.

Figure 2: Opportunities, Ranked

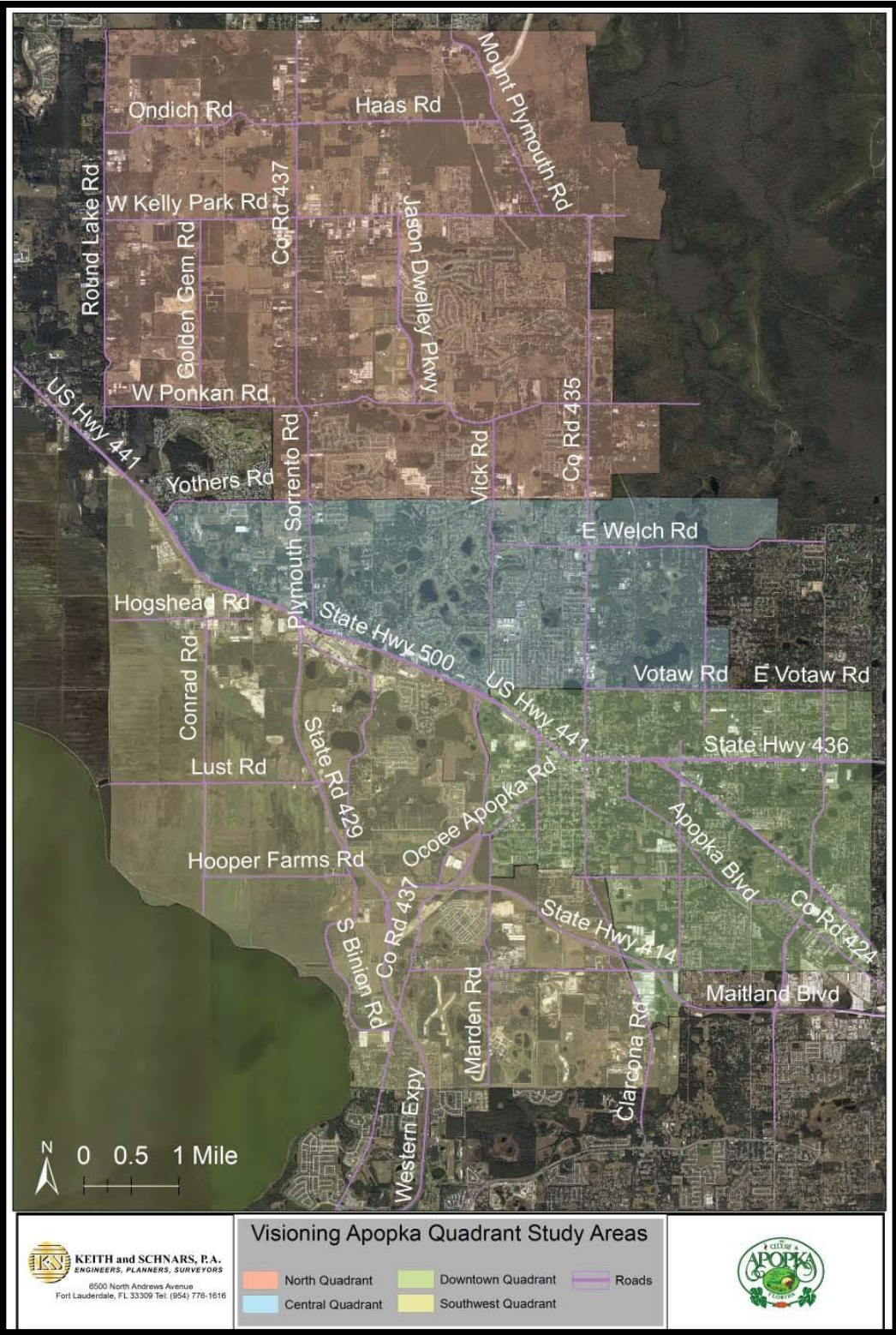
Opportunities	TOP THREE	<p>New Growth: Large inventory of city-owned property for new development. Annexation will enable growth. Many undeveloped growth potential areas, including vacant land. Simultaneously improve quality of life (QOL). There is a huge influx of new residents. More sit-down casual dining (not fast food) would help with QOL. Want less “dollar” and tire stores, less fast food. New growth could improve living conditions for Seniors with new development and funding (“Senior living at this best!”)</p>
		<p>Identity: Desire to keep Apopka unique; possibly through eco-tourism, environmental attractions. Natural parks and springs (Kelly Park, Rock & Wekiva Springs) for more healthful recreation. Cultural enhancements, which might include constructing amphitheater to become Central Florida’s “Concert Central.”</p>
		<p>Quality of Life Improvement: Bring youth (ages 12-20) into our future. Public pool and/or splash park wanted; somewhere needed to take the kids swimming. More entertainment. Host new and plentiful festivals themed with healthy food and urban gardening. Need to build multi-income communities; keep taxes low. Create a thriving community with positive youth opportunities (stay out of trouble); reduce the worry of break-ins. Build a YMCA, Boys & Girls club and/or improve the Fran Carlton Recreation Center.</p>
		<p>Economic Development: Large inventory of land to bring in any type of (desired) new industry. Now we can tag on to a rising economy; times are ripe. Need to reinvest in marketing to bring businesses; then into infrastructure improvements. Include the airport in such opportunity.</p>
		<p>Location: Is optimal. Highway system, other means of transportation, proximity to Interstate are all good. A Toll on western parkway. Environmental attractions, including Lake Apopka.</p>
		<p>Attitudinal: Can we blend Apopka into ONE?! Have forward thinking citizens. Need concise consideration everyone’s sincere belief that this CAN be done. Seek consensus for vision. Need to spark an engaged community. Must be forward thinking in building a downtown with entertainment and enterprise. (See also Downtown constraint).</p>

Figure 3: Challenges, Ranked

Challenges	TOP THREE	Attitude. Naysayers. Want to keep things as they were (fear of change). Choosing priorities. How do we balance the past with the future? Must honor history; keep hometown atmosphere.
		Barrier: Downtown is divided by US 441 My Apopka, where a quaint little Downtown welcomes all! Beautify the downtown to attract new businesses and customers. A Downtown attracting more West Orange Trail users if the corridor was safer through the neighborhoods south of 436.
		Perception and Image: New and improved marketing needed. Correcting historical inequities. Most of South Apopka is in Orange County, not in city- need to square off. Lack of intergovernmental cooperation.
		Funding: Where shall the public money to spend come from? How to keep low taxes? What municipal services must be limited due to limited funds?
		Downtown: Downtown is divided by US 441. My Apopka, where a quaint little Downtown welcomes all! Beautify the downtown to attract new businesses and customers. A Downtown attracting more West Orange Trail users if the corridor was safer through the neighborhoods south of 436.
		Utility infrastructure (water and wastewater)
		Roads: US 441! With all the right roads leading to APK new businesses should be popping up, including new restaurants. Safer and more connected corridors would allow more movement without an auto.
		Regulations: Outdated comprehensive plan and policies. Over regulation – multiple layers.

Where Are We Now and Where Are We Going?

Data Analysis and Findings



To establish a baseline for the planning effort and public workshop forums, discover and quantify gaps and deficiencies, a rigorous examination of indicator data was completed. To assist with comparison and relative data relevance, four study areas were established in consultation with city staff in part considering public safety service areas (police and fire) and considering the general character of each each set apart from others. The Boundary includes all of the City and the portions of unincorporated Orange County located within the Joint Service Agreement (JSA) area. The JSA area is included in the Visioning Apopka Project Boundary because the City provides water, sewer, and solid waste services and may annex any part of JSA area, with consent of Orange County, until the year 2025.

Figure 4 presents the four geographic study areas.

Using professionally accepted sources, such data included key sociographic, demographic and economic data. Examples include: City staff and budget office, the Environmental Systems Research Institute (see ESRI.com), East Central Florida Regional Planning Council, Orange County, and the Orange County property appraiser. The majority of the census data was derived by Geographic Information Systems (GIS) assuming equal distribution, and calculated by geographic percentage of Block Group within quadrant boundaries.

Known by some as an “environmental scan”, the focus is to answer the question “Where are we [as a community] now, and what happens if trends continue?” Various maps were developed or analyzed; these can be found in **Appendix 1**.

Figure 4: Quadrant Study Areas

Hence data was collected, diagrammed, charted and mapped where appropriate to portray findings, and where possible, straight line extrapolation was used to construct a “do nothing” scenario snapshot. In other words, “What happens if the community does nothing to choose and implement a preferred vision?” “What environmental, market, business or other forces will continue to shape our community, absent our intervention?”

Figures 5 - 9 present more detail across a range of topics, some selected general results of this investigation are:

- Available income is good; therefore, retail spending power should offer new commercial development opportunities.
- The level of education is higher than many Florida communities suggesting a desirable workforce to support new jobs.
- Property values are on a general increase, better than many Florida communities.
- There is a large inventory of available vacant and government owned land, suggesting opportunities for new growth and public amenities.
- While the general crime is not outstanding, property crime rates are predominant instead of violent crimes compared to other urban areas in Florida.
- The jobs to housing balance is low and therefore poor. Whereas communities normally prefer more jobs close to home, the lack of local jobs verifies Apopka’s status as “bedroom community” where workers must commute longer than desired distances for employment.
- Older and neglected areas of the study area afford many challenging redevelopment opportunities.
- Better forecast information is necessary to anticipate what revenue trends the City will experience in the next ten years.

The Figures are arranged first for the entire study area, then by each of the four quadrants.

Figure 5: Total Study Area

TOTAL STUDY AREA: WHERE ARE WE NOW?

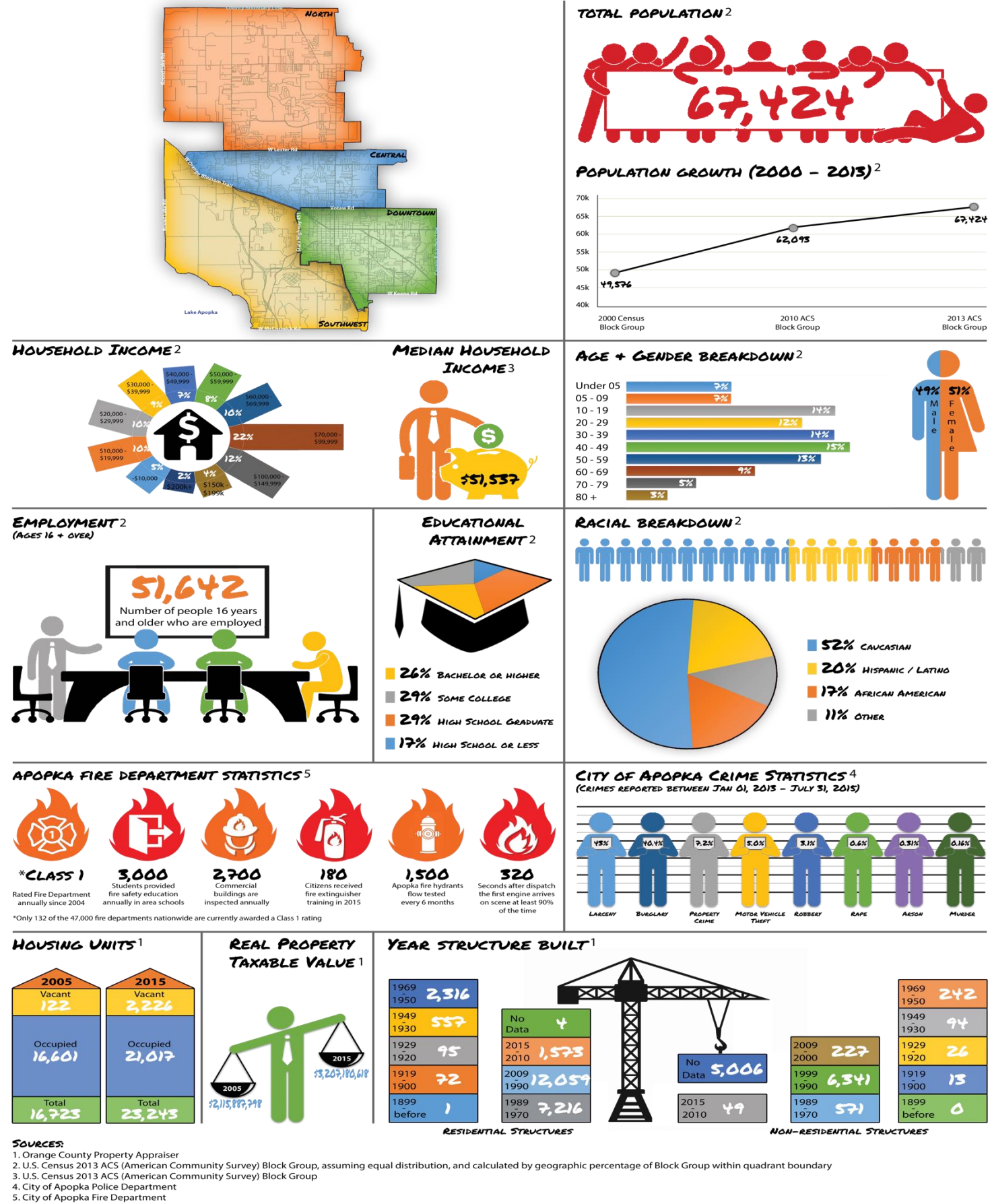
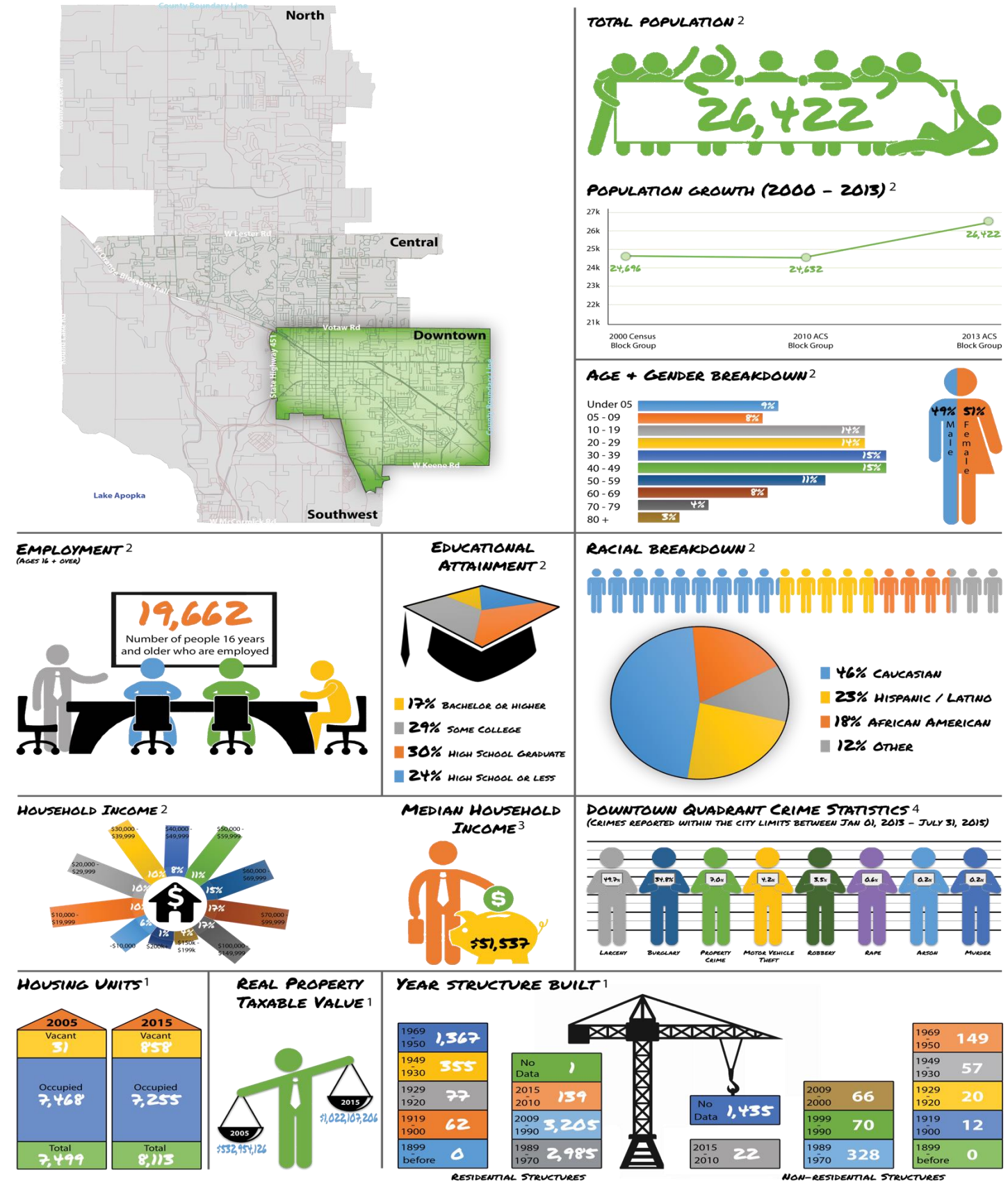


Figure 6: Downtown Quadrant

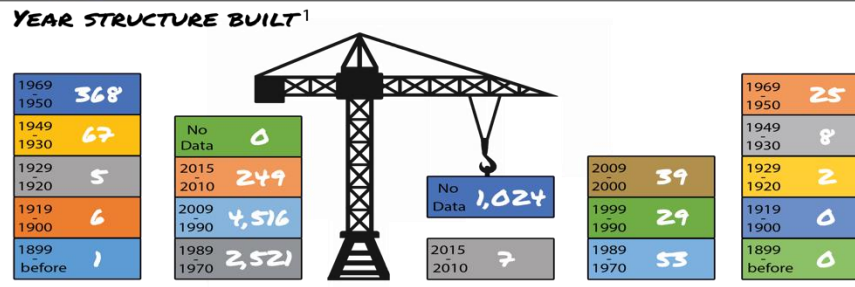
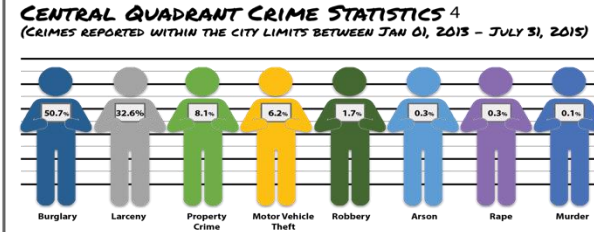
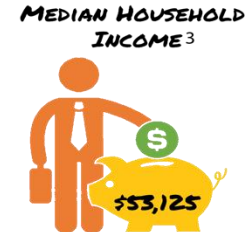
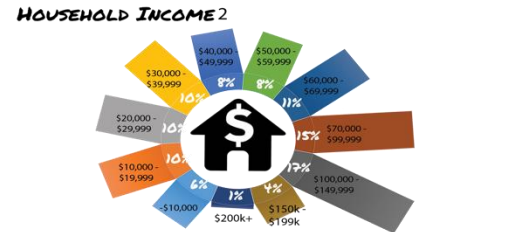
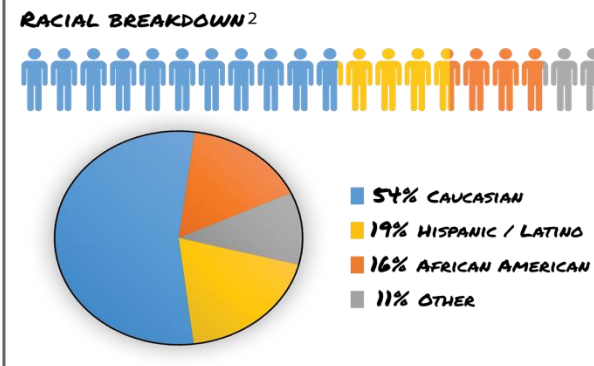
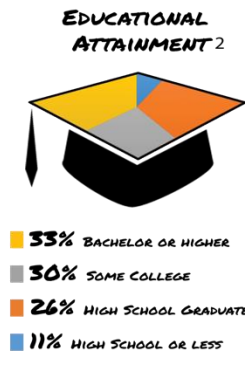
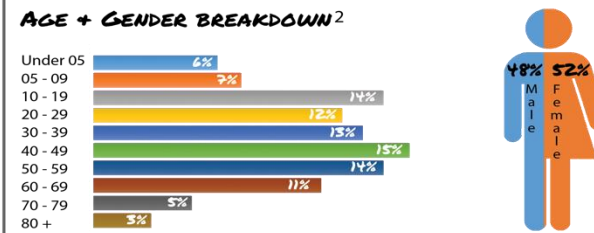
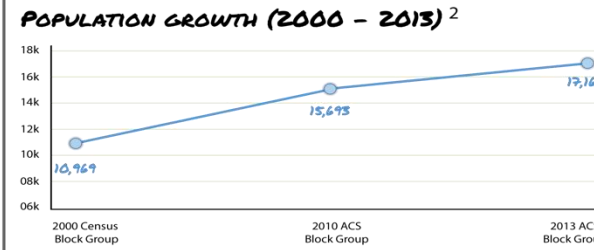
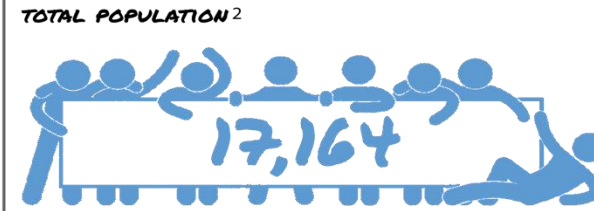
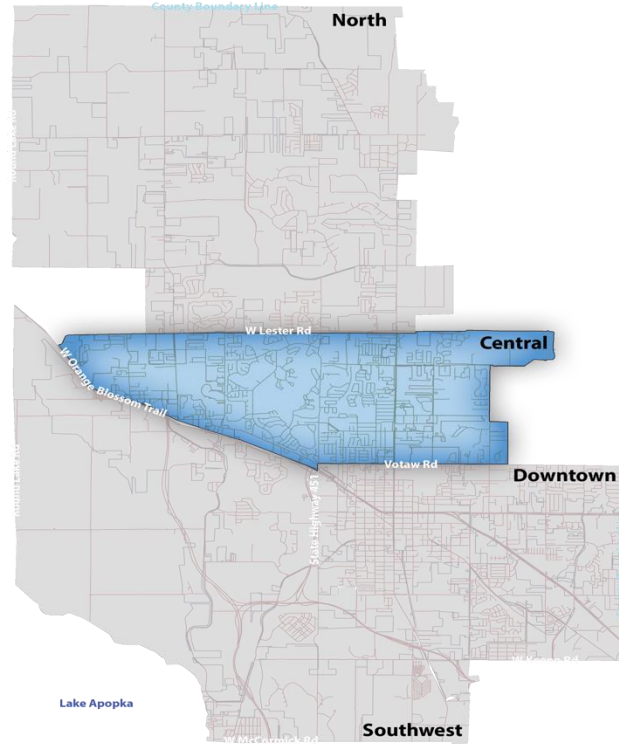
DOWNTOWN QUADRANT: WHERE ARE WE NOW?



SOURCES:
 1. Orange County Property Appraiser
 2. U.S. Census 2013 ACS (American Community Survey) Block Group, assuming equal distribution, and calculated by geographic percentage of Block Group within quadrant boundary
 3. U.S. Census 2013 ACS (American Community Survey) Block Group
 4. City of Apopka Police Department

Figure 7: Central Quadrant

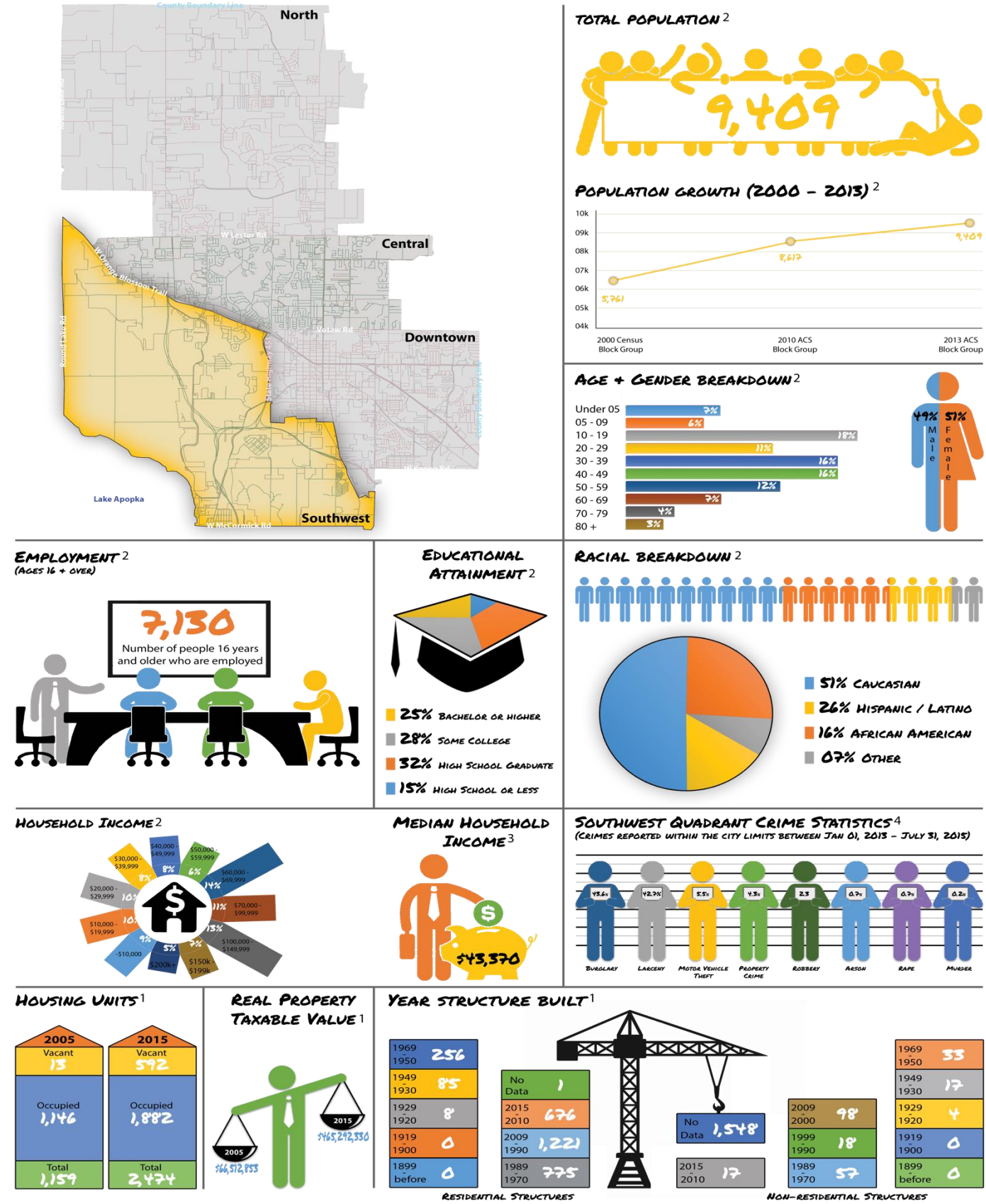
CENTRAL QUADRANT: WHERE ARE WE NOW?



SOURCES:
 1. Orange County Property Appraiser
 2. U.S. Census 2013 ACS (American Community Survey) Block Group, assuming equal distribution, and calculated by geographic percentage of Block Group within quadrant boundary
 3. U.S. Census 2013 ACS (American Community Survey) Block Group
 4. City of Apopka Police Department

Figure 8: Southwest Quadrant

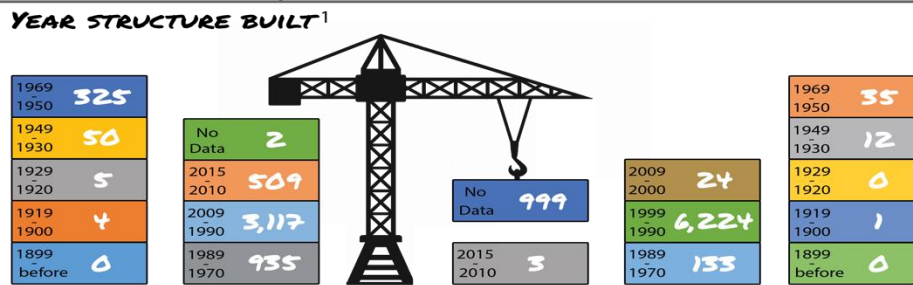
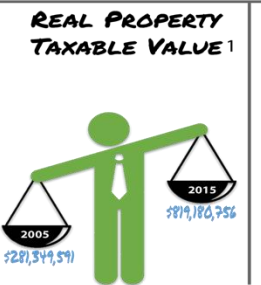
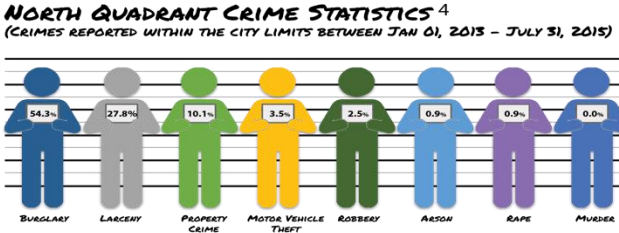
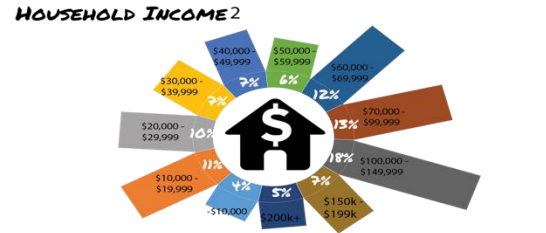
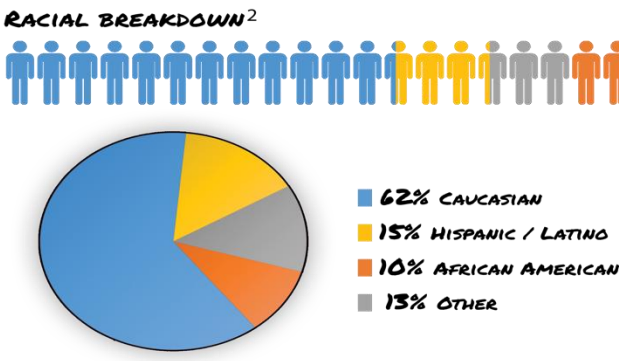
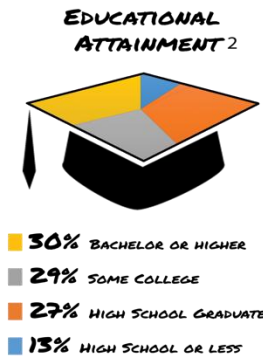
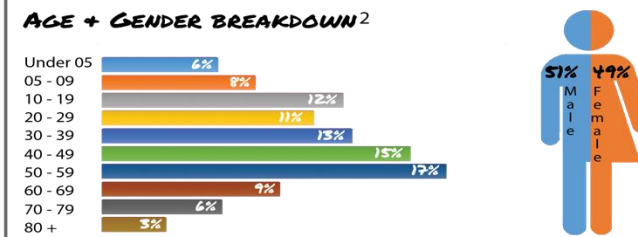
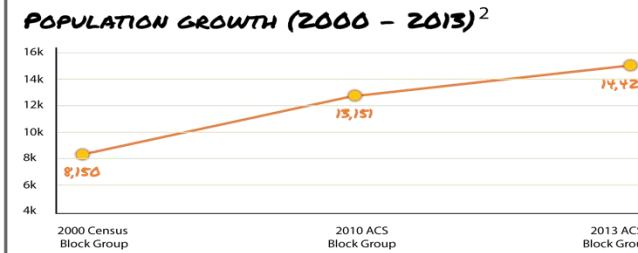
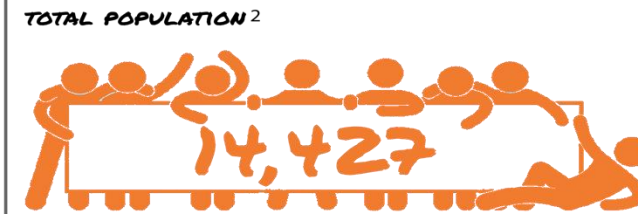
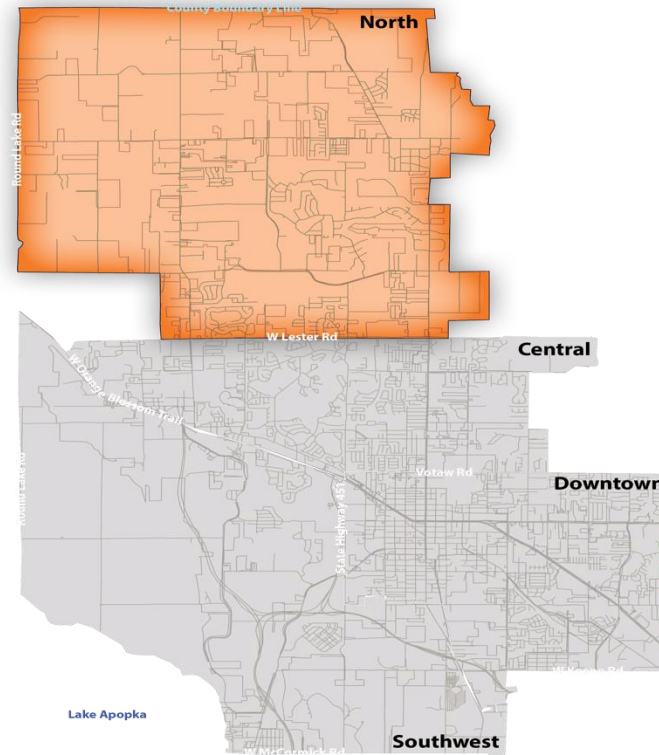
SOUTHWEST QUADRANT: WHERE ARE WE NOW?



SOURCES:
 1. Orange County Property Appraiser
 2. U.S. Census 2013 ACS (American Community Survey) Block Group, assuming equal distribution, and calculated by geographic percentage of Block Group within quadrant boundary
 3. U.S. Census 2013 ACS (American Community Survey) Block Group
 4. City of Apopka Police Department

Figure 9: North Quadrant

NORTH QUADRANT: WHERE ARE WE NOW?



SOURCES:
 1. Orange County Property Appraiser
 2. U.S. Census 2013 ACS (American Community Survey) Block Group, assuming equal distribution, and calculated by geographic percentage of Block Group within quadrant boundary
 3. U.S. Census 2013 ACS (American Community Survey) Block Group
 4. City of Apopka Police Department

Field Analysis

In August through several field visits, walking tours, and windshield surveys, Project Team staff observed current conditions. Observations continued throughout the Project's duration surrounding the many outreach events (MIS, workshop forums, and other meetings). Select highlights of such field analyses are organized by the four study area quadrants, as presented below. Field visits are conducted to discover the general urban or rural "feel" of an area. A sampling of the multiple factors examined by urban planners/designers on such visits include: aesthetics, viewsheds and vistas, focal points, nodes; circulation (vehicular and non); built environment scale, density, intensity, and architectural styles; social and business activity centers; safety; and, natural/unbuilt environment.

In this regard, **Figures 10 - 13** include some representative photos and a coarse estimate (expressed in percent) of the menu of observed features, namely shade trees, sidewalks and streetlights needed, traffic problems, building types- (residential units), bicycle lanes, bus stops without amenities, code violations, drainage issues, environmental concerns, environmental lands, parks are recreation, and vacant lands.

General observations of the sub-areas are:

- North – residential and schools- future growth
- Downtown- Commercial, historic and redevelopment potential
- Central- residential, schools, jobs and redevelopment potential
- Southwest- New development (hospital), environmental features, industrial jobs base

Figure 10: North Quadrant

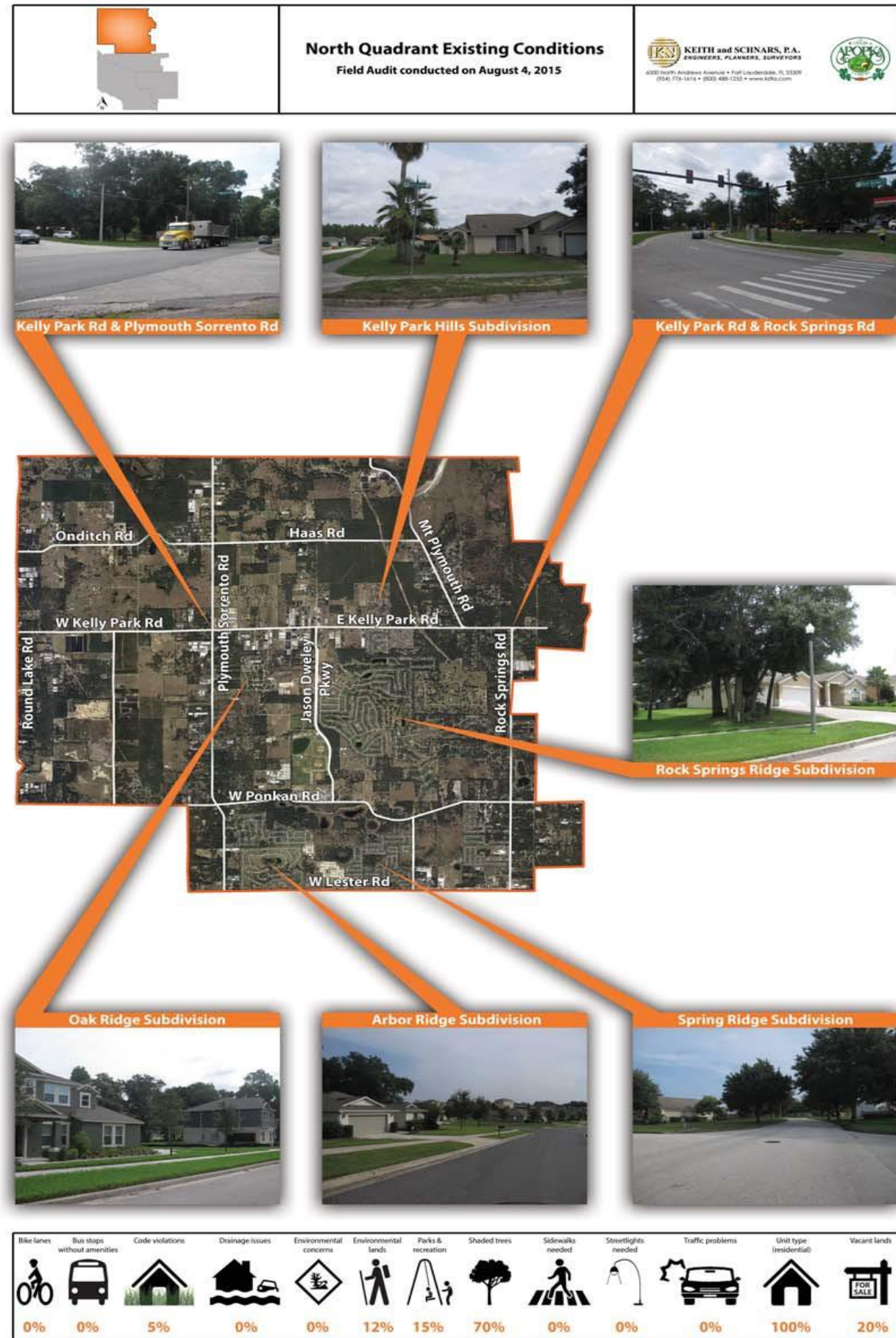


Figure 11: Southwest Quadrant

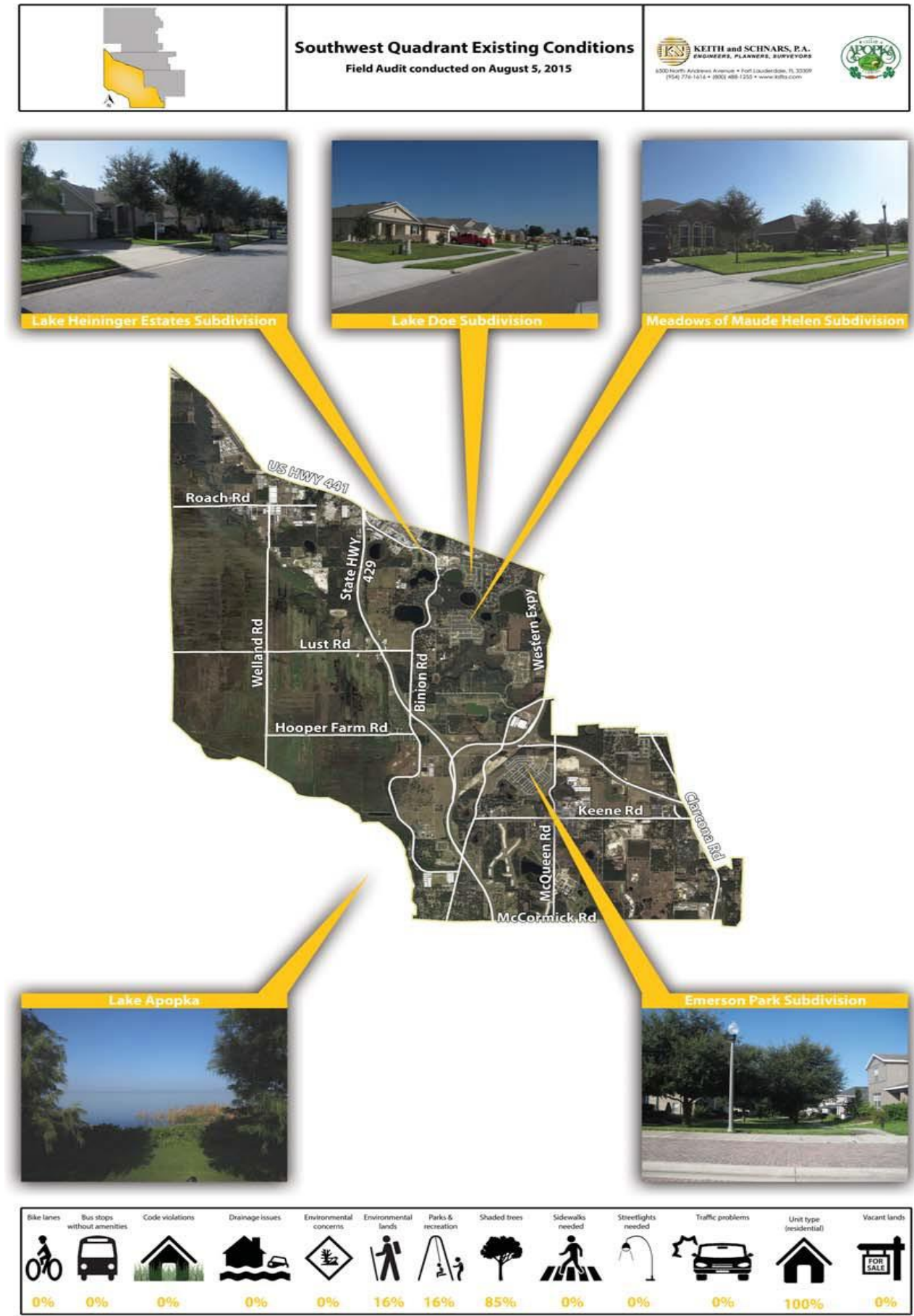
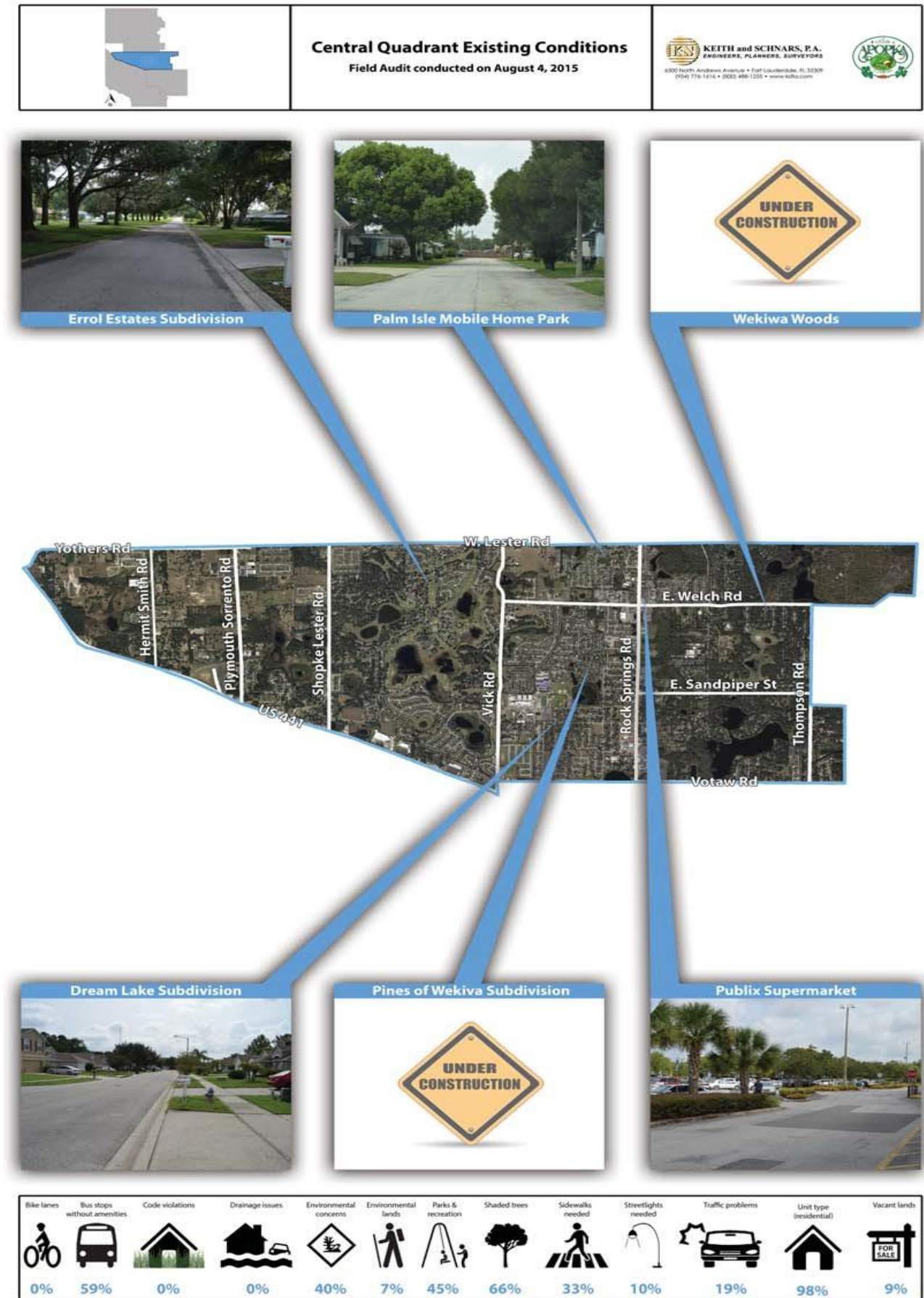


Figure 12: Downtown Quadrant



Figure 13: Central Quadrant



Community Outreach

Website

A website www.VisioningApopka.net was designed and deployed to successfully compliment the many outreach methods used during the Project. To date, the website has generated over 9,300 visits.

Media

The Project Team maintained close coordination with the City's Public Information Officer during the Project's duration, maintained availability and regular contact with numerous members of the media, and supported staff or elected officials at several media events. News articles regarding the project may be found in **Appendix 2**.

Mobile Information Station



The MIS (Mobile Information Station), a converted 34-foot recreational vehicle, is a unique community outreach tool K&S utilizes. The goal of its utilization is to provide citizens with up to date project information and status. This becomes extremely important for those citizens within the community who do not have reliable transportation or access.

Three MIS events were scheduled (see **Table 1**, below) and well attended by members of the public, as well as Steering Committee members, elected officials, and K&S staff. Visitors were given the opportunity to ask questions regarding the infographic displays, aerials, and other maps and graphics. The community wide survey was also available in paper form if residents had not taken the survey online. A significant portion of residents asked about the process of strategic visioning; the inputs; and what could be expected for the future community forum events. Information and flyers were handed out in regards to the upcoming community forum events held in each quadrant of the City. The MIS events proved to be a successful tool with an estimated attendance of 150 unique individuals from the community.



Table 1: MIS Schedule of Events

Date and Time	Location	Attendance of public (estimate)
Saturday, September 05, 2015 10:00am - 2:00pm	Alonzo Williams Park, 515 South Hawthorne Avenue, adjacent to Pop Warner Field	35
Saturday, September 12, 2015 10:00am - 2:00pm	Northwest Recreation Complex, 3200 Jason Dwelley Parkway	55
Saturday, September 19, 2015 10:00am - 2:00pm	Wekiva Riverwalk Shopping Center, 2141 N Semoran Blvd.	60





Community Forums and Listening Sessions

Schedule

A concerted effort was made to receive input from the community at readily accessible locations and times, and using formats welcoming critical, creative, and complementary ideas alike. As shown in **Table 2**, four workshop forums and two listening sessions were conducted and attended by a total of approximately 400 members of the public. Sign-in sheets are in **Appendix 3**.

Table 2: List of Community Forums and Listening Sessions

Date and Time	Location	Attendance of public (estimate)
Downtown Community Forum, Tuesday, September 15, 2015, 6:00pm - 9:00pm	Apopka Community Center, 519 S. Central Avenue	65
Central Community Forum, Thursday, September 17, 2015, 6:00pm - 9:00pm	Apopka High School, 555 Martin Street	70
Southwest Community Forum, Tuesday, September 22, 2015 from 6:00pm - 9:00pm	University of Florida IFSA / Mid-Florida Recreation Center, 2725 South Binion Road	75
North Community Forum, Saturday, September 26, 2015, 1:00pm - 4:00pm	Wolf Lake Middle School, 1725 West Ponkan Road	65
The Business and Community Leaders Forum, Tuesday, September 29, 2015, 6:00pm - 9:00pm	Apopka Community Center, 519 South Central Avenue	55
Listening Session 1, Saturday, October 24, 2015, 10:00am – 12:00pm	Farm Workers' Bureau, 1264 Apopka Blvd	30
Listening Session 2, Saturday, October 24, 2015 2pm – 4pm	St. Paul A.M.E. Church, 1012 S. Park Avenue	20
	Total	380

Format, Objectives and Conduct

The K&S Team designed and conducted each forum with careful consideration for engaging community input in a meaningful planning platform. While presentations of data and studies were part of each meeting, the K&S Team facilitators were guided by the 80/20 rule – meaning that meeting participants should contribute 80% of the conversation while our experts are listening, clarifying and categorizing ideas -- to ensure that presenters don't drown out the public.

With particular focus on each of the geographic study areas, and the interest groups (such as business leaders) relevant to each, the team established decorum and ground rules, and employed advanced facilitation techniques to maintain a setting which would stimulate balanced, honest and creative dialogue. Each of the public outreach meetings used a derivation of the nominal group technique, use a substantially similar agenda, and use a combination of plenary and small group discussions. Charrette-style map based discussion is a useful tool for small group breakouts.

Negatives and criticisms were as important as positives or new “crazy” ideas.

The basic agenda for each approximate 3-hour hands on community forum workshop was:

- A. Where are we now with trends & “Do Nothing” scenario
- B. Opportunities and Challenges exercise
- C. Desired Vision and Goals
- D. Strategic solutions
- E. Preference polling (using dotting or key pads)

The assembled working groups identified challenges and opportunities, then wrote and synthesized vision statements to capture aspirational visions. Last, each workshop forum challenged smaller working groups to write strategies (i.e. action steps) toward achieving various goals and visions. Finally, before leaving each forum the audience conveyed their preferences by dot preference voting for the most desirable strategies. In this manner the team generated dozens of vision statements and hundreds of ideas to further analyze and explore.

The final two outreach workshops were designed and conducted as listening sessions. This means the audience was engaged less to write vision statements and strategies, and more to convey the key challenges facing the participants. The results of each session, which is a listing of visions with corresponding ranked strategies, is presented in **Figures 14 - 17**.

Figure 14: VISION STATEMENTS SIMPLEMIND GRAPHIC DOWNTOWN

**INSERT FINALIZED
VERSION**

**INSERT FINALIZED
VERSION**

**INSERT FINALIZED
VERSION**

Figure 17: VISION STATEMENTS SIMPLEMIND GRAPHIC NORTH

**INSERT FINALIZED
VERSION**

The Downtown Community Forum was held on Tuesday, September 15, 2015 from 6:00pm - 9:00pm at the Apopka Community Center, located at 519 S. Central Avenue.



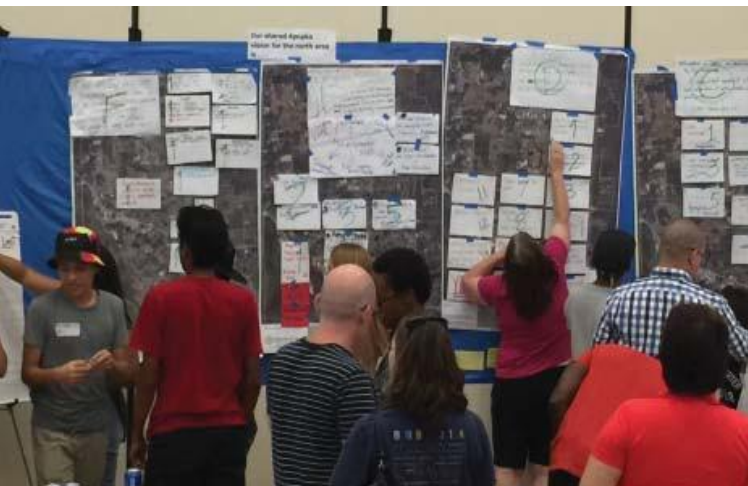
The Central Community Forum was held on Thursday, September 17, 2015, 6:00pm - 9:00pm at the Apopka High School, located at 555 Martin Street.



The Southwest Community Forum was held on Tuesday, September 22, 2015 from 6:00pm - 9:00pm at the University of Florida IFSA / Mid-Florida Recreation Center, located at 2725 South Binion Road.



The North Community Forum was held on Saturday, September 26, 2015 from 1:00pm - 4:00pm at Wolf Lake Middle School, located at 1725 West Ponkan Road



The Business and Community Leaders Forum was held on Tuesday, September 29, 2015 from 6:00pm - 9:00pm at the Apopka Community Center, located at 519 South Central Avenue.



Listening Sessions

Two special listening sessions were conducted on October 24, 2015 to hear concerns specific to the Hispanic and African-American communities.

The first session, which focused upon the concerns of the Hispanic community, was held from 10am until 12 pm at the Farm Workers' Bureau, located at 1264 Apopka Blvd.



The second session, which was held from 2pm until 4 pm at the St. Paul AME Church, located at 1012 S. Park Avenue, provided a forum for participants from the African-American community to share their perspectives and ideas.



Opinion Survey

The Public's Valuable Survey Input. In addition to the other outreach to the interested parties and public in the study area, an opinion survey was successfully administered to obtain a comparatively large volume of input, and which met a statistically significant threshold. Please see **Figure 18** below which corresponds to the summary text below.

Questionnaire, Administration, and Sample

The 23-question English and Spanish survey questionnaire (see **Appendix 4**) was administered by:

- a. Mail/Web link: Using random sampling to 9,500 households in the study area, post cards were mailed by US Mail inviting respondents to complete the survey via a website address.
- b. Project Website – Respondents were invited to complete the survey from the VisioningApopka.net website. These households served as the “scientific” sample group.
- c. Manual – Paper copies were distributed upon request, at the City hall and Utilities Offices, Mobile Information Station events, and during the public workshops. Using this means of distribution allowed for public input from persons with out computer/internet access.

The size of the “scientific” sample was determined by assuming the typical small response rate of mail surveys (which can be less than 3%). By administering the survey from late July through early November, the possible omission of opinions from “snow birds” (residents who may leave for the summer while maintaining majority residence in Apopka) was minimized.

Each household in the study area was assigned an identification number, then a random number generator was applied to the identification numbers to create the list of households included in the “scientific sample.” To control for overrepresentation, the “scientific sample” was distributed to a proportionate number of households in each of the study area’s four sub-categories (Northwest, Central, Southeast, and Southwest).

Cards mailed to almost one-third of the households in the study area (9,500) yielded a response of 276 households. This response was large enough to attain a 90% confidence interval (with 5% margin of error). Confidence interval means that the responses are at least 90 percent accurate, however results could vary five percent higher or lower.

While the size of the response is deemed valid for the desired planning application, there may be some bias from gender and older residents since the responding group had more females (61% versus 51%) and residents over 45 years of age than the study area population (71%-45 or older versus 45%-40 and older). However, since only one head of household could respond for others in the household it is indeterminate how many other males or younger respondents were included in the response. Lastly, because 81 percent of the respondents identified themselves as residents, the survey results are not skewed by non-residents. This 81 to 19 % split (resident versus non) is about the same as the total area of the study area- with about 4/5 inside and 1/5 outside of the city's legal boundary.

Findings

Survey findings were compiled and summarized giving greatest weight to the scientific sample. However, the non-scientific results did not vary appreciably.

Adding in the non-scientific sampled respondents, a total of 1,246 persons returned the survey offering perspectives on the community's vision, including thousands of lines of open-ended comments. In addition to voicing some preferences for how to pay for community improvements, among the highlights of survey responses (in summary) are to:

- Provide more local shopping and sit-down/family style restaurants
- Create a city center with vibrant downtown
- Host more festivals/fairs
- Redevelop or rebuild older commercial/retail areas
- Attract new businesses and jobs
- Induce more jobs close to home, thus encouraging
- “compact” development
- Create more walkable and bikeable corridors, areas and facilities
- Provide more recreational Opportunities
- Create an “Entry Feature” (e.g. signage or monument)
- Improve the feeling of safety
- Enhance eco-tourism

The Project Team studied survey results in much more detail to glean ideas for vision, goals and strategies brought forward during the planning process. A more detailed report of findings is contained in a lengthy report (over 150 pages) “Visioning Apopka Survey Results” and available at www.VisioningApopka.net.

Figure 18: Survey Summary

Valid Sample

	Scientific	Non-scientific	Total
Sample	9500 households		
Study area	23,248 households		67,424 persons
Responses *	276	970	1246
Confidence**	90% +/- 5%		
Resident/Non %	81/19	83/17	
Female/Male %	61/39		51/49

* Excludes 12 Manual responses
** Threshold to reach 90% confidence - 200 responses

... a bit older sample

Age	Sample		Study Area	
	Scientific (%)	Non-Scientific (%)	Age	Gender %
18-24	2	3	Under 19	28
25-34	8	15	20-29	12
35-44	19	27	30-39	14
45-54	26	23	40-49	15
55-64	71	59	50-59	15
65-74	4	5	60-69	15
75+	4	5	Over 70	5

Greatest Opportunities?

S	NS	
x	x	Safer
x	x	City Center
x	x	Economic Development/Jobs
	x	Beautify primary streets/intersections

- ### Priorities, aesthetics ?
- Top priorities?
- Local Shopping/Restaurants
 - City center/downtown
 - Appearance (entries, facilities, etc.)
- To improve community design/ aesthetics?
- Beautify existing buildings, stores, shopping areas
 - Enhance appearance of public streets/ sidewalks
 - More pleasing design/ architecture

Most Desirable/Bring Happiness?

S	NS	
x	x	Dining (family, sit down)
x	x	Shopping
x	x	Festivals/ fairs
	x	Arts, culture

City Resources for Development Focus Should be:

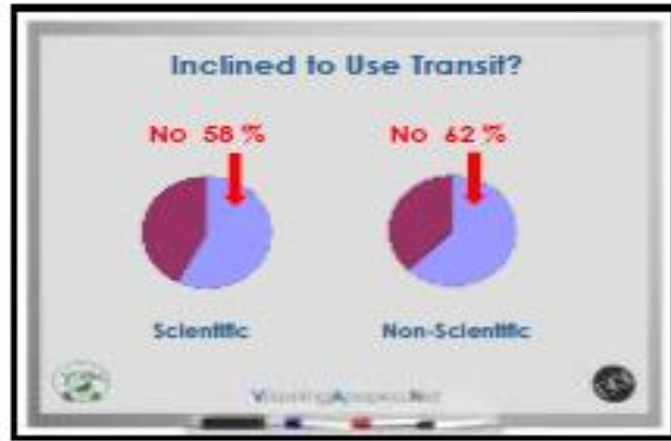
S	NS	
x	x	Enhance downtown/city center
x	x	Attract new business & jobs
x	x	Redeveloping/rebuild older commercial
	x	Enhance eco-tourism (ns)
	x	Convenient commercial, retail, medical (ns)
	x	Improve appearance/aesthetics (ns)

Roads Most Needing Reconstruction/Expansion?

S	NS	
x	x	East Welch Road
x	x	Ponkan
x		Plymouth-Sorento
	x	Kelley Park Road

- ### Roads Most Needing Beautification?
- Main Street/US 441
 - Park Avenue/Rock Springs Road
 - Semoran/US 436

- ### Best Way to Solve Road Congestion?
- Computer synchronization
 - Commuter train
 - Walkable/bikable shopping/jobs (compact)



- ### To Use Transit More, Must Be:
- Safe
 - Convenient schedule & pick up/drop off
 - Clean
- (Ahead of cheap or free)

Development, Jobs, Businesses - City to Recruit?

S	NS	
x	x	Restaurants
x	x	Retail shops
x		High-tech
	x	Health care
	x	Corporate headquarters

City Departments/Services

	Best		Improve	
	S	NS	S	NS
Police / Fire	x	x		
Waste	x	x		
Drinking water		x		
Bill Payment		x		
Recreation				x
Planning/Constr./Development			x	x
Economic Development			x	x
Website				x

- ### How receive civic information?
- Scientific:**
- City newsletter/website
 - Apopka Chief
 - Orlando Sentinel (both types)
 - USPS
- Non-Sci:**
- FB first
 - City newsletter/website
 - Apopka Chief

- ### How receive city information?
- Scientific:**
- City newsletter
 - Email
 - USPS
- Non-Sci:**
- City newsletter
 - Email
 - FB
 - City newsletter/website
 - Apopka Chief
 - Orlando Sentinel online

Future spending/budget focus? (non-dominant)

S	NS	
x	x	New pool/splash park
x	x	Manage the budget/ taxes
x	x	Shared funding (city + private)
x	x	Expand roads
x	x	Improve services (police, fire, utilities)
	x	Beautify roadways
	x	Multipurpose Gym/ Fitness complex

How to Pay?

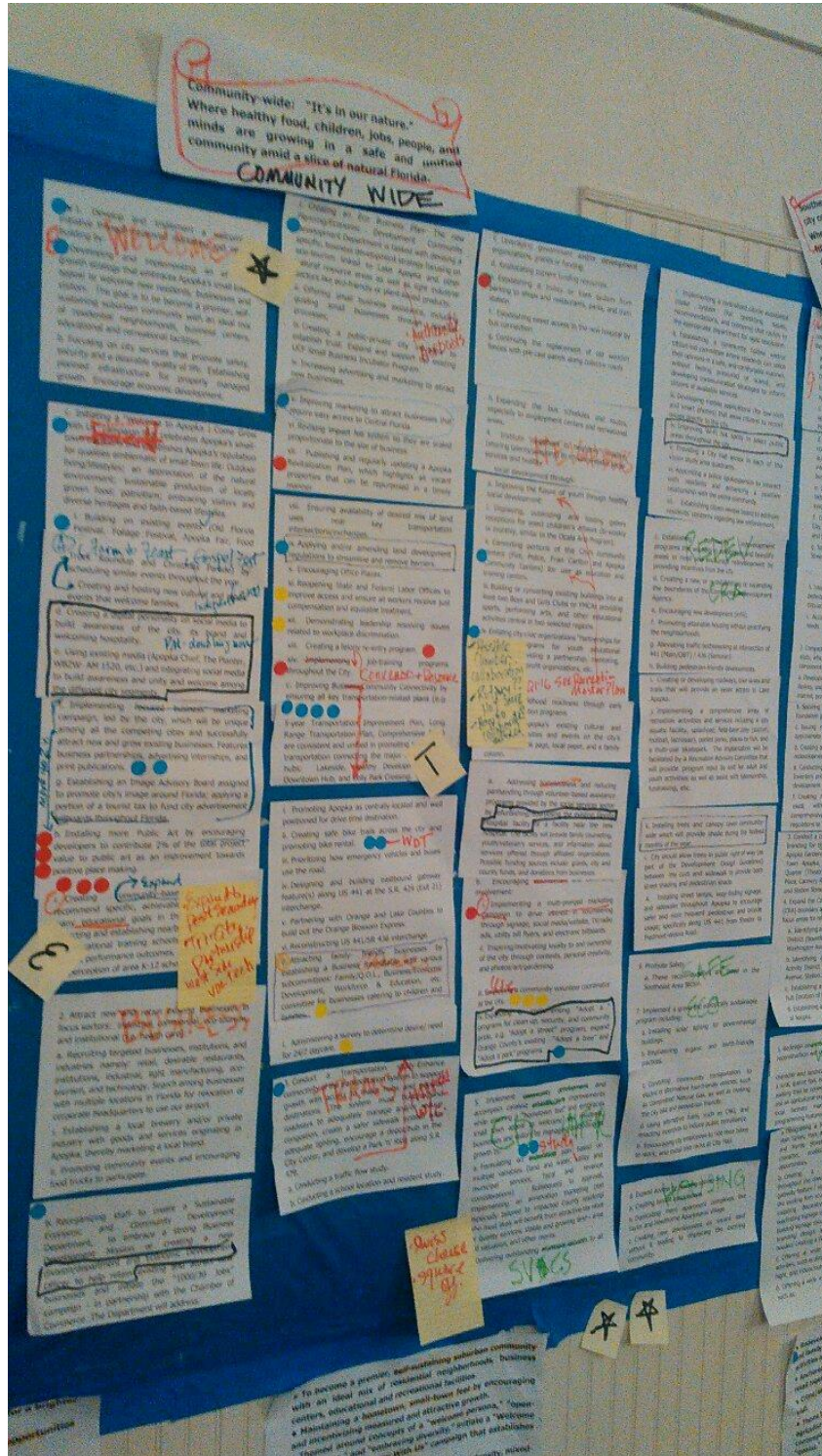
S	NS	
x	x	Public-private partnerships
x	x	Other public agency cost share
x		Hold the line on budget, taxes, fees
	x	Annex if net positive
	x	Impact fees
	x	More enterprise funding



City Council Retreat

A retreat style workshop was conducted on December 9, 2015 at Highland Manor, which provided an opportunity, mainly for the Council, to review all prior work, and narrow down priorities going forward for analysis.

The K&S Team conducted a 4 hour facilitated discussion to review and rank the many ideas and suggestions for vision, goals and strategies. Commissioners used a dotting method to narrow down the unwieldy list of community desires, thus directing staff and the consultant to proceed with analysis of approximately 95 strategies. Because the discussion ran over the allotted time, and certain Commissioner has time conflicts, the dot ranking was completed as “homework” by commissioners following the meeting.



“Stand Up” Action Planning with Staff

So named since participants preferably stand up against a wall posted timeline to explain action strategies, this stage of the process is vitally important so was done with advance homework by staff.

In an approximate 6-hour consultant-facilitated working session with senior staff on January 22, 2016, the Team endeavored to better define strategies, in other words HOW each goal can be achieved, if it can be achieved, and with critical analysis of how long it should take, how much it would cost, its legality, who should be primarily responsible – virtually all necessary details which can lead to success or failure.

The outcome of this working session was to produce a plan draft which would synthesize all the input received to date, and which could be recommended by the staff and consultant. It would contain the benefit of strategic thinking by the professionals adept in community planning and public administration thus giving the best chance for Plan success.



Vision Consistency Analysis

Are current rules, regulations, plans or policies consistent with the new Vision? To achieve the desired community vision, what strategies must we achieve to solve these key impediments?

An analysis, by strategy, was completed upon the inconsistencies and differences between the Land Development Code regulations and the goals, objectives, and policies contained within the Comprehensive Plan. The matrix analysis also contains information relating to the CRA Plan/Design Guidelines, Small Area Plan, and Parks & Recreation Master Plan. If strategies were more programmatic in nature, then they are indicated in the appropriate column within the matrix.

The table shown in **Appendix 5** summarizes an analysis of selected plans and regulations which must be considered in the implementation of the Plan.

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An American Assembly to Seek Community Consensus

This three-hour session on February 23, 2016 at Highland Manor was very well attended (more than 130 persons who signed in). For this meeting facilitation, a variation of American Assembly (AA) was used to receive community input, in essence asking “how do you like Plan so far?” “Is it on target or deficient and in need of improvement?”

In the judgment of the K&S Team, the meeting objective was reached by achieving consensus, meaning general agreement with Vision Plan and its priorities. Each of the five plan pillars were reviewed by the attending public, with one main item not able to achieve general agreement – which was the relative priority of certain parks and recreation programs and capital improvements relative to other Plan priorities.



Steering Committee Meetings [Summary of the 5 Meetings here]

Meeting 1:

Meeting 2:

Meeting 3:

Meeting 4:

Meeting 5:

Plan Adoption by Council

City Council **adoption** of the Plan was held on March 16, 2016. A copy of the Resolution is located in **Appendix 6**.

SECTION V.

Vision Plan Components

Vision Statements and Illustrations

"A vision without a plan is just a dream. A plan without a vision is just drudgery. But a vision with a plan can change the world."
- Old Proverb

Vision Statements

The final vision statements as shown in **Figure 19** below for the City of Apopka, provides the guiding light for the future direction of the City. A Vision Statement has been established by the community for each of the quadrants as well as an overarching Vision for the City as a whole. Figure X, below illustrates the linkage between each. It is of great interest that the term "grow" appears in each of the individual quadrant statements. This is a nod to the City's agriculture heritage and is reflective of the expressed desire to move forward and embrace a future of growth and prosperity.

Figure 19: Vision Statements



Illustrative Concepts

East 6th Street Promenade

In an effort to help better visualize the desired future of the community several illustrations were prepared and are presented below.



Figure 20 tries to capture a synthesis of many residents' and city officials' desires to create a vibrant, family-friendly, walkable, and unified downtown. The East 6th Street Promenade, which connects Martin's Pond to South Park Avenue, is just one of the many facets to achieving this goal. Several notable features that were mentioned in the community forums and survey include:

- **Narrowing the roadways:** By doing this, cars are more inclined to slowing down, and the additional space from the existing roadways was used to create a bike lane as well as widen the sidewalks.

Figure 20: East 6th Street Promenade

- **Lighting:** The existing style of lighting fixtures found throughout many parts of Downtown Apopka was incorporated into the Promenade's design, in order to emphasize a safe and cohesive downtown. However, banners and signage mounted to the Promenade's street lights help to give the street its own identity and destination branding.
- **Street furniture:** Benches, wayfinding signage, and trash and recycling receptacles were added to maintain a clean, comfortable, safe, and enjoyable environment to frequent.
- **Shading:** The mature oak trees were kept, and even celebrated. These trees provide a great canopy throughout the promenade, helping to block out much of the solar heat, allowing pedestrians to safely and comfortably stroll along the promenade.

Eastshore

The Eastshore illustration shown in **Figure 21** sought to capture a serene, warm, and exciting possibility for the Lake Apopka Eastshore area.

The building is designed in the Old Florida Cracker Style, and the large, open-air balcony provides expansive views to Lake Apopka and the surrounding natural environment.

It is also an ideal place to watch the sun set over the lake, and even to capture an elevated glimpse of many of the areas 350+ difference species of birds, include the American Bald Eagle.



Figure 21: Eastshore

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Gateway Monument Signage

Gateway signage plays an important role in a city's image and identity. Apopka's new signage, shown in **Figure 22**, was certainly designed with this in mind, while also ensuring the design captured the essence of the vision and inputs from the community forums and survey. One theme that was ubiquitous was "grow," and so it became the inspiration and overall concept for the new signage. Additionally, many residents were ambivalent about how exactly they wanted to see the City's future. Therefore, the design proposed to pay tribute to Apopka's history while also showing the City's new vision and aspirations.



Figure 22: Gateway Monument Signage

This was achieved by the following:

- Cut steel signage bows inwards as if someone was opening their arms. This further emphasizes Apopka welcoming all.
- Fern sculptures similar to those found on the W.O.T. pedestrian bridge towers adorn the mantle.
- Limestone was used because it is found in abundance throughout Central Florida.
- Text will be cut out of the steel piece, in order to allow light to shine through. This will further emphasize Apopka's ambitions of welcoming ALL, rather than appearing as an uninviting place to live, work, and play.

- Water fountain represents Lake Apopka, while the four water jets represent the four major disasters Apopka experienced and grew from.
- Wavy metal sculpture was inspired by the springs, while also further emphasizing the City's growth.
- Moss covered key words (Welcome, Apopka, Grow) are inspired by the City's agricultural past.
- Signs taper inwards as they get taller. This represents Apopka's community coming together during the visioning process and growing as one.
- Ferns will go in the lower planter to honor the City's agricultural past.

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Farmer's Market

The Farmer's Market rendering illustrates the proposed improvements and activities in the vicinity of the Old Train Station. The view is taken from the farmer's market located to the NE of W Station Street and shows the proposed market pavilion.

Along the south side of W Station Street is the proposed urban farm featuring aquaponic green houses. The existing Apopka Community Center is shown in the distance with the proposed splash park in front between 5th and W Station Streets and S Central Avenue.

The historic train depot can be seen in the distance on E Station Street. The proposed architecture is intended to compliment the historic Florida Style of the Train Depot, including the white color with hunter green trim.



Figure 23: Farmer's Market

The area features wider sidewalks, lighting and vegetation to create a more pedestrian friendly and pleasant atmosphere.

Goals, Strategies, and Performance Measures

[insert matrix]

Action Plan with Timeline

[insert matrix]

Implementation and Funding

The Vision Plan and corresponding strategies mean little without a commitment to implementation and funding. If Plan accountability through transparent progress reporting is achieved, the value of this management tool will be better realized.

Regular reporting of progress and adherence: As with any planning process, Vision planning should be embraced as a *continuing process*, not just the compilation of a plan document. This means regular reporting on progress according to the adopted performance measures and achievement of strategies. While some communities choose to report quarterly progress, twice a year progress reporting will be achieved with second quarter fiscal year reporting (approximately February-March). In other words, if progress is reported in February, budget adjustments can be made for the ensuing year, then the budget adoption process by September will serve as the second annual adherence to the Vision Plan as encompassed within the budget.

Agenda cover sheets or reports: To maintain focus on the Plan throughout the year, the City should require that all matters coming before the Council for action and which receive an agenda report or transmittal memorandum with cover sheet are presented in a manner which allows Council to easily understand if the proposed action helps implement the Vision Plan. A simple scaled score and succinct summary would appear on the cover sheet, with explanatory language in the memorandum or report, such as follows:

1 Fully consistent with Goal xx, Strategy zz of the Vision Plan.	2 Moderately consistent with Goal xx, Strategy zz of the Vision Plan.	3 Not Consistent with the Vision Plan, and is non-budgeted. Plan should be amended accordingly.	4 Not Applicable (not addressed in the Vision Plan, and is non-budgeted).
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Funding: Funding, deadlines, and implementation are continuing challenges for any local government. The Strategies in this Plan are contingent upon funding sources which may not yet be realized. These can include funding from a whole host of sources outlined elsewhere and not yet secured. Accordingly, target dates to implement each strategy are “soft” deadlines not yet tied to specific work plans, and are subject to annual budget decisions and the 5-year Capital Improvements Plan. In addition to the general funding sources and strategies described in the Action Plan, a menu of additional funding strategies is provided in **Appendix 7**.

SECTION VI.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Maps

Appendix 2

News Articles

Appendix 3

Sign-In Sheets

Appendix 4

English and Spanish Survey Questionnaire

Appendix 5

Vision Consistency Analysis

Appendix 6

Adoption Resolution

insert copy resolution to the Appendix
once adopted.]

Appendix 7

Additional Funding Sources

[Insert funding list appendix]



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