

# The Harbors

A US 19 Corridor Redevelopment Study  
Within The West Market Area,  
Pasco County, Florida

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## Acknowledgements

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## Scope of Work

In May of 2014, the Florida Planning and Development Lab at Florida State University contracted with the Pasco County Planning and Development Department for assistance in the implementation of their award winning plan titled The Harbors West Market Redevelopment/Infill Plan, henceforth referred to as The Harbors Plan.

The overall purpose of this project is to provide specific and implementable recommendations for redevelopment and revitalization efforts in specific focus areas within The Harbors. This will enable the Pasco County Planning and Development Department to translate the broad implementation strategies defined in The Harbors Plan into actionable redevelopment projects and public investments. The scope of work was divided into two phases to correspond with the Summer and Fall academic semesters at FSU.

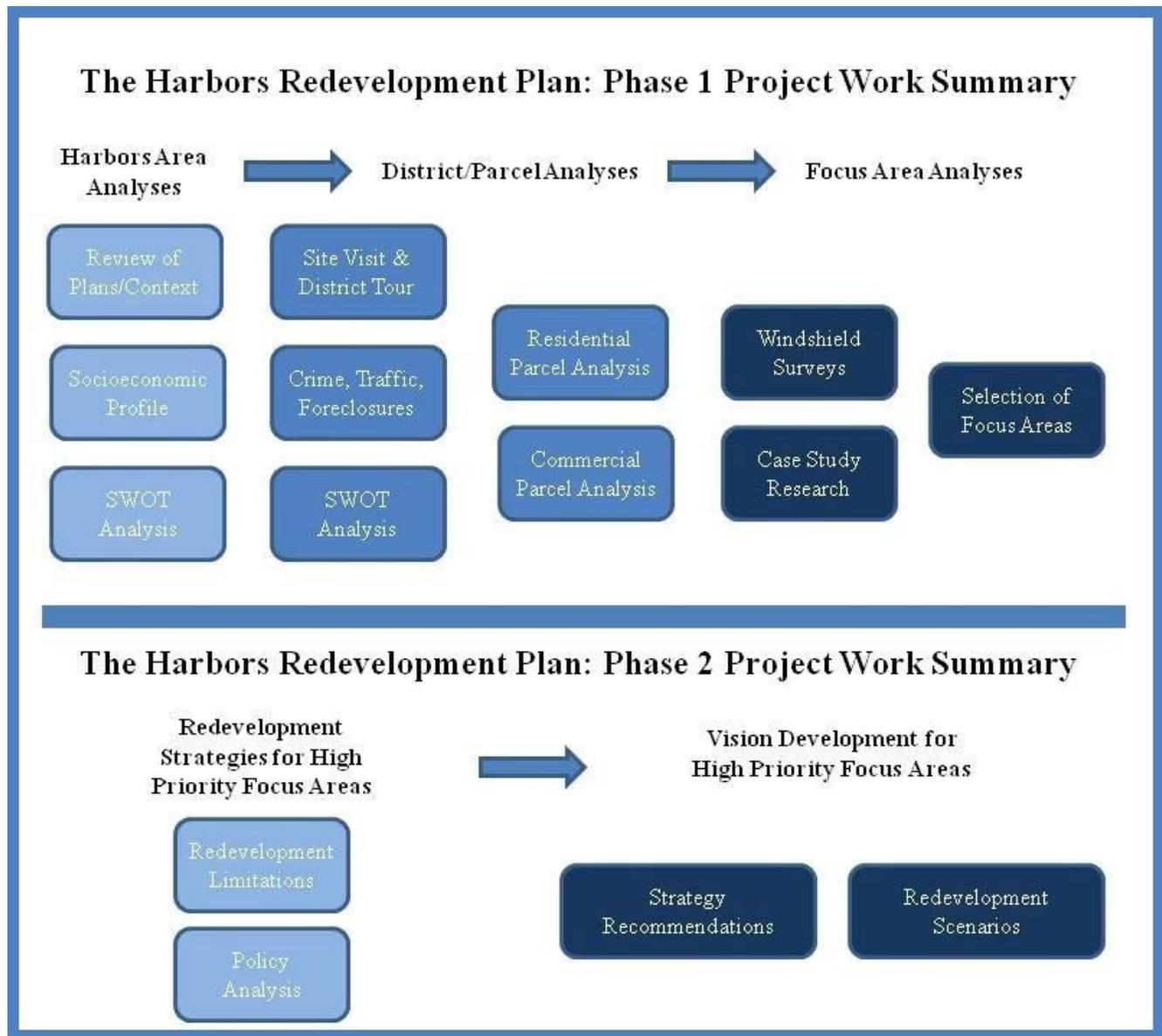
### Phase I Tasks (Summer Semester, 2014):

- Existing Conditions Analysis
- Focus Area Identification
- Case Study Research

### Phase II Tasks (Fall Semester, 2014):

- Redevelopment Strategies specific to High Priority Focus Areas
- Redevelopment Limitations specific to High Priority Focus Areas
- Policy Analysis specific to the High Priority Focus Areas
- Strategy Recommendations specific to the High Priority Focus Areas
- Vision and Redevelopment Scenarios specific to the High Priority Focus Areas

Figure 1.1: West Market Redevelopment Plan – Phase 1 and Phase 2 Project Work Summaries



# **SECTION 1**

# **INTRODUCTION**

## 1.1 Executive Summary

The Harbors US 19 Corridor Redevelopment Study is Phase I of a two phase project. The purpose of the project was to assist the Pasco County Planning and Development Department to translate the broad implementation strategies defined in The Harbors Plan into actionable redevelopment projects. Phase I of the project conducted a comprehensive evaluation of The Harbors' existing conditions to identify focus areas where Pasco County can concentrate its future planning and redevelopment efforts. This evaluation consisted of an area-wide socio-economic profile, a district level parcel analysis, and an assessment of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) of each district. Evaluation criteria were then developed from the existing conditions analysis and used to identify potential Focus Areas for redevelopment in The Harbors. The analysis of The Harbors' existing conditions was then used to identify focus areas for redevelopment based on evaluation criteria addressing challenges that needed to be addressed and factors that make the area ripe for redevelopment. Concentrating planning and redevelopment efforts in these focus areas would ensure that the catalyst projects identified in Phase II have as much impact as possible.

The socio-economic profile and the parcel analysis expanded upon and verified many of the conditions outlined in The Harbors Plan. These findings include:

- The Harbors is comprised of an older population that is slowly growing younger. This creates a need to provide amenities for the lifestyle of a younger cohort. However, the older population will continue to require housing and medical facilities.
- There are many socio-economic inequalities manifested by the geographic locations within The Harbors. These include high levels of poverty, income inequality and food deserts.
- The Harbors' housing stock is growing older. A large percentage of the housing stock was constructed prior to the 1986 Coastal Building Code. These homes will be less resilient in the event of a natural disaster.
- High vacancy and foreclosure rates signal limited investment in The Harbors. However, this provides opportunities to redevelop existing structures.
- The Harbors is largely characterized by a poor visual appeal marked by aging commercial strip development along major transportation corridors, and dilapidated residential areas.

The data gathered to conduct the socioeconomic and parcel analysis were then used to identify potential areas to focus redevelopment efforts. Data on several key indicators of economic strength and distress, including income, employment, sales, crime, poverty, and foreclosures, were mapped to identify opportunity areas that have the potential for redevelopment and challenge areas that are in need of revitalization. Focus areas were then identified by overlaying opportunity and challenge areas to identify areas where reinvestment efforts could simultaneously build upon existing strengths and address the area's weaknesses.

Based upon this analysis as well as the consideration of several other factors such as strategic location; cultural, historic, or natural significance; and opportunities to tie into local redevelopment efforts these focus areas were then narrowed down into seven final focus areas. Each of these focus areas possess their own unique assets, opportunities and challenges, and are the prime areas to concentrate revitalization efforts. However, given the limits in fiscal capacity to support redevelopment strategies, The Project Team suggested that revitalization efforts should initially be targeted in only two or three of these final focus areas. Consequently, the Project Team recommended two discrete revitalization strategy options. The first strategy option focuses redevelopment upon a "Necklace of Beads" of three commercial nodes along US 19 (The Harbors' Gateway, Millers Bayou, and Salt Springs) that could revitalize economic activity along the entire US 19 corridor. The second scenario focuses on successful placemaking within the "Heart of the Harbors" (Millers Bayou and New Port Richey's Main Street) to attract both people and economic activity to area. The Pasco County Planning and Development Department will then have the option of choosing which of these two revitalization strategies should Phase II evaluate in more detail.

Additionally, Phase I examined case studies of existing redevelopment initiatives from within the state of Florida and the United States. These case studies provide inspiration and key takeaways for targeted reinvestment and redevelopment activities within The Harbors. Phase II will use this work to inform the redevelopment action plans and identify specific catalyst projects for one of the two recommended redevelopment scenarios.

Phase I supports the goals of The Harbors Plan and further guides the revitalization efforts within The Harbors by identifying areas that are prime for revitalization efforts that could be a catalyst for the revitalization of The Harbors. The Project Team will build off this work in Phase II by identifying implementable catalyst projects and redevelopment strategies for each focus area. These projects hope to lead to the fulfillment of Pasco County's vision for The Harbors to be an area that provides a high quality of life for people and households of all ages, accommodates

a racially and ethnically diverse population, includes substantial mixed use development in key activity centers, and provides a multi-modal transportation system for its residents. In order to attract a younger and more diverse population to the area, The Harbors requires a stronger, more diverse economic base that provides a wide variety of employment opportunities. In addition, The Harbors requires more modern housing units, efficient infrastructure systems, entertainment options, and diverse recreational activities. While there is a desire to attract younger individuals, The Harbors will also need to support the current older population, which offers an opportunity to attract healthcare services and jobs to the area. Given its coastal location and the beautiful natural setting, Pasco County also envisions The Harbors as an ecotourism destination, giving residents and visitors access to the many natural resources in the area. While The Harbors faces many challenges, the study area has a strong foundation for redevelopment and revitalization in line with the goals of The Harbors Plan.

## 1.2 Introduction

### *1.2.1 Pasco County*

Pasco County was founded on June 2, 1887 from 868 square miles of land that previously made up the southern portion of Hernando County (Miller, 2014; ULI, 2008). Located on the west coast of the state, Pasco County is part of the Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), as pictured in Map 1.2. Even though Pasco County has historically acted as a bedroom community for the Tampa Bay area, its central location within the MSA places it in prime position for future economic growth. With a population of approximately 2.9 million, the Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater MSA is the third largest in the Southeast and is projected to have the 10th largest employment growth of any MSA in the nation in the next 20 years (ULI, 2013). Pasco County's position as the second smallest county within the MSA, indicates that its population growth and development patterns have been greatly influenced by the success of surrounding counties. In this way, Pasco County has been able to capitalize on the recent growth of the MSA. In fact, Pasco County has grown faster than both Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties in the past three decades (Table 1.1).

Map 1.1: Pasco County's Location in the State of Florida



Source: Landsat.com

## Tampa-St. Pete-Clearwater MSA



Within Pasco County there are six incorporated areas that include Dade City, New Port Richey, Port Richey, San Antonio, St. Leo, and Zephyrhills (Table 1.2). Dade City, one of the oldest incorporated municipalities, serves as the county seat and is located in the northeastern portion of the County. New Port Richey has the largest population of all incorporated areas at 14,911 residents and is located in west Pasco County along US 19. Just north of New Port Richey, is Port Richey. With a total population of 2,671 it has the third smallest population of all incorporated areas in Pasco

Table 1.1: Total Population for Counties within Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater MSA and Florida, 1980-2010

Area	Population 1980	Population 1990	Population 2000	Population 2010
<b>Pasco County</b>	193,643	281,131	344,765	464,697
<b>% Change</b>		45.2%	22.6%	34.8%
<b>Hillsborough County</b>	646,960	834,054	998,948	1,229,226
<b>% Change</b>		28.9%	19.8%	23.1%
<b>Pinellas County</b>	728,531	851,659	921,482	916,542
<b>% Change</b>		17.0%	8.2%	-0.5%
<b>Hernando County</b>	44,469	101,115	130,802	172,778
<b>% Change</b>		127.4%	29.4%	32.1%
<b>Florida</b>	9,746,324	12,937,926	15,982,378	18,801,310
<b>% Change</b>		32.8%	23.5%	17.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

Table 1.2: Population of Incorporated Areas in Pasco County, 2010

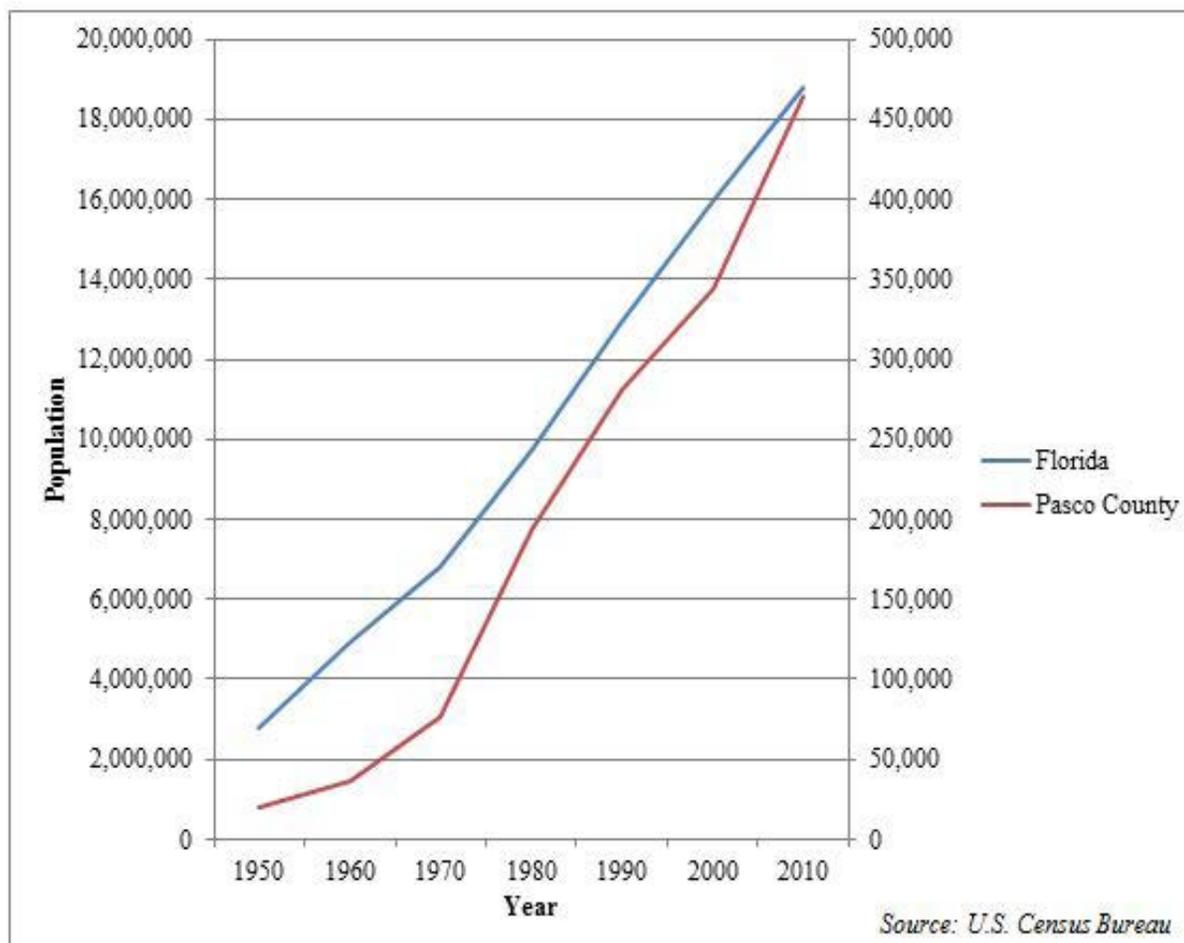
Incorporated Area in Pasco County	Population 2010	Date Incorporated
<b>Dade City</b>	6,437	1889
<b>New Port Richey</b>	14,911	1924
<b>Port Richey</b>	2,671	1925
<b>San Antonio</b>	1,138	1889
<b>St. Leo</b>	1,340	1891
<b>Zephyrhills</b>	13,288	1914

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

County. San Antonio, located in the eastern portion of the Pasco County, has a rich history dating back to its incorporation in 1889 and has the smallest population of all incorporated municipalities at 1,138. Located just east of San Antonio, St. Leo is a small town of just 1,340 that is home to St. Leo University. The last of Pasco County’s incorporated areas is Zephyrhills. Also located in the eastern portion of the County, Zephyrhills has the second largest population at 13,288 residents. The combined population of these incorporated areas is 39,785 people, or approximately 8.6% of Pasco County’s total population. So, the vast majority of the County’s population lives in unincorporated Pasco County.

Over the last 50 years, Pasco County has experienced consistent population growth and has largely mirrored the population growth of the state (Figure 1.2). Pasco County was characterized by slower, incremental growth, until the 1970s saw an explosion growth, where the population more than doubled in size by 1980. This rapid growth has continued through the 2000s, with Pasco County adding another 120,000 people by 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau). According to the Urban Land Institute (2008), the immense growth of the early 2000s can be attributed to relatively inexpensive housing in Pasco County as well as the opening of the Suncoast Parkway in 2001. The Suncoast Parkway provides a key connection from Tampa into Pasco County cutting the commute time from over 60 minutes to less than 30 minutes (ULI, 2008). This has been especially important in opening up eastern Pasco County to new development.

Figure 1.2: Florida and Pasco County Population Growth, 1950 – 2010



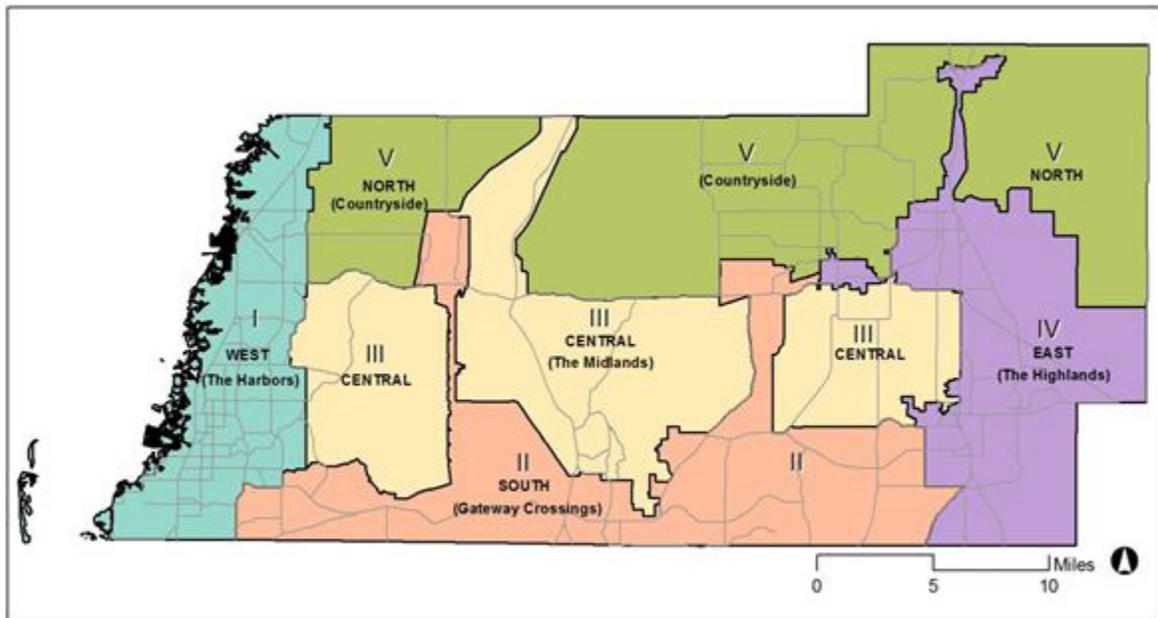
However, Pasco County’s rapid population growth has not come without challenges as it transitions from a rural bedroom community into a more urbanized county. After the Great Recession in 2008, Pasco County experienced stagnated growth, a rise in unemployment and erosion of the property tax base by nearly \$10.4 billion. In 2011, about 50 percent of the workforce was commuting

outside of Pasco County for employment. This is a problem which only continues to hamper the economic stability and strength of the county as a whole (ULI, 2013). Pasco County has also seen an immense transition in new development away from the western portion of the county to the eastern portion. This transition has brought new economic opportunities to central and east Pasco County; however it has also left the west struggling, as the newer amenities and economic strength of the east draw businesses and residents away from The Harbors.

To address the aforementioned problems that threaten the future success of the County and capitalize off of existing opportunities, Pasco County and the Pasco Economic Development Council jointly funded an Urban Land Institute Advisory Services Panel to assess changes in land use patterns and development strategies necessary to adapt to new economic realities (ULI, 2013). In 2008, the ULI produced its first report on Pasco County which addressed how the county could increase employment while providing a mix of land uses, attract businesses, and offer a more efficient transportation system (ULI, 2008). The ULI panel also identified economic development and smart land use as the two main goals for the County and further suggested that a new county organizational approach would be necessary to achieve these goals.

In 2008, The Urban Land Institute Advisory Services Panel recommended dividing Pasco County into five Market Areas: West, South, Central, North, and East (Map 1.3).

Map 1.3: Pasco County Market Areas, 2010



Source: *The Harbors Plan, 2013*

According to the 2008 report, “the five market areas were defined considering cohesive market areas, land use patterns, regional transportation frameworks, and natural resource features” (ULI, p. 17, 2008). In doing so, each Market Area is given its own specific vision, mission, and associated strategies to create focus and guidance for future growth. One these areas, The Harbors, will be the focus of this report.

### *1.2.2 The Harbors*

#### Background

The West Market Area, rebranded as The Harbors by The Harbors West Market Redevelopment/Infill Plan, is located in the western portion of Pasco County along the US 19 Corridor and is one of the oldest and most densely populated parts of the county. Covering a total land area of 84 square miles, The Harbors is bound by the Gulf of Mexico to the west, Hicks Road in the east and county line roads in the north and south (Map 1.4). Due to its vast size and density, the Pasco County Planning Department divided The Harbors into a total of 12 districts to plan efficiently while addressing the unique needs of individual communities. Each district, illustrated in Map 1.5, represents neighborhoods and developments that share similar characteristics. The districts were identified using the following criteria: historical context, physical context, neighborhood characteristics, roadways and infrastructure, natural features, development patterns, challenges and issues, and opportunities and development potential (The Harbors Plan, 2013).

According to the 2010 Census, The Harbors’ population is 214,225. This is the largest of Pasco County’s five market areas, comprising 46% of the county’s total population (The Harbors Plan, 2013). The Harbors includes two incorporated municipalities, Port Richey and New Port Richey, but these two cities combined make up only 8% of The Harbors’ population. The remaining 92% reside in unincorporated communities including Aripeka, Hudson, Holiday, and Elfers.

The Harbors faces a number of challenges that hinder its ability to meet the needs of current and future residents. These challenges prompted an extensive planning effort initiated by the Pasco County Planning Department. The Harbors West Market Redevelopment/Infill Plan was the product of a rigorous two-year planning process that involved the support and participation of a broad spectrum of stakeholders throughout the community. The goal of The Harbors Plan is to “reposition the West Market Area in such a manner that maximizes its full potential and provides its communities with multiple opportunities for living, working, education, transportation, and recreation” (The Harbors Plan, 2013, p. IV). To achieve this ambitious goal by the year 2050,

The Harbors Plan specifically aims to examine redevelopment and infill opportunities within The Harbors, identify land use, infrastructure, and economic development strategies, enhance affordable housing, promote mixed use development, and ultimately create an implementation mechanism for each of these goals. The following section summarizes the findings and recommendations of The Harbors’ Plan.

Map 1.4: Map of The Harbors



Source: The Harbors Plan, 2013

Map 1.5: The Harbors' Districts



### Challenges

The Harbors' proximity to the coast and US 19 made it an attractive and easily accessible destination for retirees and tourists, prompting a surge of growth and development in the early

1930s. This growth did not slow down until after it peaked in the 1970s and '80s (The Harbors Plan, 2013). Developers rushed to accommodate the rapid influx of new residents, leaving the area dominated by a high concentration of small single-family homes and commercial structures along US 19. The majority of single-family homes in The Harbors are located on small lots and typically have 2 bedrooms and 1 bathroom, characteristics that are becoming obsolete.



*Image 1.1: A Typical Single-Family Home in The Harbors*  
 Source: FSU Project Team



*Image 1.2: Example of Strip Development along US 19*  
 Source: FSU Project Team

Commercial buildings in The Harbors are dominated by strip development that occurred mostly in the 1960s and 1970s. This commercial development is primarily characterized by large, underutilized parking lots, vacant parcels, visually unappealing building facades, and a lack of landscaping and signage. Commercial development patterns were also concentrated along the US 19 Corridor, leaving communities in The Harbors predominantly auto-dependent. In recent years, The Harbors has experienced continued disinvestment as the housing stock and commercial buildings have aged, causing vacancies to soar and new development to relocate to the central and eastern portions of Pasco County.



*Image 1.3: Vacancies in a Commercial Strip Development on US 19*  
 Source: FSU Project Team

The Harbors Plan further identifies challenges that currently inhibit the area from reaching its full potential. According to the plan, key challenges in the West Market Area that hinder

redevelopment efforts include:

- Vacant, unused or underutilized residential and commercial properties created as a result of continuous disinvestment.
- Aging and deteriorating building stock and infrastructure from the 1960s and 1970s.
- Absence of basic amenities and infrastructure, such as paved roadways and sufficient wastewater services, in several communities.
- Unsafe roadway conditions and lack of pedestrian infrastructure that increase health hazards and fatalities.
- Auto-oriented, sprawling development in the area that has created a poor visual appearance while lacking sense of place and aesthetic appeal.

In order to appropriately address these challenges, five Plan Elements were identified that form the foundation of The Harbors Plan. The Plan Elements are Economic Development, Community Infrastructure and Planning, Environment, Open Space, and Tourism, Transportation, and Urban Design. This section will provide a summary of the five Plan Elements from The Harbors Plan.

### Economic Development

The Harbors Plan identifies Economic Development as a key component for any successful redevelopment project, and specifically aims to diversify the existing economic base, increase the number of quality jobs, and improve workforce skills and education. Currently, most job opportunities in The Harbors are low-paying service sector jobs, which impact the ability of households to pay for amenities such as housing, health, and transportation (The Harbors Plan, 2013). The lack of diversity in employment also affects the area's overall economic success. Attracting new businesses and employment opportunities to The Harbors will only occur if improvements are made in workforce skills and education. Although there are multiple economic concerns in the area, The Harbors Plan also identifies several strengths that will potentially position the area for economic success. Coastal resources, waterfront access, regional connectivity, and availability of land for redevelopment are all factors that can create economic opportunities in the future (The Harbors Plan, 2013). The Harbors has great potential for economic success if the appropriate resources are capitalized upon and improvements are made to workforce skills and education.

### Community Infrastructure and Planning

The Harbors Plan recognizes the need to create a safe and self-sufficient community. According to

The Harbors Plan (2013), Community Infrastructure and Planning “includes a wide range of topics such as housing, homelessness, community amenities, infrastructure, and safety” (p. 38). Major concerns identified within The Harbors include appearance, insufficient affordable housing, crime, homelessness, deteriorating infrastructure, lack of community facilities, and hazard risks (The Harbors Plan, 2013). The Harbors currently suffers from a lack of visual appeal, as aging buildings, foreclosed



*Image 1.4: Vacant, Deteriorating Home*  
*Source: FSU Project Team*

homes and vacant parcels contribute to the declining image of the area. Furthermore, these qualities often contribute to unsafe conditions, higher crime rates, and reduced property values (The Harbors Plan, 2013). The Harbors Plan also identifies the lack of quality, affordable housing as another major concern that hampers the success of The Harbors. Although The Harbors has an abundance of inexpensive housing, these homes often lack adequate infrastructure and proper maintenance (The Harbors Plan, 2013). Another major issue in The Harbors is infrastructure deficiencies in many neighborhoods. Existing water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure is outdated and has not adequately met the demands of the increasing population. Many neighborhoods are served by wells and septic tanks, infrastructure that can easily become compromised during floods which in turn could cause a number of health hazards for residents. The Harbors Plan also recognizes existing strengths that can serve as future opportunities such as access to the coast, the natural environment, and vacant parcels that can serve as a means for redevelopment projects (The Harbors Plan, 2013). The community and infrastructure challenges in The Harbors call for major changes.

### Environment, Open Space, and Tourism

Natural features such as parks, trails, and gardens are necessary features for any community, as they enhance the beauty of an area while providing important health and social benefits for residents. The Harbors has an abundance of natural features including its coast, riverfront, wetlands, marshes, and channels, however many of the natural features are not being capitalized upon by The Harbors. Major concerns identified by The Harbors Plan within the Environment, Open Space, and Tourism sectors include the lack of parks, trails, riverwalks, and public access to the

coast and the need to preserve natural resources and habitats. By enhancing connectivity and access to park and water bodies, The Harbors Plan hopes to position the area as an attractive and appealing tourist destination, where visitors can enjoy the bounty of natural resources.

## Transportation

Transportation is a major concern in The Harbors for a number of reasons. First, The Harbors' population is heavily dependent on cars as the sole mode of transportation, congesting roads and perpetuating auto-oriented development patterns along major corridors. Second, limited route choices also influence traffic congestion and the availability of transit options, as US 19 and Little Road serve as

the two main corridors into Hernando and Pinellas Counties. Furthermore, the deficiency of public transit in The Harbors negatively impacts the population as well the economy. Another issue of major concern in The Harbors is the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. Currently, there is a



*Image 1.7: Absence of Bike Lane and Sidewalk in The Harbors Forces Bicyclist to Ride in the Street*  
Source: FSU Project Team



*Image 1.5: View of the Pithlachascotee River*  
Source: FSU Project Team



*Image 1.6: Fishing Pier at Anclote Gulf Park*  
Source: FSU Project Team

staggering lack of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure within The Harbors, leaving those on foot or on bike with no other option than to walk or ride in the street and cross roads at dangerous locations. However, while Transportation challenges such as auto-dependency, traffic congestion, and the lack of sidewalks, bike lanes, and public transportation hamper the area's overall success, The Harbors Plan (2013) also suggests that the area's major arterials serve as regional connectors that attract new business investments in the future. Addressing The Harbors' current Transportation issues without inhibiting

its arterial-driven economic growth will be a unique challenge requiring careful planning and

innovative solutions.

Urban Design

Urban design refers to the creation and design of the built environment and is essentially the backbone of any successful community. The

implementation of urban design facilitates efficient development practices and promotes sustainable lifestyles among residents. Features of urban

design include the design of buildings, streets, public spaces, and landscapes. The design of these features affects how attractive and functional a place is but can also influence access to transportation, job opportunities, and the area’s overall economic success (The Harbors, 2013). The Harbors currently lacks a cohesive character in a variety of ways. According to The Harbors Plan (2013), Urban Design was voted as the second highest priority behind Economic Development. Concerns include separated land uses, large block sizes, and strip development as well as a lack of connectivity, a lack of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and a lack of identity (The Harbors Plan, 2013). In order to address these challenges, The Harbors Plan aims to capitalize off if its regional context and connectivity, coastal access and the diversity of neighborhood history and culture.



*Image 1.8: Example of Strip Development along US 19  
Source: FSU Project Team*



*Image 1.9: Typical View of US 19 Corridor  
Source: FSU Project Team*

In summary, The Harbors is a large, densely populated area in Pasco County, Florida currently

faced with many challenges that include a lack of job diversity, inadequate and aging infrastructure, poor urban design, and a disconnect from existing environmental resources. The Harbors West Market Redevelopment/Infill Plan aims to address each of these challenges to plan for the current population while accommodating future growth. This report relies heavily on data and information provided in The Harbors Plan in order to better understand the study area and to assist in identifying focus areas for redevelopment.

## 1.3 Existing Conditions

### 1.3.1 Introduction

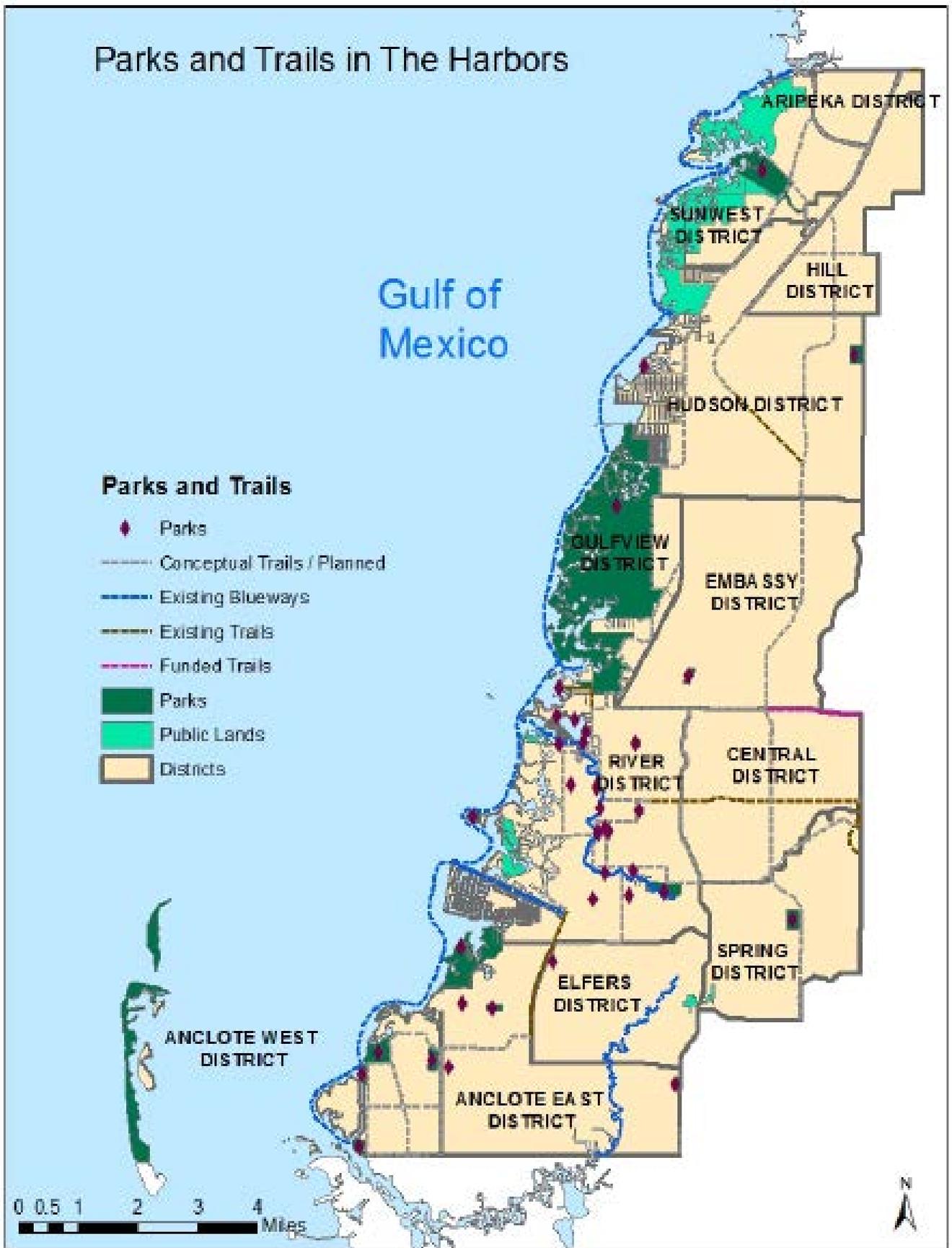
This section aims to identify the key underlying conditions and issues that will impact future planning initiatives within The Harbors. This will build off of the issues identified in The Harbors Plan by providing a more detailed examination of the conditions and issues facing The Harbors. Examining these issues at the area-wide level will provide a general picture of the opportunities and threats facing The Harbors as a whole before diving into a district by district parcel analysis to determine focus areas for revitalization efforts. Analyzing the existing conditions will account for the environmental, economic, infrastructural, educational, public safety, and public health issues that will shape The Harbors' future.

### 1.3.2 Environment and Natural Resources

The Harbors most prominent environmental asset is the Gulf of Mexico. Access to the Gulf of Mexico provides ample opportunities for recreation and tourism, yet views of the water are mostly obstructed by commercial development along US 19. The area also includes a variety of smaller bays, estuaries, marshes, streams, and waterways that contain a variety of aquatic plants and animal species. The Pithlachascotee River, commonly referred to as the 'Cotee River, is a large waterway that runs through the City of New Port Richey and empties into the Gulf of Mexico near the area known as Millers Bayou. The 'Cotee River is part of an extensive system of waterways and recreational paddling trails that run along the coast and throughout the southern portions of The Harbors (Map 1.6).

The Harbors is also home to an abundance of state, county, city parks (Map 1.6). According to The Harbors Plan, natural green space and open areas make up the second largest land use category in the district. The area has two state parks, Werner-Boyce Salt Springs State Park and

Map 1.6: Parks and Trails in The Harbors



Anclote Key Preserve State Park. Werner-Boyce Salt Springs State Park is located along the coast just north of the Gulfview Mall. This park offers a variety of recreational opportunities including fishing, boating, hiking, and nature trails ([www.floridastateparks.org](http://www.floridastateparks.org)). Anclote Key Preserve State Park is located three miles off of the southern coast of The Harbors. Visitors can only access the 403-acre Park by boat or kayak, but it provides scenic beaches and a number of activities including camping, boating, and wildlife viewing ([www.floridastateparks.org](http://www.floridastateparks.org)). Of Pasco County's 39 county parks, 18 are located within The Harbors. Additionally, the City of New Port Richey boasts 12 city parks and the City of Port Richey contains 5 city parks.

However, as noted in The Harbors Plan, a lack of parks, trails, riverwalks, and access to the coast is still seen as major concern. This suggests that The Harbors' existing parks and natural resources have limited access and are underutilized. This is significant considering that its natural resources are among its most unique and promising features. Determining how to make the most of The Harbors' natural assets will be a key concern for future redevelopment efforts.

### Environmental Hazards

Unfortunately, many of The Harbors most promising natural features also create its most threatening hazards. In particular, The Harbors' proximity to the Gulf of Mexico and its extensive waterways make it very prone to flooding. The Harbors' entire coastline and significant portions of the land near the coast (especially in the Sunwest and Gulf View Districts) are classified as a coastal high hazard area. These areas are subject to inundation in a major storm event with additional flooding hazards from storm-induced waves. All development in these areas is required to have flood insurance and must be built on pylons (FEMA, 2013). In addition to the coastal high hazard zone, sizable areas scattered throughout The Harbors are located within floodplains (Map 1.7). On top of posing a hazard to residents and businesses, floodplains also impose insurance and floodplain management regulations that can become barriers to new development.

### Repetitive Loss Areas

The Harbor's concentration of flood prone areas has caused significant portions to be classified as repetitive loss areas. Repetitive loss properties include any insurable buildings that have filed two or more flood insurance claims within 10 years. FEMA classifies the areas surrounding these properties that are subject to similar flooding conditions as repetitive loss areas ("Mapping Repetitive Loss Areas", 2008). These areas may or may not be currently insured by the NFIP. In some cases floodplain management regulations can mitigate for repetitive flood losses by requiring

all substantially damaged buildings (the cost to repair is 50 percent or more of the building's value) in the regulated floodplain to be brought up to the same flood protection level as a new building ("Mapping Repetitive Loss Areas", 2008). Unfortunately, repetitive loss buildings are frequently not within the regulated floodplain or do not receive substantial damage. Communities with repetitive loss areas must conduct public outreach to inform residents in the area that they are subject to flooding, identify mitigation activities for residents, and share basic information about the availability of flood insurance (Merrick, "The Guidebook to Conducting Repetitive Loss Area Analyses"). As a result of repeated flooding, there are 16 repetitive loss area located within The Harbors (Map 1.7). These areas are most prevalent along the coastline within the Hudson and River Districts, but a sizable part of the Embassy District is also classified as a repetitive loss area.

### *Basin of Special Concern*

The Timber Oak Sub Basin located in the Embassy District is designated as a Basin of Special Concern by Pasco County. A Basin of Special Concern is a closed drainage basin that retains its water and allows no outflow to other external bodies of water such as rivers or oceans. Storm water runoff in these basins converges to a common low area and limits the amount of development that can occur in or around the basin ("Ordinances and Resolutions"). In addition to several design standards, Pasco County requires that development activity within a Basin of Special Concern cannot cause an increase in the volume of runoff ("Ordinances and Resolutions").

In summary, The Harbor's coastal location and natural resources simultaneously provides one of its most promising opportunities and most dangerous hazards. Determining how to capitalize on its natural assets and ecotourism opportunities without further endangering The Harbors' current and future population represents a unique planning challenge moving forward.

### *1.3.3 Economy*

Similar to both Pasco County and the state of Florida, The Harbors' economy is largely based on the service sector (The Harbors Plan, 2013). Pasco County relies on five main service sector industries including: healthcare, retail trade, education, food service, and construction (Figure 1.3). Since these industries have a limited ability to export goods and services to the surrounding region, the county often struggles to generate the external capital and revenue needed to spur economic growth (Pasco County Economic Development Plan, 2013, p. 8).

Map 1.7: Flood Prone Areas in The Harbors

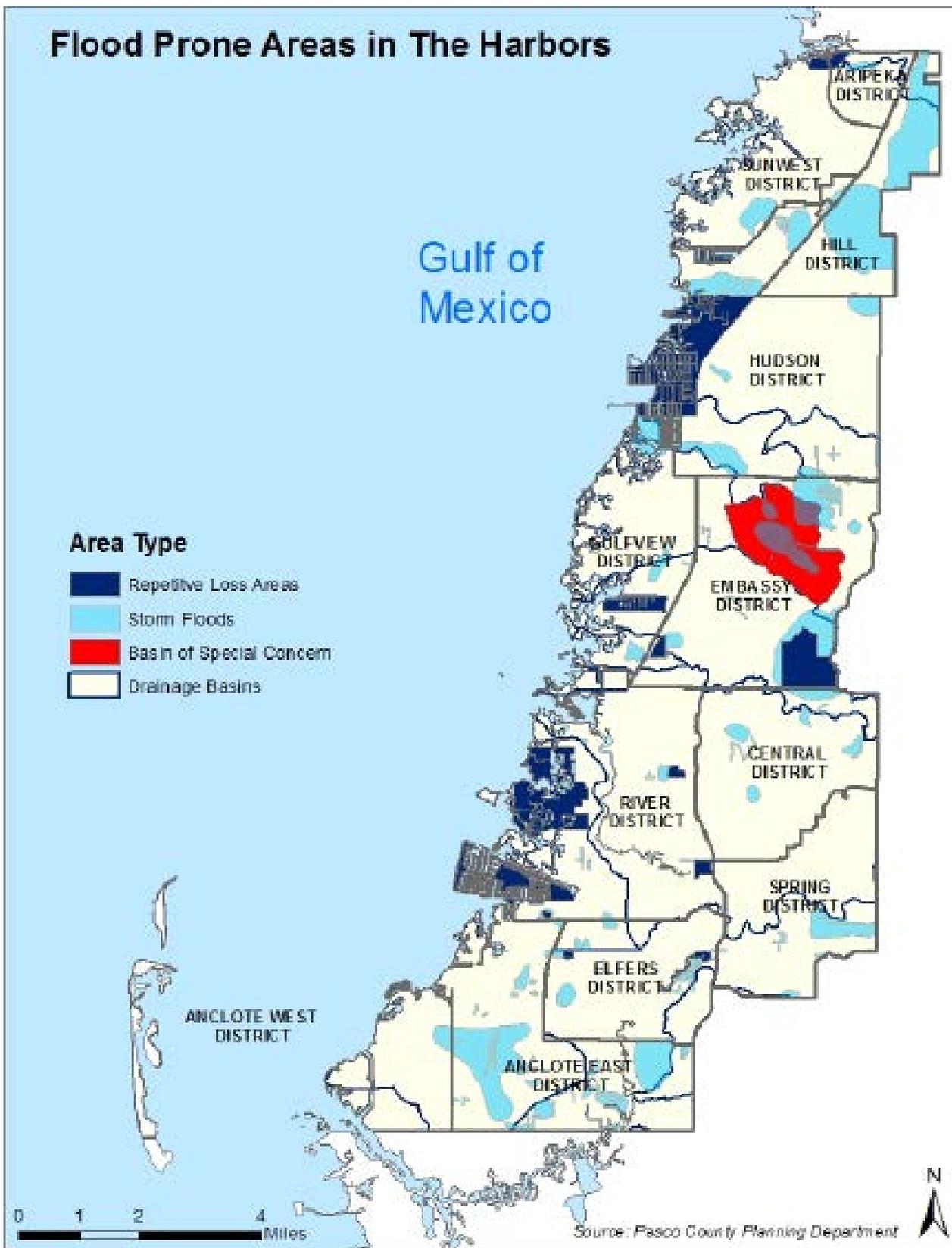
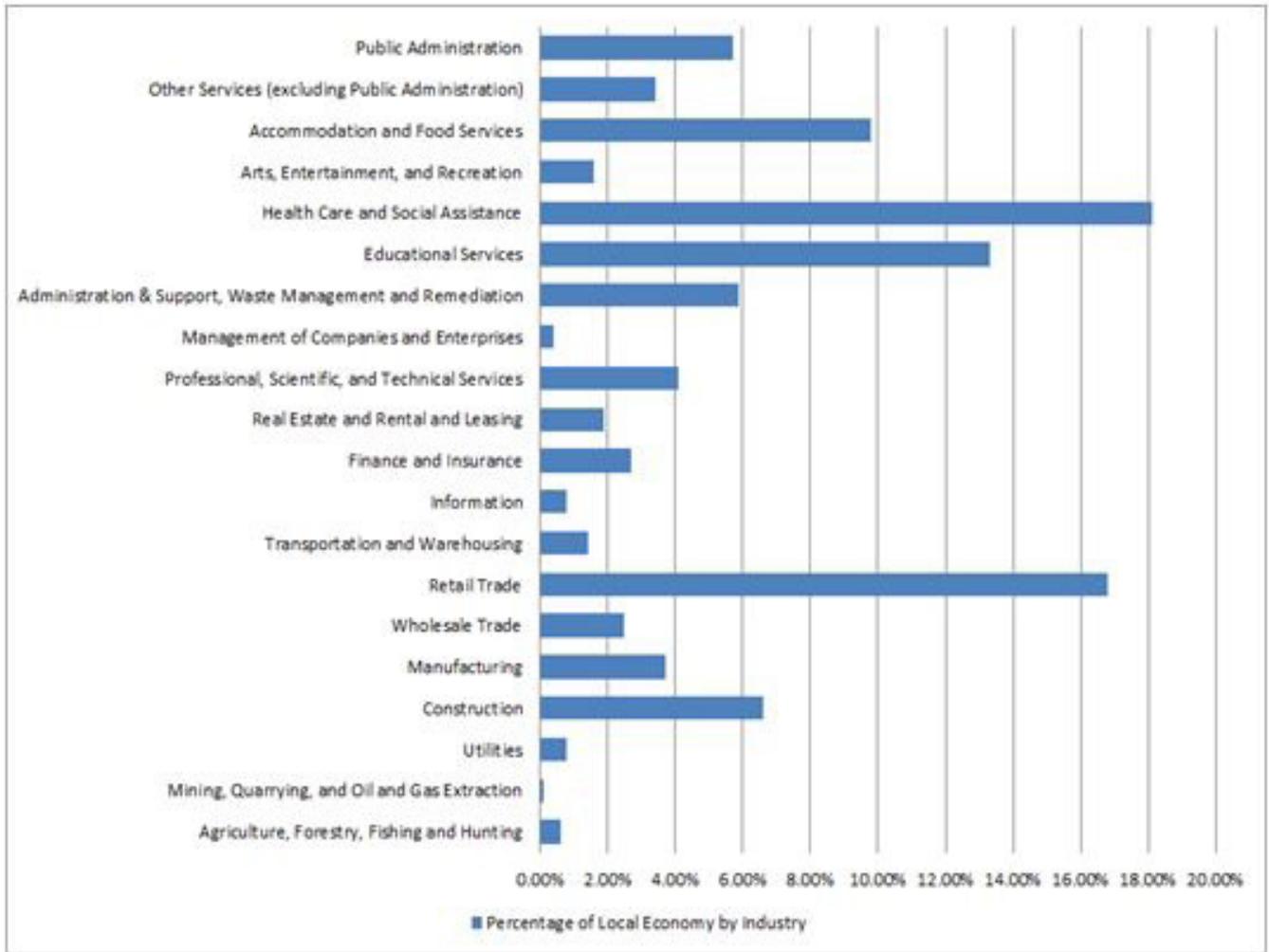


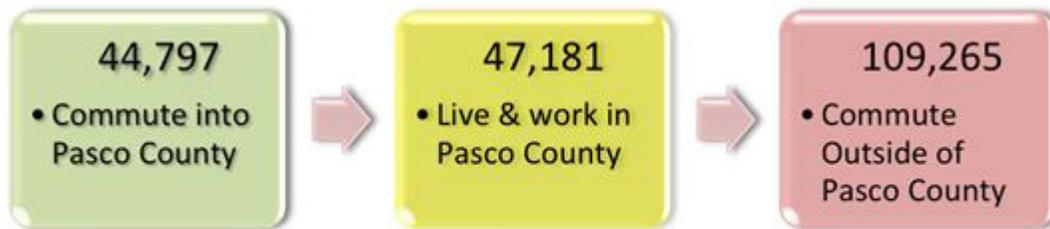
Figure 1.3: Pasco County's Economic Industries



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Study, 2011

While The Harbors may no longer be strictly a bedroom community, its economy remains heavily reliant on Tampa Bay and St. Petersburg. As seen in Figure 1.4, the majority of Pasco County's workforce travels outside of the county for employment. Consequently, the growth of The Harbors' service-based economy often depends on the success of the regional economy.

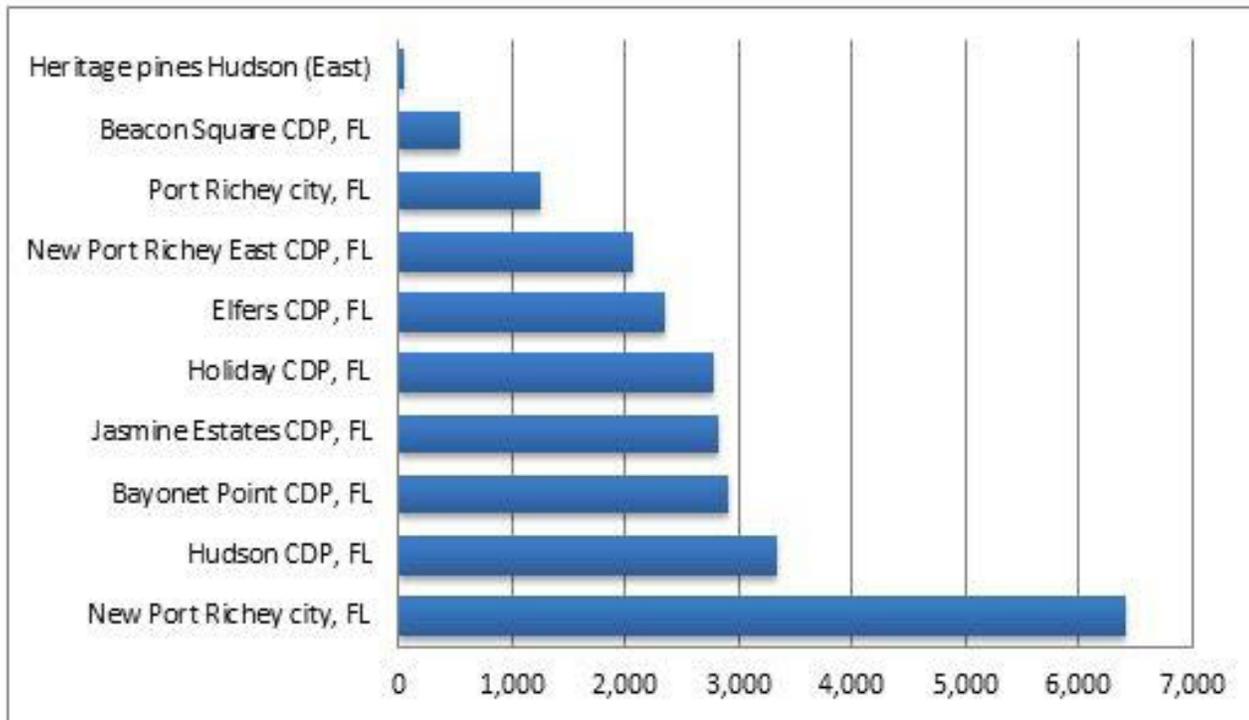
Figure 1.4: Commuter Statistics for Pasco County



U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Study, 2011

Over reliance on service sector industries has limited The Harbors’ economic growth. The predominance of one industrial sector indicates there is potential for industry diversification and economic expansion, in the future (Klosterman, 1990). Expanding The Harbors employment and investment opportunities could attract additional residents and stimulate further development. Employment centers are scattered throughout The Harbors, with the majority located along major road corridors. The highest concentration is located along the US 19 Corridor (STB, 2013).

Figure 1.5: Commuter Statistics for Pasco County



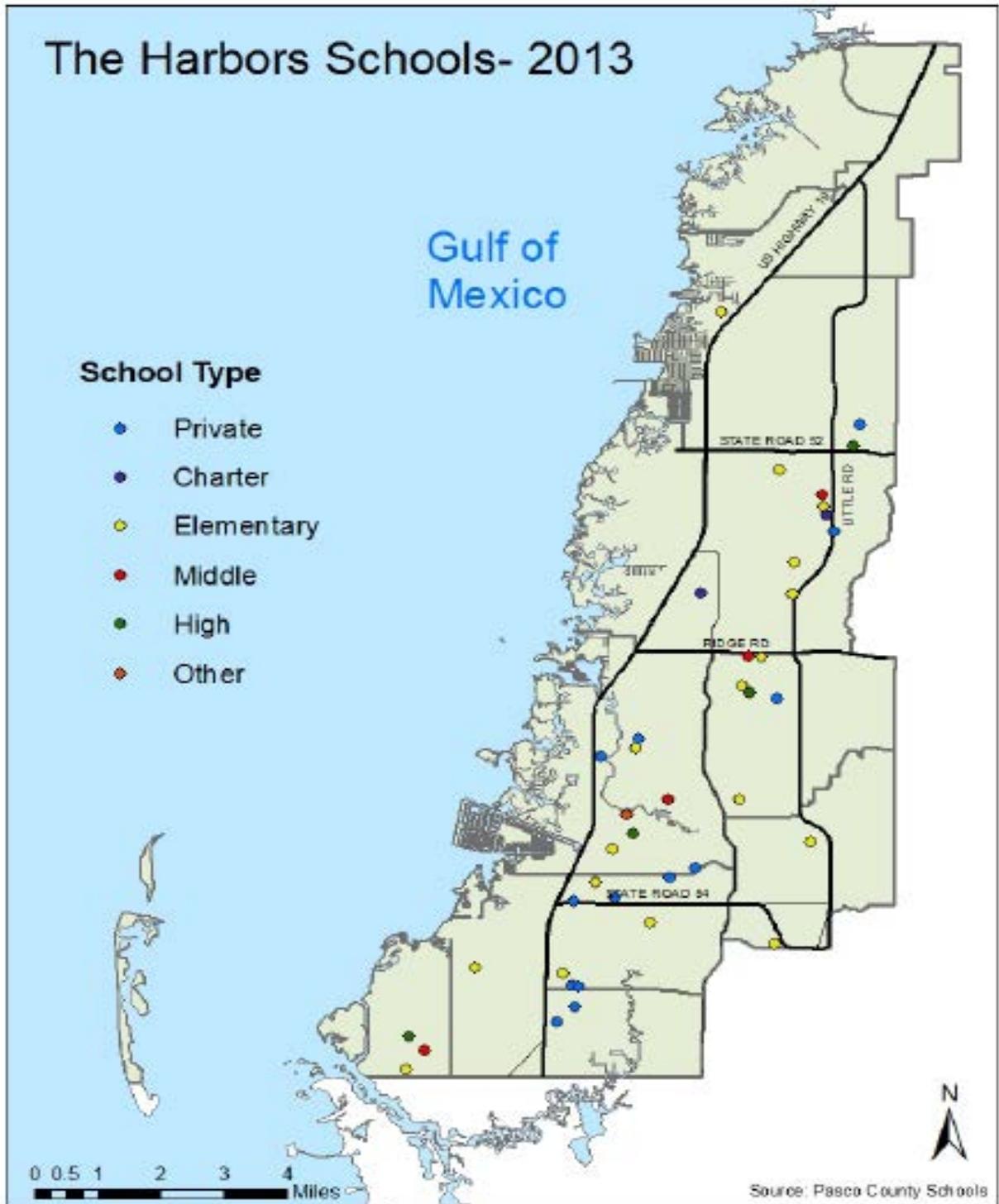
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Study, 2011

### 1.3.4 Schools

Forty-one schools are currently serving The Harbors’ growing population. Map 1.8 shows the location and type of each school including elementary, middle, high, charter, private, and other schools. The majority of these schools are located within the southern eight districts to support this area’s higher population density. Twenty-four of Pasco County’s thirty-four Title 1 schools are located in The Harbors. Title I is a designation from the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 that federally supplements schools that have high poverty.

From 1986 to 2010, Pasco County enjoyed an annual student enrollment increase of between 3-5% (Solocheck, 2010). This created a false sense of funding security for the school board. In 2010 and 2011, enrollment decreased by 285 students (Solocheck, 2010). This decreased funding by over \$5,000,000 and spurred funding reorganization efforts within the school district (Solocheck, 2011).

Map 1.8: Commuter Statistics for Pasco County



### 1.3.5 Major Roadways

As illustrated in Map 1.9, The Harbors has two primary north-south arterials: US Highway 19 (US 19) and Little Road. US 19 runs the full length of The Harbors and is the area's largest and most heavily trafficked highway. Little Road branches off from US 19 just south of Hernando County and travels parallel to US 19 all the way to the southern border. There are several east-west thoroughfares bisecting US 19 and Little Road including State Road 52 (SR 52), Ridge Road, and State Road 54 (SR 54). SR 52 and SR 54 are regional corridors that extend into central and eastern Pasco County. Most of The Harbors' development is oriented around these major arterials. Commercial development in particular primarily takes the form of strip development along these corridors. Consequently, improving and maintaining the safety and efficiency of these thoroughfares is vital to the economic success of the area.

Unfortunately, large portions of US 19 and several sections of other major arterials have significant congestion problems. Level of Service (LOS) provides a measure of the level of free flow, congestion, and speed along roadway segments. The Transportation Element of Pasco County's 2025 Comprehensive Plan (July 2013), LOS established that all roadways classified as collector or higher are required to maintain minimum standard of LOS D. Road segments that cannot meet these standards (LOS E and F) are classified as deficient. According to the 2003 Major Road Network Inventory and Level of Service, the entirety of US 19 south of SR 52 was classified as deficient with a LOS F (Transportation Element – 2025 Comprehensive Plan, 2006, p. 17-18).

Since 2003, road capacity improvements have reduced congestion and improved the LOS. However, congestion problems, especially on US 19, still remain. Map 1.10 illustrates the 2012 Level of Service scores for major roadways in The Harbors. Several segments of US 19 between SR-54 and SR-52 have improved from LOS F to LOS C. However, the remainder of US 19 south of SR 52 remain deficient and significant portions of US 19 near the Pinellas County boarder maintained their LOS F. These segments will require significant improvements in road capacity or public transit service to accommodate continued development. Otherwise, congestion along these segments could hinder redevelopment efforts.

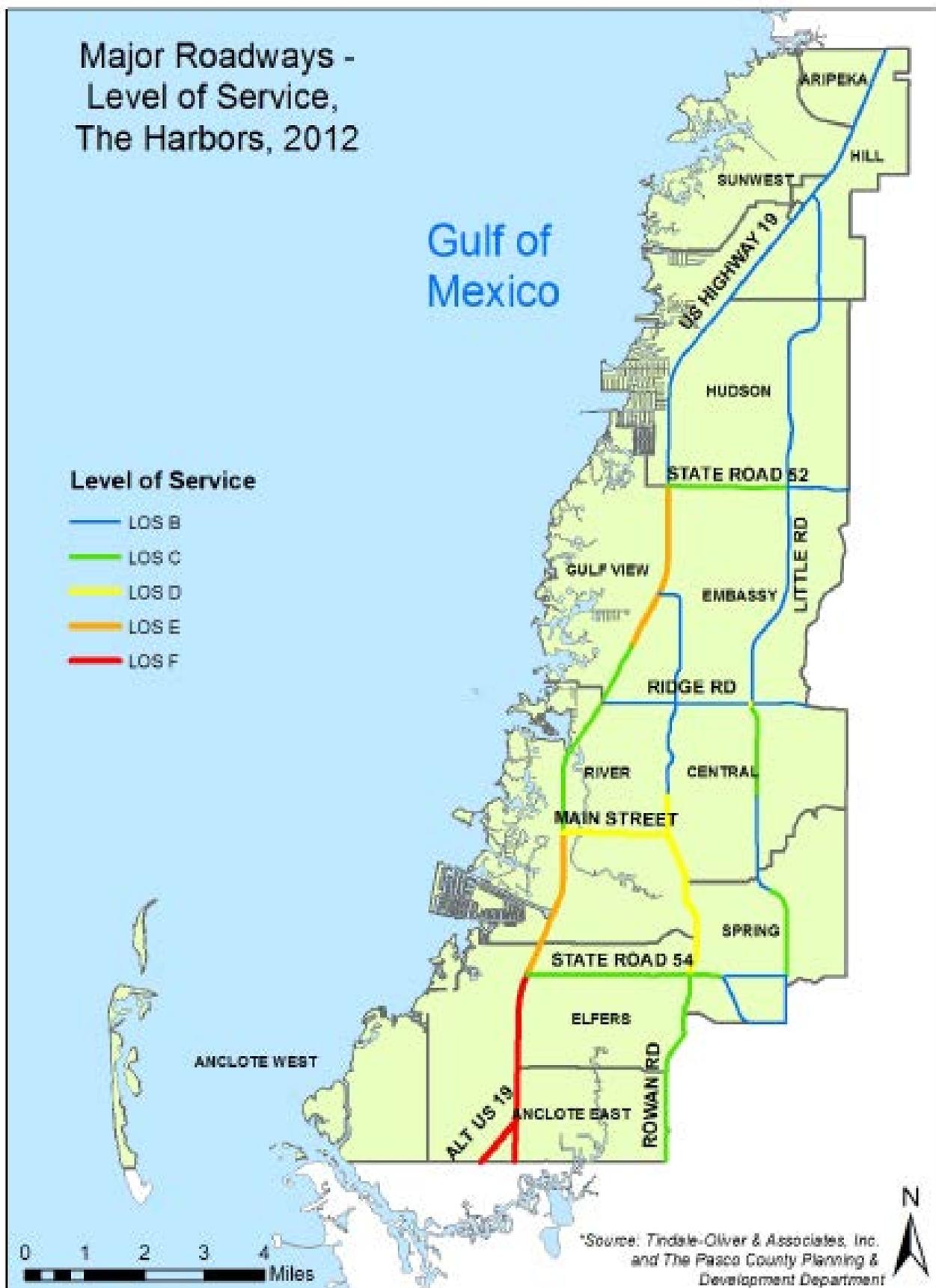
However, none of The Harbors' other major roadways have significant congestion problems. In fact, between 2003 and 2012 more than half of the Little Road Corridor improved from LOS C and D to LOS B. The Ridge Road intersection is the only segment of Little Road performing at LOS D. So, other than US 19, many of The Harbors' major roadways can accommodate future growth

and development. The only potential exception to this is the area around Main Street in New Port Richie. With an LOS D, it may not take long for new development to cause congestion problems along Main Street.

Map 1.9: Major Roadways in The Harbors



Map 1.10: Major Roadways – Level of Service in The Harbors, 2012

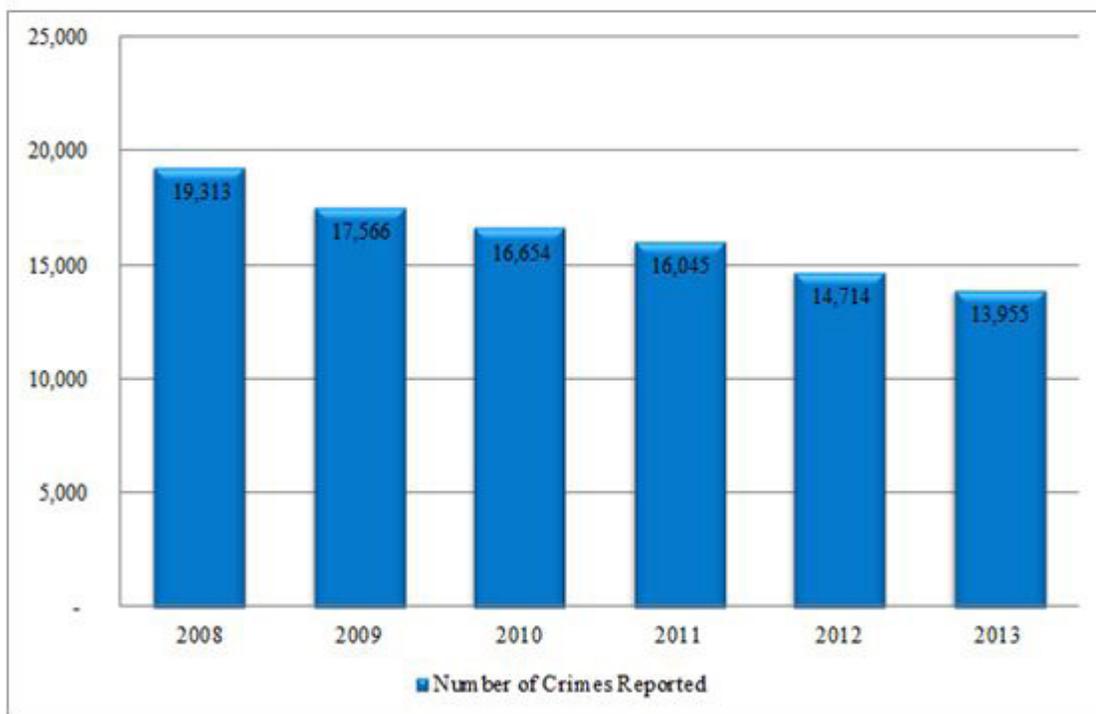


### 1.3.6 Public Safety

#### Crime

According to data provided by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) and the Pasco County Sheriff's Office, crimes reported within The Harbors and Pasco County have declined by an average of 1,071 crimes per year over the past five years (Figure 1.6). This reduction in crime rates appears to be a regional trend since five of the surrounding counties have also seen significantly fewer crimes in recent years (Figure 1.7). Comparing Pasco County to the regional also reveals that it has the third lowest crime rate of counties in the Tampa Bay MSA.

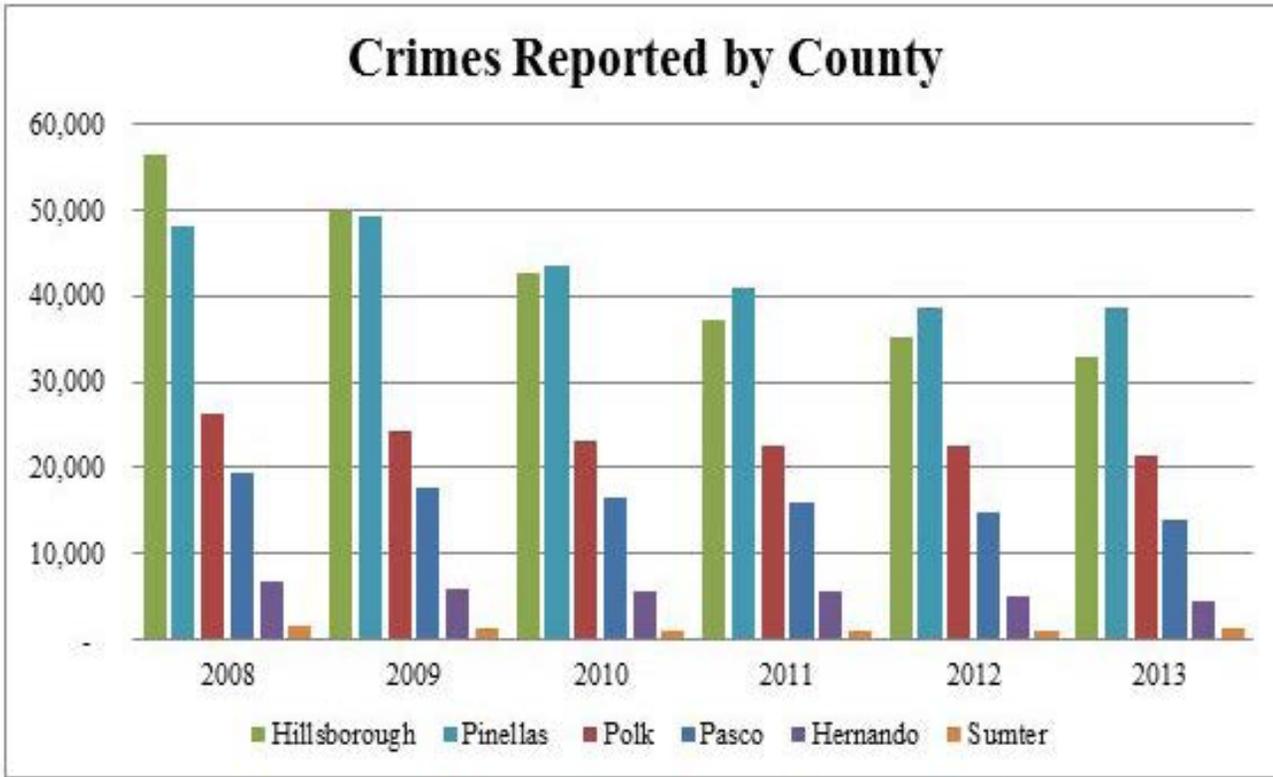
Figure 1.6: Number of Crimes Reported In Pasco County 2008-2013



Source: FDLE, UCR, County Profiles

While Pasco County has experienced an overall reduction in crime, several trends have emerged within The Harbors. Of all crimes reported in Pasco County, over 43% percent occurred within The Harbors. This is significant given that The Harbors contains 46% of the county's entire population, meaning that the denser population of the area can attribute to higher crime rates within The Harbors. Property crimes and theft were the most commonly crimes in The Harbors from June 2012 to May 2014. More specifically, automotive burglary, grand theft, petit theft, residential burglary, retail theft, and vehicle theft typically are The Harbors most common crimes.

Figure 1.7: Number of Crimes Reported By Regional Counties

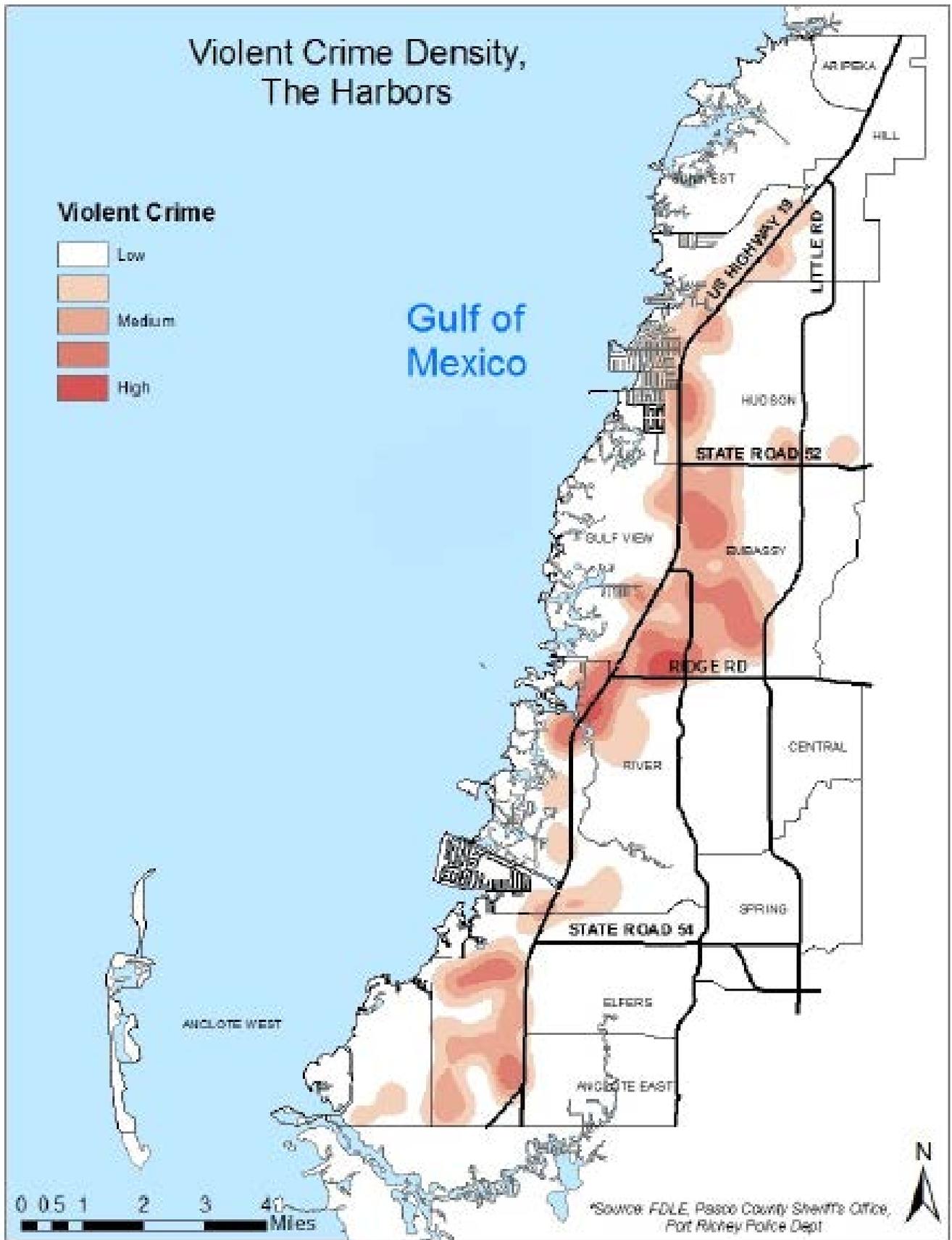


Source: FDLE, UCR, County Profiles

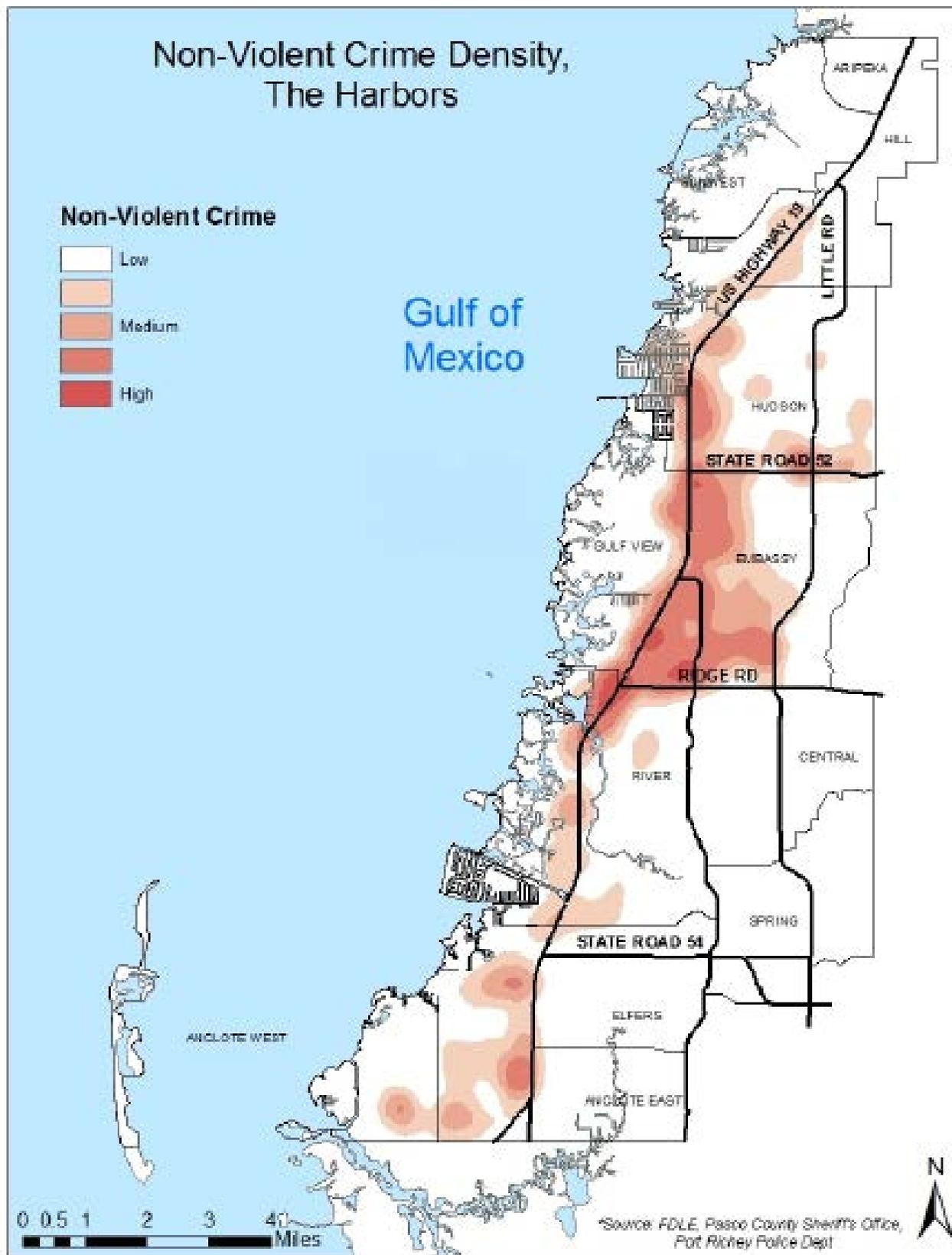
From the data provided by the FDLE, the crime was divided into three different categories: violent, non-violent, and property crimes, based off of definitions from the Bureau of Federal Investigation. Each type of crime (violent, nonviolent, and property) within The Harbors are visually displayed in Maps 1.11, 1.12, and 1.13, while Map 1.14 overlays all three categories to display the epicenters of crime. As seen in the maps, the highest crime rates are found within the Embassy, Anclote East, and Anclote West Districts. Each of these districts experiences a distinct concentration of all three types of crime. Map 1.14 shows the complete concentration of all three types of crime, with the heaviest concentration being within the Embassy district.

However, since these crime density maps simply provide a visual representation of where increased numbers of crimes occur, this can lead to the false impression of high crime rates because they simply may be highlighting areas with larger populations. Evaluating crime rates per capita, or per 1,000 residents, can provide a more accurate measure of where higher concentrations of crime are occurring and consequently a better measure of neighborhood stability. In this way, The Harbors' crime trends were further analyzed by examining The Harbors' violent, non-violent, property, and total crimes per 1,000 residents by census tract (Maps 1.15-8).

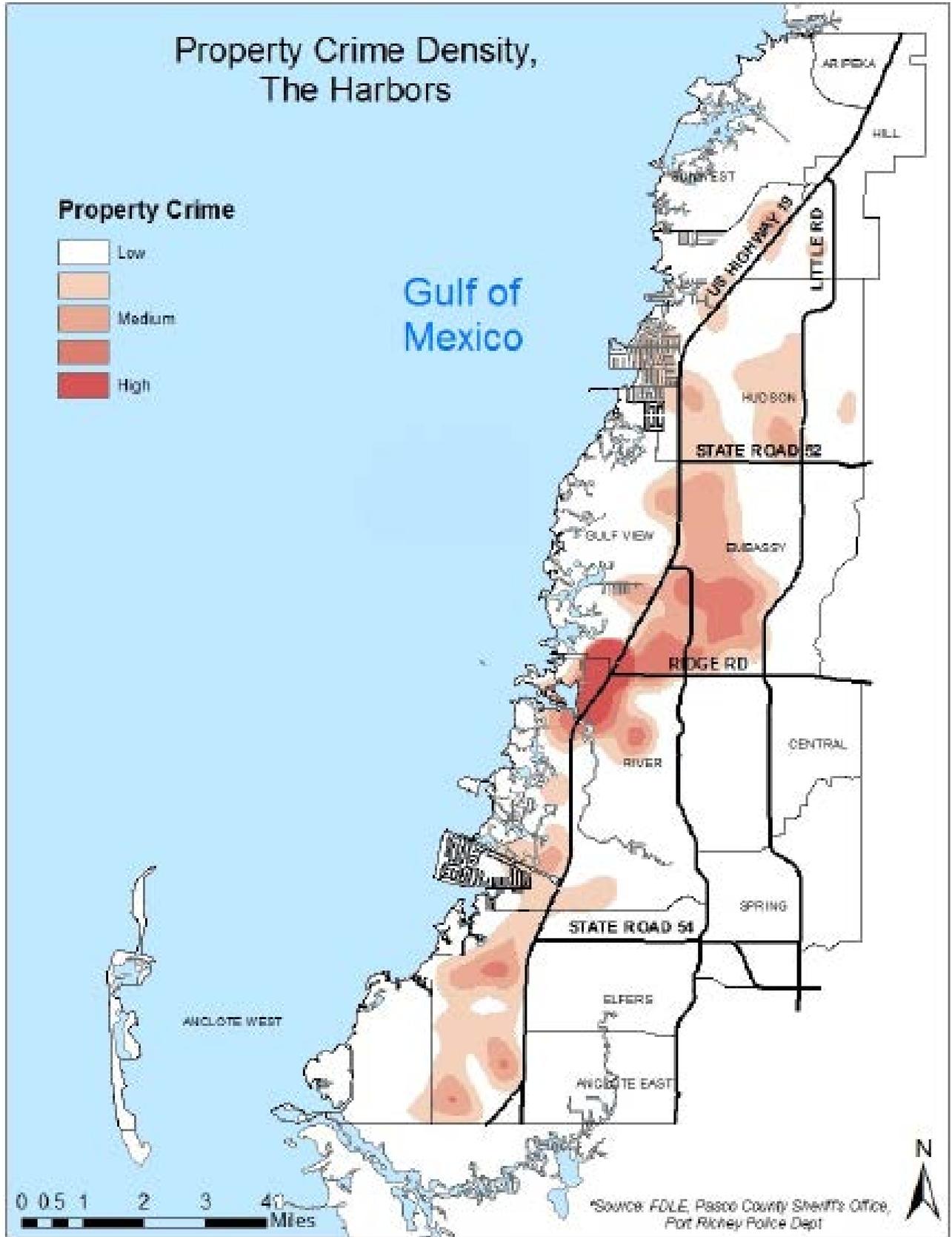
Map 1.11: Concentration of Violent Crime in The Harbors



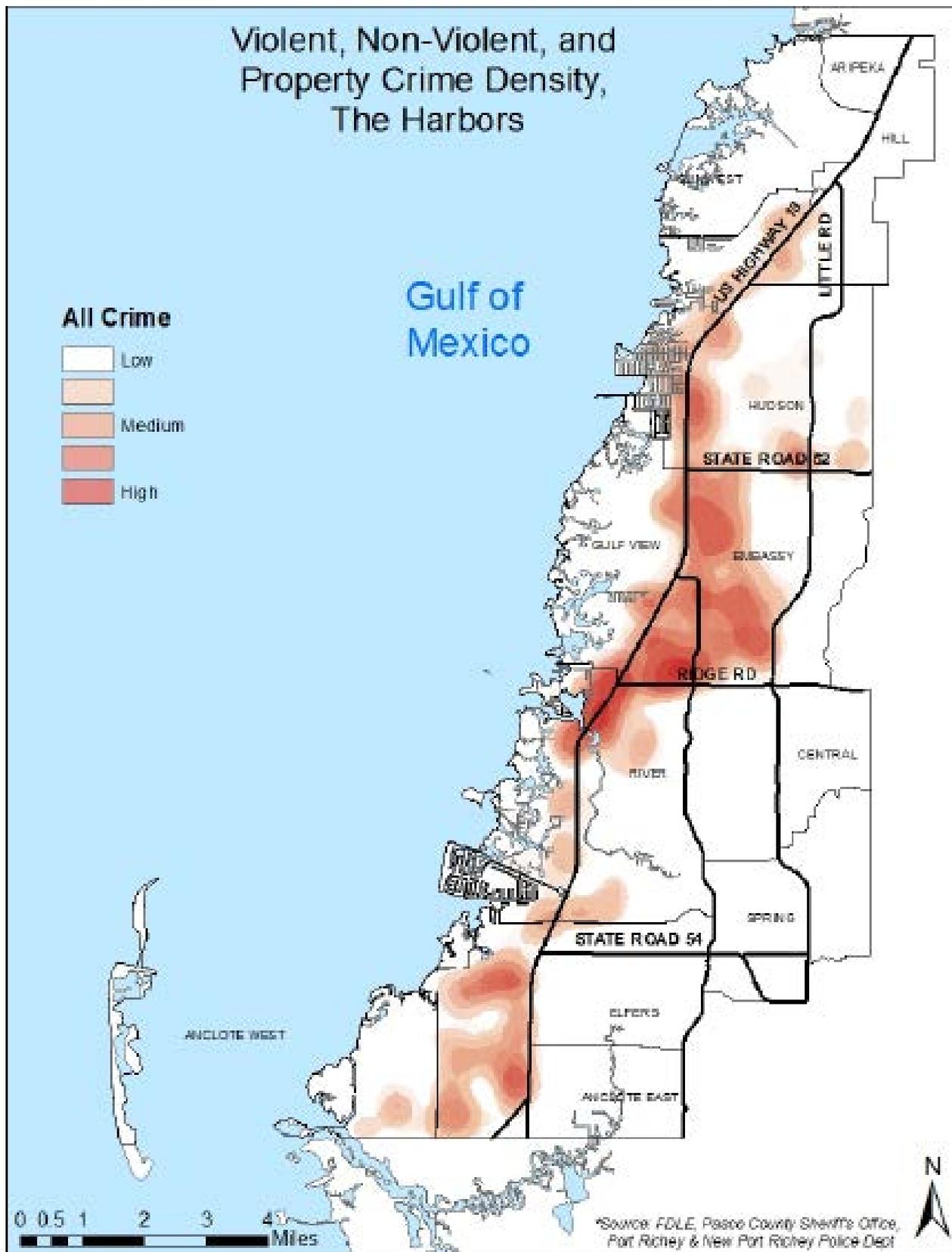
Map 1.12: Concentration of Non-Violent Crime in The Harbors



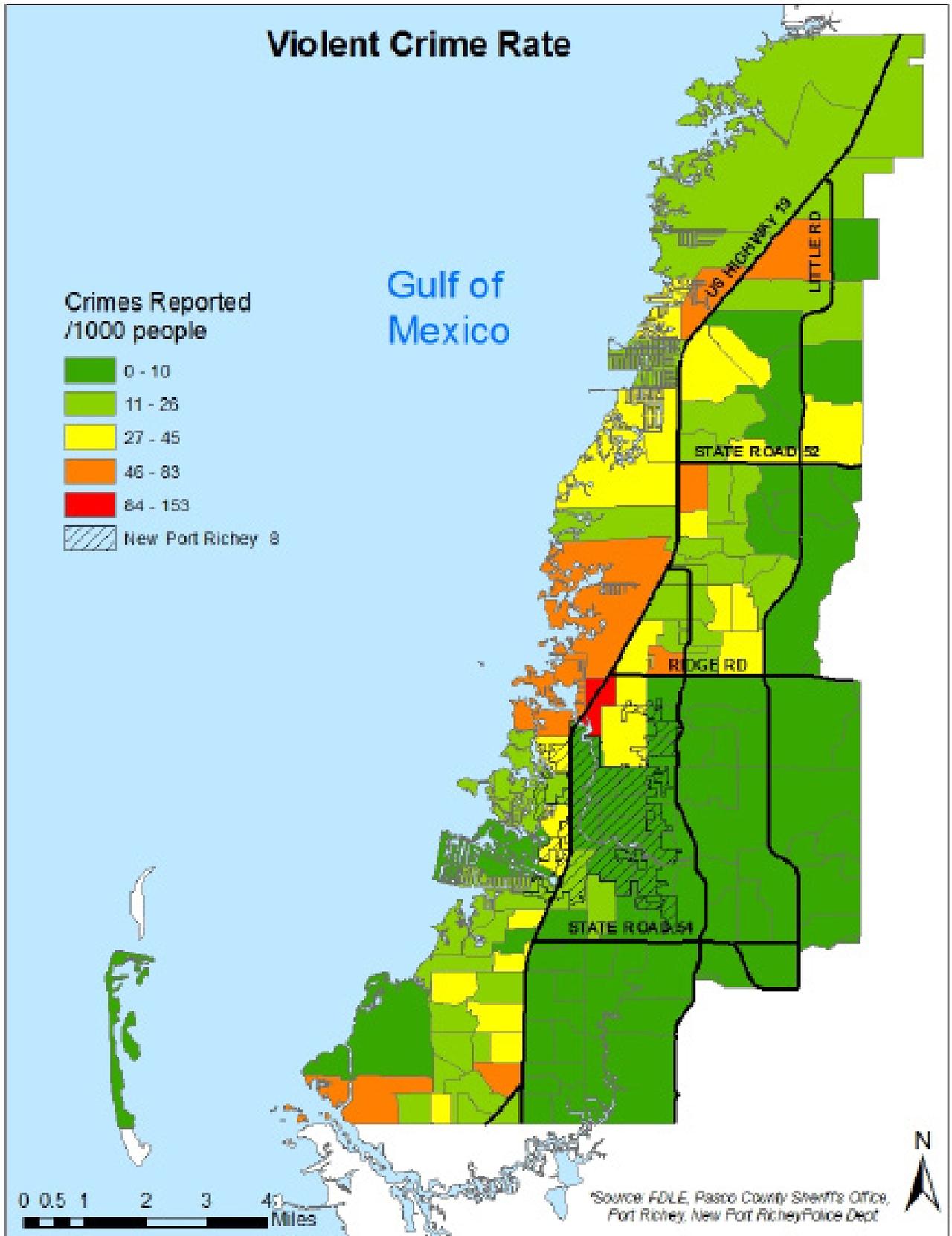
Map 1.13: Concentration of Property Crime in The Harbors



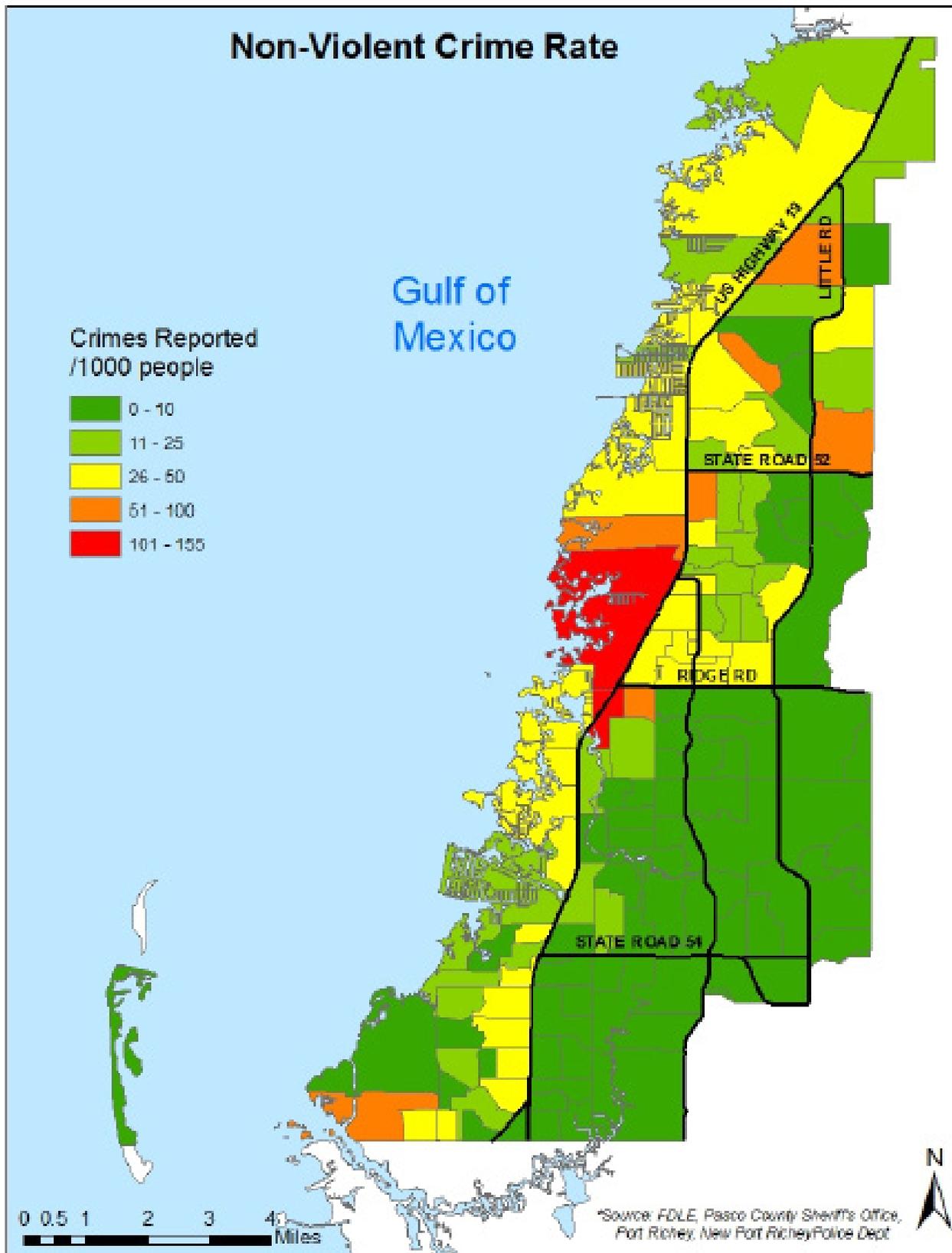
Map 1.14: Concentration of All Crime (Violent, Non-Violent, and Property) in The Harbors



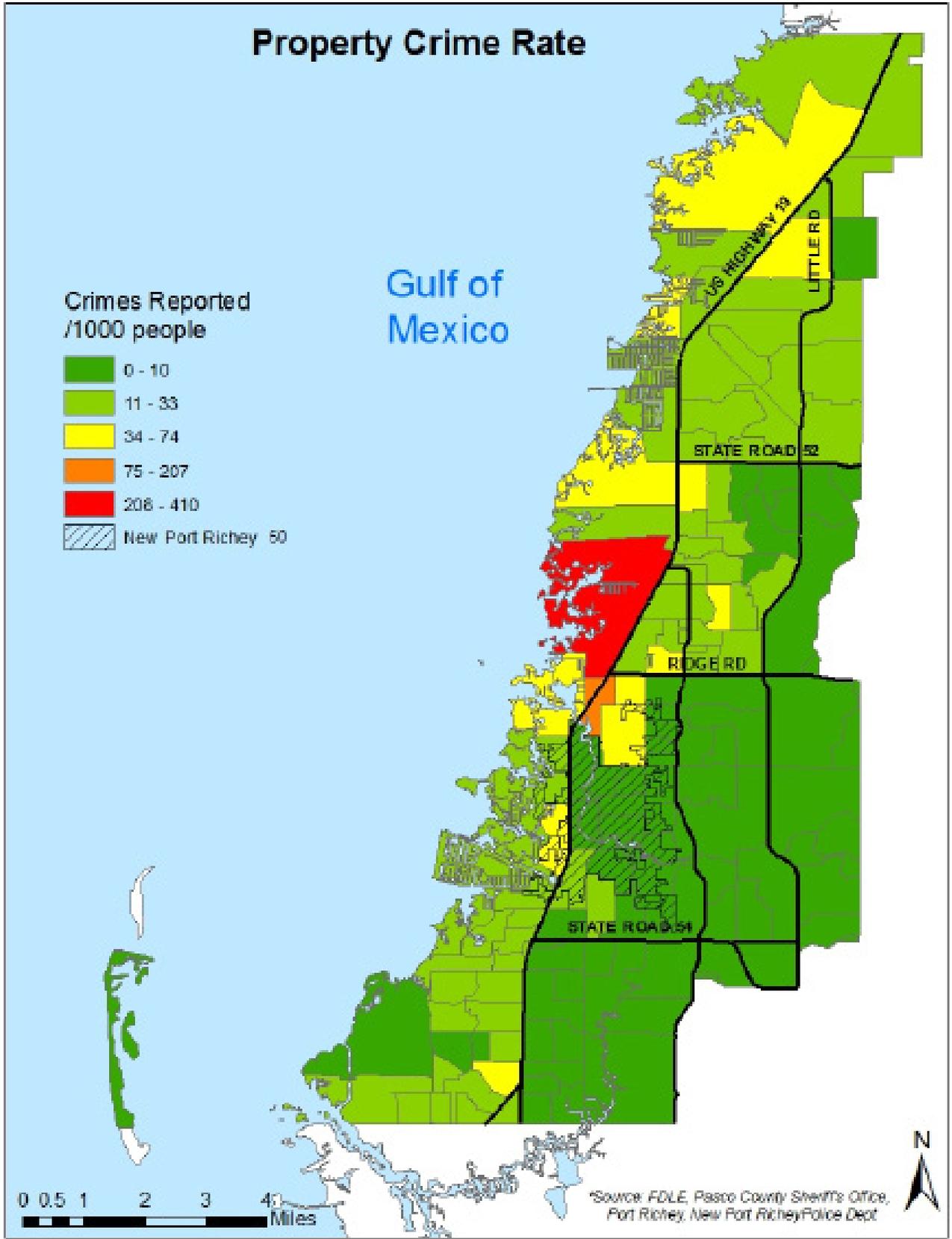
Map 1.15: The Harbor's Violent Crime per 1,000 people by Census Tract\*



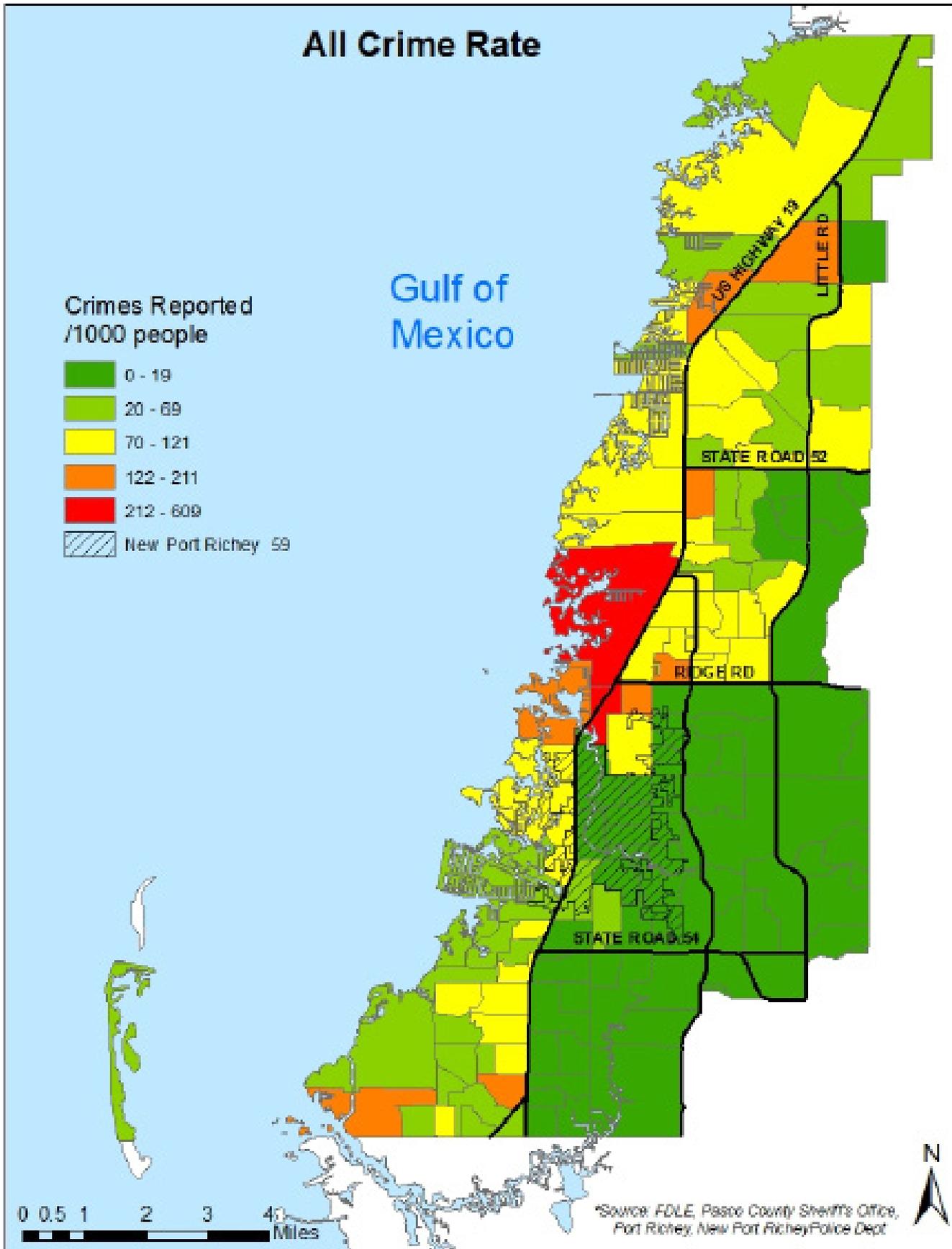
Map 1.16: The Harbor's Nonviolent Crime per 1,000 people by Census Tract\*



Map 1.17: The Harbor's Property Crime per 1,000 people by Census Tract\*



Map 1.18: The Harbor's Total Crime per 1,000 people by Census Tract\*



In the Harbors' case, the areas with the highest concentrations of total crime generally correspond to areas with the highest crime rates per 1,000 residents. While crime rates varied throughout The Harbors, the areas with consistently high crime rates were centrally located along US-19 north of the City of New Port Richey and within the Embassy District. In terms of both crime concentration and per capita crime rate, the Southeastern corner of The Harbors has the lowest instances of crime.

### Traffic Accidents and Pedestrian/Bicyclist Safety

Safety is a critical component of any urban redevelopment initiative. If safety cannot be reasonably afforded to motorists, pedestrians, and/or bicyclists, the initiative's appeal will be lost. Ensuring a focus area or catalyst project is comfortable and safe for all users will generate greater support for the project. Sidewalk access further supports redevelopment efforts by providing greater mobility, interconnectivity, and safety to pedestrian patrons while enhancing the sense of place. Considering US 19's past and present struggles with regards to pedestrian/bicyclist safety, any successful redevelopment efforts must account for and improve pedestrian safety in The Harbors.

Safety considerations are especially important for planning efforts within Pasco County because of the major pedestrian safety problems that have plagued the County. In 2009, Pasco County had the highest rates of pedestrian fatalities and severe injury crashes in Florida (PSAP, 2012). Unfortunately, most of Pasco County's pedestrian safety hazards revolve around US 19. From 2005 to 2010, US 19 accounted for approximately 40% of all pedestrian crashes in Pasco County. In 2002 alone, there were 15 pedestrian fatalities along US 19 (Orth, 2003). It should not be surprising that a 2002 publication by the Surface Transportation Policy Partnership titled "Mean Streets" identified the Pasco County stretch of US 19 as the most dangerous road for pedestrians in the United States (Ernst & McCann, 2002). This assertion was restated in 2005 by a Dateline NBC report that found that a 30-mile stretch of US 19 in Pasco and Pinellas Counties accounted for 100 pedestrian fatalities in a five-year span (Mankiewicz, 2005).

However, Pasco County has not allowed these issues to go unheeded. In 2012, Pasco County developed its Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP). The PSAP outlined the need for several "Action Items" (p. 9-10) regarding US 19, including:

- extensive sidewalk installments along the roadway
- support for more pedestrian-friendly development patterns
- review of pedestrian signal timings

- investigation into the feasibility of installing pedestrian barriers along the roadway to prevent dangerous pedestrian behaviors

While these Action Items are still an ongoing effort, significant improvements to The Harbors' sidewalk network have been made (Map 1.19). Sidewalks currently extend along both sides of US 19 from the southern border of The Harbors to just north of Ridge Road. Similarly, all but the northernmost segment of Little Road has sidewalk access on both sides of the roadway. Thus, sidewalk provision in the southern half of The Harbors has increased, but large stretches of the northern half of US 19 remain without sidewalk access.

As a result of these and other initiatives, pedestrian safety in The Harbors has improved considerably. According to data provided by Pasco County Traffic Operations, traffic accidents involving bicyclists or pedestrians in The Harbors declined by 30% between 2009 and 2013 and by 46% along US 19 (Table 1.3). In that same time period, pedestrian accidents along US 19 only accounted for 15% of pedestrian and bicyclist accidents in Pasco County. While this remains very high, it is a significant improvement from 2005 to 2010 when it accounted for 40% of Pasco County's pedestrian accidents (Pasco County Metropolitan Planning Organization, 2012).

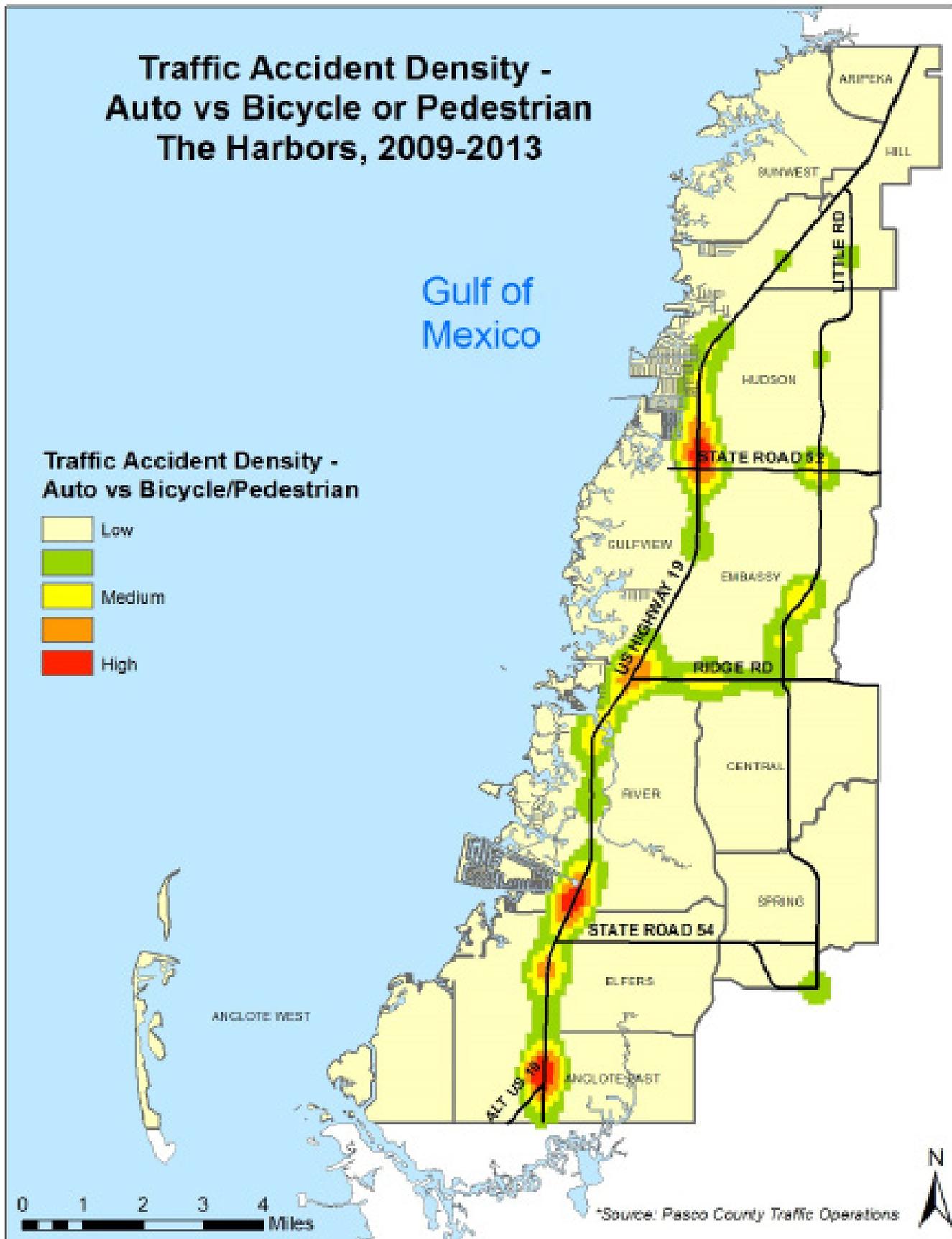
However, despite these improvements, several major problem areas remain. As seen in Map 1.16, pedestrian accidents within the Harbors are concentrated around major intersections along US 19. From 2009 to 2013, US 19 still accounted for 66% of all pedestrian and bicycle accidents and 76% of fatalities in the Harbors. Fifteen pedestrian accidents occurred at the US 19 and SR 52 intersection alone. So, Pasco County's efforts to address The Harbors' pressing pedestrian safety needs have made the area significantly safer for pedestrians and bicyclists. However, US 19 continues to be a dangerous thoroughfare for pedestrians. Without continued efforts to improve pedestrian safety, this has the potential to perpetuate auto-oriented development and pose a threat to redevelopment efforts within The Harbors.

While not as pressing or obvious of an issue, The Harbors' pervasive auto-oriented development around a few major arterials has also created safety issues for automobile drivers. From 2009 to 2013, over 5,000 traffic accidents occurred on The Harbors' five major roadways alone; making it one of the most hazardous areas in Pasco County. As seen in Map 1.20, automobile traffic accidents are concentrated in many of the same areas as pedestrian accidents. The intersection of US 19 and SR 52 had the highest concentration of traffic accidents in The Harbors with approximately 275 accidents from 2009 to 2013. However, unlike pedestrian safety, traffic safety issues were not limited to US 19. Major intersections along Little Road also have high concentrations of traffic accidents.

Map 1.19: Sidewalks along Major Roadways in The Harbors, 2014



Map 1.20: Bicycle and Pedestrian Traffic Accident Density, 2009-2013



Map 1.21: Traffic Accident Density: All Traffic Accidents, 2009-2013



Table 1.3: Pedestrian and Bicycle Traffic Accidents and Fatalities in the Harbors, 2009-2013

Roadway	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Five-Year Cumulative
<b>US Highway 19 - Accidents</b>	37	28	22	19	20	126
<b>US Highway 19 - Fatalities</b>	3	1	4	2	3	13
<b>Little Road - Accidents</b>	9	9	7	2	5	32
<b>Little Road - Fatalities</b>	0	1	1	1	1	4
<b>SR 52 - Accidents</b>	3	2	2	1	0	8
<b>SR 52 - Fatalities</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Ridge Road - Accidents</b>	1	1	7	1	7	17
<b>Ridge Road - Fatalities</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SR 54 - Accidents</b>	0	0	0	4	3	7
<b>SR 54 - Fatalities</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL - Accidents</b>	50	40	38	27	35	190
<b>TOTAL - Fatalities</b>	3	2	5	3	4	17

Source: Pasco County Traffic Operation

1.3.7 Public Health

This section examines the health outcomes and the health factors of Pasco County’s residents. Comparing this data to the surrounding counties will provide insight into the relative health of the County and will help to identify the health problems and lifestyle choices that are affecting the well-being of The Harbor’s residents. This analysis was performed at the county level because data specific to The Harbors’ was not available. Unfortunately, Pasco County’s health outcomes are slightly below average. Compared to the other counties within the Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater MSA, Pasco County typically ranks below the more urbanized Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties but above Hernando County.

## Overall Health Outcomes

According to the County Health Rankings, Pasco County is ranked 42 out of 67 counties in Florida. This puts Pasco County below Hillsborough and Pinellas County, but higher than Hernando County. These rankings were determined by examining two primary health outcomes: length of life (mortality) and quality of life (morbidity). As seen in Table 1.4, Pasco County was ranked 40th and 42nd respectively on these measures (Table 1.4). These primary outcomes were further broken down into secondary outcomes that determine residents’ length and quality of life. As seen in Table 1.4, the entirety of the Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater MSA scored below the state average over all of these measures except low birth rate. Once again, the level of urbanization appears to contribute to the relative health outcomes within the MSA. Over almost every measure, Pasco County had worse outcomes than the more urbanized Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties and better outcomes than the more rural Hernando County.

Table 1.4: County Health Rankings for Tampa Bay Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater MSA, 2014

	Florida	Pasco County	Pinellas County	Hernando County	Hillsborough County
<b>Health Outcomes Ranking</b>		42	35	50	31
<b>Length of Life Ranking</b>		40	39	47	24
<b>Premature Deaths</b>	7310	8716	8617	9063	7601
<b>Quality of Life Ranking</b>		42	22	54	40
<b>Poor or Fair Health</b>	16%	19%	14%	22%	17%
<b>Poor Physical Health</b>	3.7	4.6	3.7	4.8	4.2
<b>Poor Mental Health</b>	3.8	4.9	4	5.9	4.1
<b>Days</b>					
<b>Low Birth Weight</b>	9%	8%	9%	8%	9%

Source: County Health Rankings 2014

## Overall Health Factors

County Health Rankings also examine health factors that influence a county’s health outcomes. These factors include measures of healthy behavior, clinical care, the physical environment, and socioeconomic factors. Table 1.5 presents the results of several of these factors for Florida and the

Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater MSA. Results indicate that Pasco County’s poor health outcomes may be attributed in part to poor health behaviors such as poor diet and exercise habits and the use/abuse of tobacco and alcohol. Pasco County scored worse than all of the surrounding counties on most of these measures. Pasco County’s low health outcomes may also be attributed to socioeconomic factors. Although Pasco County scored very well on social support and the number of children in single-parent homes, its lower income higher poverty rates, and lower educational attainment likely contribute to lower health outcomes.

Table 1.5: County Health Rankings: Health Factors for Tampa Bay Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater MSA, 2014

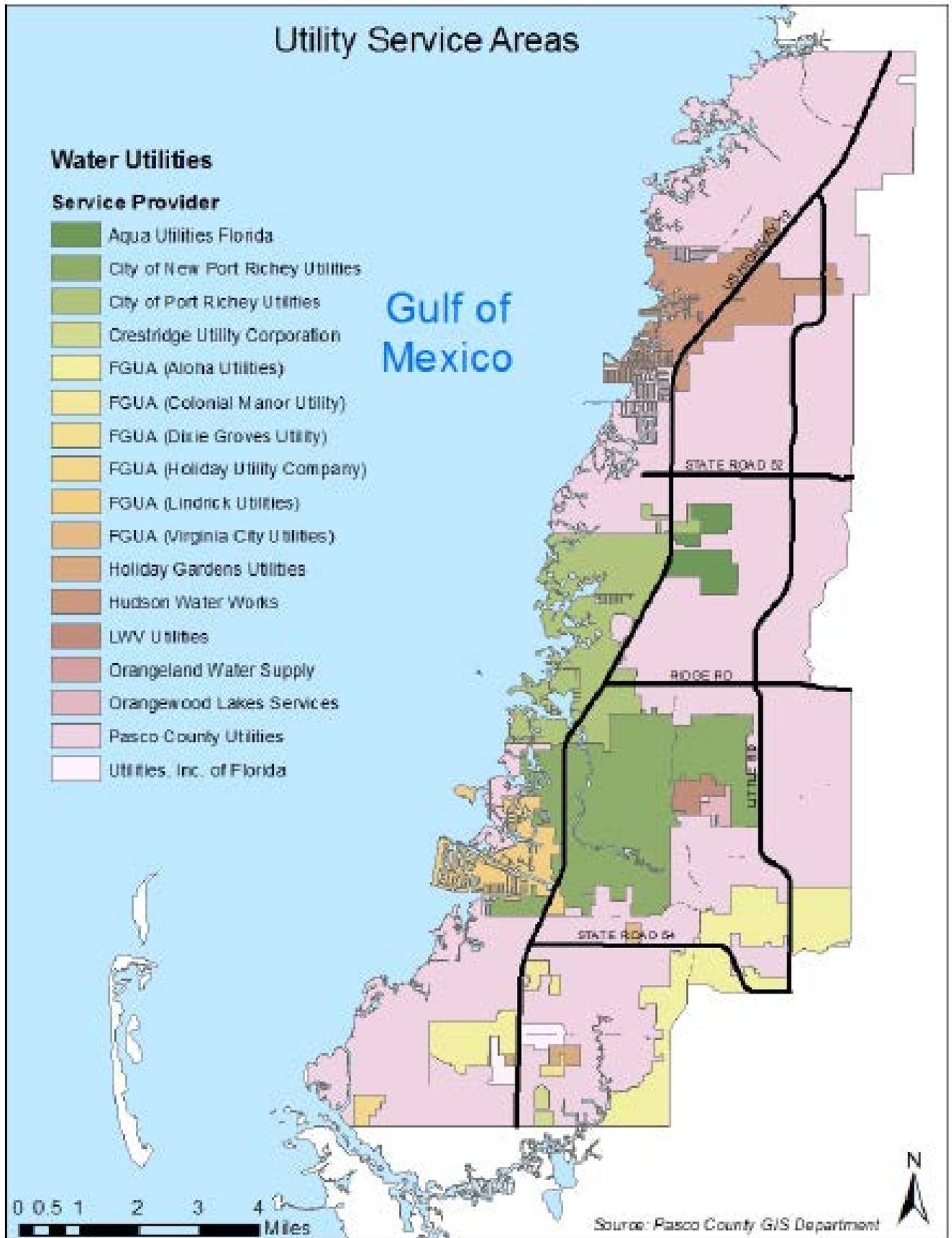
Health Behaviors	Florida	Pasco	Pinellas	Hernando	Hillsborough
<b>Adult Smoking</b>	18%	26%	20%	23%	18%
<b>Adult Obesity</b>	26%	29%	24%	29%	27%
<b>Food Environment Index</b>	7.20	7.30	7.50	6.90	7.00
<b>Physical Inactivity</b>	24%	29%	20%	26%	23%
<b>Access to Exercise Opportunities</b>	0.78	0.76	0.95	0.64	0.87
<b>Excessive Drinking</b>	16%	20%	17%	17%	19%
<b>Alcohol-impaired Driving Deaths</b>	29%	23%	30%	21%	31%
<b>Sexually Transmitted Infections (per 100,000 people)</b>	399	225	422	225	575
<b>Teen Births (per 1,000 females age 15-19)</b>	38	36	37	35	44

Source: County Health Rankings 2014

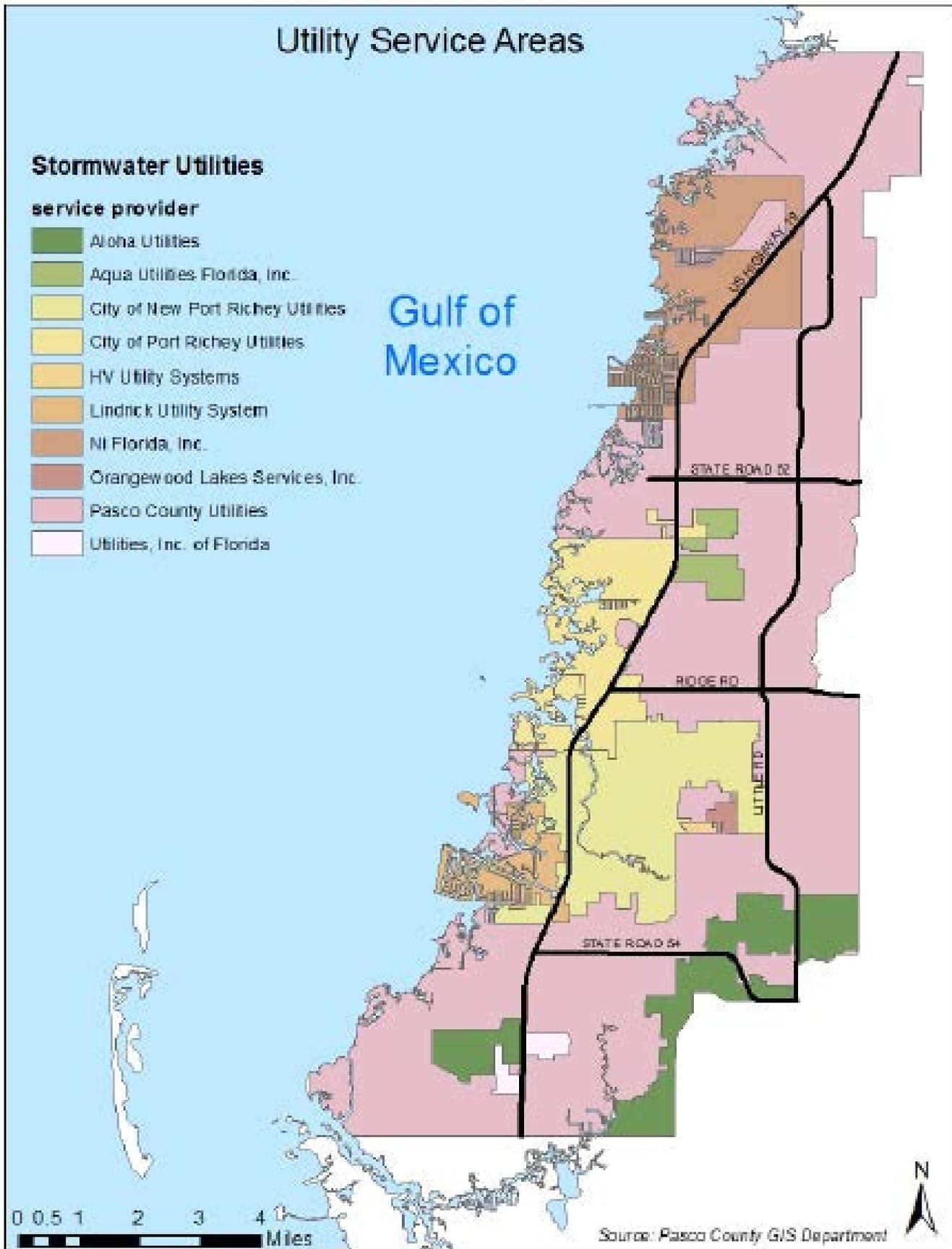
### 1.3.8 Utilities

Water, Wastewater, and stormwater services are provided by a mixture of public and private entities. Nineteen utility service providers currently provide water services to The Harbors. In an attempt to consolidate and interconnect private utility networks Pasco County has entered into an agreement with the Florida Gulf Utility Authority (FGUA). FGUA allows local governments to join together with other counties or municipalities to acquire, finance, own, and operate a water or wastewater utility. Maps 1.22 & 1.23 outline where these utility providers are currently providing service. Table 1.6 indicates what services are provided within these areas. Areas where wastewater services are not provided rely on onsite septic systems for wastewater treatment and disposal.

Map 1.22: Utility Service Providers



Map 1.23: Stormwater Service Providers



Map 1.24: Septic Tank Concentrations

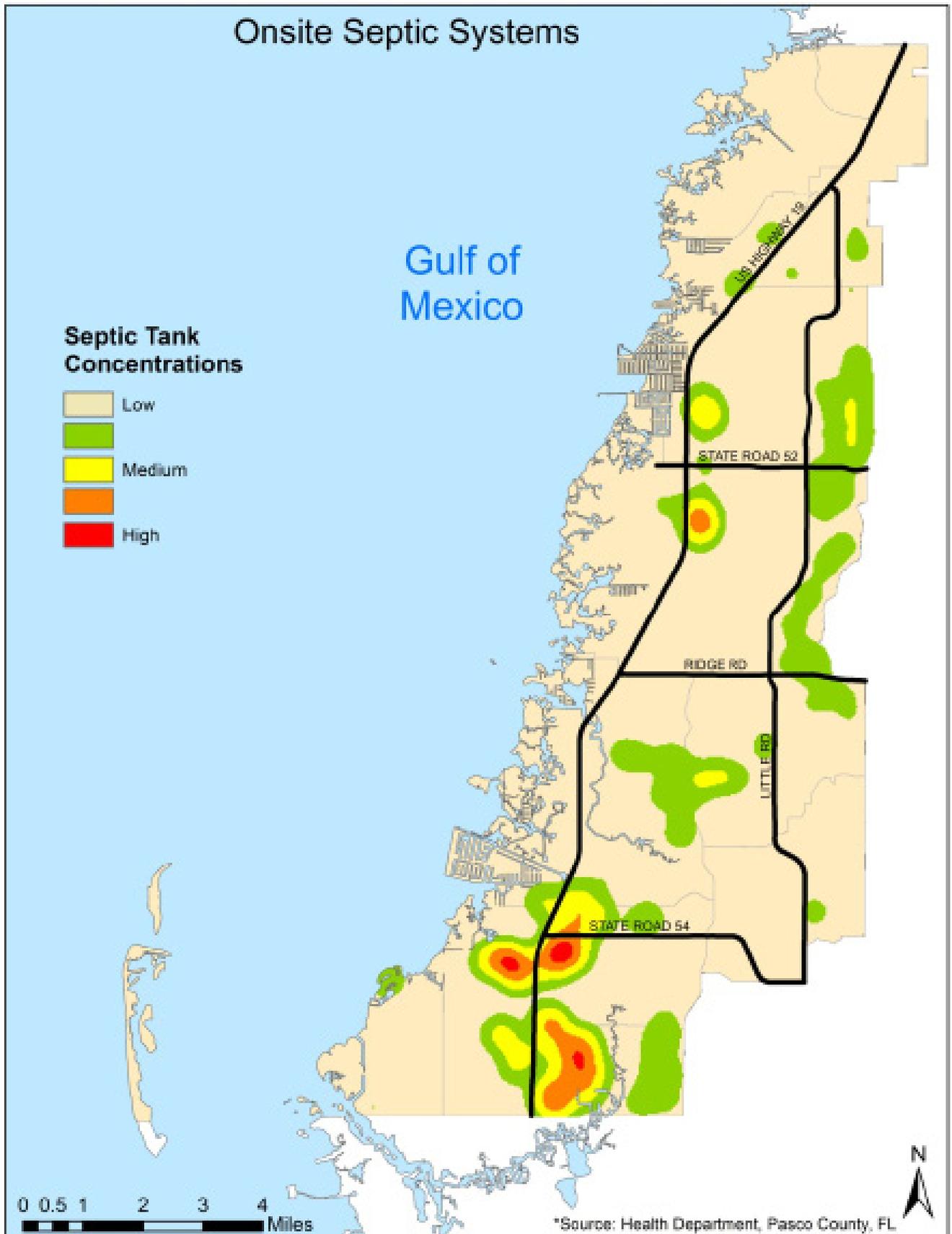


Table 1.6: Water Service Providers in The Harbors

Service Provider	Water	Wastewater	Stormwater
<b>Aqua Utilities Florida</b>	X	X	X
<b>City of New Port Richey Utilities</b>	X	X	X
<b>City of Port Richey Utilities</b>	X	X	X
<b>Crestridge Utility Corporation</b>	X		
<b>FGUA (Aloha Utilities)</b>	X	X	X
<b>FGUA (Colonial Manor Utility)</b>	X		
<b>FGUA (Dixie Groves Utility)</b>	X		
<b>FGUA (Holiday Utility Company)</b>	X		
<b>FGUA (Lindrick Utilities)</b>	X	X	X
<b>FGUA (Virginia City Utilities)</b>	X		
<b>Holiday Gardens Utilities</b>	X		
<b>Hudson Water Works</b>	X		
<b>LWV Utilities</b>	X		
<b>Orangeland Water Supply</b>	X		
<b>Orangewood Lake Service</b>	X	X	
<b>Pasco County Utilities</b>	X	X	X
<b>Utilities, Inc. of Florida</b>	X		
<b>HV Utility Systems</b>			X
<b>Ni Florida, Inc.</b>			X

### Potable Water

The three largest potable water service providers are the City of New Port Richey, the City of Port Richey, and Pasco County. The county is the largest potable water provider, supplying approximately 22.8 Million Gallons Daily (MGD), predominantly for residential use. The County’s potable water systems, plants, wells, storage facilities, transmission mains, and distribution lines are considered to be in good condition, and are updated and repaired as needed. However, as Pasco County’s population continues to grow and demand for potable water increases, additional water supply and treatment facilities will need to be constructed. It is estimated that existing

countywide facilities will have to be expanded to 56.5 MGD by 2025 (Pasco County Comprehensive Plan 2025).

### Wastewater

The City of New Port Richey, the City of Port Richey, and Pasco County are also the three largest wastewater providers. However, private utility service providers and private systems are also responsible for treating effluent. Private systems consist of either septic tanks or privately owned and operated onsite package plants. Based on health department permit applications there are approximately 5,820 septic sites located in The Harbors. However, septic permit records were only available after 1998, so the actual number of septic tanks is likely higher. As seen in Map 1.20, the majority of residences utilizing septic systems are located in the southern portions of The Harbors, between SR 54 and County Line Road. Current, wastewater-disposal capacity within Pasco County is approximately 26.8 million gallons per day. Population projections estimate that countywide facilities will have to be expanded to accommodate future growth (Pasco County Comprehensive Plan 2025).

### Energy

Electricity is supplied by two main energy companies Duke Energy and Withlacoochee River Electric Cooperative. Duke Energy provides energy services to the northern portion of The Harbors, while Withlacoochee River Electric Cooperative provides service to the south.

### Gas

Natural gas services are provided by two companies Clearwater Gas and TECO Peoples Gas.

### Solid Waste

The county does not provide solid waste pickup service. Six private companies are contracted with the county to provide solid waste removal services. Solid waste is disposed of at the County landfill.

### *1.3.9 Conclusion*

The Harbors' current conditions provide it with a unique combination of opportunities and threats. Careful planning will be required to capitalize on The Harbors' promising opportunities without

exacerbating the issues that threaten the well-being of The Harbors' current and future residents and development.

The Harbors' proximity to the coast provides a variety of parks and recreational options that have the potential to be turned into recreational and ecotourism destinations. However, this proximity also puts much of The Harbors within a coastal high hazard zone that is prone to flooding. Utilizing The Harbors environmental features in a way that promotes economic development without degrading the environmental features or putting residents in further danger of flooding will be a unique planning challenge.

Similarly, promoting walkability, pedestrian safety, and neighborhood revitalization in an area that is notorious for pedestrian accidents and fatalities has been a major challenge. To this end, significant progress has been made as pedestrian accidents have decreased significantly in the last five years. However, US 19 remains the most dangerous road for pedestrians in Pasco County. Combining this with congestion and traffic safety problems poses a threat to economic vitality of The Harbors' commercial core along US 19. At the same time, US 19 may provide the opportunity for the regional connectivity needed to generate a vibrant local economy that brings money into the community instead of continuing to allow local capital to flow into Tampa Bay and St. Petersburg. However, this may only be possible if congestion along US 19 is reduced. This simultaneous need for higher speeds, higher traffic volumes, enhanced walkability, and sense of place once again demonstrates how The Harbors' most promising opportunities come hand in hand with its greatest challenges. Future planning efforts will need to find innovative ways of tying the revitalization of The Harbors' economy to the safety and walkability of its commercial corridors.

Addressing these issues will be vital to the success of any planning and revitalization efforts within The Harbors. As such, the issues, threats, and opportunities identified in the existing conditions will form the foundation of the parcel and SWOT analyzes and set a baseline for identifying key focus areas for future redevelopment. However, before this analysis could be performed it was necessary to closely examine the socioeconomic conditions within The Harbors to develop a complete picture of dynamics shaping its future.

**SECTION 2  
SOCIO-ECONOMIC  
PROFILE**

## Section 2 – Socio-Economic Profile

### 2.1 Introduction

This section aims to analyze the demographic trends and socio-economic factors that characterize The Harbors' current population and will shape the future of the area. In short, the socioeconomic profile will answer the question "Who lives in The Harbors?" The answer to this question will provide insight into the types of revitalization efforts that are needed by identifying what the population's needs are, where these issues are most prevalent, and what assets are available to meet these needs. In this way, The Harbors' socioeconomic profile works alongside the evaluation of its existing conditions to set a framework for the parcel analysis and inform the selection of key focus areas for revitalization. To this end, this section will analyze demographic trends within the Harbors including the population's size, composition, growth trends, age, gender, ethnicity, education, income, employment, homeownership, mode of transportation, and access to food.

### 2.2 Population

To understand and analyze The Harbors' population and how its age composition compares to Pasco County and the rest of Florida, population pyramids organized by age and sex cohorts were constructed for The Harbors, Pasco County, and the state of Florida. Results indicate that The Harbors' age composition is relatively similar to that of Pasco County, but both The Harbors and Pasco County are significantly older than Florida as a whole and have very small young adult populations (age 20-34).

As depicted in Figure 2.1, The Harbors' population is largely comprised of adults aged 45 to 64. In 2010, this age cohort represented over 28% of the total population. Conversely, only 15% of the population is between the ages of 20 and 34, possibly suggesting that The Harbors' younger generations are seeking housing and employment opportunities elsewhere. Not surprisingly the relative lack of younger families has led to a slightly smaller juvenile population.

The relative age of The Harbor's population is highlighted when it is compared to Florida's population pyramid (Figures 2.1 and 2.4). Pasco County's median age is almost three years older than the State of Florida. Similarly, 18.1% of The Harbors' population is over the age of 70, which is almost 6% higher than the state of Florida. This is especially significant because Florida's population is one of the oldest in the nation.

Figure 2.1: Population by Age and Sex for The Harbors, 2010

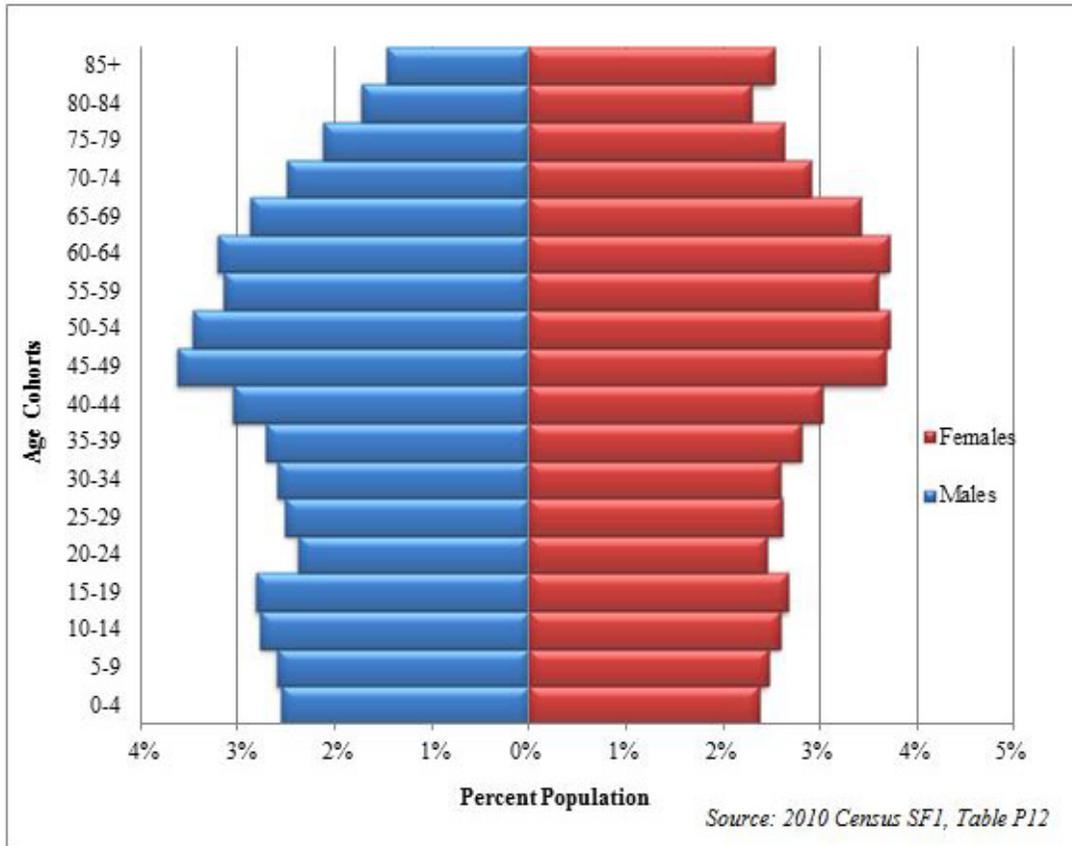


Figure 2.2: Population by Age and Sex for The Harbors, 2010

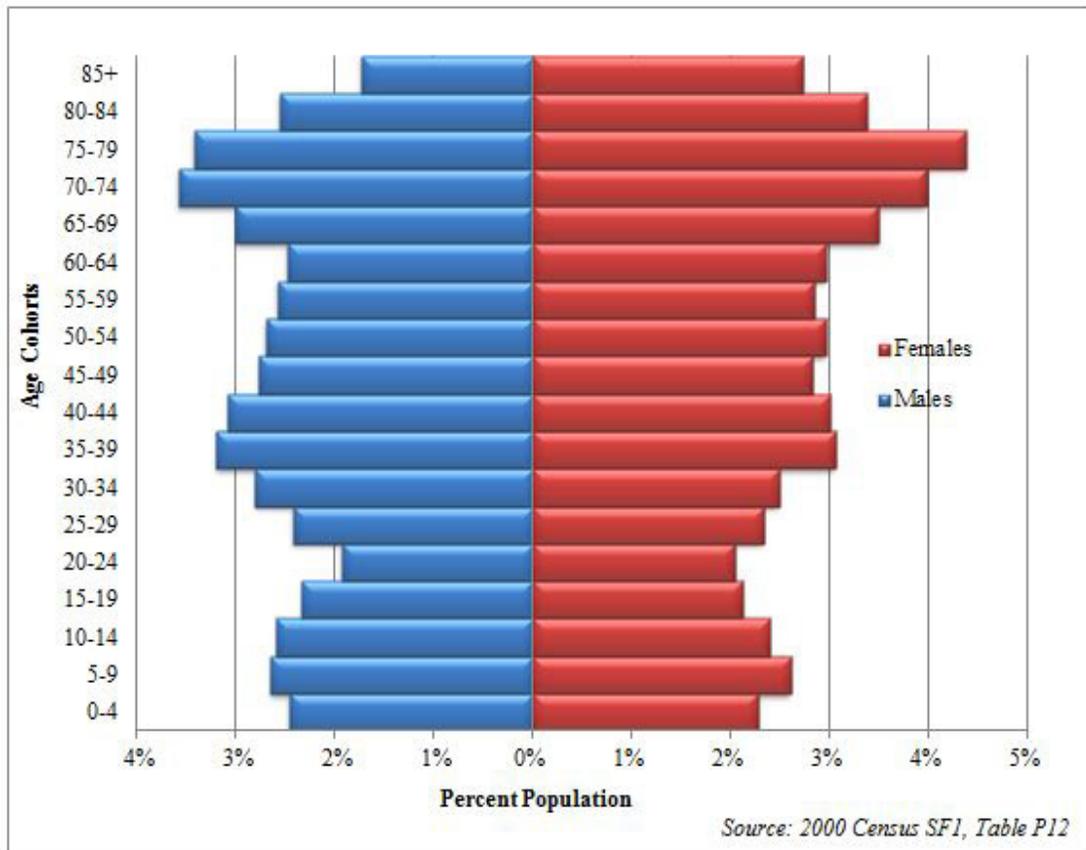


Figure 2.3: Population by Age and Sex for Pasco County, 2010

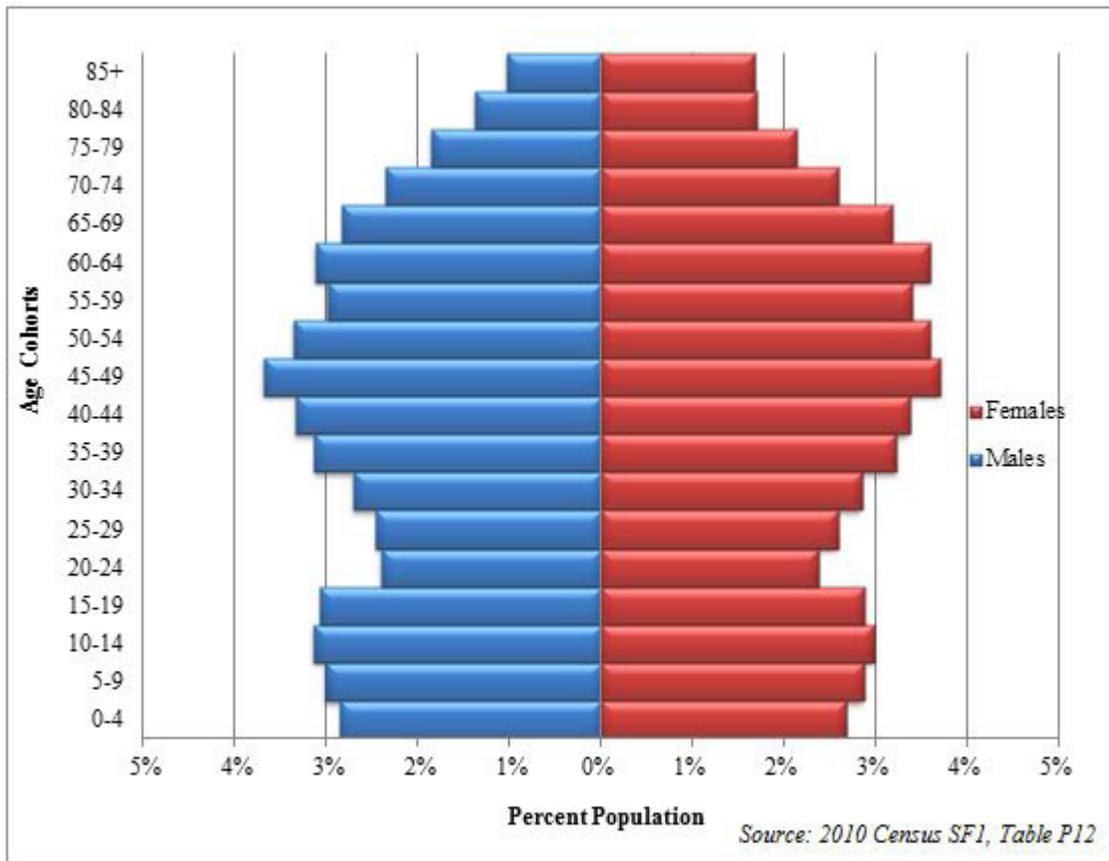
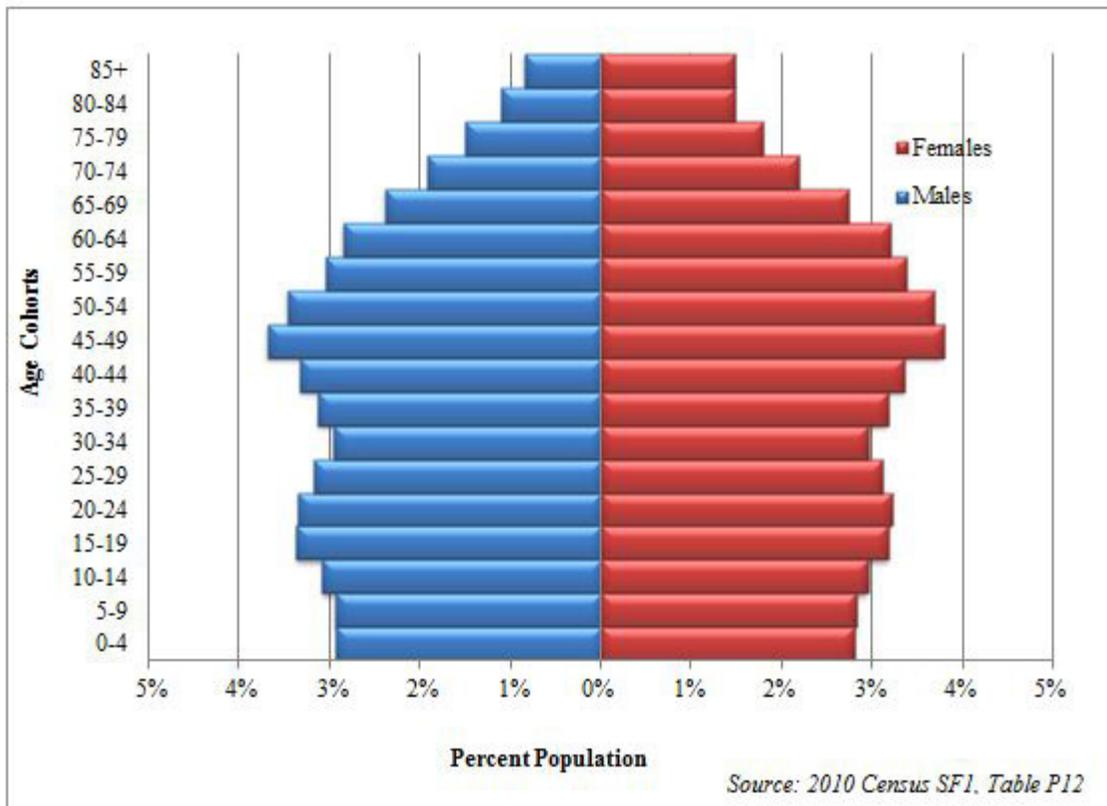


Figure 2.4: Population by Age and Sex for Florida, 2010



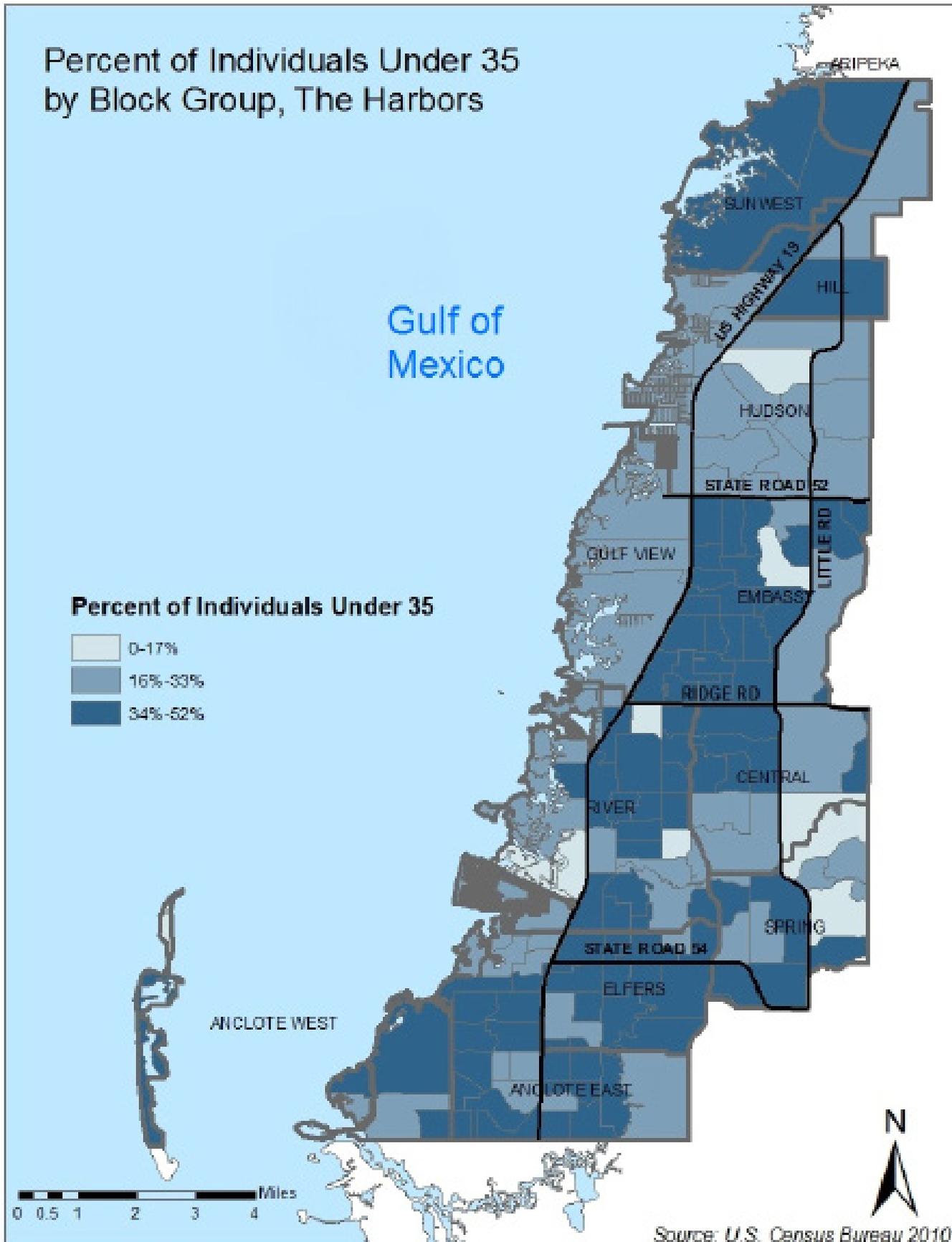
Even though The Harbors' age composition is relatively similar to that of Pasco County, comparing Figures 2.1 and 2.3 reveals that The Harbors is slightly older than the rest of the County. The Harbors' coastal location has attracted more retirees than the rest of Pasco County. The only other notable difference between The Harbors' and the rest of Pasco County is The Harbors' relatively small juvenile population.

Yet, despite its aging baby boomer population, The Harbors' has grown younger in the last decade. In 2000, adults age 70 to 80 made up The Harbors' largest age cohort. Between 2000 and 2010, The Harbors' population over 70 years old decreased from 26% of the population to only 18%. However, this trend is not likely to continue in the near term. As the baby boomers continue to age, The Harbors' age composition could soon resemble its 2000 levels unless more young families begin staying in The Harbors to live and work. Consequently, planning for a population that is aging in place will be a major concern moving forward. At the same time, finding ways of keeping The Harbors' younger generations from migrating elsewhere may be even more important for the economic revitalization of the area.

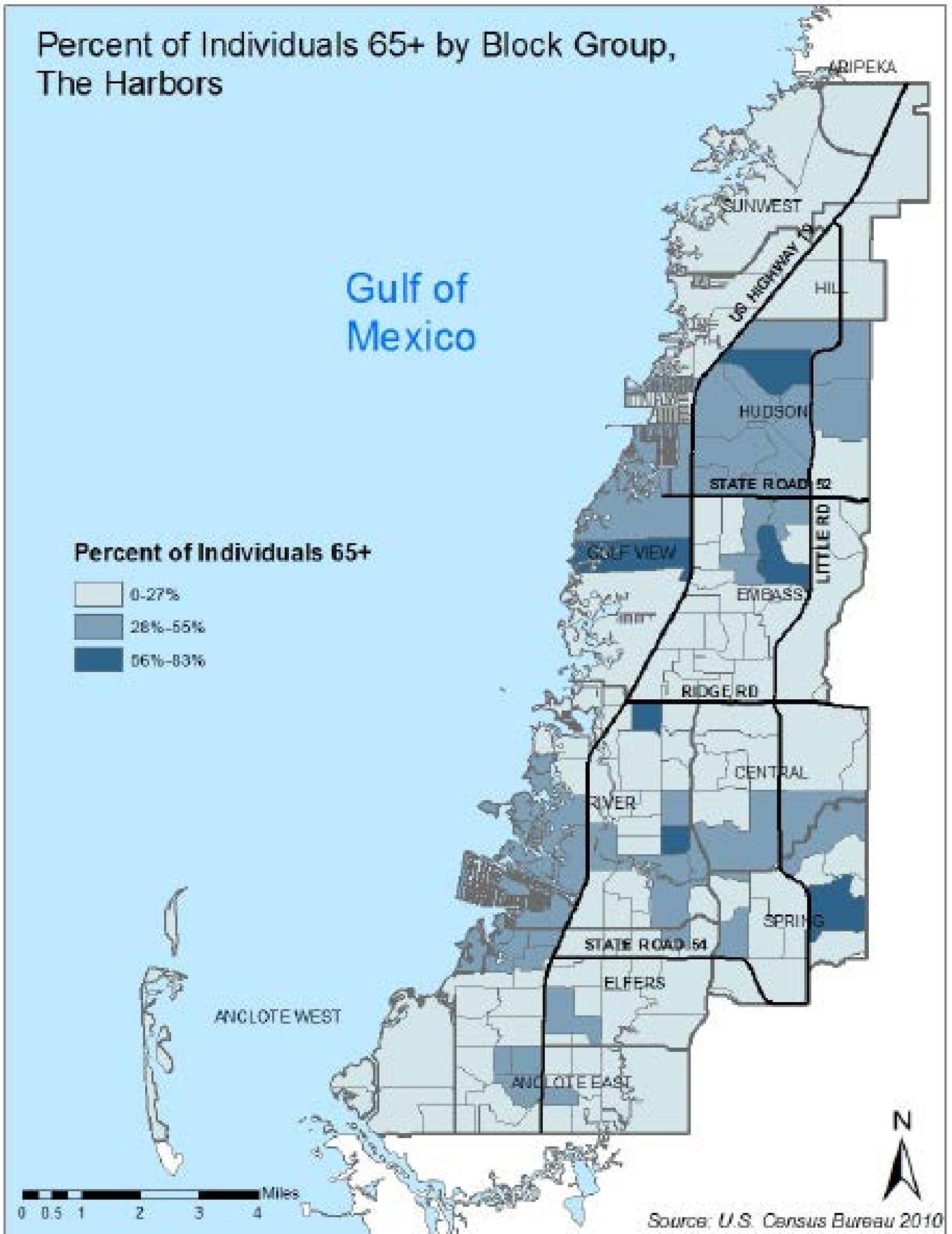
### 2.3 Population by Block Group

To further understand the age composition of The Harbors' population, the distribution of residents under the age of 35 and over age 65 was examined at the block group level. Block groups are clusters of census blocks created by the Census Bureau as a unit of analysis between blocks and census tracts. While census tracts contain between 1,500 and 8,000 people with an average size of 4,000 people, block groups contain between 600 and 3,000 people. Maps 2.1 and 2.2 illustrate the proportion of The Harbors' residents under the age of 35 and over 65 by block group. As seen in Map 2.2, The Harbors' elderly population is very concentrated in specific areas. Six block groups in particular have elderly populations that make up over 50% of its residents. High concentrations of elderly are mostly located in one of two areas: 1) the north-central part of The Harbors (including the Hudson and Gulf View Districts) and 2) the south-central part of The Harbors (including the River and Central Districts). In contrast, The Harbors' younger population is spread out relatively evenly throughout the area (Map 2.1). The only block groups with relatively low concentrations of younger generations are those with very high concentrations of older residents. However, several southern and central districts such as the Embassy, Elfers, Sunwest, Anclote East and Anclote West display slightly larger proportions of residents under the age of 35.

Map 2.1: Percent of Individuals Under 35 Years of Age by Block Group in The Harbors, 2010



Map 2.2: Percent of Individuals Over 65 Years of Age by Block Group in The Harbors, 2010



## 2.4 Household Distribution and Composition

Map B-1 displays the number of households by census tract. The greatest number of households in The Harbors can be found close to the Pasco County border in the eastern portions of the Spring, Elfers, and Central Districts. There is also a large concentration of households in the central portion of the Embassy district, east of US 19. The primary areas with the least number of households in The Harbors include the Sunwest and Aripeka districts in the north.

The Harbors' large elderly population has a significant impact on its household composition. Comparing The Harbors' household composition to that of Pasco County and state of Florida reveals that a high percentage of The Harbors' households are comprised of adults over the age of 65 living alone and households with one or more people 65 years and over (Table 2.1). Not surprisingly, areas with high concentrations of households with people over 65 correspond to the Districts previously identified as having large elderly populations.

The Harbors large elderly population also means that it has a lower proportion of family households and families with children under 18 years old than both Pasco County and the state of Florida (Table 2.1). The Harbors' distribution of households with children is displayed spatially by Map B-2. Households with children are concentrated in, but not confined to, the Sunwest, Embassy, Central, Elfers, and Anclote West Districts. This is consistent with the location of The Harbors' under 35 population (Map 2.1). The only districts that have a noticeably lower proportion of families with children under 18 years old are the Hudson and Gulf View Districts which have large elderly populations (Maps 2.2 and B-2).

Table 2.1: Household Composition for The Harbors, Pasco County, and Florida

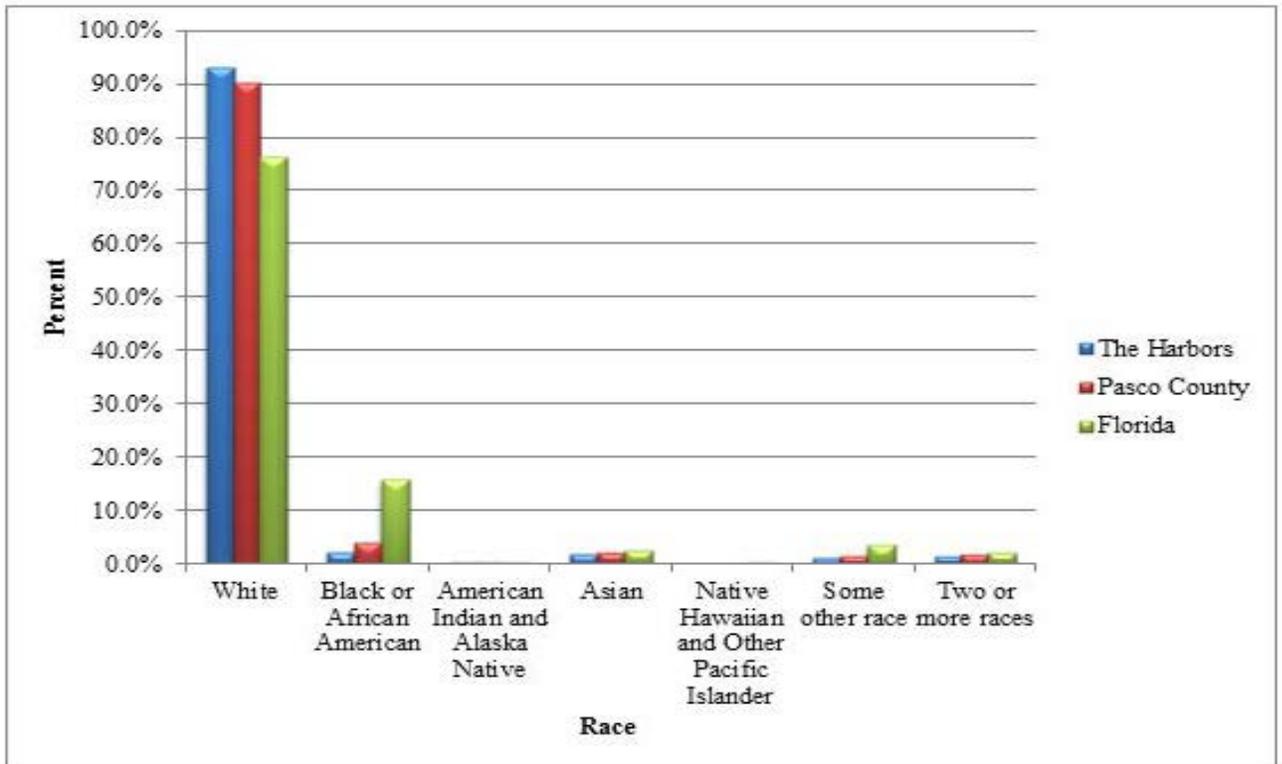
Location	Family Households	Married Couples	Female Householder; no husband present	Nonfamily Households	House-holder living alone 65 years and older	Households with one or more people under 18 years	Households with one or more people 65 years and over
The Harbors	60.9%	46.2%	10.5%	39.1%	15.7%	23.6%	39.3%
Pasco County	66.9%	52.9%	10.1%	33.1%	12.3%	28.2%	34.9%
Florida	65.3%	48.2%	12.7%	34.7%	11.0%	29.8%	30.3%

The number of female-headed households is one of few household composition characteristics where The Harbors resembles the rest of the county and the state. 10.5% of The Harbor’s households have a female householder, which is only slightly below the state average. The Harbors’ female-headed householders are spread throughout the area with small concentrations in the Hill, Embassy, River, and Anclote West Districts (Map B-3). Once again, the areas with a low percentage of female headed householders correspond to districts with a high percentage of residents over 65 such as the Hudson and Gulf View Districts.

### 2.5 Race & Ethnicity

The Harbors’ has a very homogeneous racial and ethnic composition, but it is slowly diversifying. Figure 2.5 and Table 2.2 compares The Harbors’ racial and ethnic breakdown to that of Pasco County and the state of Florida. With 93.1% of its population identifying as white and only 7.6% of its population identifying as Hispanic or Latino, The Harbors is even less racially and ethnically diverse than the rest of Pasco County; a County that is significantly less diverse than the state of Florida. Spatially, the nonwhite population is relatively concentrated in the Hill District, with small pockets also located in the Embassy district and along SR 52 (Map 2.3). However, none of these areas is more than 15% non-white.

Figure 2.5: Population by Race, The Harbors, Pasco County, and Florida, 2006-2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey

Map 2.3: Percent of Non-White Population by Census Tract in The Harbors, 2010

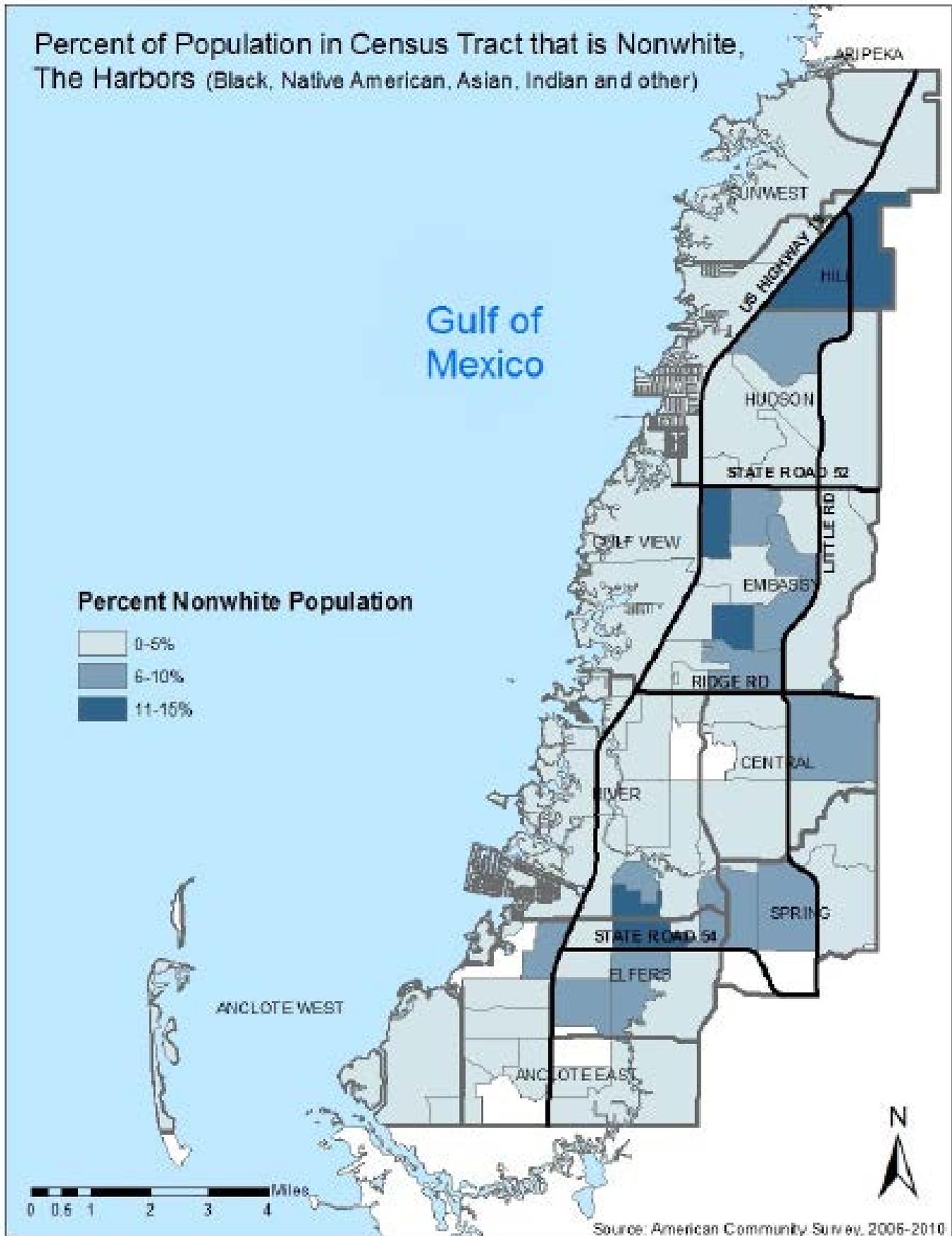


Table 2.2: Population by Ethnicity, The Harbors, Pasco County, and Florida, 2006-2010

Location	Hispanic or Latino	Not Hispanic or Latino
The Harbors	7.6%	92.4%
Pasco County	10.8%	89.2%
Florida	21.6%	78.4%

*Source: United States Census Bureau 2000 and American Community Survey, 2006-2010*

However, The Harbors has been slowly diversifying. Over the last decade, The Harbors’ non-white population increased by 2.9%, and its Hispanic population increased by 3.6% (Table 2.3). Considering that the Pew Research Center, projected that Hispanics will account for 29% of the U.S.’ population by 2050, this trend of diversification is likely to continue (Pasel & DeVera, 2008).

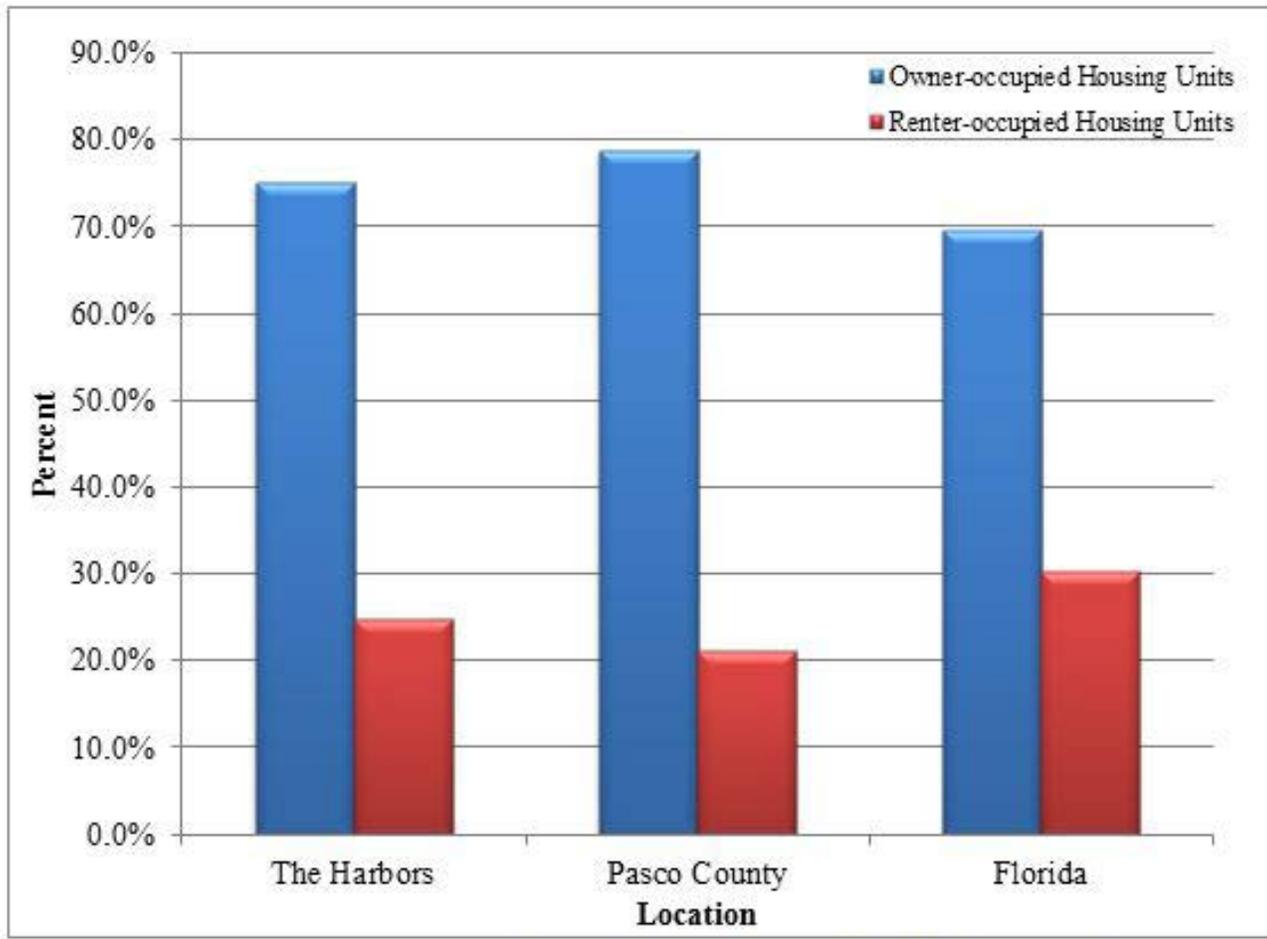
Table 2.3: Population by Ethnicity, The Harbors, Pasco County, and Florida, 2006-2010

The Harbors	White	Black or African American	American Indian and Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	Two or More Races	Some Other Race
2000	96.0%	1.0%	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	1.0%	1.0%
2010	93.1%	2.2%	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	1.2%	1.4%

## 2.6 Home Ownership and Rental Rates

Figure 2.6 exhibits a comparison of the percentage of owner occupied and renter occupied housing units in The Harbors, Pasco County, and Florida. The Harbors rate of owner occupation is comparable to Pasco County’s, but both have higher percentages of owner occupied housing than the state of Florida. The Harbors’ high home ownership rate may be surprising given its population’s relatively low incomes and high poverty rate (Section 2.8 & 2.9), but this may be due to its large elderly population who either have been in the area for a long time or are retired and have more assets than income.

Figure 2.6: Housing Tenure of The Harbors, Pasco County, and Florida, 2006-2010



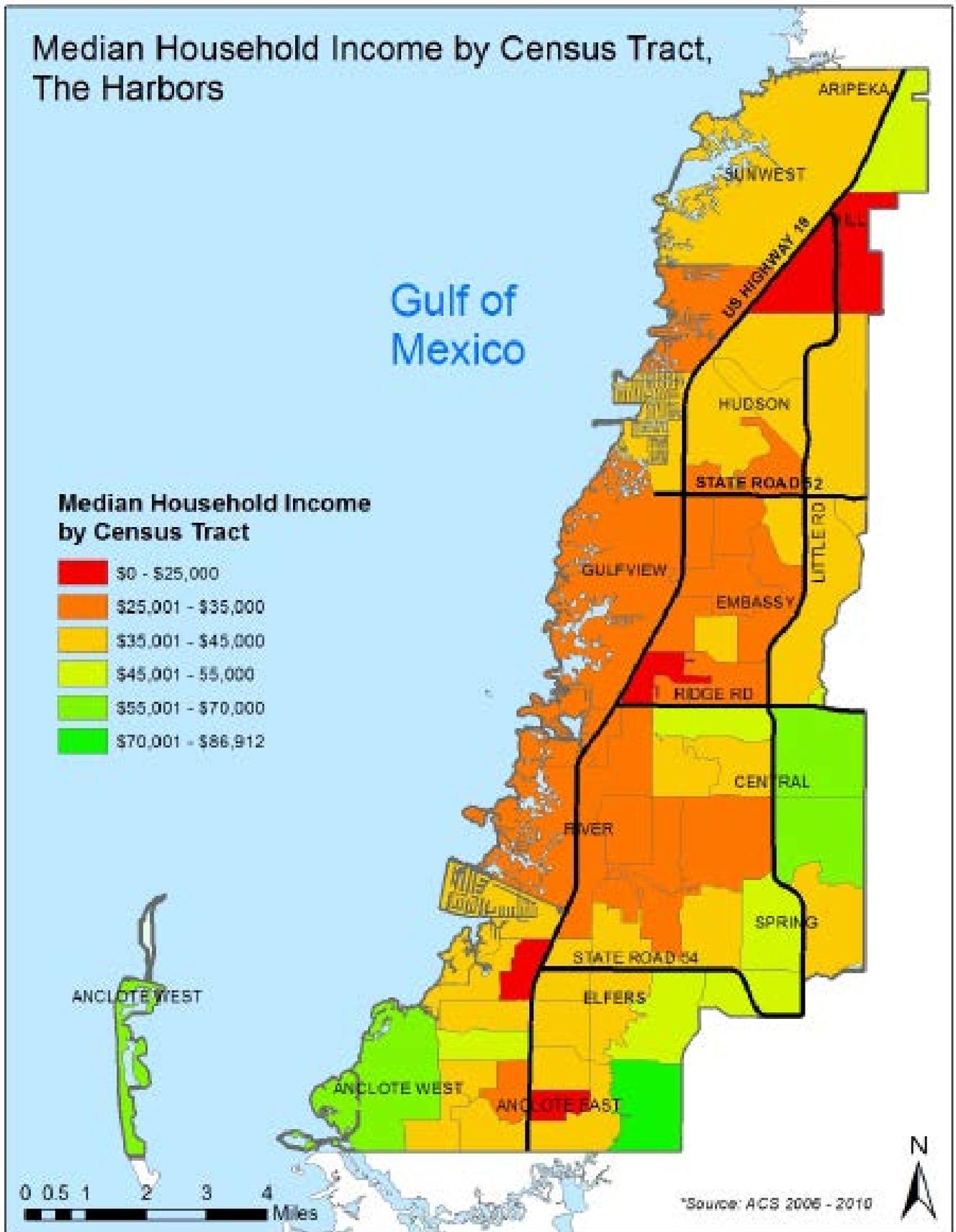
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey

## 2.7 Median Household Income

The Harbors has a significantly lower median household income than both Pasco County and the state of Florida. As seen in Table 2.4, The Harbors' median household income in 2010 was \$38,982. This was over \$5,000 lower than Pasco County's and almost \$9,000 lower than the state of Florida. Unfortunately, this gap has continued to widen in recent years. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, The Harbors' median household income was \$30,647, compared to \$32,969 and \$38,819 in Pasco County and Florida respectively (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). This means that median income gap between The Harbors and Pasco County has grown by almost \$3,000 in the last ten years. However, The Harbors has managed to keep pace with the state of Florida as a whole, so the widening income gap between Pasco County and The Harbors appears to be due more to Pasco County's rapid growth than The Harbors' stagnation.

As seen in Map 2.4, The Harbors' lower income areas are located in and around the central more heavily populated districts (Embassy and River) as well as the southern half of the Hill District.

Map 2.4: Median Household Income of The Harbors by Census Tract, 2006-2010



Conversely, The Harbors’ higher income residents tend to be located in the southeastern half of The Harbors, closer to the Pinellas and Pasco County borders. Fortunately, comparing Map 2.4 to the spatial distribution of The Harbors elderly and non-white populations (Maps 2.2 and 2.3) does not indicate any obvious income inequality issues.

Table 2.4: Median Household Income of The Harbors by Census Tract, 2006-2010

Location	Median Household Income
The Harbors	\$38,982
Pasco County	\$44,228
Florida	\$47,661

Source: American Community Survey, 2006—2010

### 2.8 Poverty

The Harbors’ lower median household income has led to poverty rates that are slightly higher than the county and state averages. Table 2.5 displays the percentage of residents living below poverty in The Harbors, Pasco County, and the state of Florida. Of the three, The Harbors has the highest poverty rate at 14.3%, which is 0.5% higher than the state of Florida (13.8%) and 2.0% higher than Pasco County (12.3%).

Having a poverty rate that is only 0.5% higher than the state average may not seem like major issue, however examining poverty rates at the census tract level may provide reason for concern. The Census Bureau defines “poverty areas” as “census tracts...where at least 20% of residents [are] below the poverty level<sup>1</sup>” (United States Census Bureau). According to this definition large parts of The Harbors can be classified as “poverty areas.” As seen in Map 2.5, significant portions of the Sunwest, Hill, Gulf View, Embassy, and River Districts have poverty rates above 20%. Addressing issues of poverty and stimulating economic redevelopment in a way that provides opportunity for those in poverty will be a major challenge a requiring innovative solutions.

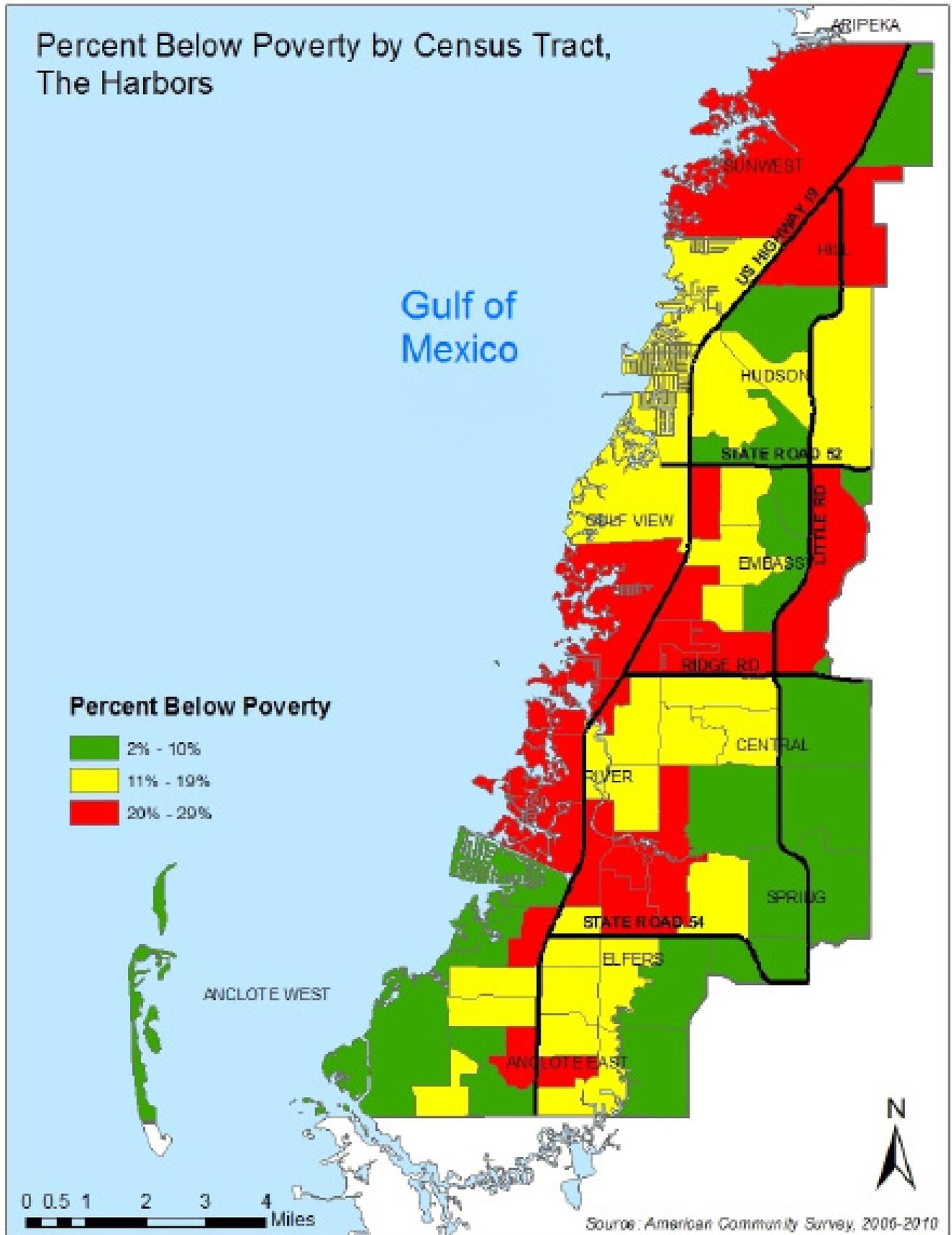
Table 2.5: Percent Living Below Poverty in The Harbors, Pasco County and Florida, 2006-2010

Location	Percent Below Poverty
The Harbors	14.3%
Pasco County	12.3%
Florida	13.8%

Source: American Community Survey, 2006-2010

<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Census Bureau defines poverty level by income thresholds that are determined by the estimated cost of providing basic necessities (food, clothing, shelter) for a household. Any household with an income below the poverty threshold are considered to be in poverty. These thresholds vary by household size.

Map 2.5: Percentage Living Below Poverty by Census Tract, 2006-2010



## 2.9 Unemployment Rate

Unemployment rates are an important indicator of a county's economic health. On top of being a sign of a weak economy and a lack of job opportunities, high unemployment rates are indicative of lower incomes, higher poverty rates, and a lower quality of life. According to data from the American Community Survey, several census tracts in The Harbors have unemployment rates over 18% (Map B-4). Some, but not all, of these areas correspond to census tracts with high poverty rates (Map 2.5). In addition, large sections of The Harbors have unemployment rates between 10% and 18%. In 2010, the unemployment rates for Pasco County and the state of Florida were 9.6% and 8.9% respectively (American Community Survey, 2006-2010). Thus, the majority of The Harbors, including many of its most populated areas have higher unemployment rates than the state average.

## 2.10 Educational Attainment

Although The Harbors' high school education levels are on par with the state of Florida, its proportion of college graduates is significantly lower than the state or Pasco County. As seen in Table 2.6, 85.3% of The Harbors' residents have a high school education. This is equal to the state average and is only slightly lower than the rest of Pasco County. However, only 14.3% of The Harbors' population possesses a bachelor's degree. This is 5.7% lower than Pasco County and 11.6% lower than the rest of state. In this way, The Harbors relatively unskilled workforce may make it difficult to attract highly skilled industries and jobs.

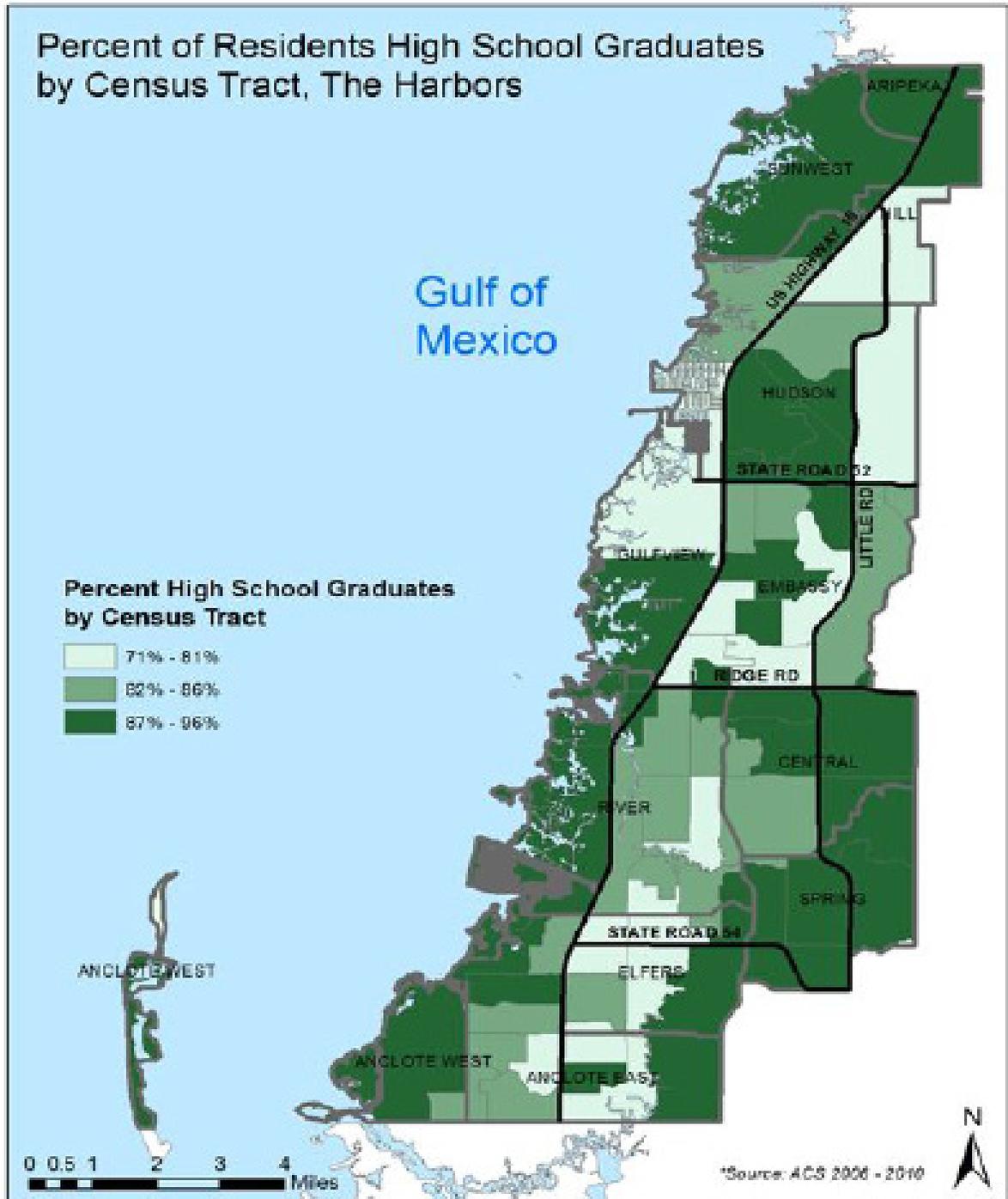
Table 2.6: Percent High School and College Attainment in Population Age 25+ in The Harbors, Pasco County, and Florida, 2006-2010

Location	High school graduate (includes equivalency)	Bachelor's degree
The Harbors	85.3%	14.3%
Pasco County	86.1%	20.0%
Florida	85.3%	25.9%

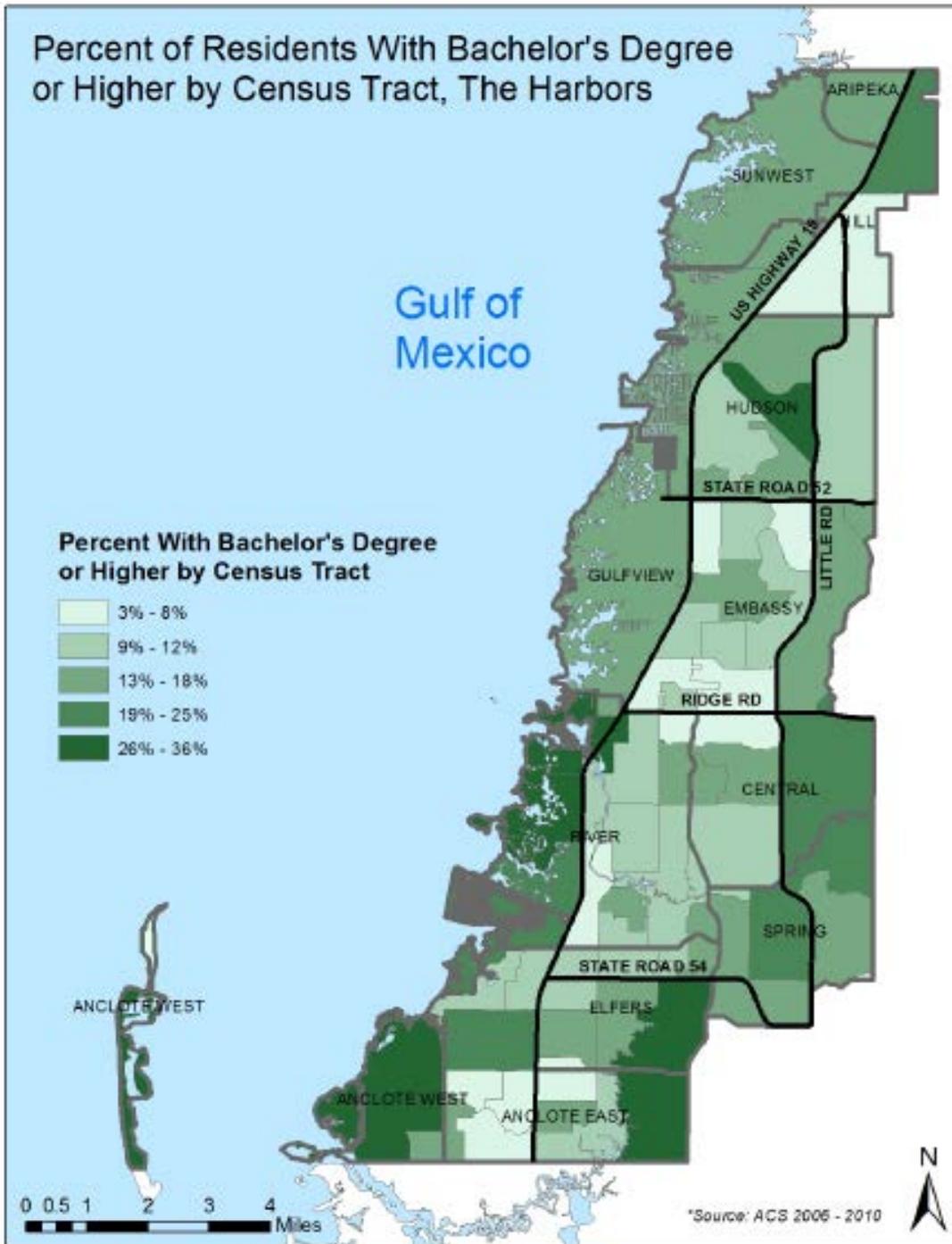
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey

Mapping residents' educational attainment by Census Tract reveals that many of the southern and eastern districts have a slightly more educated population (Map 2.6 & Map 2.7). College educated residents in particular are concentrated in the Anclote West, Anclote East, Central, and Elfers Districts (Map 2.7). Not surprisingly, these areas loosely correspond to areas with higher median incomes while areas with less education, such as parts of the Embassy and River Districts, also have higher poverty rates.

Map 2.6: Percent of High School Graduates by Census Tract, The Harbors, 2006-2010



Map 2.7: Percent of Residents with Bachelor's Degree or Higher by Census Tract, The Harbors, 2006-2010



## 2.11 Mode of Transportation

The Harbors' commuting mode share is very similar to the rest of Pasco County. Decades of auto-oriented development has made traveling by any other means difficult. In addition, Pasco County's relatively low population density has also made it difficult for public transit to be a viable option. As a result, 82.6% of The Harbors' residents commute to work by driving alone; 3.2% higher than the state average (Table 2.7). However, there is some variation of mode choice within The

Harbors. Portions of the northern coastal districts along with the areas surrounding Port Richey and New Port Richey display larger alternative mode shares (Map B-5). However, even in these areas, at least 65% of the population commutes by driving alone.

Table 2.7: Mode of Transportation to Occupation in The Harbors, Pasco County, and Florida, 2006-2010

Location	Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	Alternative Modes (carpool, walk, public transit)	Worked at home
The Harbors	82.6%	13.9%	3.5%
Pasco County	82.0%	13.2%	4.8%
Florida	79.4%	16.2%	4.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey

## 2.12 Vehicle Ownership

Table 2.8 compares The Harbors' vehicle availability rates to Pasco County and the state Florida. The Harbors' lower median income and higher poverty rates have likely led to lower rates of multi-vehicle households. At the same time, the area's auto-dependency may have kept the rate of no-vehicle families from rising higher than the state average. Consequently, 47.8% of The Harbors' households have one vehicle, which is higher than both Pasco County and Florida. Examining this data spatially reveals that at least 90% of households in the vast majority of Census Tracts have at least one vehicle (Map B-7). The Gulf View and River Districts have the highest proportion of households with no vehicles available. This corresponds to the areas that have the highest alternative modes shares (Map B-5). Comparing this to Map 2.5 shows that these areas also have higher poverty rates. This could indicate that sizable portions of the River and Gulf View Districts are in poverty and have limited access to employment opportunities. While, this is not supported by these areas unemployment rates, which are no higher than average (Map B-4), it remains a notable concern.

Table 2.8: Vehicles Available by Occupied Housing Unit in The Harbors, Pasco County, and Florida, 2006-2010

Location	No Vehicles	1 Vehicle	2 Vehicles	3 Vehicles or more
The Harbors	6.1%	47.8%	35.3%	10.7%
Pasco County	4.6%	42.4%	39.8%	13.2%
Florida	6.5%	40.3%	38.6%	14.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey

## 2.13 Food Deserts

Food deserts are “urban neighborhoods and rural towns without ready access to fresh, healthy and affordable food” (USDA, 2014). According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Census tracts qualify as food deserts if they meet the following criteria:

1. “Qualify as “low income communities,” based on having: a) poverty rate of 20% or greater OR b) median family income at or below 80% of the area median family income, AND:
2. Qualify as “low-access communities”, based on the determination that at least 500 persons and/or at least 33% of the census tract’s population live more than one mile from a supermarket or large grocery store.”

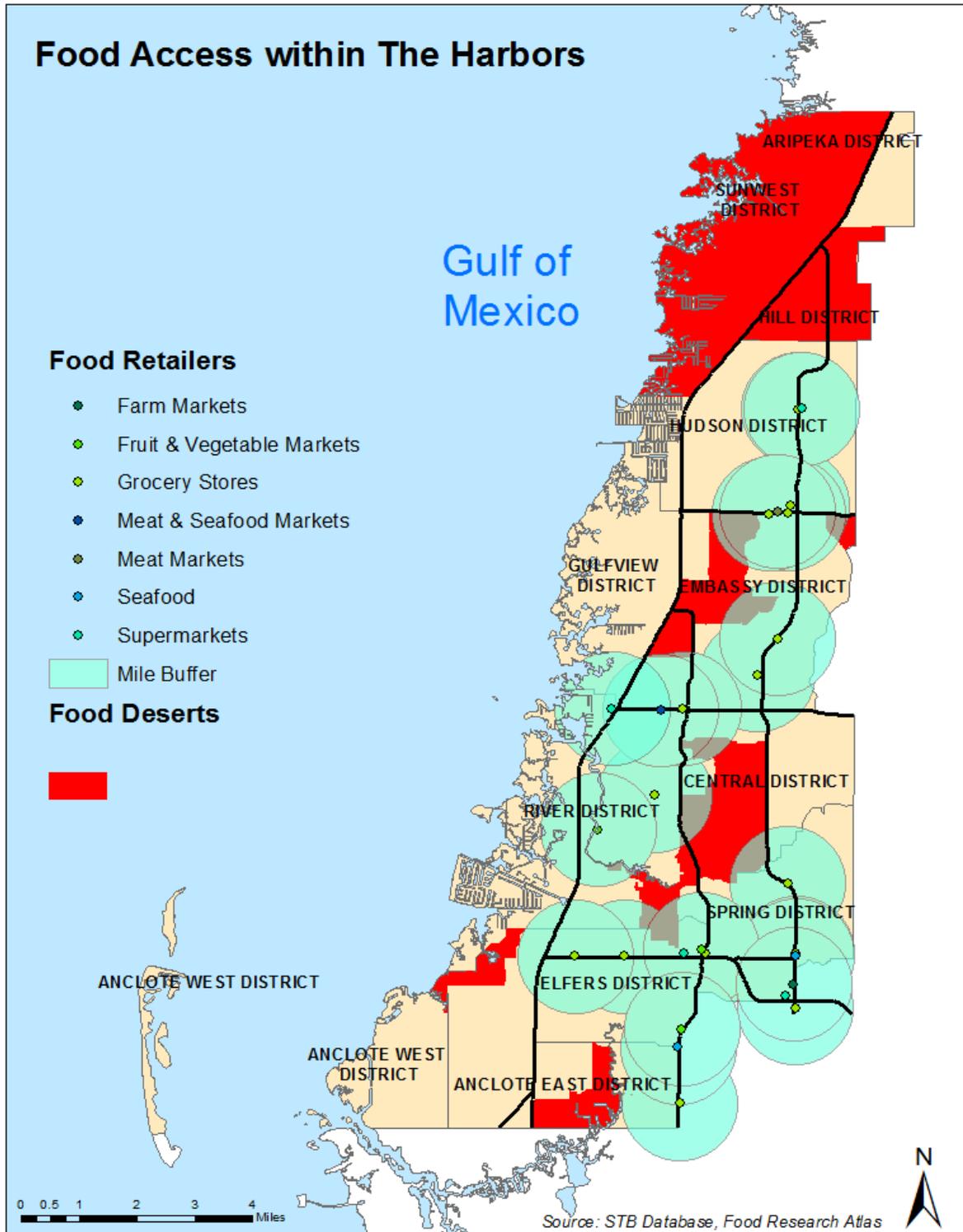
The USDA’s Economic Research Service developed the Food Research Atlas to identify low income and low access census tracts. In addition to the criteria above, the USDA included additional measures of food access which use the distance to a supermarket to evaluate a supermarket’s walkability and drivability. These criteria classify a supermarket’s walkability as high if it is within a half mile radius, medium if it is between a half mile and one mile radius, and low if it is over a mile away. Drivability to a supermarket is classified as high if it is within 10 miles of a community. While no area within The Harbors is more than 10 miles from a supermarket, indicating high drivability throughout, large portions struggle with walkability and food desert issues. Map 2.8 displays The Harbors’ food deserts as identified by the Food Research Atlas. With ten food deserts spread across The Harbors, food access is shown to be a major issue for many of the area’s residents. This is especially true of several of the northern and central districts. In fact, the entirety of the Aripeka and Sunwest Districts are classified as a food desert.

While the Food Research Atlas displays food deserts, it does not identify where food sources are located. Using food source data from the Site of Business database, Map 2.8 overlays The Harbors’ food deserts with the location of each food source and places half and one mile buffer zones around each source to identify areas without walkable access to food. This analysis indicates that, in addition to the official food deserts, large portions of The Harbors are not within walking

distance of a food source. These areas were likely not identified as food deserts because of the residents’ higher incomes. Many of The Harbors’ food desert issues stem from the fact that its food sources are primarily located along major roads. The strip-development patterns that have dominated The Harbors commercial development have concentrated all business activity, including food sources, along commercial corridors. Unfortunately, these commercial corridors are more than a mile away from significant portions of The Harbors’ residential development. Considering The Harbors’ lack of public transit, (0.5% of households utilize public transportation), this presents

a major challenge to low-income and elderly residents' ability to access healthy food. This issue will only become more pressing as The Harbors' baby boomers continue to age and start having difficulties driving. In the future, a reduction in the separation of uses and the promotion of innovative forms of commercial and mixed use development will likely be necessary to alleviate The Harbors' food access issues.

Map 2.8: Food Access within The Harbors



## 2.14 Conclusion

The Harbors' socio-economic profile raises several significant issues that have major implications for the area's future. First of all, The Harbor's population is older than that of both Pasco County and the state of Florida. Even though The Harbors' has grown younger in the last decade, this trend will likely reverse, at least in the near term, as the baby boomers age and young families do not stay to replace them. This will create two major issues that will require careful planning. First, ensuring an auto-dependent elderly population can maintain access to goods and services and preserve their quality of life as they age-in-place will continue to be a major concern. This will be especially important in areas that have large concentrations of elderly such as the Embassy District. Second, it highlights the need to attract a younger population that can support economic revitalization.

The Harbors' population also has lower incomes, higher poverty rates, less education, and higher unemployment rates than Pasco County and the state of Florida. The need for more and higher paying jobs reveals the need for local economic revitalization. Unfortunately, The Harbors' unskilled workforce may present a barrier to economic growth. However, several of the southeastern districts have capitalized on the success of Pinellas and eastern Pasco Counties and have begun to attract younger, wealthier, and more educated residents. This demonstrates the potential to benefit from the regional growth within the Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater MSA.

Finally, decades of auto-oriented development has led to a population that is heavily dependent on the automobile for transportation. This same strip-development has caused food sources to locate along major arterials leaving food deserts throughout the area. Since high poverty rates have kept vehicle ownership rates relatively low and public transit is very limited, The Harbors' residents face significant food access issues.

In Phase I, the FSU Project Team will utilize the economic and demographic characteristics described in this section to identify focus areas within The Harbors that hold potential for redevelopment and reinvestment. After an examination of the District Profiles, immediately following this section, the FSU Project Team will identify specific areas for additional study and analysis that are prime for reinvestment. These focus areas will then be narrowed down to determine geographic priority areas for the reinvestment and redevelopment projects ultimately developed during Phase II of this project.

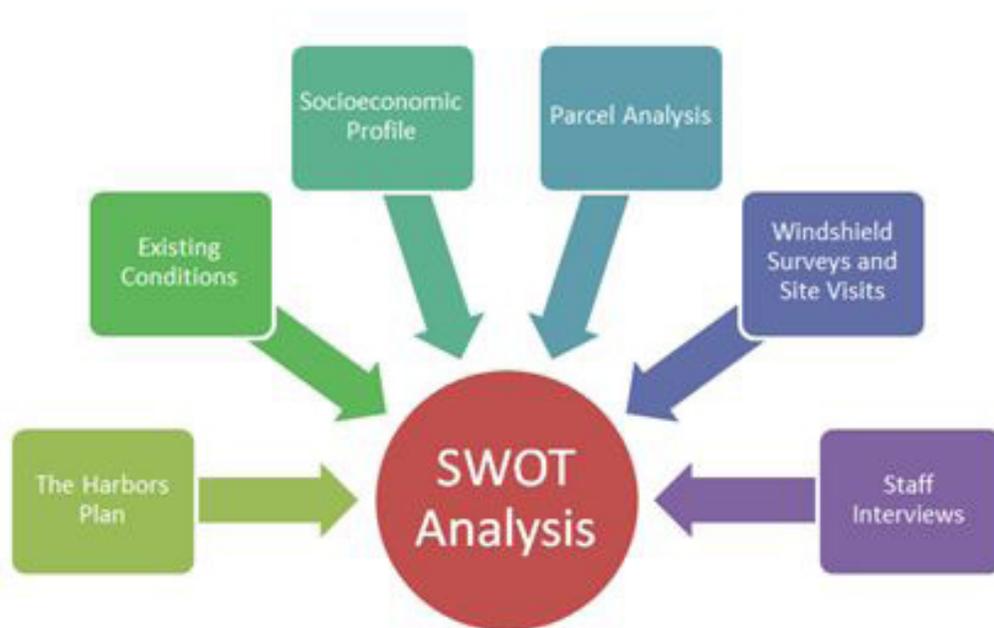
**SECTION 3**  
**DISTRICT PROFILES**

## Section 3 – District Profiles

### 3.1 Introduction

A parcel analysis was conducted for each district within The Harbors area. This analysis included the consideration of many parcel characteristics such as existing and future land use, year structure built, property value, vacancy, and foreclosures. The parcel analysis was used in conjunction with the existing conditions data and socio-economic data to inform a district-level Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis. The section below highlights the relevant parcel data, existing conditions, and socio-economic factors that informed the SWOT analysis (Figure 3.1). It is important to identify these factors so that weaknesses and threats can be addressed, and strengths and opportunities can be capitalized upon to spur growth in the districts. How the identified factors are addressed will determine whether efforts for reinvestment and redevelopment in The Harbors are successful. The following section provides an analysis of each district and graphics summarizing these strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats derived from the parcel analysis and existing and socio-economic conditions.

Figure 3.1: The Harbors SWOT Analysis Process



Source: FSU Project Team

Map 3.1: The Harbors' Districts



## 3.2 The Aripeka District

### 3.2.1 Introduction

With only 901 residents spread across 885 acres, the Aripeka District is the smallest of the 12 districts in terms of both land and population. It is located on the northern border of Pasco County, bounded by Aripeka Road, US 19, and County Line Road. This district offers unique historical and natural charm that The Harbors Plan aims to preserve including historic Aripeka, a small fishing village, as well as coastal resources and conservation lands. The Aripeka District's location at the border of Pasco and Hernando Counties has only amplified development pressure that threatens to impact the areas environmental assets. Key issues within the Aripeka District identified by The Harbors Plan are the need to protect the district's resources from urban influence, the need for trails and sidewalks, and the need for more cohesive planning for the Aripeka District's historic area.

### 3.2.2 Parcel Analysis

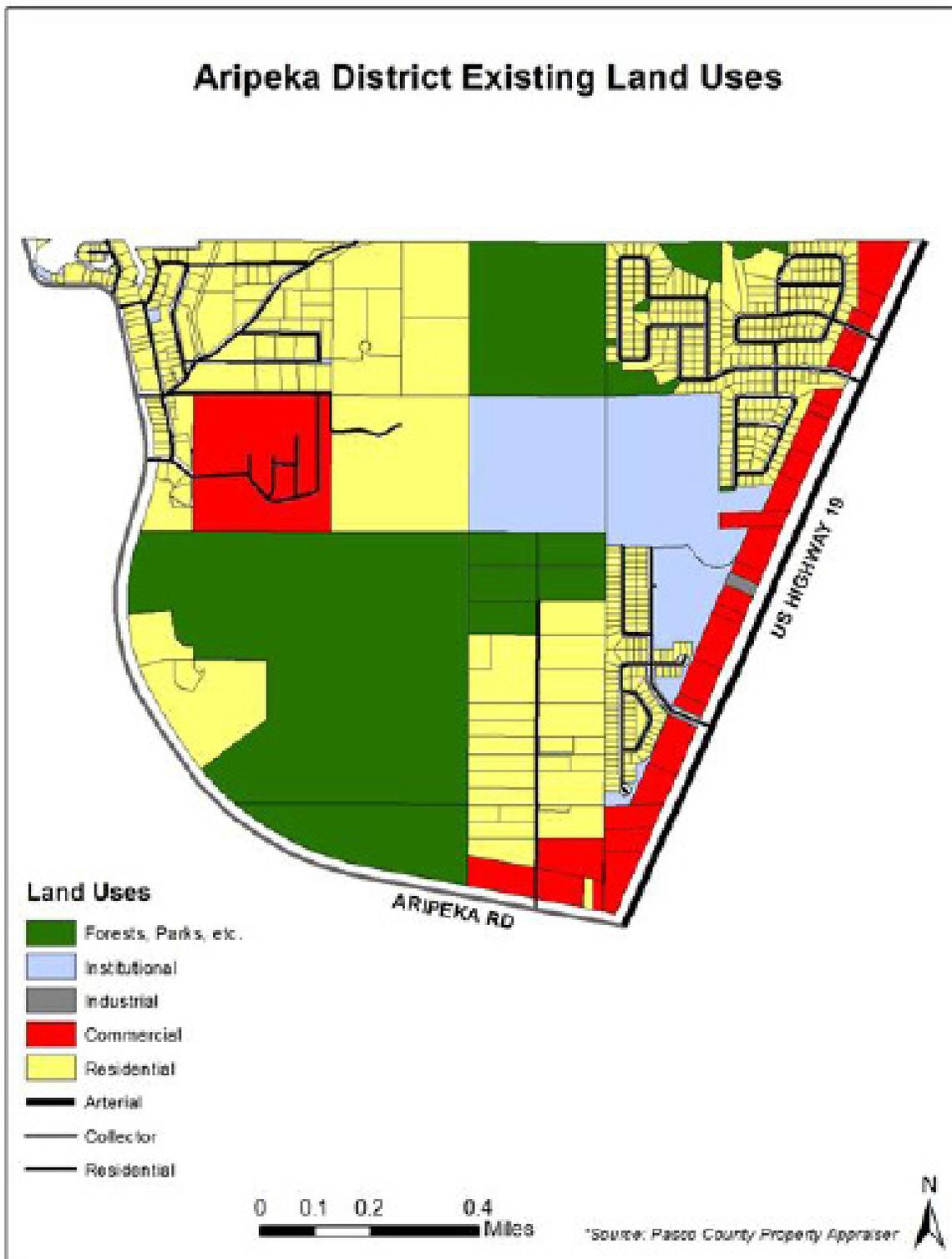
As seen in Map 3.3, the Aripeka District's existing land use is characterized by residential, forests and parks, institutional, and commercial uses. Commercial uses are mainly concentrated along US 19 with one large parcel off of Aripeka Road on the eastern side of the District (Map 3.3). In fact, all but one of the District's commercial parcels are located along US 19. Aripeka's residential development is typically located behind these commercial strips or off of Aripeka Road near the County boarder. Pasco County's 2025 Future Land Use Map (FLUM) expects and allows significantly more residential development than currently exists in the Aripeka District (Map C-2.1). Almost all of the land in the Aripeka District is planned for residential use with the exception of the commercial uses along US 19 and some forest in the northern portion of the district.

There currently are 29 commercial parcels in the Aripeka District, but most of this land is undeveloped. Of the 29 parcels, only 8 are developed. The few developed commercial properties consist of retail stores, auto sales and service, and non-automotive service shops. The single commercial parcel on the eastern side of the district is a 23.7 acre mobile home/RV park. Most of these commercial properties are characterized by an aging commercial stock. Six (75%) of the developed commercial properties were built before the Coastal Building Code of 1986 (Table C-2.2). Since 69% of the Harbors' total commercial building stock was built before 1986, the Aripeka District has a slightly older commercial building stock than the rest of The Harbors.

Map 3.2: The Aripeka District



Map 3.3: The Aripeka Existing Land Use



The aging commercial stock could increase redevelopment and rehabilitation costs for future growth and development because a large percentage of the existing building stock will need significant repairs and rehabilitation to render them suitable for modern use. Also, these buildings may not be compliant with the current building code which makes them more vulnerable to flooding and less resilient to other natural disasters. These factors can dissuade business from

investing in the Aripeka District.

The Aripeka District also has lower commercial property values than The Harbors as a whole. Approximately 67% of commercial parcels in the district are valued at \$50 per square foot or less compared to 49% in The Harbors (Table C-2.6). These lower property values are likely due to its aging commercial building stock, the poor condition of these buildings, and its relative distance from commercial centers. However, The Aripeka District's lower commercial property values along with the significant amount of undeveloped commercial land could present an opportunity for affordable redevelopment in the district.



*Image 3.1: Undeveloped Commercial Parcel Along US 19*

Source: FSU Project Team

Twenty-one of the twenty-nine commercial parcels in the Aripeka District (72%) are classified as vacant-undeveloped by the Pasco County Property Appraiser (Table C-2.3). These vacant parcels are all located along US 19 and Aripeka Road (Map C-2.4). Windshield surveys revealed that many of these commercial parcels were for sale (Table E-1.1). This commercial vacancy rate is high when compared to only 30.6% for The Harbors area (Table C-2.3). These undeveloped parcels provide opportunities for commercial investment and expansion in the district.

Approximately 90% of the Aripeka District's parcels are designated for residential use. Unlike its commercial development, much the District's residential development is relative new. As Table C-2.2 indicates, only 14% of the Aripeka District's residential parcels were built before Florida's standard building code was instituted in 1974. The Harbors' average is more than two and a half times larger at 37.7% (Table C-2.2). Similarly, only 25% of The Harbors' housing stock was built before the Coastal Building Code of 1986, while roughly 60% of the Aripeka District's housing stock has been built since that time (Table C-2.2). There is a cluster of newer residential housing located in the northeast portion of the district in the Briarwoods, Rainbow Oaks, and West Argo Heights neighborhoods. Windshield surveys also found that new residential construction was taking place at 18237 Waydale Loop (Table E-2). The Aripeka District's newer housing stock is one of its major strengths. A newer, more resilient housing stock is especially important for the Aripeka District due to its location within the coastal high hazard area and 100 year flood plain. This presents potential for the Aripeka District because potential homeowners and residents are more likely to invest in newer, more resilient homes, which are in close proximity to the coast.

However, despite, its newer housing stock, the Aripeka District has slightly lower property values than the rest of The Harbors. Approximately 95% of the Aripeka District's residential parcels are valued at \$50 per square foot or less compared to 87% for The Harbors as a whole (Table C-2.6). This is a weakness because people are less likely to invest in properties of low value because these properties are often in lower quality neighborhoods and are in need of repair. However, lower properties values may also provide an opportunity by allowing for cheaper redevelopment. Of the 533 residential parcels in the Aripeka District, 34% are classified as vacant-undeveloped by the Pasco County Property Appraiser (Table C-2.3). This is roughly five times greater than The Harbors' average. Most of the undeveloped residential land is located in the northwest and southeast portions of the district (Map C-2.5). A windshield survey of the district, discovered that much of the undeveloped land in the southeastern half of the District is along US 19 near a subdivision named Briar Oaks (Table E-2). Infrastructure (such as utilities, sidewalks and roadways) is already in place to support housing within the Briar Oaks development. This provides an opportunity for future residential development in the Aripeka District.

Thirty-four homes or roughly 6.3% of residential parcels are in the foreclosure process (Table C-2.7). This is similar to The Harbors' average of 8.0%. Most of the foreclosed properties in the Aripeka District are located in two small residential developments, Rainbow Oaks and West Argo Heights, in the northeast portion of the district (Map C-2.6). The foreclosures in these neighborhoods can present an opportunity for redevelopment or rehabilitation of homes to revitalize these areas.

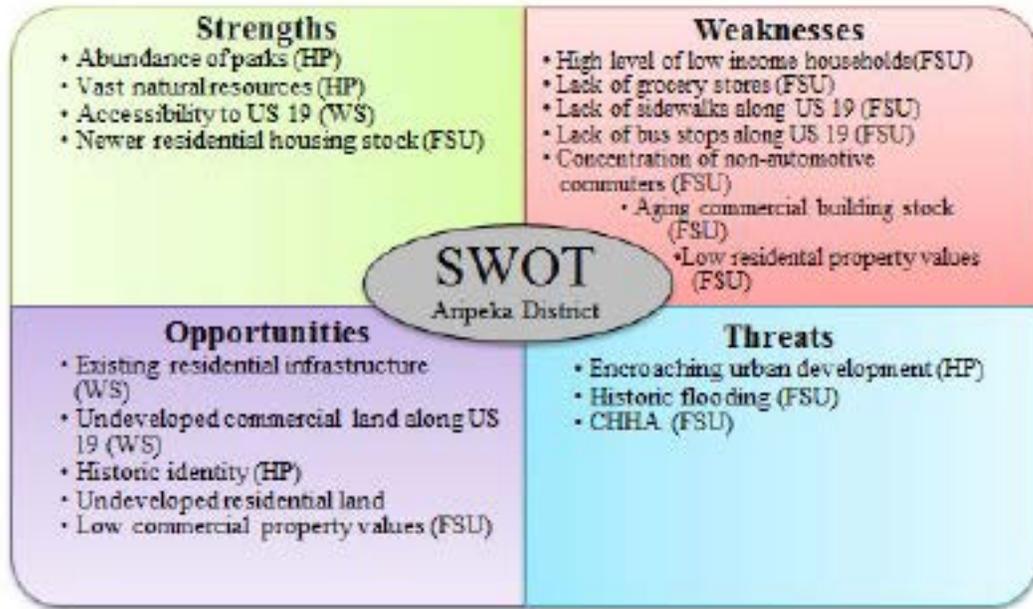
### *3.2.3 SWOT Analysis*

Based upon the FSU Project Team's analysis of The Harbors Plan, Existing Conditions, Socioeconomic Analysis, and Parcel Analysis/Windshield Surveys, the following Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses, and Threats were identified for the Aripeka District.

#### *i. Strengths and Opportunities*

The Aripeka District has many unique characteristics that provide great potential for future development. The Aripeka District contains valuable natural resources such as an abundance of parks, conservation lands, and waterfront homes. The district also has a unique historic character and was designated a State Historic Site in 1993 (The Harbors Plan, 2013). The area is home to a younger population relative to other districts in The Harbors, with 34%-52% individuals age 35 and under (Section 2.3). Further, 25-35% of families in this district have their own children under

Figure 3.2: Aripeka District SWOT Summary



Items in the SWOT Analyses were drawn from the following three sources:

FSU= Florida State University Project Team  
 HP= The Harbors Plan  
 WS= Windshield Survey

18 (Section 2.3). This is due to its proximity to Hernando County. It is possible that many young people are living in the Aripeka District and commuting to Hernando County for work or social amenities. The Aripeka District also contains many newer housing units that were constructed after 1986 and the implementation of coastal building codes (Table C-2.2). This new housing has the potential to attract families and other residents to the area. Another opportunity for the Aripeka District is its accessibility to US 19. The district contains an abundance of undeveloped commercial land along US 19 which provides an opportunity to capitalize on underutilized commercial space. Since many of these commercial parcels have low property values, they have the potential for relatively inexpensive redevelopment opportunities (Table C-2.6). The Aripeka District also contains many undeveloped residential parcels that present an opportunity for the expansion of residential development in this district, especially if it continues to attract younger families.



Image 3.2: The Historic Aripeka Post Office  
 Source: FSU Project Team

## *ii. Weaknesses and Threats*

When traveling south on US 19, the Aripeka District is the first district in The Harbors, and it is the northern gateway to much of Pasco County. This district has many great characteristics, such as its historic identity and natural resources, but it is also plagued by a number of issues. Encroaching urban development from cities in the neighboring Hernando County is threatening The Aripeka District's character as a rural fishing village (The Harbors Plan, 2013). Future planning will need to address ways in which to preserve this rural character. Appropriate use of the Aripeka District's valuable natural resources is also threatened by the fact that it is a coastal high hazard area. This area has been prone to flooding and contains a small repetitive loss area (Section 1.3.2). The potential for flooding is particularly concerning because the majority of the commercial building stock in the Aripeka District was built before the Coastal Building Code of 1986 (Table C-2.2).

The Aripeka District also struggles with low incomes and low property values. In fact, between 46% and 62% of households in every census tract in the district were low income households (Section 4.3). The Aripeka District's low residential property values were supported by windshield surveys that found that poor housing conditions such as unmaintained yards, boarded windows, and deteriorated roofing. This could make it difficult for the district to attract potential homeowners to the area. Similarly, many of the roads within this residential development were dirt roads.

Another challenge in the Aripeka District is its automobile dependency. During the preparation of The Harbors Plan, residents of the Aripeka District identified the lack of curbs, sidewalks, and bicycle trails as a key issue within this district. These are important concerns for the residents since 17-30% of households in the district use alternative means to commute to their occupation, compared to only 13.9% of The Harbors (Section 2.12, Map B-5). Since there are no known bus stops in the Aripeka District, the lack of sidewalks has become a more pressing issue (Map C-2.81). The lack of transportation infrastructure makes it difficult for the residents relying on alternative modes to travel without a vehicle. This is especially concerning since the entire district is a food desert lacking even a single food source (Section 2.14, Map 2.8).

### *3.2.4 Conclusion*

The Aripeka District has a unique character as a historic, rural fishing village along a pristine coastline. This character along with its natural resources and proximity to the urbanization within

Hernando County shows great opportunity for reinvestment. The District's newer residential housing stock and existing residential infrastructure also provide opportunities to attract younger, wealthier families. However, to achieve Pasco County's vision of preserving and enhancing Aripeka District's natural and historic resources the District will need to address many threats and weaknesses such as its aging commercial buildings stock, low commercial and residential property values, low income households, encroaching development, limited food access, and lack of pedestrian infrastructure.

### 3.3 The Sunwest District

#### 3.3.1 Introduction

Located just south of the Aripeka District, the Sunwest District is much larger consisting of 3,511 acres and 2,215 residents, but it is still relatively small compared to other districts (The Harbors Plan, 2013). More than half of the land within the Sunwest District has been designated as coastal and conservation lands, which are owned and managed by the Southwest Florida Water Management District. The remaining land in the Sunwest District mostly consists of undeveloped vacant land and medium-density residential uses with limited commercial use along US 19. The Sunwest District is also the site of the SunWest Harbourtowne Development of Regional Impact (DRI), a proposed mixed used development located on property currently serving as a limestone mining operation. The Sunwest District lacks adequate public access to the coast, connections between parks, and transit connections within the district (The Harbors Plan, 2013). The Plan's vision for the Sunwest District aims to protect and emphasize the existing natural assets and promote opportunities for resort-style living through SunWest Harbourtowne.



*Image 3.3: Lake at Sunwest Mine*

Source: FSU Project Team

Map 3.4: The Sunwest District



### 3.3.2 Parcel Analysis

The majority of the land in the Sunwest District is currently undeveloped. Coastal conservation, mining, and timberlands are the District's primary land uses (Map 3.5). However, much of this land is planned for new development as part of the SunWest Harbourtowne DRI (Map C-2.7). The Harbourtowne will be located in the northern half of the district and comprises the majority of the land in the district. In addition, much of the remaining land that is not designated as a coastal high hazard area is expected to be turned into residential development (Map C-2.7; Section 1.3.2).

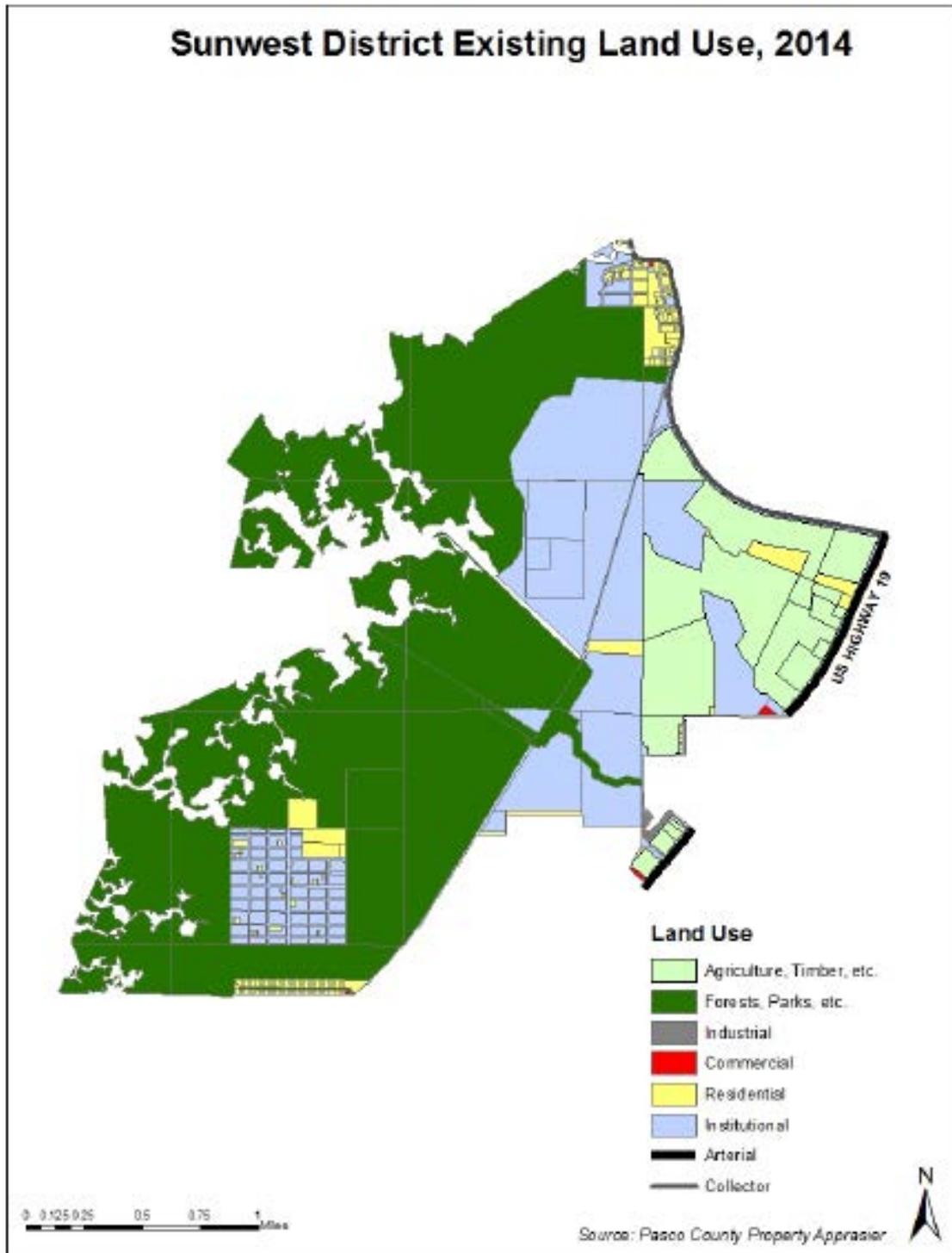
The Sunwest District currently has very little commercial development. In fact, only four parcels, or 1.3% of its land, are designated as commercial. Even most of the land along US 19 is classified as agriculture and timber land uses (Map 3.5). The only existing commercial properties in the district are a mortuary/cemetery, an adult entertainment club, and an industrial mining operation. The District's limited access to US 19 and large proportion of environmentally sensitive land could pose a challenge to expanding commercial development in the area.

Of the four commercial parcels in the district, two found to be undeveloped by the property appraiser (Table C-2.3; Table E-1.1). While, these vacant parcels could provide an opportunity for greenfield commercial development along US 19, this will be very limited since they only account for two acres. Thus, without reclassifying some of the district's agricultural/timber land as commercial, expanding local business in the Sunwest District will be difficult.

The few existing commercial structures in the Sunwest District also struggle with an aging building stock. Both were built in the 1960s, well before Florida's first building codes were established (Table C-2.2). Windshield surveys indicated these aging structures are deteriorating, rendering them unsuitable for modern use (Table E-2). This will create another challenge for commercial rehabilitation and reinvestment in the district. Not surprisingly, these commercial property values are relatively low ranging from \$26 to \$50 per square foot (Table C-2.6). This could offer an opportunity for affordable redevelopment, but limited land availability, especially after the Harbourtowne DRI, will once again prevent the Sunwest District from expansive commercial redevelopment.

Residential development in the Sunwest District is also limited. In fact, most of its residential development is the edges of larger developments primarily located in other districts. GIS Analysis

Map 3.5: The Sunwest District Existing Land Use Map



and the windshield surveys revealed that the Sunwest District only has two pockets of residential development; one located in the north of the district adjacent to the Aripeka District and the other is located in the south abutting a residential development in the Hudson District (Map 3.5).

The age of the residential housing stock in the Sunwest District varies greatly based upon the location. The residential development in the southern end of the district is newer and in better condition than in the northern portion, a finding that was confirmed by the windshield surveys (Table E-1.2). All of the housing units near the district's northern border were built before 1974 when minimum building codes were established. Conversely, all of the housing stock in the southern portion of the district was



*Image 3.4: Example of Deteriorated Housing in North Sunwest District*

Source: FSU Project Team

built after 1980. Consequently, 52% of the housing stock was built before 1974 when minimum building codes were established, which is significantly higher than The Harbors as a whole (37.7%) (Table C-2.2).

The residential property values in the Sunwest District follow a similar pattern with the newer housing near the district's southern border having higher property values than the older development in the north (Table E-1.; Table C-2.6). However, as a whole, the Sunwest District has lower property values than The Harbors. 87.2% of the Sunwest District's residential properties were valued at \$50 per square foot or less and no properties are valued over \$75 per square foot. In contrast, 12% of The Harbors properties were valued at over \$75 per square foot (Table C-2.6).

Over half (53.2%) of the residential parcels in the Sunwest District are classified as vacant by the Pasco County Property Appraiser. Windshield surveys and GIS Analysis revealed that most of these parcels are located in a partially developed neighborhood located at the southern end of the district directly north of the existing neighborhood. While there are no roads, water, infrastructure, or platted development, a system of canals has been constructed to enable the development of canal homes. This partially planned development offers an opportunity to expand residential land use near existing residential developments.

The large tracts of undeveloped residential land offer opportunity for the provision of neighborhood parks and new residential development. The SunWest Harbourtowne will attempt to capitalize on this opportunity, but this still leaves the need to ensure redevelopment efforts do not ignore the deteriorating state of the existing housing stock. In particular, the windshield surveys noted that many of the single-family and mobile homes along Aripeka Road in the northern part of the

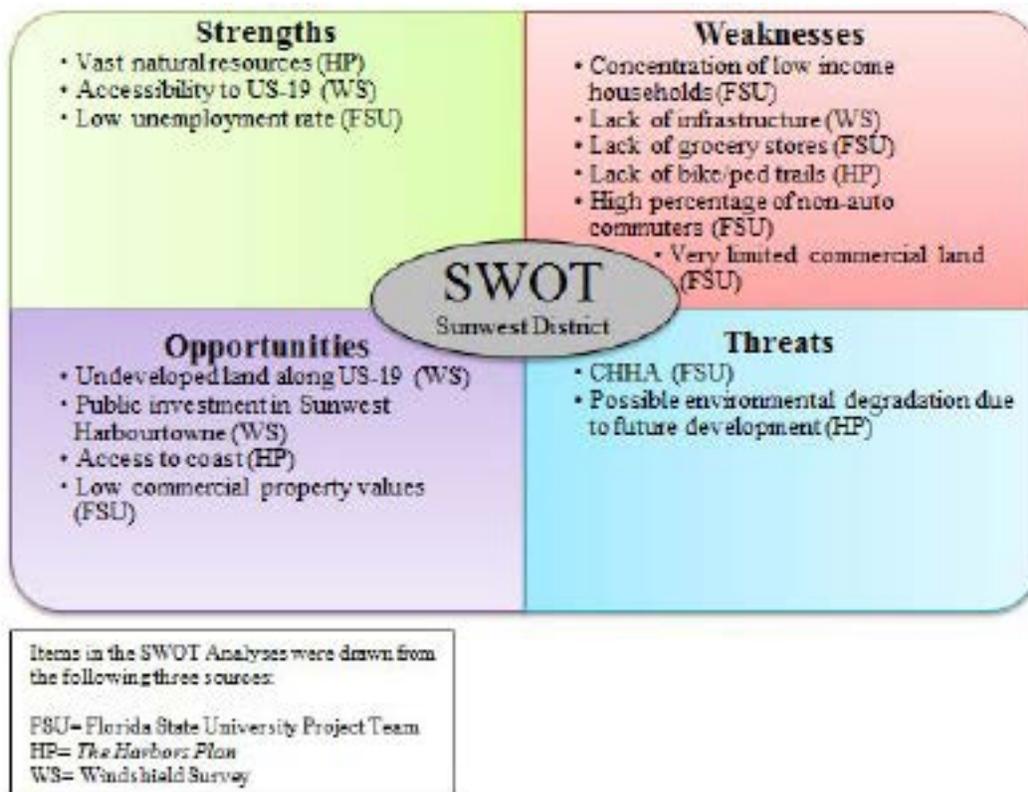
Sunwest District are deteriorating and in need of repair (Table E-1.2).

However, despite its aging housing stock and lower property values, the Sunwest District is not struggling with foreclosures as much as the rest of The Harbors. Only four (2%) of the district’s residential properties are in foreclosure compared to 8.0% of properties in The Harbors (Table C-2.7). All four of the district’s foreclosures are located in the neighborhood in the southern portion of the district. The foreclosures consist of two foreclosed homes and two undeveloped lots (Map C-2.12).

### 3.3.3 SWOT Analysis

Based upon the FSU Project Team’s analysis of The Harbors Plan, Existing Conditions, Socioeconomic Analysis, and Parcel Analysis/Windshield Surveys, the following Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses, and Threats were identified for the Sunwest District:

Figure 3.3: The Sunwest District SWOT Summary



### *i. Strengths and Opportunities*

The Sunwest District is characterized by a vast landscape of untapped natural resources. The SunWest Harbourtowne DRI provides an excellent opportunity to capitalize on the access to the coast, provide more parks and trails, provide new residential development, and attract new and younger residents. The public investment in SunWest Harbourtowne DRI has already made progress and developed momentum toward these ends. Undeveloped land along US 19 may also provide an opportunity for commercial investment, but much of this land is currently dedicated agricultural use. Especially as the Harbourtowne DRI continues to be developed, commercial businesses could be attracted to the area because of its access to US 19. Another notable strength of the Sunwest District is its low unemployment rate. Less than 8% of the District's workforce is unemployed (Section 2.10, Map C-4).

### *ii. Weaknesses and Threats*

The majority of the Sunwest District is located in the coastal high hazard area indicating a high potential for flooding (Section 1.3.2). This poses a challenge because future development efforts will need to consider the natural character of the land to avoid further environmental degradation. In addition to this threat, there is a lack of road infrastructure throughout the district. The lack of adequate infrastructure can discourage private investment in the district due to the high cost of providing such needs. In addition, only 2% of the land is dedicated to commercial use, and most of the land adjacent to US 19 is not classified as commercial. This could create a barrier to commercial revitalization since developers will be attracted to other districts with ample undeveloped parcels along US 19.

Much like the Aripeka District, the Sunwest District struggles to provide transportation options and food access to the district's large low income and transit dependent populations. Relative to The Harbors, a higher percentage (17-30%) of the Sunwest District's residents use alternative modes of transportation to commute to work (Section 2.12, Map B-5). While the Harbourtowne DRI promises to provide more bicycle and pedestrian trails throughout the district, there currently is a lack of infrastructure supporting residents who do not drive (Section 2.12; Map B-5). The district's transportation issues are likely due in part to the area's lower income. Between 63% and 85% of households in about half of the district's census tracts are classified as low-income (Section 4.3). This is especially problematic because the district does not have a single grocery store causing and all but one of its census tracts to be classified as a food desert (Section 2.14).

### 3.3.4 Conclusion

The Harbors Plan envisions the Sunwest District as a unique nature-based recreational destination that protects and enhances coastal resources and ecosystems while supporting ecotourism and resort-style living. The combination of its large amounts of undeveloped land, ample natural resources, and the SunWest Harbortowne DRI provides plenty of opportunity for the district to achieve this vision. However, the concentration of low income residents and deteriorating housing stock in the north indicates a need for revitalization efforts. The lack of trails, sidewalks, and bus stops will pose a challenge for mobility in the Sunwest District, especially considering the high rate of residents who rely on alternative modes. Finally, the environmental risks and degradation associated with development in the coastal areas will pose a challenge as the district continues to become more established.

## 3.4 The Hill District

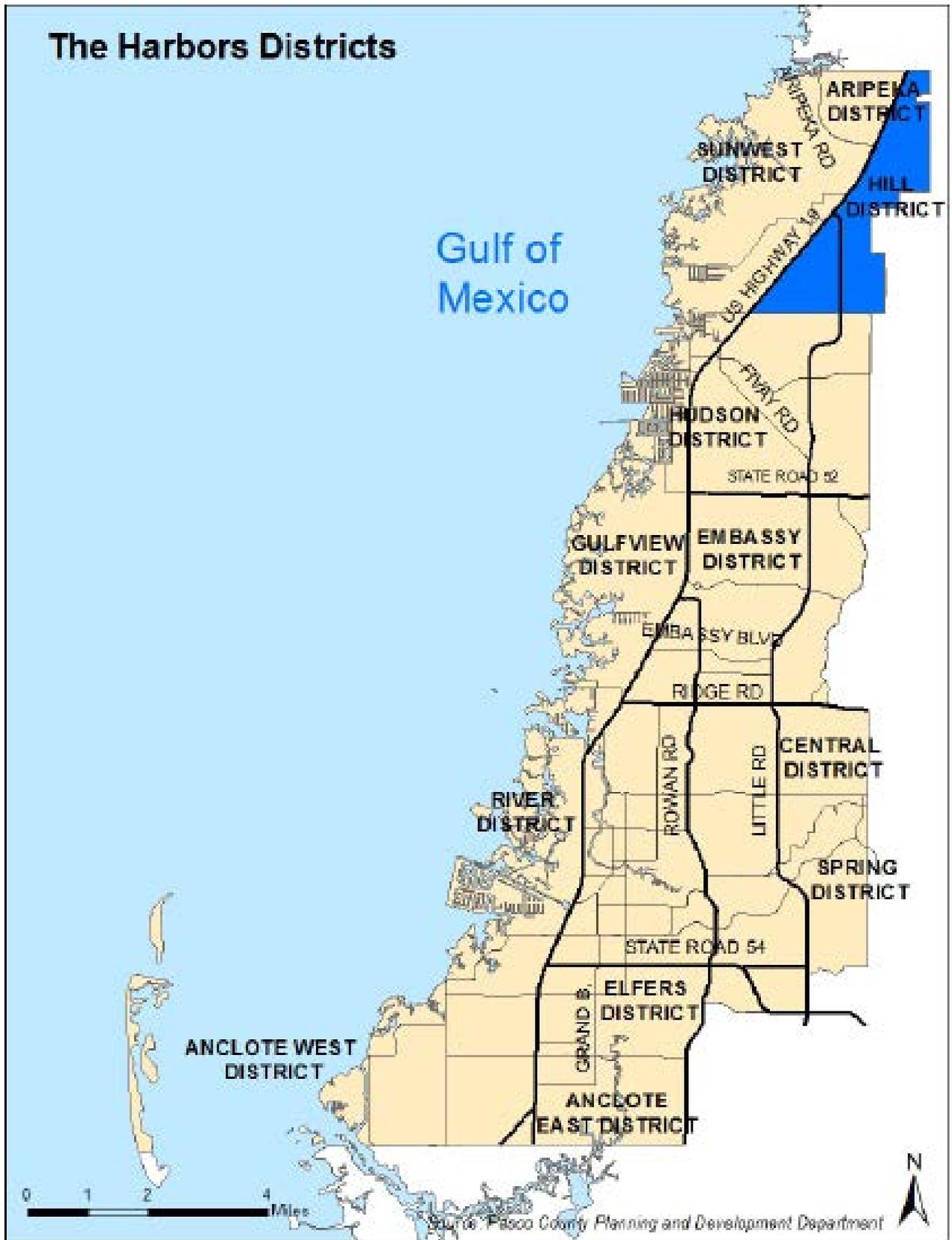
### 3.4.1 Introduction

The Hill District, located east of the Sunwest and Aripeka Districts, spans 2,805 acres and has a total population of 5,189 (The Harbors Plan, 2013). The district is characterized by industrial and commercial land uses along US 19 with low-density residential land use and large tracts of vacant land filling in the space east of US 19. Currently, The Harbors Plan cites multiple issues in this district that it hopes to address including the incompatibility between existing industrial and residential uses, limited parcel size for further industrial development, and a lack of pedestrian infrastructure especially along US 19. The Harbors Plan emphasizes the opportunity to create a thriving industrial area that harmonizes industrial, residential, and commercial uses by designing for compatibility with adjacent uses and overall cohesiveness.

### 3.4.2 Parcel Analysis

The Hill District is characterized by numerous mobile home/RV parks, commercial development along US 19, and a concentration of industrial businesses in the southern half of the district. The Hill District is also characterized by two distinct halves with very different socioeconomic compositions and land use patterns. The northern half has a much wealthier and more educated population. Not surprisingly, this is coupled with larger residential parcels. The northern half also has undeveloped commercial parcels along US 19 (Map C-2.17; Section 4.3). This provides the Hill

Map 3.6: The Hill District



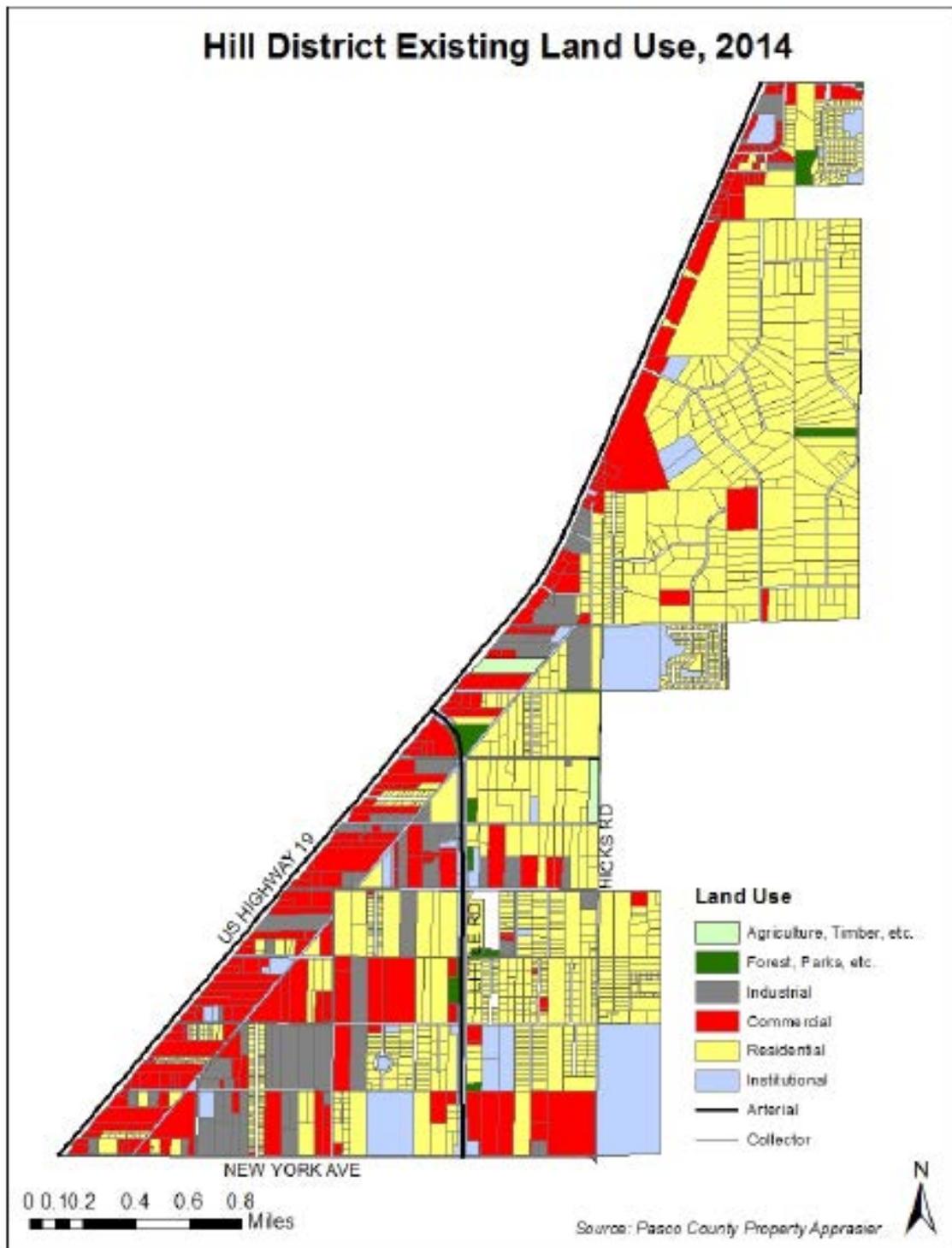
District with an opportunity to develop the commercial sector in the north. The southern half of the district has a much poorer and less educated population, and is comprised of a mix of commercial, industrial, and residential. Many of the businesses in the district are light industrial uses such as warehouses, light manufacturing, and auto-related companies (Table E-1.1). Unfortunately, the close proximity of these industrial uses to residential development creates significant compatibility issues (Map 3.7). It is not uncommon for these incompatible uses to be abutting each other. However, Pasco County's FLUM attempts to address the compatibility issues in the southern half of the district by clustering industrial activity in the southern half and residential uses in the north (Map C-2.20). While this is the first step to addressing the incompatible land use pattern in the district, there will continue to be challenges creating a more compatible land use pattern.

Similar to the other northern districts, the Hill District's commercial building stock is older than much of the rest of The Harbors'. 81.8% of the district's commercial stock was constructed before 1986 and the implementation of coastal building codes, compared to 69% in The Harbors (Table C-2.2). Many of the older commercial buildings are concentrated in the southern half of the district.

The Hill District's commercial properties also have lower property values than The Harbors as a whole. Of the Hill District's commercial properties, 20% are valued between \$0 and \$25 per square foot. Only 13% of commercial properties in The Harbors fall within this range. Conversely, only 15% of the Hill District's commercial properties are valued between \$51 and \$100 per square foot, compared to about 27% of The Harbors' commercial property values (Table C-2.6). The district's lower commercial property values are concentrated in the southern half of the district corresponding with older building stock and lower income residents. While the district's aging commercial stock is a substantial weakness, the low property values provide an opportunity for affordable reinvestment because of the low entry costs into the commercial property market.

The majority of commercial parcels (60.2%) in the district are undeveloped. In particular, windshield surveys found that all of the commercial parcels north of Houston Avenue were undeveloped and for sale (Table E-1.1). Similarly, the western border of the Hill District parallel to US 19 consists almost solely of undeveloped commercial parcels. Some of these undeveloped commercial parcels are fairly large, ranging from under one acre to 40 acres. The large, undeveloped parcels provide ample opportunity for commercial investment and the provision of much needed grocery stores in the district. There is only one commercial property in the

Map 3.7: The Hill District Existing Land Use Map



foreclosure process. It is a small parcel (less than one acre) located along US 19 in the southern portion of the Hill District (Map C-2.18).

Mobile homes are the dominant form of residential units in the Hill District. Windshield surveys determined that while the condition of mobile home parks (and all other types of residences)

ranged from well-maintained to severely deteriorated, the Hill District contains better quality mobile homes and mobile home communities than other districts in The Harbors (Table E-1.2). For example, in well-maintained areas, some owners have added screened in porches, bay windows, updated landscaping, and repaired and/or replaced driveways and sidewalks. Some of these communities also provide residents with amenities such as pools and community centers.

On average, the age of the residential housing stock in the Hill District is similar to that of The Harbors. Of the Hill District's residential properties, 53.2% were constructed before the Coastal Building Code of 1986 (Table C-2.2). However, there is a wide variation in the age of the residential housing stock. The year built ranges from 1940 to present, but a slightly larger proportion of the housing stock was built in the 1960s and 1970s. No particular area has a concentration of new or old housing. The aging housing stock does pose a challenge for the district, but is not out of the ordinary for The Harbors.

Within the Hill District, 96.2% of residential properties are valued at \$50 or less per square foot (Table C-2.6). This is 9.2% higher than The Harbors as a whole. This reveals that the Hill District has slightly lower residential property values than The Harbors overall. The lower property values are a weakness for the Hill District and can be attributed to the type of residential units, the age of the residential housing stock, and the lack of coastal access. The lowest residential property values are concentrated in the southern half of the district and are in the greatest need of rehabilitation and reinvestment.



*Image 3.5: Undeveloped Commercial Parcel on US 19*

Source: FSU Project Team



*Image 3.6: Well-maintained Mobile Home in the Hill District*

Source: FSU Project Team

Of the residential parcels in the Hill District, 233 (18%) are considered vacant by the Pasco County Property Appraiser (Table C-2.3). GIS Analysis and windshield surveys confirmed that all but one of these properties were undeveloped. This one parcel is located in the center of the district

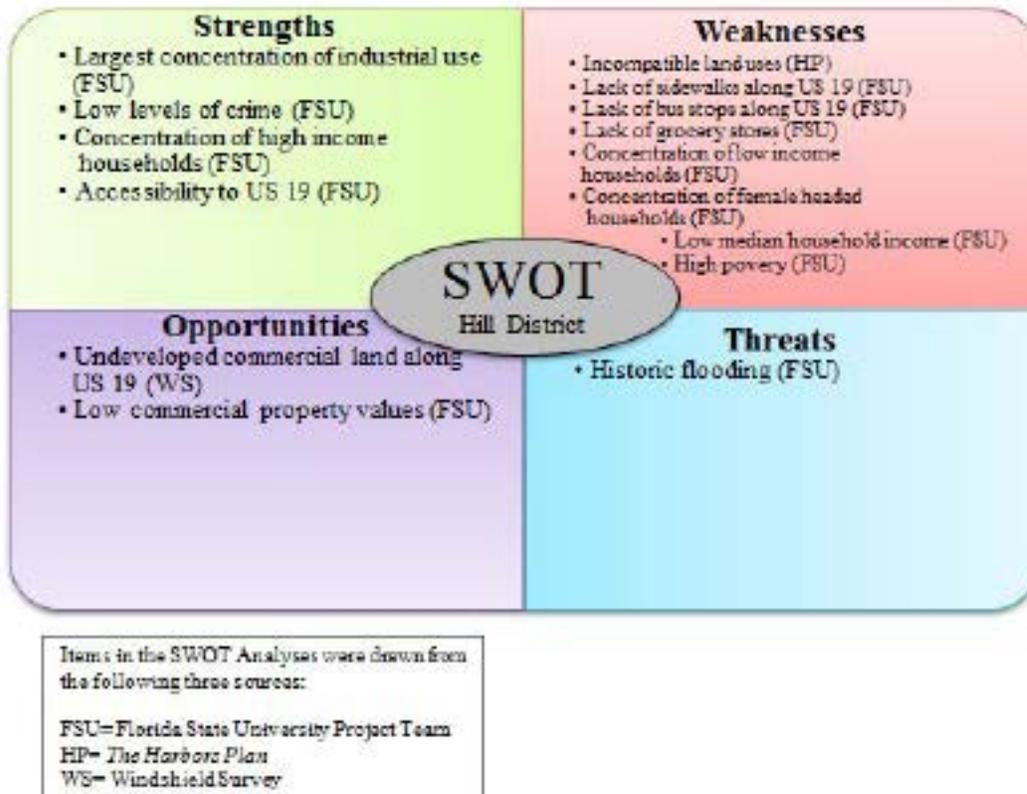
near US 19 (Table E-1.2; Map C-2.17). The district’s undeveloped parcels are spread evenly throughout the district and typically are relatively large parcels. These vacant parcels provide the Hill District with opportunities to expand residential development near existing residential areas, especially in the northern half of the district, which could alleviate some of the issues associated with the incompatible land uses in the southern half of the district. By focusing new residential development in the north, more land will be available in the southern half of the district for industrial use. The undeveloped land also presents an opportunity to provide some of the needs identified by The Harbors Plan including neighborhood parks, sidewalks, bus stops, and trails.

At the time of analysis, there were 80 (6.2%) housing units in the foreclosure process in the Hill District (Table C-2.7). This is similar to the foreclosure rate for The Harbors overall (8.0%). These residential foreclosures are scattered throughout the Hill District (Map C-2.19).

### 3.4.3 SWOT Analysis

Based upon the FSU Project Team’s analysis of The Harbors Plan, Existing Conditions, Socioeconomic Analysis, and Parcel Analysis/Windshield Surveys, the following Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses, Threats were identified for the Hill District:

Figure 3.4: The Hill District SWOT Summary



### *i. Strengths and Opportunities*

Combining the results of the parcel analysis with the existing conditions assessment and socioeconomic analysis revealed many strengths and opportunities in the Hill District. The district has the highest concentration of industrial uses, and can capitalize on this opportunity to attract more industrial investment because there are many of the parcels located near the existing industrial uses are undeveloped. Collocating industrial businesses is a benefit for the community and the businesses because it is easier to provide the roads and infrastructure specific to industrial use while also ensuring the proper buffers between incompatible uses. Industrial land often pollutes surrounding properties, so locating industrial uses near each other would prevent polluting residential and commercial land. The Hill District also has opportunities for more commercial development. Roughly 60% of the commercial land along US 19 is undeveloped (Map C-2.16). The accessibility to US 19 could attract commercial and industrial businesses because of the visibility associated with being located along major roadways. In addition, the districts' commercial property values are low which would reduce commercial investment costs. The Hill District also has very low levels of crime compared to the rest of The Harbors. Only a few pockets along US 19 and the abutting residential development in the southern half of the district have higher crime rates than The Harbors' average (Table D-2.13). The rest of the district enjoys a very low crime rate. The low levels of crime can attract new residents and businesses to the district. In addition, there is concentration of high income households in the northern half of the district. The census tract that comprises the entire northern half of the district has 31% to 62% of its households classified as high income (Section 4.3; Section 2.7).

### *ii. Weaknesses and Threats*

Unfortunately, the Hill District is also facing several significant threats and weaknesses. A large portion of the district has been subject to historic flooding (Section 1.3.7). As mentioned above, the proximity of industrial and residential land uses has created an incompatible land use pattern throughout the district, especially in the southern half. Also, there is a lack of pedestrian infrastructure such as sidewalks and bus stops along US 19 (Section 1.3.5; Map C-2.81).

The southern portion of the Hill District is also struggling with many socio-economic issues. Between 14% and 23% of households in the southern half are female-headed householders with no husband present (Section 2.5, Map B-3). Further, this area has a low median household income of under \$25,000 and a high poverty rate between 20% and 29% (Section 2.7, 2.9). Finally, the

district does not have a single grocery store and the southern portion of the district is classified as a food desert by the USDA (Section 2.14).

#### 3.4.4 Conclusion

The Harbors Plan envisions the Hill District as an industrial focused area with a healthy mix of residential and commercial uses that create jobs as well as a livable and sustainable environment. The ample amounts of undeveloped commercial land along US 19 and sizable undeveloped residential parcels provide an opportunity to expand commercial/industrial development in appropriate areas, incorporate pedestrian infrastructure, and provide grocery stores. This will need to be done carefully to ensure compatibility with the existing industrial development that is scattered across the district. Unfortunately, the area's proclivity for flooding may also pose a threat to these redevelopment efforts. The socio-economic conditions are also a major weakness in the district. The southern half of the district's high percentage of female headed households, high poverty rate, and low median household income will require revitalization efforts to focus in this area of the Hill District.



*Image 3.7: Example of Adjacent Industrial and Residential Land Uses*

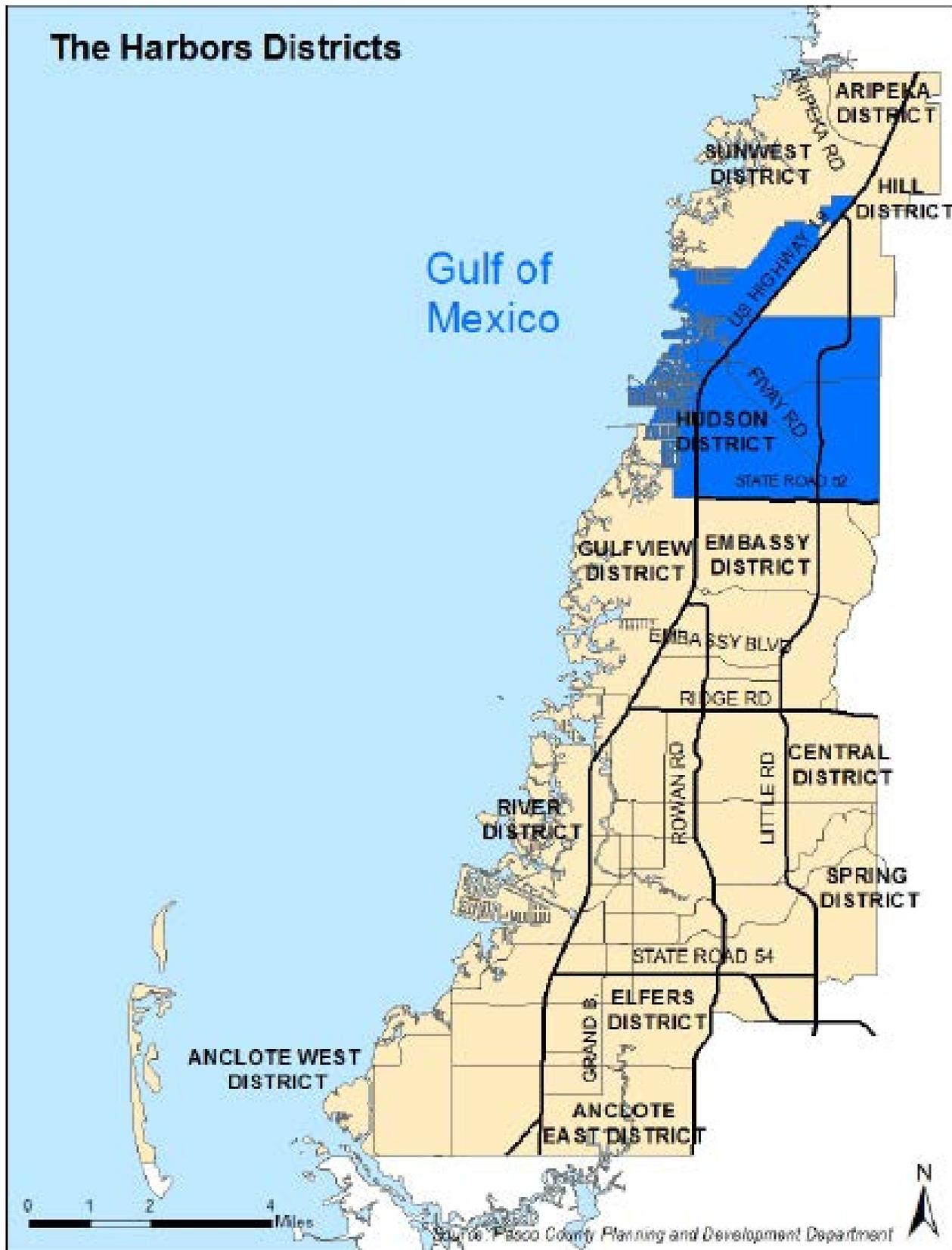
Source: FSU Project Team

## 3.5 The Hudson District

### 3.5.1 Introduction

Located just south of the Sunwest and Hill Districts, the Hudson District is one of the oldest and largest districts in The Harbors with historical roots dating back to the late 1800's (The Harbors Plan, 2013). In the early twentieth century, the Fivay Company's lumber production sparked the initial stages of growth in the area but eventually stagnated in the 1940s when the company went out of business. The Hudson District later bounced back from the economic downturn in the 1950s as a result of new waterfront development, bringing new residents and economic revitalization back to the area (The Harbors Plan, 2013). Today, the Hudson District's 8,071 acres is home to Hudson Beach, various waterfront properties, gated suburban neighborhoods, and 25,795 residents. Like many of the other districts, the Hudson District is characterized by strip

Map 3.8: The Hudson District



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development along US 19. This development still lacks adequate public access to the coast, sidewalks, bike trails, and transit services (The Harbors Plan, 2013). The Harbors Plan emphasizes the need to protect the area's coastal and historic resources while promoting ecotourism by marketing Hudson Beach as a local and regional destination

### *3.5.2 Parcel Analysis*

The Hudson District is primarily made up of commercial and residential uses. GIS Analysis and windshield surveys showed that the Hudson District is characterized by commercial strip development along US 19 and SR 52, with residential properties immediately abutting and filling in behind the commercial strip (Table E-1.1, Map 3.9). As such, residential development is prevalent throughout the entire district.

Of the 16,339 total parcels in the Hudson District, commercial parcels comprise 5.8% (959 parcels) of the land use in this district (Table C-2.3). Only 4% of The Harbor's parcels are commercial making the Hudson District the second largest concentration of commercial development in The Harbors, second only to the River District. The most prevalent type of commercial uses include one-story offices and retail stores. However, the Hudson District is also home to the Beacon Woods Golf Club, located in the southern portion of the district, and the Regional Medical Center Bayonet Point, located just off of US 19 on Fivay Road.

The age of the commercial building stock is not as large of a challenge for the Hudson District when compared to The Harbors. About 53% of the commercial buildings in the Hudson District were constructed before the 1986 Coastal Building Code, compared to 69% for The Harbors as a whole (Table C-2.2). However, this still indicates that much of the commercial stock is aging. In fact, only 10% of the districts' commercial stock was built after 1994 when the building codes were updated to include new regulations such as wind design standards. The oldest commercial development is focused along US 19, especially along the northern half of the US 19 corridor.

The commercial property values in the Hudson District are similar to that of The Harbors overall. 44.1% of commercial properties in the Hudson District are valued at \$50 or less per square foot. Another 30.0% are valued between \$50 and \$100 per square foot compared to 48.7% and 27.1% respectively within The Harbors. The district's low commercial property values are concentrated along US 19 in the north half of the district which corresponds to the location of the older commercial structures.

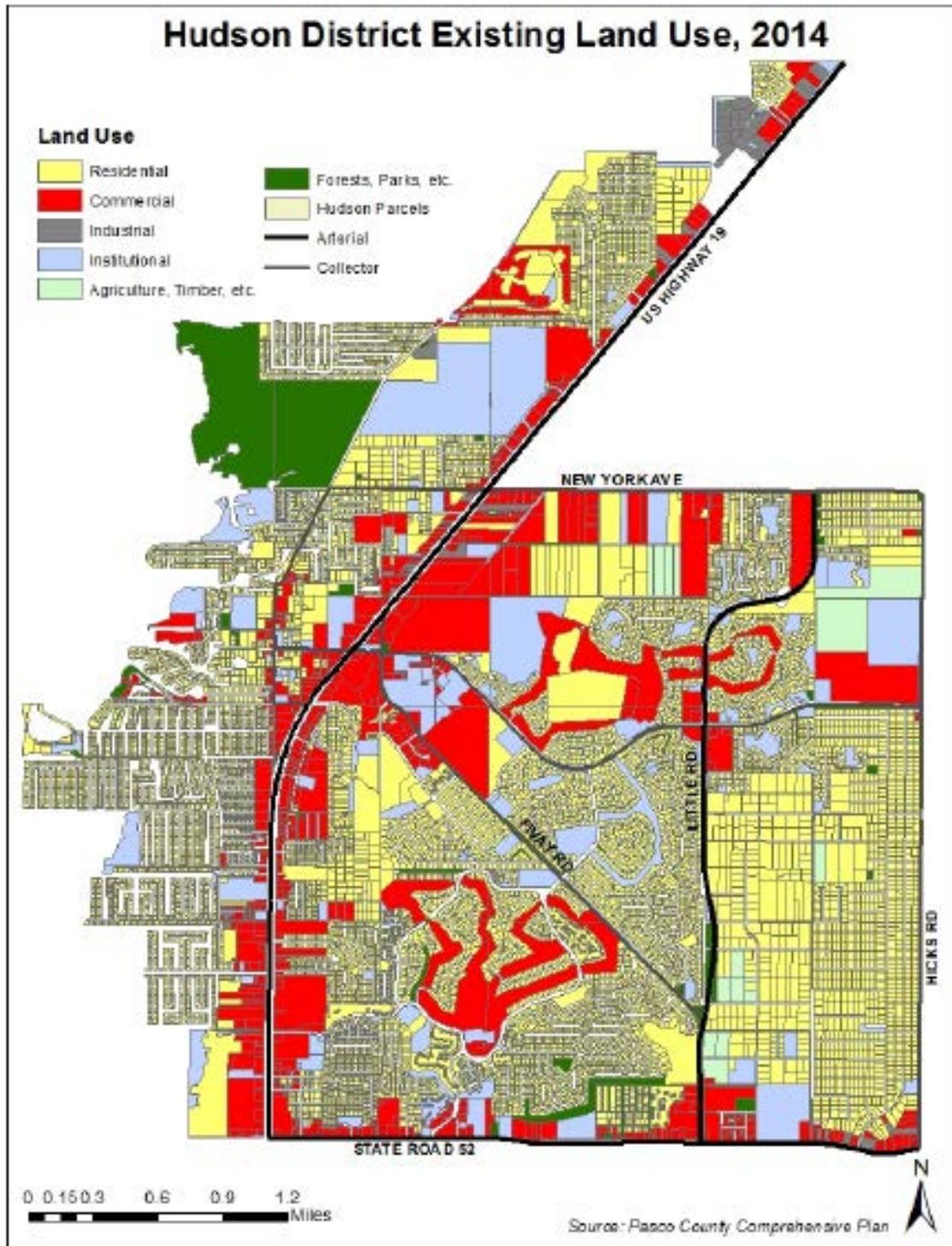
Of the 959 commercial parcels in The Hudson District, 33% (320 parcels) are considered vacant by the Pasco County Property Appraiser (Table C-2.3, Map C-2.33). GIS Analysis and windshield surveys confirmed that all of this land is undeveloped. In addition much of the existing commercial development is also vacant. For example, one strip-mall in the immediate vicinity of the Medical Center, the Scott Medical Plaza, had over 50% vacancy at the time of the survey (Table E-1.1). Granted, the Plaza may be an exception because it had recently finished renovations to the facade, parking lot, and landscaping, but windshield surveys also found numerous vacant buildings and partially occupied strip-malls throughout the district (Table E-1.1). However, despite these vacancies, The Hudson District has a strong sales base. Data from the Site to Business Database (STB) provided by Pasco County Planning and Development Department shows that the Hudson District is one of The Harbors' strongest in terms of employment and business sales activity (Section 4.3). Consequently, the vacancies may simply offer an opportunity for more commercial investment and redevelopment along US 19.

There are three commercial foreclosures (0.31% of commercial parcels) in the Hudson District (Table C-2.7). This is similar to the commercial foreclosure rate (0.43%) for The Harbors as a whole. All of these properties are smaller than an acre and are located along US 19 abutting existing commercial development (Map C-2.25). One of the foreclosed parcels is vacant, two are one story retail stores, and one is a non-auto service shop. While each of the foreclosed properties is relatively small, they do offer the potential for inexpensive redevelopment opportunities near existing commercial uses.

Of the 16,339 total parcels in the Hudson District, 14,490 (88.7%) are classified as residential. The Hudson District's residential development is comprised of canal homes, apartments, single-family houses, mobile-home parks, and condominiums located on the Beacon Woods Golf Course.

Similar to its commercial building stock, the age of the Hudson District's housing stock is less of a challenge when compared to The Harbors overall. 31.2% of residential buildings in the district were constructed after 1986 when the Coastal Building Code was established, compared to only 22% of the residential structures in The Harbors (Table C-2.2). However, this still means that over two-thirds of the Hudson District's residential structures were constructed before 1986 coastal building codes were enacted. This is especially problematic because the district's oldest residential development is located along the coastline. The proximity of many pre-code residential structures to the coast and canals presents a potential for flooding and damage during storm events. Much of the district's new construction is located along its eastern border, away from the coast. For example, windshield surveys observed a newly established subdivision called The Highlands that

Map 3.9: The Hudson District Existing Land Use Map



was 75% occupied and had infrastructure in place for the remaining undeveloped parcels (Table E-1.1).

The Hudson District’s residential property values are on par with The Harbors as a whole. 86.4% of residential properties in the Hudson District are valued at \$50 per square foot or less compared to 87.0% within The Harbors (Table C-2.6). Unfortunately, windshield surveys found that many of the residential areas in the Hudson District have deteriorated housing, poorly maintained yards, and/or numerous rent and for-sale signs (Table E-1.2). These factors can contribute to the low property values in the Hudson District. The low property values are prevalent throughout the entire district, with the highest property values coinciding with the newest housing construction.

Of the 14,490 residential parcels in the Hudson District, 11% (1,601 residential parcels) are classified as vacant by the Pasco County Property Appraiser (Table C-2.3).

The undeveloped parcels are scattered throughout the district, but are concentrated in particular developments on the edges of the district. For example, the residential developments located in the southeast or northwest corners of the district have many more undeveloped parcels than the residential developments in the center of the district.

These undeveloped parcels range from 0.25 acres to 34 acres. The undeveloped residential

parcels near the coast will be an opportunity for the Hudson District to capitalize on the views and natural resources associated with the coast.



*Image 3.8: Scott Medical Plaza Sign Along US 19 Showing Only a Few Tenants*

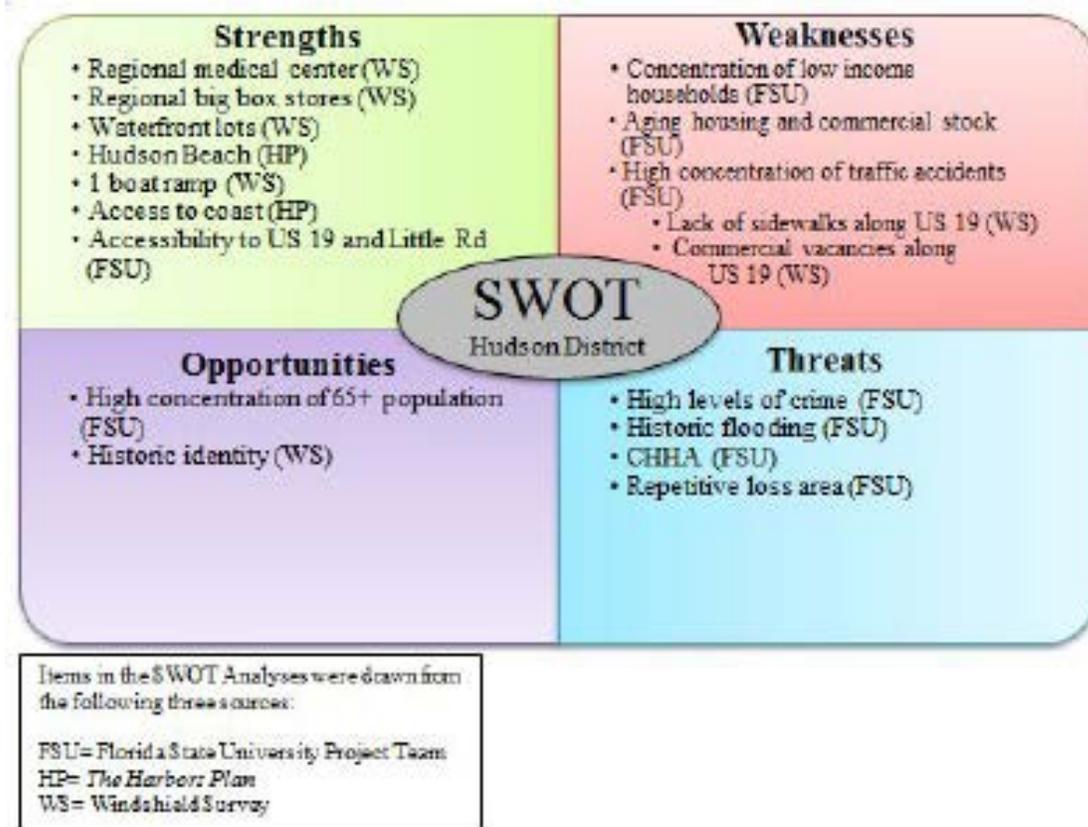
Source: FSU Project Team

Overall, there are 871 (6.1%) residential properties undergoing foreclosure in the Hudson District (Table C-2.7). This is slightly less than The Harbors, which has a foreclosure rate of 8.0%. The residential properties in the foreclosure process are located throughout the district, but are slightly more concentrated in the south between US 19 and Little Road and the east among the canal homes (Map C-2.26). These foreclosures offer opportunities to provide neighborhood parks, sidewalks, trails, and other needs identified in The Harbors Plan.

### 3.5.3 SWOT Analysis

Based upon the FSU Project Team’s analysis of The Harbors Plan, Existing Conditions, Socioeconomic Analysis, and Parcel Analysis/Windshield Surveys, the following Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses, and Threats were identified for the Hudson District:

Figure 3.5: The Hudson District SWOT Summary



*i. Strengths and Opportunities*

The Hudson District appears to have one of the strongest commercial bases of any district in The Harbors. The Regional Medical Center Bayonet Point and many large retail stores are located in the district, attracting a regional clientele. This along with its access to US 19 could make it a prime candidate for commercial redevelopment. While the commercial vacancies may provide evidence to the contrary, this also provides additional space for commercial investment.

In addition, the District’s location along the coast, with coastal access on Hudson Beach, offers many recreational opportunities including at least one boat ramp. This access to the coast is a major strength for the Hudson District because it could attract even more people to the area by providing a place to recreate and creating a more livable environment (Map C-2.22). Building on this could help turn The Hudson District into an ecotourism destination. The Hudson District’s historic identity and character provides another avenue to support these efforts and to capitalize upon existing strengths through enhancement efforts.

The Hudson District also has the largest concentration of older residents of any district in The Harbors. This acts as both an opportunity and a threat to the future of the district (Section 2.3). The older population will require the special provision of services including transit options and healthcare needs. At the same time, older populations typically have stable incomes and will attract additional healthcare services. These services have the ability to create more jobs in the Hudson District. The Hudson District can capitalize on its older population by attracting more retirees to the district. This population could spur economic growth throughout the district because retirees have the income and time to enjoy the local amenities or recreational opportunities associated with tourism in The Harbors.

### *ii. Weaknesses and Threats*

Like much of the rest of The Harbors, The Hudson District is prone to flooding. The district's entire coastline is in the coastal high hazard area, and almost all of the area west of US 19 is designated as a repetitive loss area (Section 1.2.3). The resiliency of the commercial and residential housing stock in this area is also suspect in the event of a storm because many of the structures were built in the 1960's and 1970's before minimum building codes were established (Table C-2.2).

The Hudson District also struggles with high levels of non-violent, violent, and property crimes. Non-violent and violent crime is concentrated along the US 19 and SR 52 commercial strips, while property crime is prevalent throughout the district (Section 1.3.5). Crime rates in the Hudson District are as high as 35 crimes per 1,000 people. This is almost three times higher than The Harbors' average (Table C-2.3).



*Image 3. 9: Absence of Crosswalks on SR 52*  
Source: FSU Project Team

Another challenge within the district is the high number of traffic accidents. In fact, the area surrounding the US 19 and SR 52 intersection was the most dangerous stretch of road in The Harbors for both motorists and pedestrians (Section 1.3.5). From 2009 to 2013, approximately 711 traffic accidents occurred in the Hudson District along US 19 and SR 52 alone. In addition, this stretch of US 19 is dangerous for bicyclists and pedestrians because there are few red lights and a lack of crosswalks and sidewalks (Table E-1.1). The long block lengths and lack of convenient

crosswalks result in pedestrians not utilizing the existing crosswalks which pedestrians and motorists in hazardous situations.

Finally, the concentration of low income households in the district could provide a challenge to redevelopment. Every census tract in the district has between 46% and 62% of its households classified as low income (Section 4.3). In this way, the high levels of crime, traffic accidents, and concentration of low income residents could slow reinvestment and hinder revitalization efforts within the district.

#### *3.5.4 Conclusion*

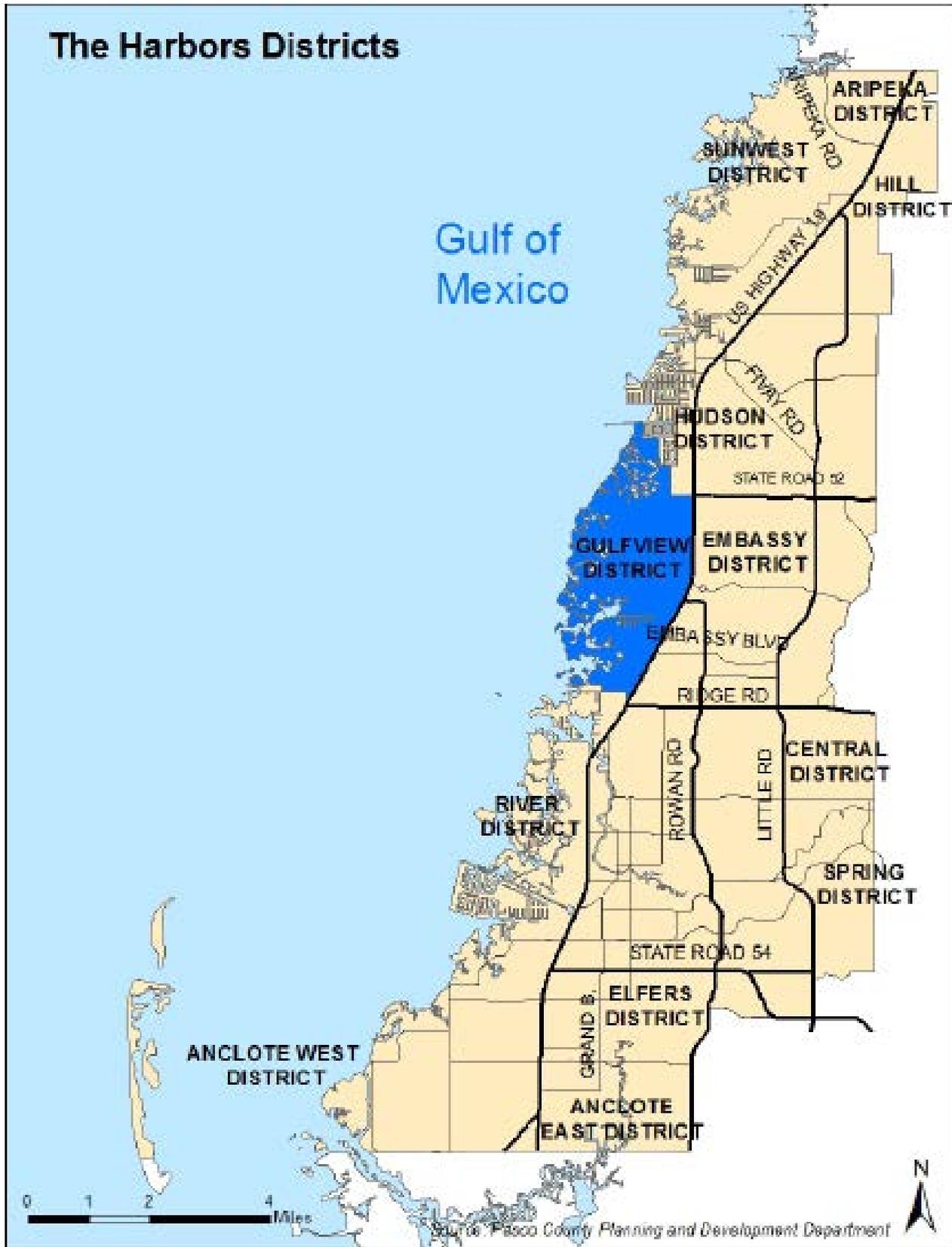
The Harbors Plan envisions the Hudson District as a major destination for ecotourism while protecting and enhancing its historic and coastal resources, and providing a system of trails to capitalize on these resources. The Hudson District already attracts a regional clientele, and would benefit from additional investment in the area to promote regional and local tourism efforts. The accessibility to the coast provides additional opportunities for continued investment in the Hudson Beach area and will offer residents recreational activities, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and sidewalks. However, the high levels of crime, traffic accidents, and foreclosures in conjunction with the concentrations of elderly residents and low income households will create challenges for the district as it attempts to achieve this vision. The district is also subject to flooding which could hinder revitalization efforts. Redevelopment efforts will need to address these issues to fully capitalize on its strengths.

## **3.6 The Gulf View District**

### *3.6.1 Introduction*

Southwest of the Hudson District is the Gulf View District. With a population of 5,629 and a land area of 3,743 acres, the Gulf View District is moderate in size comprising 7% of The Harbors' land area. This district is defined by its coastal resources and other natural features such as parks and rivers, older housing stock, and outdated strip development along US 19. The Gulf View District is home to Gulf View Square Mall, located between US 19 and the Werner-Boyce Salt Springs State Park. The mall is one of The Harbors' key retail anchors, yet its location currently blocks the view of the coast from US 19 greatly hindering its potential as an aesthetic local destination. Other problems currently facing the Gulf View District include vacant retail along US 19, inadequate

Map 3.10: The Gulf View District



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public access to coastal resources, and lack of bike and pedestrian infrastructure. The Harbors Plan highlights the need to redevelop the Gulf View Square Mall and offers a range of design alternatives that emphasize compact, mixed-use development that showcases a coastal view and surrounding natural resources.

### *3.6.2 Parcel Analysis*

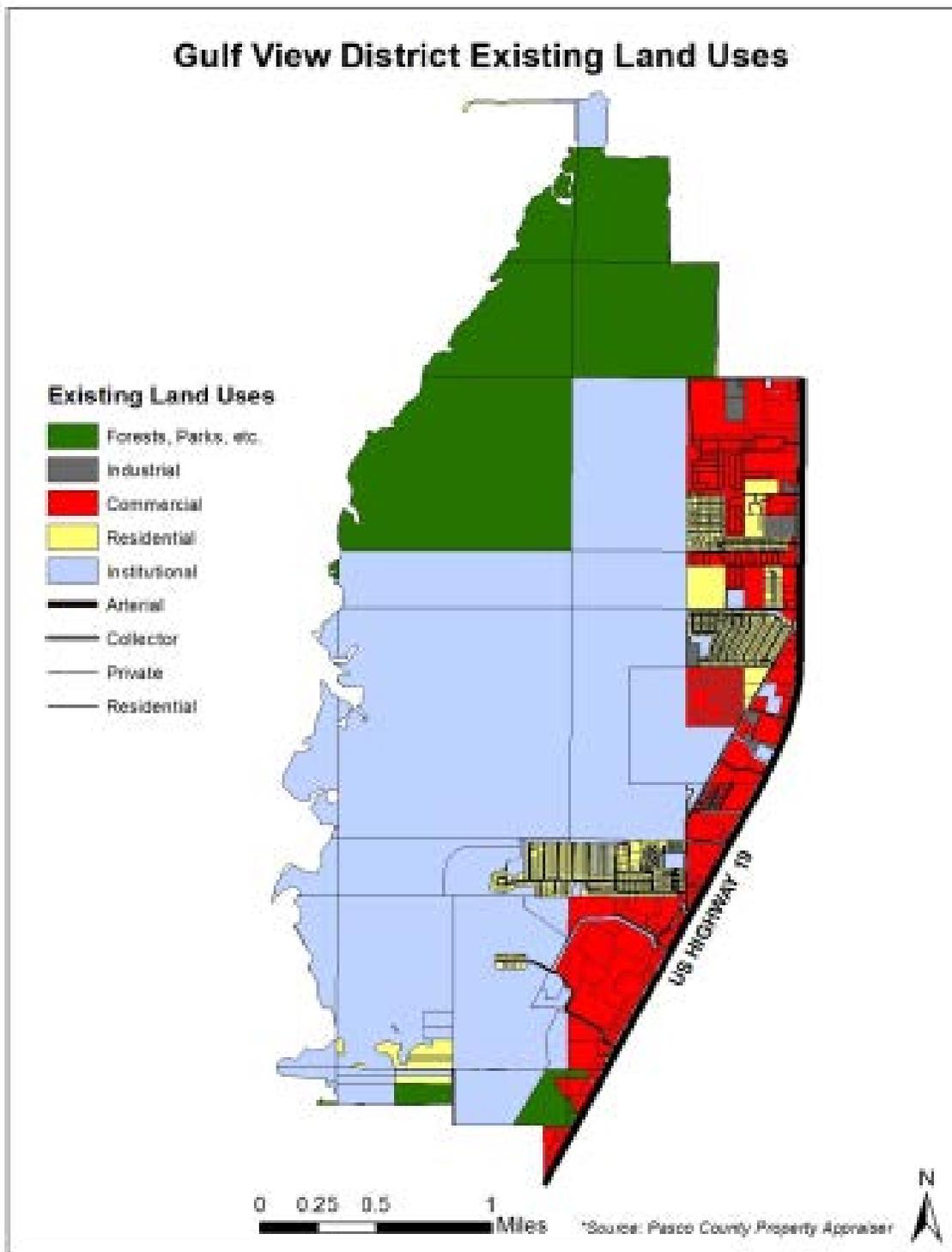
As seen in Map 3.11, the Gulf View District's existing land use is characterized by institutional, forests and parks, and commercial uses. The district's commercial uses are concentrated along US 19 and there is very little residential use in this district. The district's proximity to the coast, its environmentally sensitive land, and its flood prone nature will limit future development. Pasco County's FLUM anticipates some residential development in the central and southern portions of the district, but much of the district will remain coastal land (limited to 0.25 dwelling units per acre) or recreational open space. This is due to the concern that the opportunity for future residential development will encroach on the Gulf View District's natural assets and environmentally sensitive land in the western region of the district.

There are 150 commercial parcels within the Gulf View District which account for nearly 11% of 1,401 total parcels. The most prevalent types of commercial land uses include auto sales and service and retail stores. The majority of the district's commercial parcels are located along the US 19 Corridor in the eastern portion of the district (Map 3.11). In particular, the district's commercial activity is oriented around the Gulf View Square Mall located along the US 19 corridor.

The Gulf View District's commercial building stock is relatively newer than the Harbors' average. Approximately 56% of the commercial building stock in the Gulf View District was built before the Coastal Building Code of 1986 compared to 78% of The Harbors' total building stock (Table C-2.2). However, especially since the Gulf View District is a coastal district, that fact that over half of the commercial buildings likely do not comply with the current code still provides reason for concern over flooding in the event of a natural disaster. Also, since remodeling buildings could require significant investment to bring them up to code, this could provide a barrier to entry for businesses wanting to invest in the Gulf View District.

The Gulf View District's commercial property values are higher than The Harbors' average. Only 34% of the commercial properties in the Gulf View District are valued at less than \$50 per square foot compared to almost 50% of The Harbors' commercial properties (Table C-2.6). The higher commercial property values can be attributed to the younger commercial building stock,

Map 3.11: The Gulf View District Existing Land Use Map



its proximity to residential centers, and the presence of the mall. While this is beneficial to the existing business owners, the additional value could further increase the cost of redevelopment. Approximately 39% of commercial parcels in the Gulf View District are classified as vacant/undeveloped by the Property Appraiser (Table C-2.3). In addition to the vacant commercial land,

many of the developed commercial buildings are vacant. Windshield surveys indicated that the Gulf View Mall in particular contains vacancies, deteriorated buildings, unmaintained landscaping, potholes and cracks in the parking lot, and the remains of old store signs. Much of the commercial space directly north of the mall also had substantial levels of unoccupied, vacant commercial parcels. These unoccupied commercial properties could provide significant redevelopment opportunities, provided that the cost of redeveloping and bringing these properties up to code does not prevent commercial investment.



*Image 3. 10: Empty Strip Mall Next to Gulf View Mall*

Source: FSU Project Team

Approximately 82% of parcels in the Gulf View District are classified as residential (Table C-2.3). However, this represents a very small portion of the district's land area. The district offers a mixture of residential uses including mobile homes, single-family homes, multi-family homes, and condominiums. This housing stock is relatively old, even older than The Harbors'. Roughly 48% of the housing stock was built before the Florida building code was enacted in 1974 (Table C-2.2). Almost all of the remaining housing was built between 1974 and 1986, when the Coastal Building Code was established by the state. Concentrations of older housing, built in the 1960s and 1970s can be found in the West Port, Senate Manor, Heritage Village, and Brown Acres West Addition neighborhoods. Not surprisingly, windshield surveys found that the housing in these areas were dilapidated with a high number of vacancies (Table E-2). Especially because of the district's coastal, low-lying nature, this presents some significant concerns regarding the safety of the district's residents in the event of a natural disaster. These homes would likely not provide adequate protection to its occupants in the event of a hurricane, tornado or flash flood impacting the area. This will be a challenge for the district moving forward. In addition, it will be difficult to persuade potential homeowners to locate in the Gulf View District because these coastal homes are not compliant with the current building code and will need repairs.

Another potential concern for the Gulf View District is the low property values of residential parcels. Roughly 86% of the Gulf View District's residential parcels are worth less than \$25 per square foot. This is more than two and a half times The Harbors' average (Table C-2.6). This shows that the Gulf View District is struggling with severely low property values which can be due to the aging and dilapidated housing stock and location within a flood prone area.

Of the Gulf View District's 1,139 residential parcels, only 63 (5.5%) are classified as vacant by the Property Appraiser (Table C-2.3). This is slightly lower than The Harbors' average which is approximately 6%. Windshield surveys confirmed that all but one of these parcels were undeveloped. As Map C-2.31 illustrates, vacant parcels are dispersed throughout the major residential developments along the US 19 Corridor. These undeveloped parcels will present the district's few opportunities for new residential development.



*Image 3.11: A Typical Home in the Gulf View District*

Source: FSU Project Team

Despite its low property values and aging housing stock, The Gulf View District has a relatively low foreclosure rate. Only 48 or 4.2% of the district's residential parcels are in the foreclosure process compared to 8.0% in The Harbors as a whole (Table C-2.7). While there are some foreclosures in the northern developments, the majority are located in the southern development near the Gulf View Mall (Map C-2.32). The location of the foreclosures can provide insight into areas that need redevelopment and revitalization.

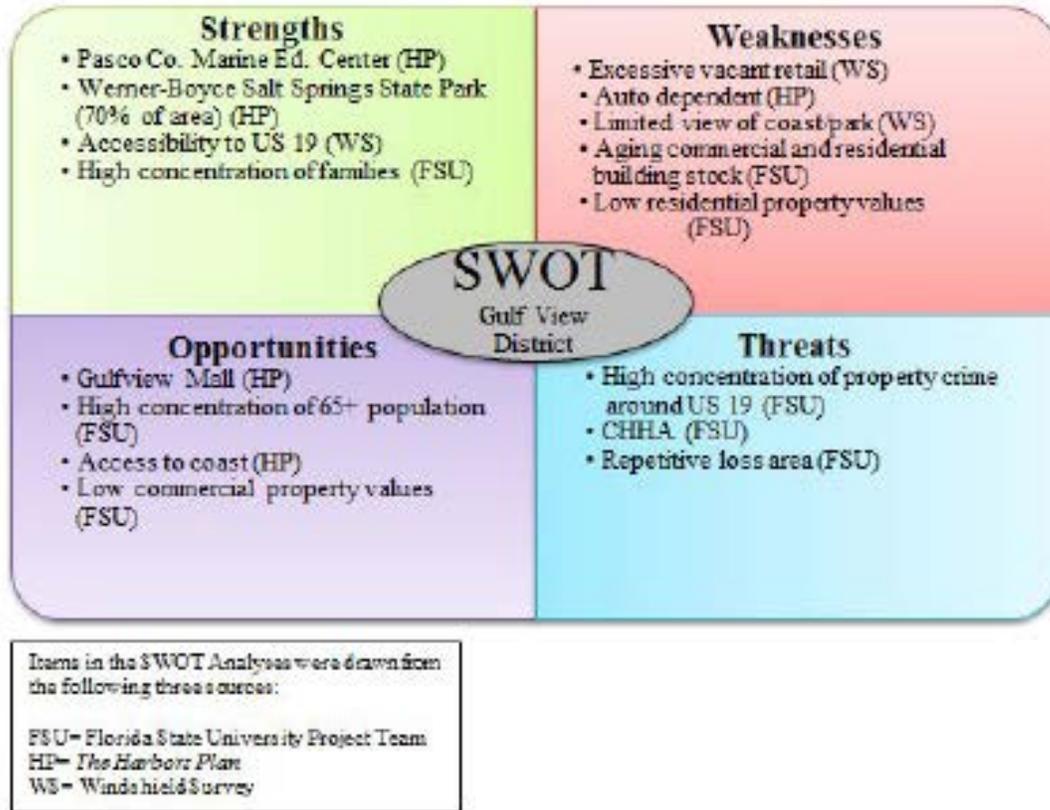
### *3.6.3 SWOT Analysis*

Based upon the FSU Project Team's analysis of The Harbors Plan, Existing Conditions, Socioeconomic Analysis, and Parcel Analysis/Windshield Surveys, the following Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses, Threats were identified for the Hill District:

#### *i. Strengths and Opportunities*

Combining the results of the parcel analysis with the existing conditions assessment and socioeconomic analysis revealed many strengths and opportunities in the Hill District. The district has the highest concentration of industrial uses, and can capitalize on this opportunity to attract more industrial investment because there are many of the parcels located near the existing industrial uses are undeveloped. Collocating industrial businesses is a benefit for the community and the businesses because it is easier to provide the roads and infrastructure specific to industrial use while also ensuring the proper buffers between incompatible uses. Industrial land often pollutes surrounding properties, so locating industrial uses near each other would prevent polluting residential and commercial land. The Hill District also has opportunities for more commercial development. Roughly 60% of the commercial land along US 19 is undeveloped (Map C-2.16).

Figure 3.6: The Gulf View District SWOT Summary



The accessibility to US 19 could attract commercial and industrial businesses because of the visibility associated with being located along major roadways. In addition, the districts’ commercial property values are low which would reduce commercial investment costs. The Hill District also has very low levels of crime compared to the rest of The Harbors. Only a few pockets along US 19 and the abutting residential development in the southern half of the district have higher crime rates than The Harbors’ average (Table D-2.13). The rest of the district enjoys a very low crime rate. The low levels of crime can attract new residents and businesses to the district. In addition, there is concentration of high income households in the northern half of the district. The census tract that comprises the entire northern half of the district has 31% to 62% of its households classified as high income (Section 4.3; Section 2.7).

*ii. Weaknesses and Threats*

While, the Gulf View District’s coastline provides it with its most unique opportunities, it also threatens the safety of current residents and the viability of future development. Approximately half of the district is located in a coastal high hazard area and a significant portion of its residential

development is classified as a repetitive loss area (Section 1.2.3). Since a large portion of the district's commercial and residential building stock was constructed before the Coastal Building Code in 1986, these buildings are less likely to be resilient during storms and natural disasters. The high risk of flooding will likely limit the amount and location of future development within the Gulf View District.

Balancing these limitations with the need to provide more public access to the coast will be a difficult balance to find. The district currently provides no public access, such as beaches or trails, to the coastline. In particular, the Werner-Boyce Salt Springs State Park is a vast natural resource however; there is little access, trails, or recreational opportunities in the park. Enhancing this resource could transform this park into an enjoyable destination for both residents and tourists.

Another issue plaguing the Gulf View District is the high level of crime. Census tracts in this district have violent crime rates ranging from 26-37 per 1,000 people and non-violent crime rates of 48-69 per 1,000 people. This is significant because the average violent and non-violent crime rates for The Harbors are only 11.6 and 14.1 per 1,000 people respectively (Table D-2.3). Much of this crime is concentrated along US 19, and could threaten commercial reinvestment around this corridor.

The Gulf View District is also challenged by a high poverty rate and low residential property values. The southern portion of the district in particular has a poverty rate between 20% and 29%, which is almost twice as high as The Harbors' average (Section 2.9). This may make it more difficult to attract residents to the area.

### *3.6.4 Conclusion*

Pasco County envisions the Gulf View District as an area with the opportunity to enhance its access and visibility to the coast, promote ecotourism, expand waterfront and recreational activities, and retrofit commercial strip malls. The presence of the Gulf View Square Mall and the Werner-Boyce Salt Springs State Park in particular provides the district with two major destinations that can serve as a base for expanding commercial and ecotourism activities. However, the district currently is underutilizing many of its assets and will have to overcome several challenges to reach this vision. The Gulf View District is characterized by unappealing, auto-dependent strip developments along US 19 which have a high vacancy rates and fail to capitalize on their proximity to the coast. In addition, the area struggles with low residential property values, an aging commercial and residential building stock, and high concentrations of property crime. Finally, flooding hazards

and environmentally sensitive coastal land will limit the location and intensity of development. Addressing and overcoming these issues will be key to the success of any redevelopment efforts.

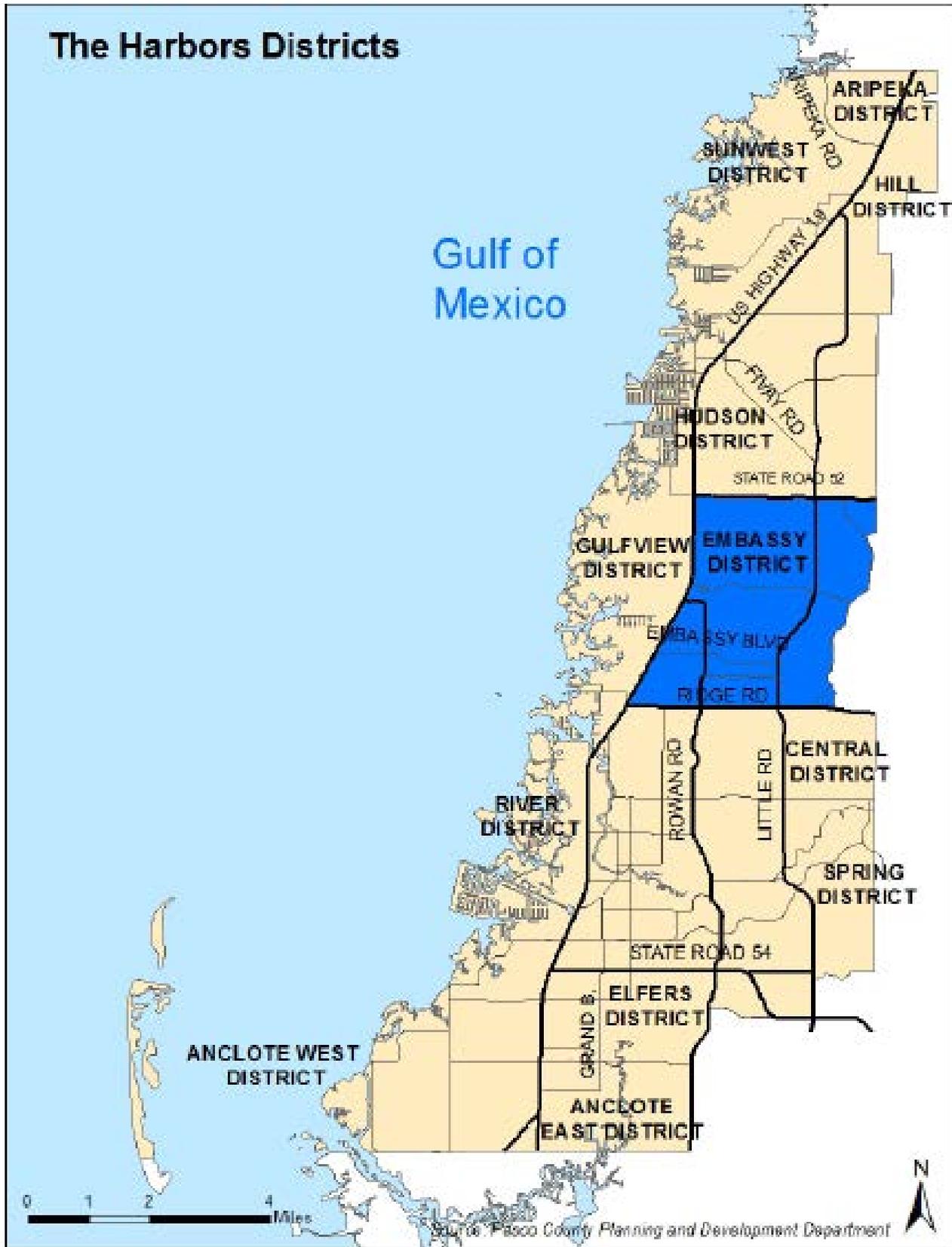
## 3.7 The Embassy District

### 3.7.1 Introduction

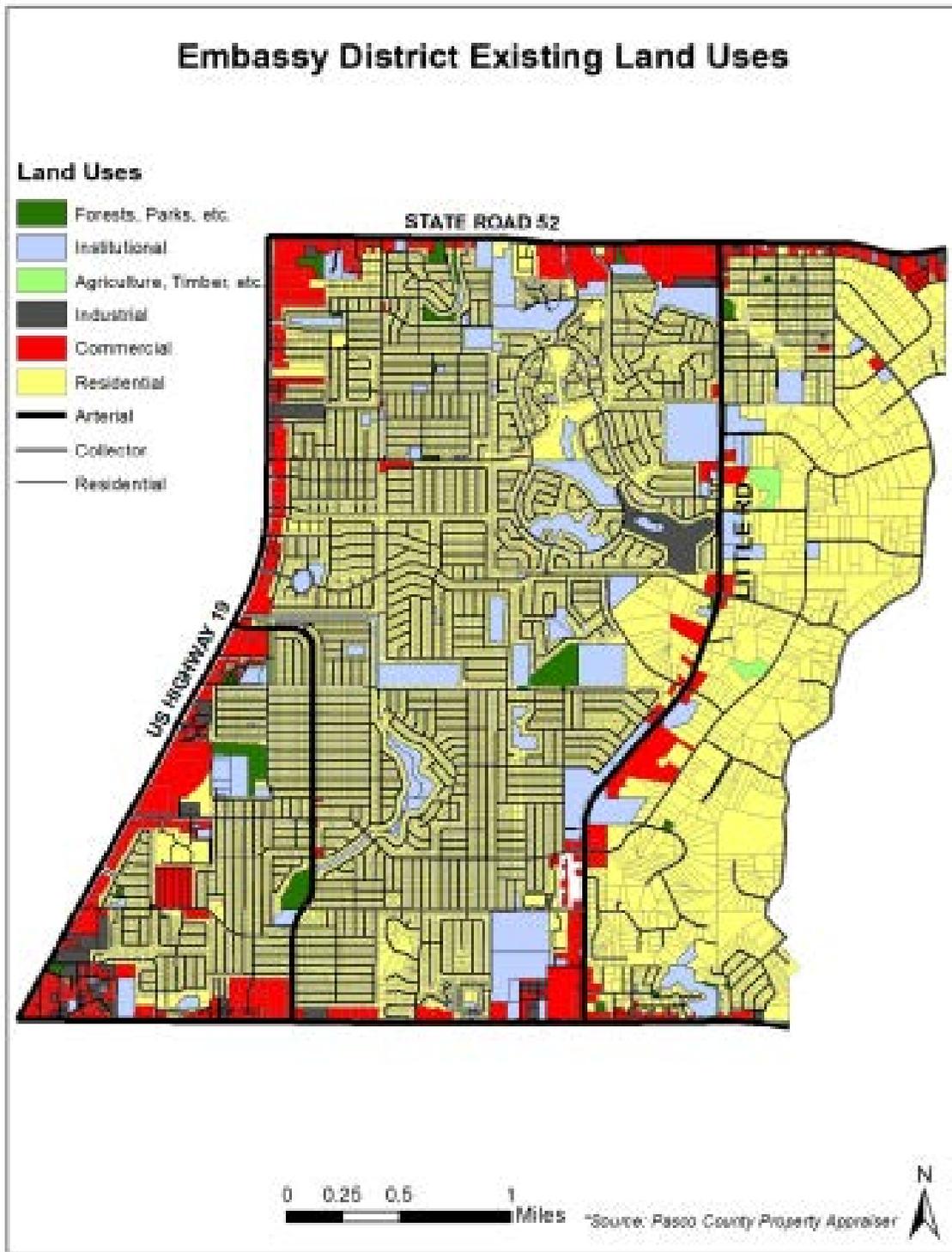
With a population of 44,334 people, The Embassy District is the most populated district in The Harbors. Located directly east of the Gulf View District, this inland district is characterized by an older housing stock, mostly built in the 1970s and 1980s, a lack of trees, parks, and open spaces, and strip development along US 19, Ridge Road, and SR 52. The Embassy District has also experienced high rates of crime and foreclosure across nearly the entire district. These issues signify the need for revitalization in the area. The Harbors Plan hopes to address these issues by conducting an open space need analysis, creating neighborhood centers for community gatherings, and retrofitting existing strip malls to create pedestrian-friendly, compact mixed-use centers. As seen in Map 3.13, existing land use in the Embassy District is characterized largely by residential uses but also contains some commercial and institutional land along major arterials including US 19, Little Road, Ridge Road, and SR 52. Commercial land uses account for only 2.5% of all land uses in the Embassy District. The district's major commercial uses include retail stores and offices. Pasco County's FLUM anticipates the Embassy District's land use pattern will not change drastically in the next 25 years. The Embassy District is expected to remain a primarily residential district with commercial and retail uses oriented around major arterials (Map C-2.33). The only apparent difference between the existing and future land use patterns are that some of the current commercial uses along Little Road are planned for future residential development.

### 3.7.2 Parcel Analysis

The Embassy District is challenged by an aging commercial building stock. More than 90% of the commercial properties were built before the implementation of the Coastal Building Code of 1986, which required elevated and wind resistant buildings (Table C-2.2). This is much higher than that of The Harbors as a whole, where nearly 79% of its commercial properties were built before 1986 (Table C-2.2). The aging commercial stock could increase redevelopment and rehabilitation costs for future growth and also presents some significant concerns regarding the safety of the district's residents in the event of natural phenomena. These older commercial buildings are not likely to be as resilient in the event of a natural disaster.



Map 3.13: The Embassy District Existing Land Use Map



The Embassy District has a wide range of commercial property values. Approximately 74% of the commercial properties in the Embassy District are valued at less than \$50 per square foot. By comparison, only 56% of commercial properties in The Harbors are valued at less than \$50 per square foot (Table C-2.6). At the same time, a higher proportion of the Embassy District’s commercial properties are valued at greater than \$100 per square foot (17.5%) than The Harbors

(12.3%) (Table C-2.6). The Embassy District's lower commercial property values could present an opportunity for affordable redevelopment in the district because low land costs present low barriers to entry in the commercial property market.

Out of the district's 471 commercial parcels, nearly 30% are classified as vacant-undeveloped by the Pasco County Property Appraiser (Table C-2.3). This is approximately the same as The Harbors' average. Thus, the Embassy District does have significant amounts of space for greenfield commercial development. However, more importantly, windshield surveys discovered that much of the district's existing commercial development is also vacant. These vacancies included small "strip malls" along US 19 that contained several unoccupied units (Table E-1.1). A number of these strip developments were also observed to be in fair or poor condition, with deteriorated store fronts and roofs (Table E-1.1). In particular, a former "Service Merchandise" facility located across from the Gulf View Mall has fallen into disrepair. This building is 59,885 square feet and sits on a 6 acre parcel. This facility, coupled with other unoccupied commercial properties in the immediate area, could be a potential candidate for redevelopment.



*Image 3.12: Vacant Service Merchandise Building Along US 19*

Source: FSU Project Team

The Embassy District is dominated by residential uses. Of the more than 18,500 parcels in district, 17,734 (95%) are classified as residential. Single-family homes are the primary residential use in the Embassy District, but it also houses condominiums and mobile homes.

However, the nature of the single-family housing has a distinct east-west divide along Little Road. Residential development west of Little Road is characterized by relatively high density single-family housing with small lots, very little greenspace, and in some cases a grid street network. East of Little Road, residential development is very low-density with large lots and plenty of greenspace.

Unfortunately, much of the district's residential stock is aging. Roughly 91% of the residential properties in the Embassy District were built before the Coastal Building Code of 1986 (Table C-2.2). The district's older housing stock and its sheer volume of residential parcels will likely present resiliency problems in the event of a natural disaster. Windshield surveys confirmed that much of the older housing stock is deteriorating (Table E-2). Concentrations of the oldest housing units, built in the 1960s, can be found in the Palm Terrace Estates, Jasmine Estates and Holiday Hill neighborhoods.

The vast majority (98.9%) of residential properties in the Embassy District are valued at less than \$50 per square foot (Table C-2.6). This indicates that the Embassy District's residential property values are lower than The Harbors as a whole, where approximately 87% of residential parcels valued at \$50 per square foot or less. These low property values can be due to the aging housing stock, discussed previously, along with the poor building conditions and neighborhood quality. This presents a major issue in the Embassy District because it will cause difficulty in attracting potential residents to the area.



*Image 3.13: A Mobile Home in the Embassy District*

Source: FSU Project Team

Of all residential parcels in the Embassy District, only 411 (2.3%) of these are classified as vacant by the Property Appraiser, suggesting that the district is almost built-out (Table C-2.3). However, the Embassy District struggles with a high foreclosure rate, which could provide opportunities for infill redevelopment. There are 1,801 residential parcels in the foreclosure process within the Embassy District, amounting to a 10.2% foreclosure rate (Table C-2.7). As Map C-2.39 illustrates, this substantial volume of foreclosures is mostly located in the central and western portions of the Embassy District. Any potential redevelopment efforts in the Embassy District must take into account the volume of residential foreclosures in the area.

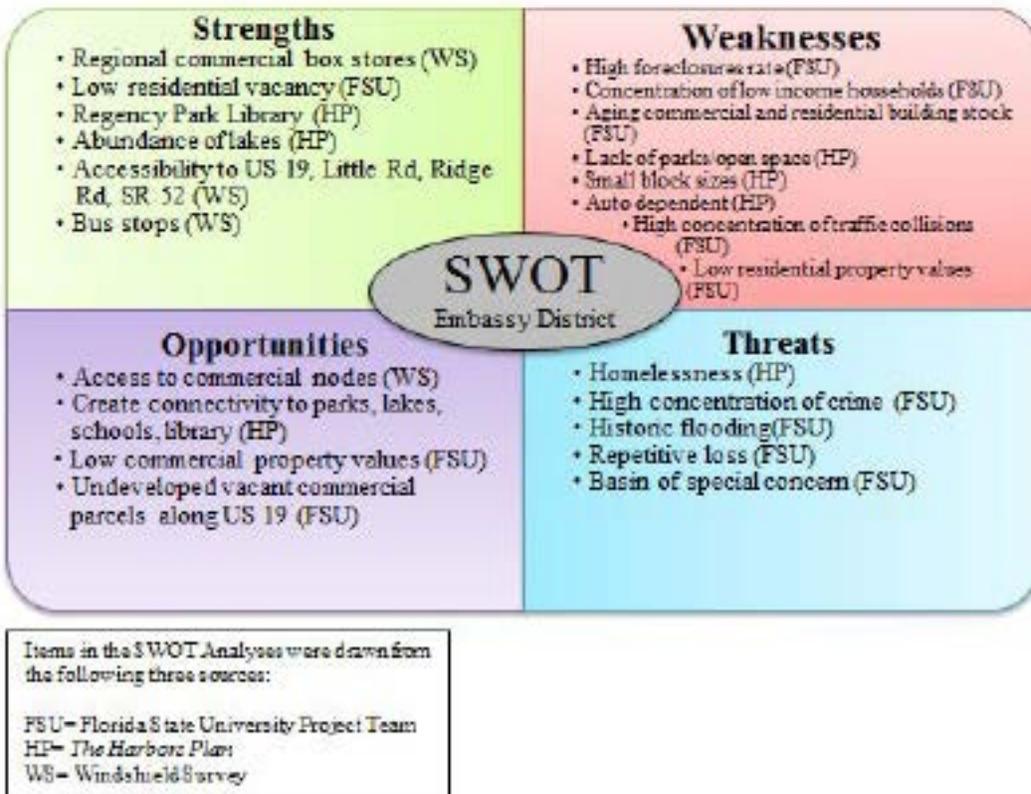
### *3.6.3 SWOT Analysis*

Based upon the FSU Project Team's analysis of The Harbors Plan, Existing Conditions, Socioeconomic Analysis, and Parcel Analysis/Windshield Surveys, the following Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses, and Threats were identified for the Embassy District:

#### *i. Strengths and Opportunities*

The Embassy District contains natural resources including an abundance of small lakes and the Bear Creek Wetland which can provide natural stormwater management services. Other notable strengths in this area include a grid street network which provides connectivity to other neighborhoods and US 19. In conjunction with this, the Embassy District has smaller block sizes, between 1,000 and 1,500 feet, and sidewalks along most streets (The Harbors Plan, 2013). These features provide the Embassy District with the potential to redevelop into a more walkable, pedestrian and cyclist friendly area. In addition, the Embassy District provides 8 bus stops allowing

Figure 3.7: The Embassy District SWOT Summary



residents the opportunity to use an alternate mode of transportation (Map C-2.81).

The district also contains higher concentrations of younger individuals. With the exception of the eastern border and a single census tract in the central part of the district, between 34% and 52% of residents in every census tract are age 35 or younger (Section 2.3). Further, the district has a concentration of families with children less than 18 years of age.

Other opportunities in the Embassy District include the large amount of vacant and undeveloped commercial parcels along US 19 and the low property value of these parcels. The vacant and undeveloped land presents an opportunity for the county or private business owners to purchase this land for redevelopment (Map C-2.36). The low property values are an opportunity because the low cost of investment could attract businesses to the area (Table C-2.6).

*ii. Weaknesses and Threats*

The Embassy District faces a number of environmental challenges. Members of the public have

identified a lack of parks and open space within this district. Along with this, there is a lack of trees and general landscaping in residential areas west of Little Road (Table E-1.2). Addressing these issues would give residents space to recreate and would enhance the overall aesthetic appeal of the district. Like much of the rest of The Harbors, flooding is another issue facing the Embassy District. Sizable portions of the district are within the 100-year flood plain, and a large area in the southeast portion is classified as a repetitive loss area (Section 1.3.2). This is especially concerning due to the district's aging commercial and residential building stock. These homes were built before the enactment of the Coastal Building Code in 1986, and therefore will be less resilient to storms and natural disasters (Table C-2.2). In addition, the district contains a basin of special concern, known as the Timber Oak Sub Basin (Section 1.3.2). This may limit the potential for redevelopment in this area because development codes specify that any new development in this basin may not increase net runoff.

Socioeconomically, the Embassy District struggles with a concentration of low income households. Between 46% and 83% of households in every census tract in the district are classified as low income (Section 4.3). Consequently, a number of census tracts in southwest portion of the Embassy District have over 20% of their residents living below poverty (Section 2.9). The Embassy District also has a high unemployment rate. Only three census tracts in the district have an unemployment rate below 8% (Section 2.10, Map B-4).

In addition, the Embassy District struggles with food access. Several census tracts in the western portion of the district and one census tract in the northeastern portion are classified as food deserts (Section 2.14). The Embassy District does have several grocery stores, but these are located along major corridors on the outskirts of the district, and are not easily accessible by means other than a car.

The Embassy District is also a hotspot for crime. The violent crime rate in parts of the district is 60 per 1,000 people, almost six times that of The Harbors (Table D-2.3). Property crime is also high. One census tract in particular (Census Tract 310.08) had a property crime rate of 37 per 1,000 people, over three times The Harbors' average (Table D-2.3).

#### *3.7.4 Conclusion*

The Embassy District struggles with many factors that threaten to hinder its future development and success. These factors include crime, high foreclosure rates, older building and housing stocks, high commercial vacancy rates, low median household income, high unemployment, and

environmental threats. Despite these challenges, the district has many strengths and opportunities that show great potential for the future. Pasco County's vision for the Embassy District is that it will be a place that provides "walkable, interconnected neighborhoods that encourage walking, biking, and social interaction," with "adequate infrastructure, and safe and accessible parks and neighborhood centers" (The Harbors Plan, pg. 80). Many of the Embassy District's strengths, such as its grid street pattern, small block sizes, sidewalks, transit access, and natural resources provide a great starting point to achieve Pasco County's vision. Opportunities that the Embassy District can take advantage of to achieve this vision include low commercial property values, undeveloped vacant commercial parcels along US 19, and creating connectivity between existing parks and community facilities.

## 3.8 The River District

### 3.8.1 Introduction

The River District is a coastal district located just south of the Gulf View District. With a current population of 32,427 spread across 7,539 acres, the River District is among the largest districts in terms of size and populations. Like several other districts, the River District is home to a number of prominent natural resources including Millers Bayou and the Pithlachascotee River. Its current development patterns are dominated by strip development along US 19, as well as aging residential development that often is characterized by disconnected cul-de-sacs. The River District is notable because it contains both of The Harbors' incorporated municipalities. New Port Richey, in particular provides a quaint, pedestrian-friendly 'downtown' area that offers residents a variety of restaurants, small shops, and the historic Hacienda Hotel. This area's historic identity is a strength and an opportunity for the River District. The existing characteristics of the downtown can be built upon to create a sense of place throughout the entire district. At the same time, Port Richey and the Millers Bayou area provide a unique opportunity to tie recreation and economic development together by building off of the area's parks, water access,



*Image 3.14: Boardwalk at Green Key*

Source: FSU Project Team



*Image 3.15: Millers Bayou*

Source: FSU Project Team

and growing commercial node. Finally, the River District could also find a potential redevelopment project in the former HCA Community Hospital, a branch of the HCA West Florida Hospitals. The closure of the hospital was followed by the exodus of related medical businesses leaving numerous vacancies in a neighborhood where crime has become an issue (The Harbors Plan, 2013).



*Image 3.16: Millers Bayou*

Source: FSU Project Team

### 3.7.2 Parcel Analysis

The River District's existing land use pattern is characterized by residential development throughout with commercial uses along arterials and parks and institutional land uses (such as schools, fire and police stations) filling in the gaps in between. Pasco County's FLUM anticipates that the district's future land use pattern will mirror its existing patterns (Map C-2.47).

Of the River District's 18,640 total parcels, commercial parcels comprise 5.7% (or 1,063 parcels) of the land use in the district. This is a slightly higher proportion of commercial development than the rest of The Harbors (Table C-2.3). Most of these commercial parcels are concentrated along US 19, Ridge Road, and Main Street (Map 3.15). The most prevalent types of commercial land uses include one-story retail stores, stores/office/single family residential, one-story offices, professional service buildings, and auto services. The Gulf Harbors Golf Course is also located within the Gulf Harbors community along the southern coastline.



*Image 3.17: Residence in the River District*

Source: FSU Project Team

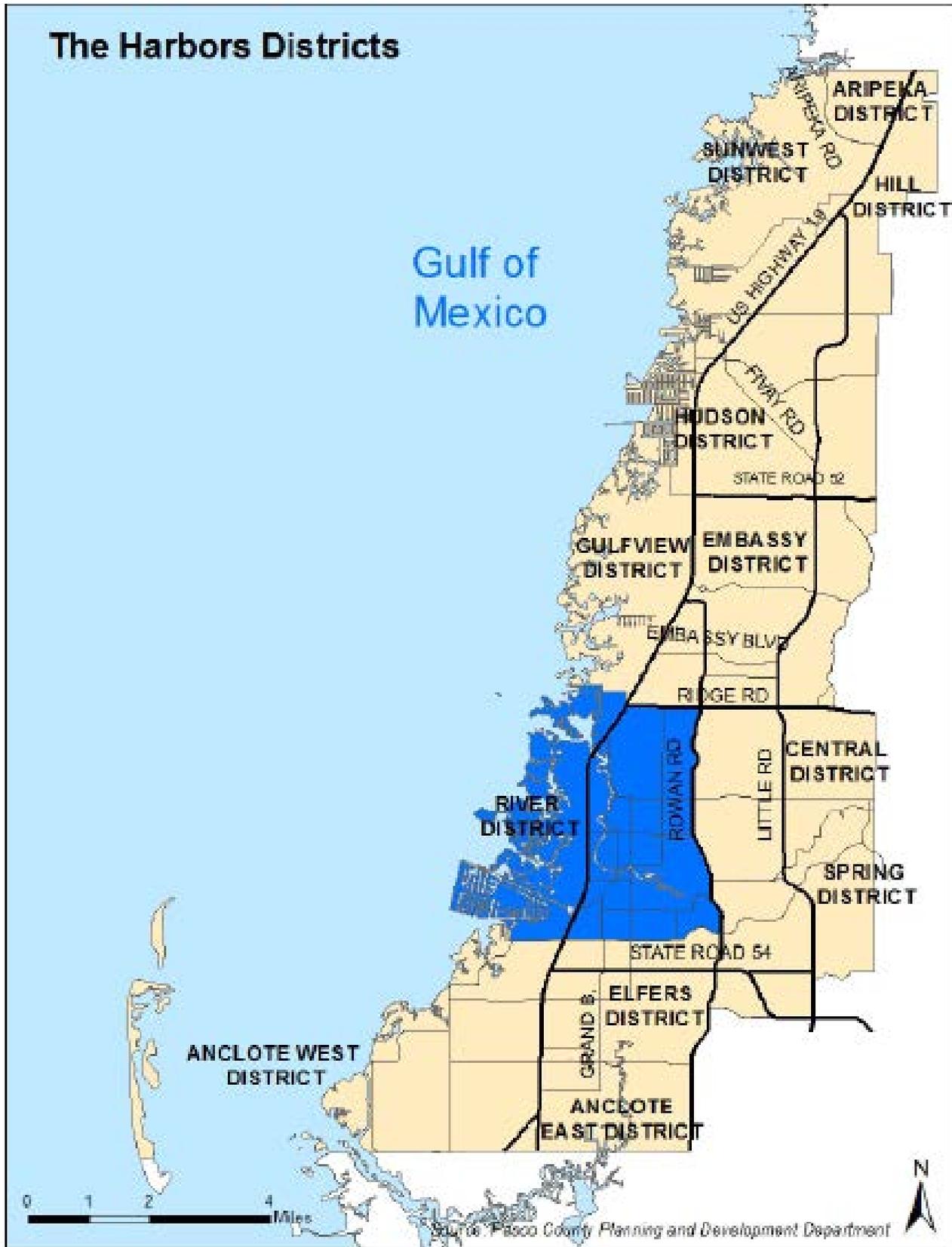


*Image 3.18: Residence in the River District*

Source: FSU Project Team

The River District's aging commercial building stock could pose a challenge to the district's future. 62% of the commercial stock in the River District was built before 1974 and the enactment of state building codes (Table C-2.2). This compares to only 37% of the commercial building stock in

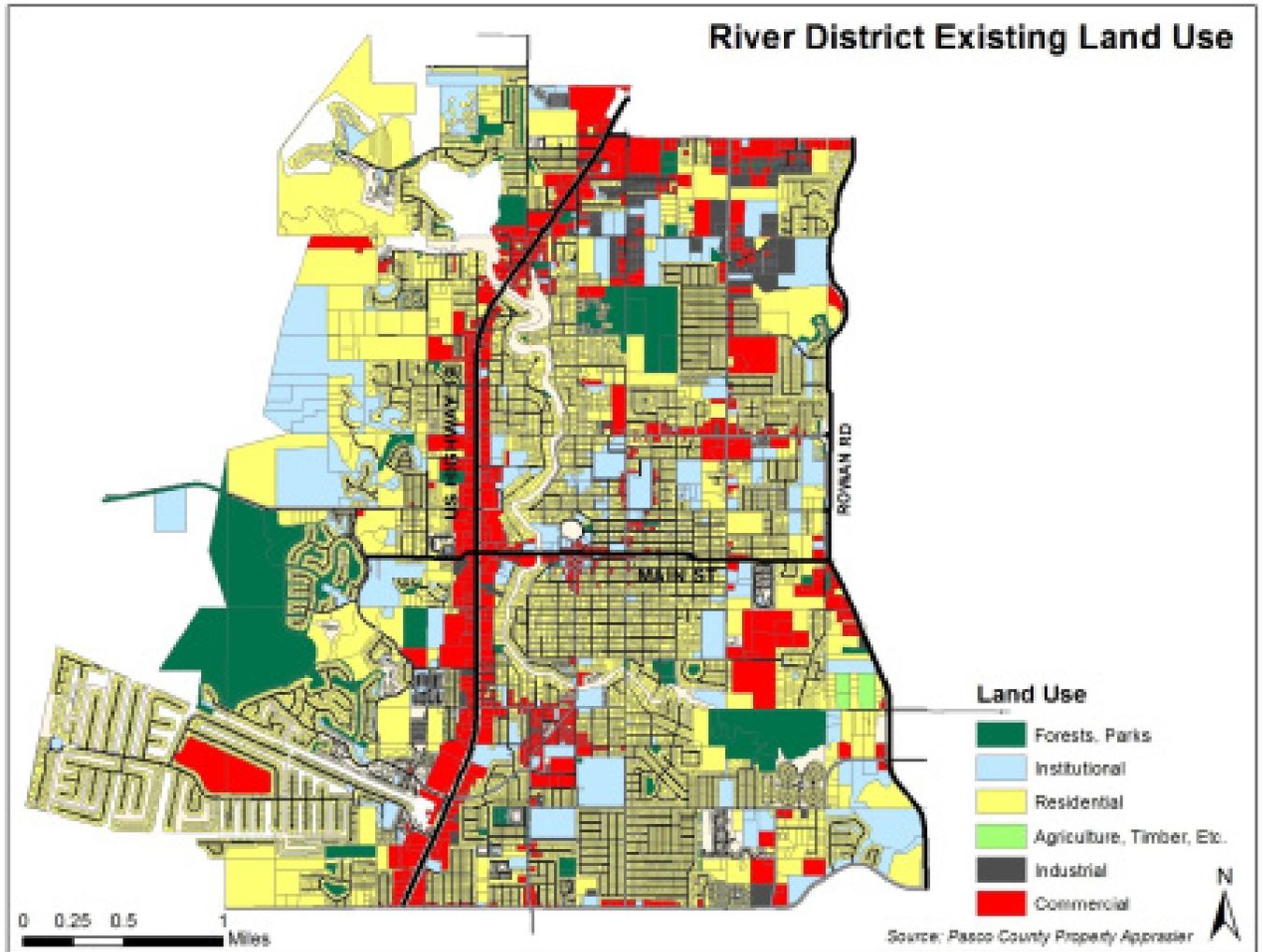
Map 3.14: The River District



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Map 3.15: The River District Existing Land Use Map



The Harbors. The aging commercial stock could increase redevelopment and rehabilitation costs for future growth and development in the River District because a large percentage of the existing building stock will need significant repairs and rehabilitation to render them suitable for modern use.

However, despite the age of its commercial buildings, the River District’s commercial property values are similar to those of The Harbors (Table C-2.6). The only significant difference is that 47% of the River District’s commercial parcels fall within the \$26 to \$50 per square foot range, compared to only 35% in The Harbors. Consequently, the River District has slightly lower percentages for all other ranges of property values than The Harbors. The lowest commercial property values in the district are concentrated along US 19 in the southern half of the district.

Of the 1,063 commercial parcels in the River District, 267 parcels (25%) are classified as vacant by the Pasco County Property Appraiser (Table C-2.3, Map C-2.50). Many of these vacant parcels offer infill or greenfield development opportunities near existing commercial uses (Map C-2.50). These parcels could also be used to achieve some of the goals of the Environment, Open Space, and Tourism Elements of The Harbors Plan, by creating more recreational or open space uses. In addition, many commercial strips along US 19 were either empty or underutilized structures with very few tenants (Table E-1.1). Another hotspot for vacant or underutilized commercial development is the HCA Hospital and related professional office/medical office buildings immediately surrounding the area (Table E-1.1). The underutilized hospital is a major weakness and opportunity for the district. Even though it will pose challenges due to the potential contamination and the high cost of rehabilitation, reinvestment in the hospital could spur further economic revitalization.

Only four of the River District's 1,063 (0.38%) commercial parcels are in the foreclosure process (Table C-2.7). This is similar to The Harbors' commercial foreclosure rate of 0.45%. Two of the foreclosed parcels are located directly across from each other along US 19 at the southern end of the district (Map C-2.52). The other two parcels are along SR 52 and Little Road. All of the foreclosed parcels are classified as retail or office and are all less than one acre in size. While each of the foreclosed properties is relatively small, they do offer redevelopment opportunities near existing commercial uses.



*Image 3.19: Example of Commercial Vacancies in the River District*

Source: FSU Project Team

Of the 18,640 parcels in the River District, 16,093 (86%) are classified as residential. In the River District, the residential parcels are generally concentrated along the coastline and throughout the center of the district (Map 3.15). The majority of residential uses in the River District are single family homes, but the district also includes a substantial number of mobile homes (1,002 units) and condominiums (1,525 units).

Similar to its commercial building stock, the River District's residential housing stock is aging and will pose a challenge for the district. Over 50% of the housing stock was built before 1974, when the first building codes were established (Table C-2.2). This is significantly higher than The Harbors where only 37% of the residential housing stock was built before 1974. Additionally, 31% of the River District's housing stock was built between 1974 and 1986. Thus, almost 85% (11,955 units) of the residential housing stock in the River District was built before 1986 when the Coastal

Building Code were established. Windshield surveys noted that the age of the district's housing stock is evident. Many structures show signs of significant maintenance issues including poorly maintained yards, cracked driveways, and deteriorating housing (such as worn roofing and siding materials) (Table E-1.1). The proximity of this aging and dilapidated housing to the coast is a concern because these structures likely are vulnerable to wind and flooding damage in the event of a storm. Additionally, many of the aging homes within the River District are located very close to the river or canals which pose an even greater threat of flooding.

The residential property values in the River District are higher than that of The Harbors. Only 24% of residential parcels in the River District are worth more than \$50 per square foot compared to only 12% in The Harbors. Similarly, 15% of The River District's residential properties are worth more than \$76 per square foot compared to only 3% of The Harbors'. These higher property values are concentrated along the coastline or the Pithlachascotee River waterfront (Map C-2.49). The relatively high residential property values and residential waterfront access are strengths for the River District.

Of the 16,093 residential parcels in the River District, 1,967 parcels (11%) are considered vacant by the Property Appraiser (Table C-2.7). GIS Analysis confirmed that all but three of these parcels are in fact undeveloped (Map C-2.5, Table C-2.5). The majority of the undeveloped parcels are west of US 19 near the coastline, and are relatively large parcels ranging anywhere from 5 to 50 acres. Windshield surveys noted that these undeveloped parcels are still uncleared, wooded parcels (Table E-1.2). These large, vacant residential parcels can be an opportunity for the River District to capitalize on the views and natural resources associated with the coast.

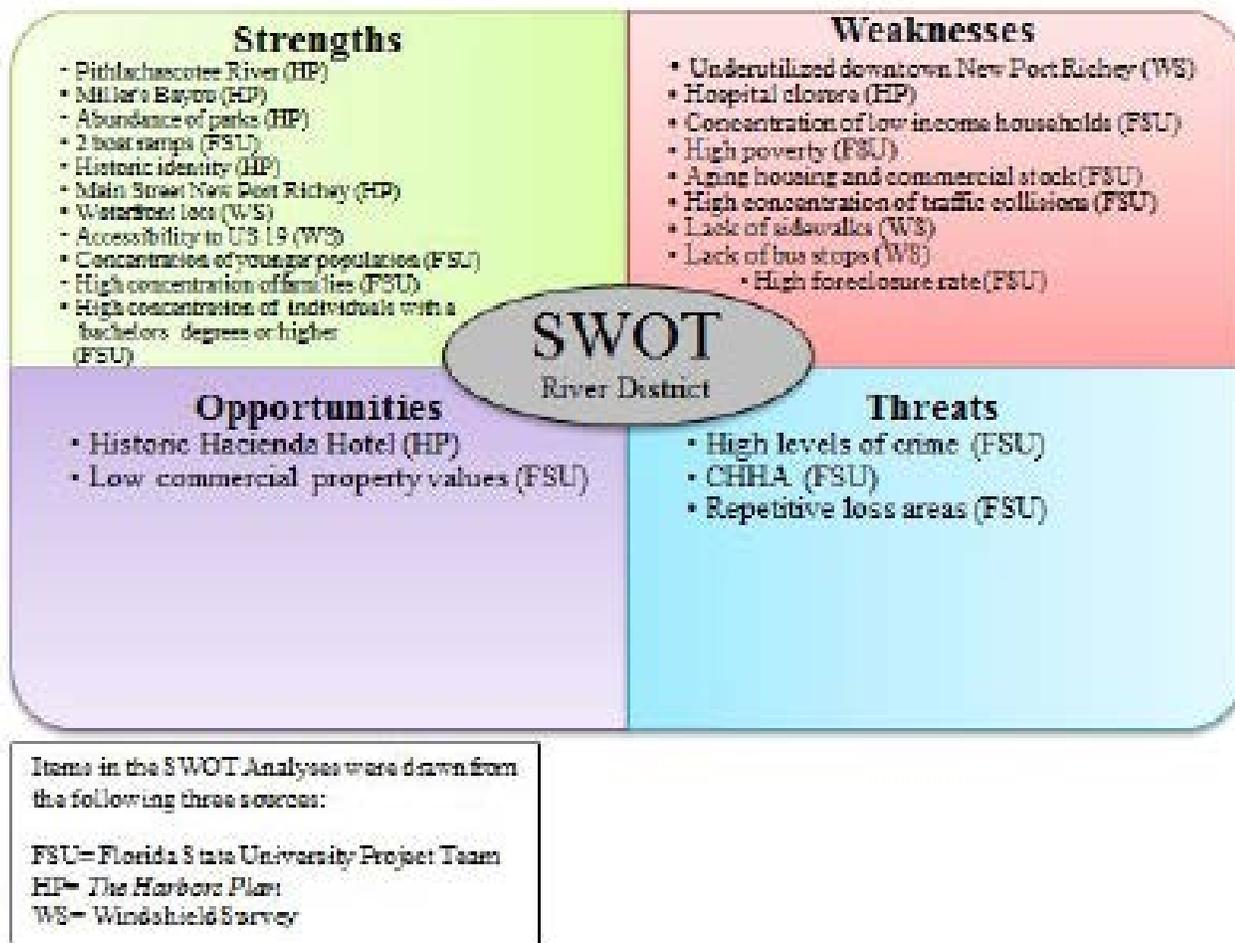
There are 1,082 residential foreclosures within the River District. This equates to approximately 6.7% of the residential parcels being in the foreclosure process. This is slightly lower than The Harbors' residential foreclosure rate of 8.0% (Table C-2.7). The foreclosures in the River District are spread throughout the entire district and do not seem to be isolated to a particular neighborhood (Map C-2.55). However, the FSU Studio Team observed significant numbers of vacant homes throughout the River District, many of which were in poor condition. This indicates that the River District is struggling with vacant or abandoned homes as much as it is with foreclosures.

### *3.8.3 SWOT Analysis*

Based upon the FSU Project Team's analysis of The Harbors Plan, Existing Conditions,

Socioeconomic Analysis, and Parcel Analysis/Windshield Surveys, the following Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses, and Threats were identified for the Embassy District:

Figure 3.8: The River District SWOT Summary



### i. Strengths and Opportunities

The River District is home to many notable strengths and opportunities. Many these revolve around three geographic areas: Miller Bayou, Downtown New Port Richey, and the former HCA Hospital. Millers Bayou and the Pithlachascotee River provide recreational opportunities, coastal access, and parks for residents. This provides the district with the opportunity to build off of its two boat ramps and almost 20 parks to turn the River District into a destination for boaters and ecotourism. The district's abundance of waterfront property has also benefited its residential development by increasing its property values (Map 3.15, Map C-2.49).

Downtown New Port Richey provides the district with a sense of place and a historic identity. This creates a perfect opportunity for small-scale economic development, including restaurants and

retail along Main Street and the riverfront. The former HCA hospital creates an opportunity for larger scale economic development. In particular, there are three large, undeveloped parcels, ranging in size from 3 to 7 acres, adjacent to the hospital that provide an opportunity to create a node for commercial or health service activity. The River District's relatively low commercial property values could make capitalizing on these opportunities more affordable by enabling redevelopment at a lower cost. In addition, any such revitalization efforts will be further supported by the district's accessibility to US 19. Together, these three areas provide the district with plenty of opportunity to spur economic development while achieving some of The Harbors Plan's Environmental and Urban Design Goals such as the expansion of tourism opportunities and the improvement of the area's image and identity (The Harbors Plan, p. 31).

The River District is already attracting younger residents and families which can continue to grow if the district capitalizes on this population's lifestyle needs. In portions of the district, between 34% and 52% of residents are under the age of 35. Similarly, as high as 35% of families in several census tracts have children under 18 years of age (Section 2.3, Map B-2). Residents of the River District are also relatively well educated, with several census tracts on the western coastline reporting that 18-36% of residents have earned a bachelor's degree or higher (Section 2.11). This is notably higher than The Harbors' rate of college education (14.3%). The district's younger and more educated population should only serve to further support economic revitalization efforts.

### *ii. Weaknesses and Threats*

The existing conditions assessment and socio-economic analysis reveal several weaknesses and threats that could hinder redevelopment efforts in the River District. The coastline of the River District is located in the coastal high hazard area, indicating a high risk of flooding during storm events. This risk has caused four separate areas to be classified as repetitive loss areas (Section 1.3.2). While the designation as a repetitive loss areas may provide additional funding opportunities, the high risk of flooding poses a threat to existing and future development. This is especially concerning because much of the existing building stock was built before minimum building codes and may not be resilient in the event of a storm.

In addition, the River District struggles to provide adequate pedestrian safety. The River District's section of US 19 is among the most dangerous stretches of road in the nation (Section 1.3.1). The highest concentrations of traffic accidents are located where US 19 intersects with Ridge Road and Trouble Creek Road (Section 1.3.2). These pedestrian safety issues may be due in part to the district's lack of sidewalks and bus stops, as well as the district's relatively low rate of car

ownership (Map C-2.80). Several census tracts report between 9% and 18% of households have no vehicles available, which is significantly higher than The Harbors average of 6% (Section 2.13, Map B-7). This reveals a major challenge for mobility within the River District.

The River District's high rate of property crime is also a weakness for the area. Property crime is especially prevalent in southern portion of the district near the former HCA Hospital. Pockets of violent and nonviolent crimes are also present, but are not as prevalent (Section 1.3.3). The crime rates by census tract in this area range from 13 to 25 crimes per 1,000 people (Table D-2.3).

Another weakness is the concentration of low income households throughout the district. Between 63% and 85% of households in every one of district's census tracts are classified as low income (Section 4.3). This is The Harbors' highest concentration of low income residents. Consequently, much of the district also struggles with higher poverty rates (20-29%) (Section 2.9). Finally, the River District is struggling with a high residential foreclosure rate (14%). Residential foreclosures can dissuade people from moving into the district solely based upon the perception of crime. However, statistical analysis of foreclosure and crime data supported this perception by indicating a moderate correlation between the two criteria (Section 4.3.4).

The combination of the district's high risk of flooding, poor traffic and pedestrian safety, mobility challenges, high levels of property crime, and high poverty rates all pose major challenges that could hinder the district's ability address to capitalize on its opportunities for future development.

### *3.8.4 Conclusion*

The Harbors Plan envisions the River District as a community with a viable downtown that preserves its historic identity, promotes tourism, and provides multi-modal transportation options. The existing character of sections of the River District provide a unique opportunity to build upon pockets of thriving development with a strong sense of place in the community. While the FSU Project Team believes that there is great opportunity for reinvestment in the River District, due to its ample natural resources and historic identity, there are significant threats that must be addressed to ensure the viability of these efforts. The aging commercial and residential structures within the coastal high hazard and flood prone areas, the district's high rates of poverty and crime, and its lack of pedestrian infrastructure will all require special attention for revitalization efforts to be successful.

## 3.9 The Central District

### 3.9.1 Introduction

Located just east of the River District, the Central District has a population of 13,322 and spans 4,535 acres (The Harbors Plan, 2013). The Central District is home to the West Pasco Government Center, and is characterized by disconnected land uses and street networks, low and medium-density residential development, mixed office and retail uses along Little Road, and a lack of public parks and open spaces (The Harbors Plan, 2013). The Harbors Plan identifies a significant opportunity for development and economic revitalization in the area through the planned development of New Port Corners. Located in the center of the district, the New Port Corners planned development plans to turn over 960 acres of undeveloped land into a mixed use development that will include single and multi-family residential, commercial, employment, and office uses (The Harbors Plan, 2013). Through the implementation and development of New Port Corners, the Central District can address its need for a mixed-use community destination.

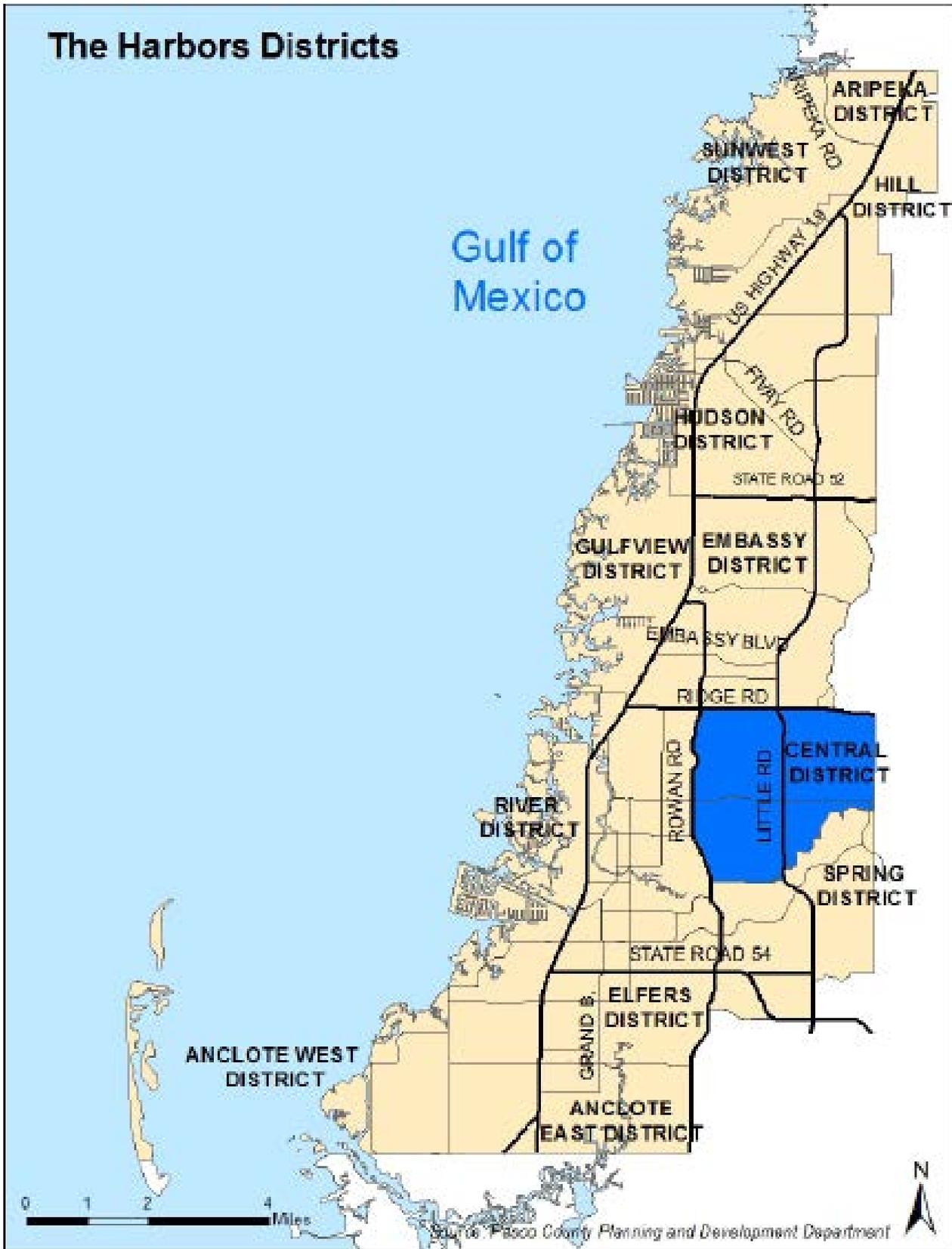
### 3.9.2 Parcel Analysis

The Central District is primarily made up of residential, commercial, and agriculture and timber land uses. Commercial land uses are concentrated along Rowan Road, Little Road, and Massachusetts Ave. Agriculture and timber land uses are concentrated in the southern half of the district abutting commercial and residential development (Map 3.17). However, all of the land currently classified as agriculture and timber is now planned as the New Port Corners development. Pasco County's FLUM also concentrates future commercial development along Little Road near existing commercial development (Map C-2.40).

201 of the 4,000 parcels in the Central District are currently designated for commercial use. This accounts for 5% of the district's parcels which is about the same as The Harbors' average of 4%. The most prevalent types of commercial uses include one-story retail stores, offices/SFR, one-story offices, and professional service buildings. Also, the Magnolia Valley Golf Club is located near the intersection of Rowan Road and Massachusetts Ave.

The Central District's relative new commercial building stock is one of its strengths. Over one-third (36%) of its commercial building stock was developed after 2002 when the current building codes went into effect. This is true for only 8.4% of The Harbors' commercial development (Table C-2.2).

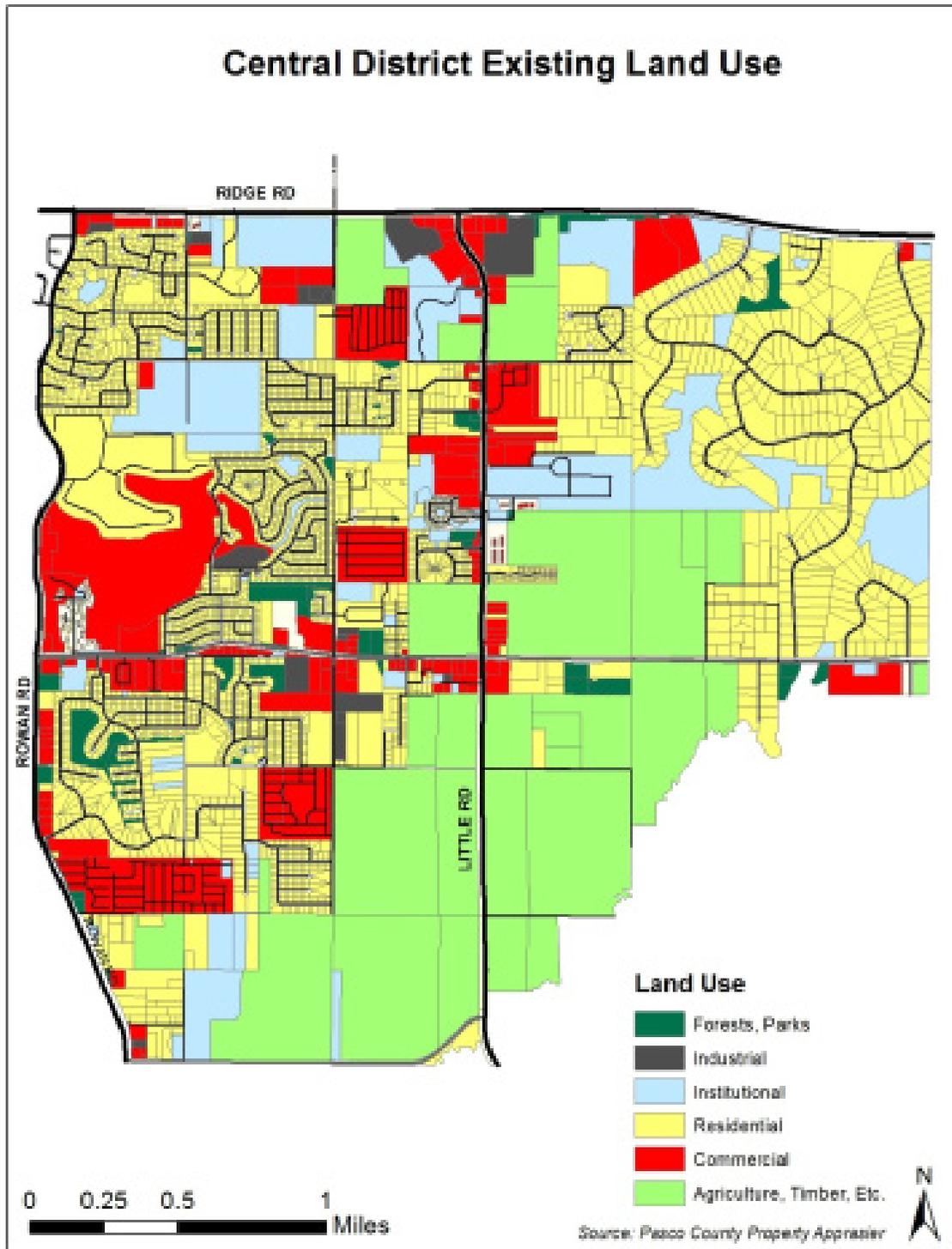
Map 3.16: The Central District



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Map 3.17: The Central District Existing Land Use Map



Similarly, only 13.3% of the district’s commercial stock was developed before 1974, compared to over 37.2% of the Harbors’. Thus, the vast majority of the district’s housing stock was built up to the minimum state building codes established in 1974.

The commercial land in the Central District also tends to have much higher property values than the rest of The Harbors. Almost 60% of the district's commercial properties are valued between \$51 and \$100 per square foot. An additional 5.9% of properties are valued at more than \$200 per square foot (Table C-2.6). This is significantly higher than The Harbors where only 35% of the properties are valued between \$51 and \$100 per square foot and 2.3% of the properties are valued over \$200 per square foot. The few commercial properties in the district that have lower property values are the ones with significantly older structures.

Sixty-four of the Central District's commercial parcels (32%) are classified as vacant by the Pasco County Property Appraiser (Table C-2.3, Map C-2.43). This is almost the same as The Harbors' average of 30%. Windshield surveys confirmed that the Property Appraiser's data is generally consistent with field conditions (Table E-1.1). These vacant parcels offer an opportunity for the district because many are large parcels, ranging from 3 to 22 acres, and are located near major roadways such as Rowan Road, Massachusetts Ave, and Little Road (Map C-2.43). Most of the undeveloped commercial property is also clustered around existing commercial development.

Only 1% (2 parcels) of the district's commercial parcels are in the foreclosure process (Table C-2.7). However, this is slightly higher than the rest of The Harbors (0.45%). The foreclosures include the Magnolia Valley Golf Course located near the intersection of Rowan Road and Massachusetts Ave, and a parcel classified as a one-story retail store at the intersection of Massachusetts Ave and Little Road (Map C-2.45). The foreclosed golf course is a unique opportunity for redevelopment in the Central District.



*Image 3.20: Example of Recent Commercial Development in the Central District*

Source: FSU Project Team

Of the 4,000 parcels in the Central District, 3,357 (84%) are classified as residential. This is typical of The Harbors' primarily residential land use pattern. The residential land is spread throughout the entire district except for in the concentration of agriculture and timber use in the southeastern corner (Map 3.17). The primary residential land use is single-family housing. The second largest residential land use is condominiums (114 units), but there are also mobile homes and multi-family parcels.

Like its commercial building stock, the Central District's residential housing stock is relatively new. 74% of the housing stock in the Central District was developed after 1974 when the first state

building codes were established, while only 62% of The Harbors was built after 1974 (Table C-2.2). Similarly, 7% of the district's housing was built after 2002 and the establishment of the current Florida Building Code, compared to only 4.3% of The Harbors'. The age of the residential housing stock is relatively mixed throughout the entire district, but there is a slightly higher concentration of older homes in the southwestern portion of the district. These older units are concentrated in subdivisions located between Rowan Road and Little Road in the area often referred to as "New Port Richey East".



*Image 3.21: Residence in the Central District*  
Source: FSU Project Team

However, despite its newer housing stock, the residential property values in the Central District are slightly lower than The Harbors overall. About 90% of the residential properties in the Central District are valued at less than \$50 per square foot, compared to 88% of residential properties in The Harbors (Table C-2.6). The lower property values can be attributed in part to the district's lack of coastal access, but the district's lowest residential property values coincide with the location of the oldest housing units.

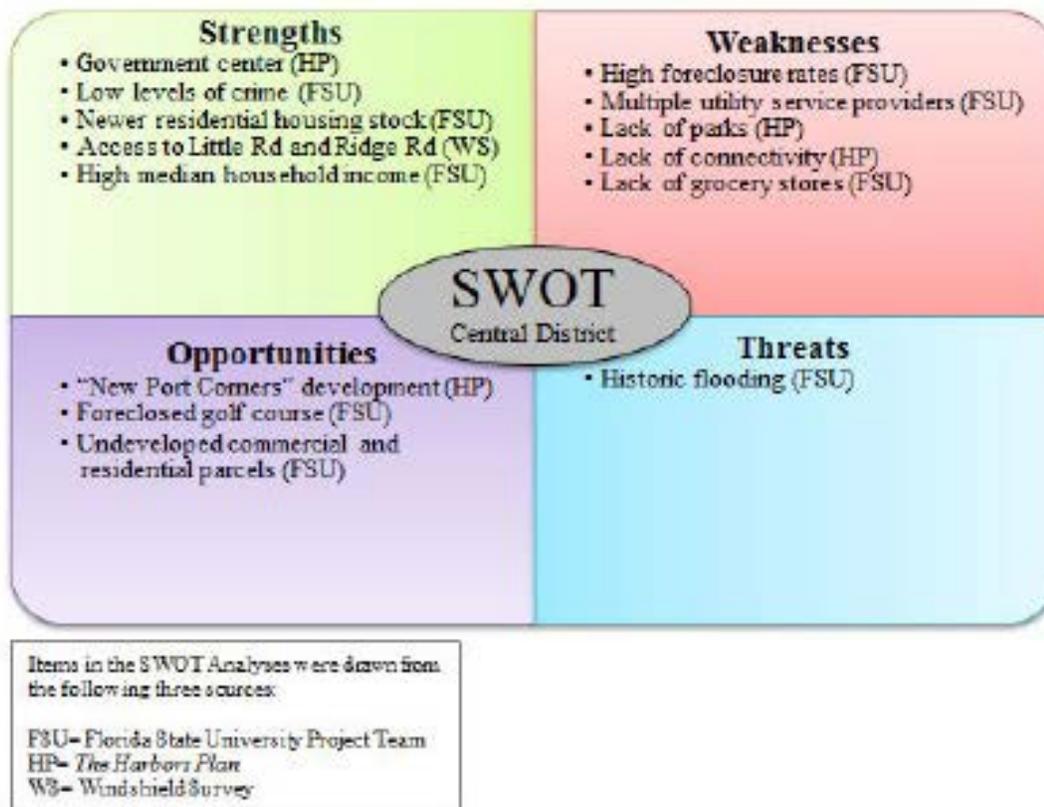
Of the residential parcels, 257 (7.6%) are classified as vacant by the Pasco County Property Appraiser (Table C-2.3). This percentage is slightly higher than The Harbors' (6.5%) indicating the Central District has slightly more room for new residential development. All but one of the vacant-designated residential parcels was confirmed to be undeveloped by GIS Analysis and windshield surveys (Map C-2.44; Table E-1.2). These undeveloped parcels are scattered throughout the district, and will offer the opportunity for infill development or neighborhood parks, a need identified by The Harbors Plan. However, since the large tracts of agricultural and timber land in the southern portion of the district are planned for New Port Corners development, the Central District has significantly more land to use for new residential development than is currently indicated by the Property Appraiser.

There are 295 residential foreclosures in the Central District. This accounts for 8.8% of the residential properties, which is almost the same as The Harbors' average (8.0%) (Table C-2.7). These residential foreclosures are scattered throughout the district, once again providing additional opportunities for infill development (Table C-2.46).

### 3.9.3 SWOT Analysis

Based upon the FSU Project Team’s analysis of The Harbors Plan, Existing Conditions, Socioeconomic Analysis, and Parcel Analysis/Windshield Surveys, the following Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses, and Threats were identified for the Central District:

Figure 3.9: The Central District SWOT Summary



#### i. Strengths and Opportunities

Pasco County has invested in the Central District through the location of the West Pasco Government Center. This will bring consistent investment to the surrounding area and will provide lasting employment opportunities. The New Port Corners planned development provides a significant opportunity to address many of the needs identified in The Harbors Plan including public parks, increased street connectivity, and mixed-use development. This mixed-use development will boast 3,397 residential dwelling units, 1,400,000 square feet of commercial and retail space, and 3,400,000 square feet of employment, office, and supporting space (The Harbors Plan, p. 88). The New Port Corners planned development will become a desirable location for business and residents to locate. Also, the accessibility associated with being located along the major roadways such as Little Road and Rowan Road could attract businesses to those areas. Further, the New Port Corners

planned development can help to coordinate infrastructure requirements and needs in an efficient manner considering the multiple water and wastewater service providers in the district (Section 1.3.7). In addition to New Port Corners, the Central District has ample undeveloped parcels it can utilize for continued redevelopment. Finally, the Magnolia Valley Golf Club is currently in the foreclosure process and provides a unique opportunity that can either be used as an amenity or space for large scale redevelopment. Thus, the Central District has significant opportunities for large-scale development and redevelopment. With careful planning these could be used to address many of the district's weaknesses.

Further supporting these potential development efforts are several social factors. The Central District has a low concentration of property, non-violent, and violent crimes compared to the rest of The Harbors which could make the area more attractive to new residents (Maps 1.11-4; Table D-2.3). The Central District also has a relatively wealthy population. It is one of the few districts with census tracts that have a median household income greater than \$70,000 (Section 2.7). This concentration of wealthy residents is located in the eastern half of the district, east of Little Road. The district's wealthy population is partially in conjunction with its slightly newer housing stock, built primarily in the 1980s and 1990s. In this way, the Central District appears to have some momentum attracting the demographics necessary to support the planned redevelopment efforts.

### *ii. Weaknesses and Threats*

The existing conditions indicate some weaknesses and threats within the Central District. First of all, the Central District currently has no public parks (Section 1.3.2). The lack of parks limits the ability of the district to attract new residents who are seeking nearby recreational amenities. The district also lacks street connectivity due to many cul de sacs and dead ends. This lack of connectivity is not conducive to a walkable community, which The Harbors Plan identified as an important factor in its Urban Design Element (The Harbors Plan, p. 58). In addition to these weaknesses, the district has experienced pockets of flooding that can affect the safety of future development (Section 1.3.2). Also, the multiple utility providers can complicate the provision of infrastructure for future development (Section 1.3.7). The Central District has four different wastewater and water service providers including the City of New Port Richey Utilities, LWV Utilities, Orangeland Water Supply and Orangewood Lakes Service. In addition, the stormwater service providers include HV Utility Systems, Orangewood Lake Services Inc, and the City of New Port Richey Utilities. These providers will have to coordinate the future provision and maintenance of infrastructure and services as new development occurs at nearby greenfield sites.

Finally, the Central District is severely lacking access to grocery stores (Section 2.14). The district has no grocery stores and multiple census tracts are classified as food deserts by the USDA. However, the ample amount of greenfield land along with the New Port Corners planned development provides opportunities for grocery stores to be established within the district.

### *3.9.4 Conclusion*

The Harbors Plan envisions the Central District as a community destination characterized by a connected street network that encourages walking and biking, the adequate provision of parks and open space, and a healthy mix of uses (The Harbors Plan, p. 88). The New Port Corners planned development provides a great opportunity to achieve these goals by providing residents with more parks and open space and by creating a more connected street network. In addition to New Port Corners, the district has large amounts of undeveloped/underutilized parcels, such as the Magnolia Valley Golf Club, which offer additional opportunities for commercial development. The district's high median household income indicates that it is developing a well-established population that could support more commercial investment. Similarly, its low crime rates could continue to attract residents to the district. However, the historic flooding will have to be carefully considered as more land is developed. Finally, the provision of water services will also need to be carefully coordinated since multiple utility providers currently service the area.

## **3.10 The Spring District**

### *3.10.1 Introduction*

Just south of the Central District, is the Spring District. The Spring District currently has a population of 26,603 and covers 4,124 acres, or 7.7% of The Harbors area. It is characterized by well-established, gated communities, housing built in the 1980s and 1990s, well-distributed natural resources and open space, and concentrations of commercial development at major intersections (The Harbors Plan, 2013). The most pressing issues within the Spring District are a lack of interconnectivity, bike paths, and public access to natural resources and open spaces. The area also requires updated stormwater management and flood prevention strategies (The Harbors Plan, 2013).

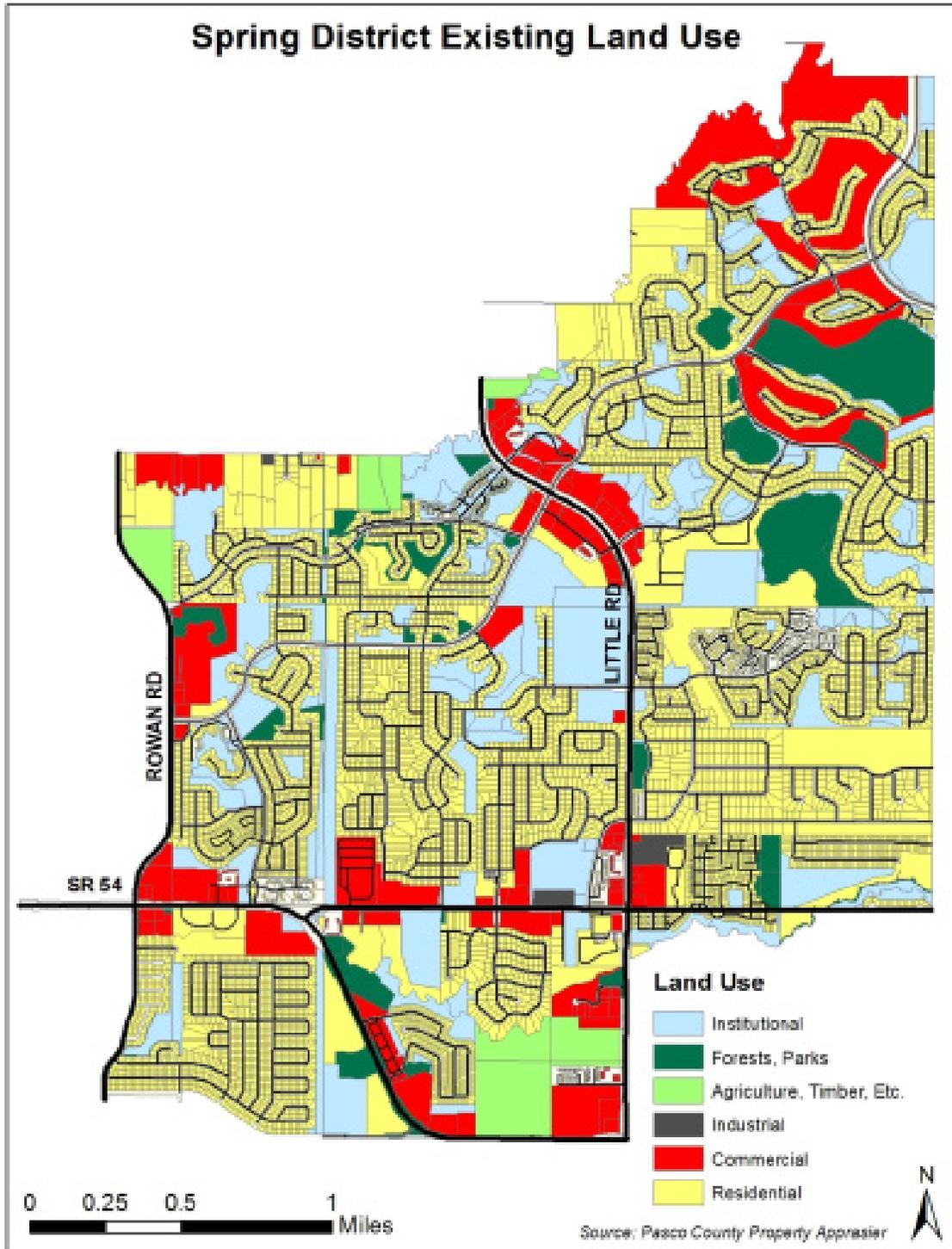
Map 3.18: The Spring District



### 3.10.2 Parcel Analysis

The Spring District is primarily made up of residential, commercial, and institutional land uses, although residential is by far the most dominant land use. Much of the district's commercial land is

Map 3.19: The Spring District Existing Land Use Map



concentrated along Little Road, Rowan Road, and SR 54. Institutional land is scattered throughout the area and consists of a wide range of uses including clubs, lodges, and halls; right of way, streets, and ditches; and sewage disposal, wastelands, and swamps (Map 3.19). Since most of the district is already developed, Pasco County's FLUM does not anticipate major changes to the distribution of land uses (Map C-2.54).

There are 192 commercial parcels in the Spring District, comprising only 2% of its 8,938 total parcels. In this way, the Spring District has relatively fewer commercial properties than the rest of The Harbors, since 4% of The Harbors properties are commercial. Consequently, it is likely that many residents have to leave the Spring District to find commercial services. The major types of commercial land uses include one-story retail stores, one-story offices, and professional service buildings. Finally, the Timber Greens Country Club and golf course are located in the northeast corner of the district within the Timber Greens subdivision.

The Spring District's commercial building stock is significantly newer than the rest of The Harbors. 40% of the district's commercial stock was built after 2002 when the most recent building codes took effect. This is only true for 8.4% of The Harbors' commercial buildings. Also, only 2% of the district's commercial stock was built before 1974, when no building codes were in effect, compared to 37% for The Harbors (Table C-2.2). The district's newest commercial development, constructed after 2002, is concentrated along Little Road in the northern and southern ends of the district. The older commercial development is concentrated along Massachusetts Ave and was built between 1974 and 1986. The Spring District's newer commercial stock is one of its strengths and may be a sign of a healthy and growing commercial market in the area.

The Spring District also has significantly higher commercial property values than The Harbors' average. Only 11% of the Spring District's commercial parcels fall within the \$26 to \$50 per square foot range, compared to over 35% in The Harbors (Table C-2.6, Map C-2.55). In turn, about 40% of the district's commercial parcels are in the \$51 to \$100 range, and 18% are in the \$101 to \$150 range, compared to 30% and 8% respectively in The Harbors. The location of higher commercial property values typically corresponds to areas with newer commercial structures. The high property values will benefit the area by attracting new businesses to already successful commercial nodes.

Of the Spring District's 192 commercial parcels 46 (24%) are considered vacant by the Pasco County Property Appraiser (Table C-2.5). All of this undeveloped land is concentrated along Rowan Road, Massachusetts Avenue, and Little Road and is clustered around existing commercial uses

(Map C-2.57). This presents an opportunity for the district to focus new development at specific commercial nodes. Finally, there are no commercial foreclosures in the Spring District.

Of the 8,938 parcels in the Spring District, 8,064 parcels are classified as residential, comprising 90% of its land use. In this way, the Spring District is even more residentially focused than The Harbors (Table C-2.3). Residential land is prominent throughout the entirety of the district (Map 3.19). Almost all of the residential uses are single-family homes with a few condominiums scattered throughout the district.

Similar to its commercial stock, the Spring District's residential housing stock is notably newer than that of The Harbors. Almost none of the district's housing stock was built before 1974 when Florida's first building codes were established. This is a stark contrast to the 38% of The Harbor's housing stock that was built before 1974 (Table C-2.2). Similarly, about 28% of the Spring District's residential housing units were constructed after 1994, compared to only 9.5% of the residential units in The Harbors. This leaves 72% of the district's housing stock that was constructed between 1974 and 1994. So, even though it has a newer housing stock than The Harbors, the Spring District's housing stock is beginning to age. Yet, windshield surveys noted



*Image 3.22: Residential Neighborhood in the Spring District*

Source: FSU Project Team

that the new developments are in good condition and provided amenities not found throughout much of The Harbors. For example, residential developments, such as Mill Run, Wind Trail, and the Seven Springs area, were sometimes gated, had recreational amenities, sidewalks, and/or a uniform identity (Table E-1.2). The district's newest housing stock, built between 1986 and 2002, is located in the northeast corner of the district while the older housing stock, built between 1974 and 1986, is concentrated in the southwest portion of the Spring District.

The residential property values in the Spring District differ from The Harbors' in that they fall in a relatively narrow range. Almost 99% of the residential property values in the Spring District are valued between \$26 and \$75 per square foot. While the majority (60%) of The Harbors' properties are also within this range, The Harbors has significantly more low value properties. 37% of properties in The Harbors are worth less than \$25 per square foot, compared to only 1% of properties in the Spring District. However, the district's narrow range of property values also means that it has very few residential properties (less than 1%) valued at over \$75 per square foot. In this way, the Spring District's relatively new housing stock may have raised the area's

property values above the very low range, but its lack of coastal access may have kept them from rising into the very high range (Table C-2.6).

Of the 8,064 residential parcels in the Spring District, only 216 (2.6%) are classified as vacant by the property appraiser (Table C-2.3). Windshield surveys are consistent with this data observing many large tracts of forested undeveloped residential property. These undeveloped parcels, ranging in size from 5 acres up to 40 acres, are scattered throughout the district and abut existing residential parcels (Map c-2.57). These large, vacant parcels will be an opportunity for the Spring District to provide neighborhood parks, a need identified in The Harbors Plan.

There are 578 residential foreclosures in the Spring District. This equates to 7% of the residential parcels being in the foreclosure process, which is very similar to The Harbors' residential foreclosure rate of 8% (Table C-2.7). The district's residential foreclosures are scattered throughout the district and reflect no particular pattern (Map C-2.59).

### *3.10.3 SWOT Analysis*

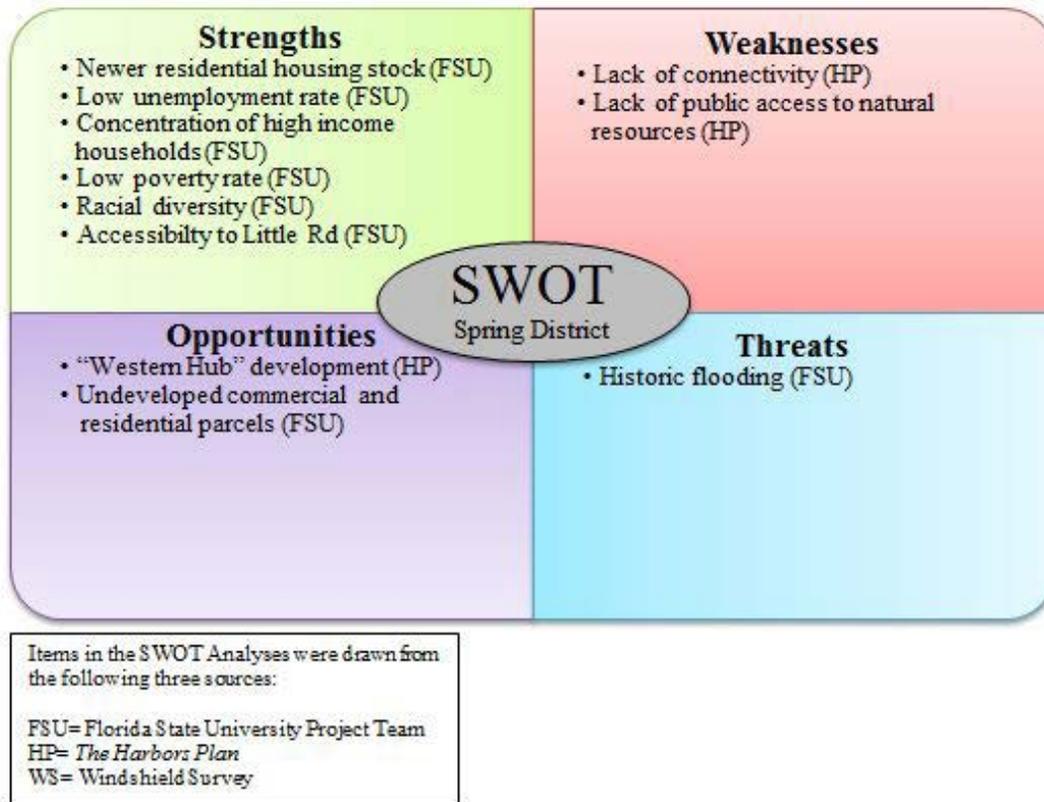
Based upon the FSU Project Team's analysis of The Harbors Plan, Existing Conditions, Socioeconomic Analysis, and Parcel Analysis/Windshield Surveys, the following Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses, and Threats were identified for the Spring District:

#### *i. Strengths and Opportunities*

The Western Hub Redevelopment Plan is a 1,159 acre proposed mixed-use development within the district (The Harbors Plan, 2013). The Western Hub Redevelopment Plan offers the district an opportunity to provide parks, open space, and a more connected street network between residential and commercial uses (The Harbors Plan, 2013). This development will be located on the south side of SR 54 east and west of Little Road. In addition, Parcel Analysis revealed there are many large (greater than 10 acres) undeveloped residential parcels throughout the district adjacent to existing residential properties that could be utilized as parks and open space for nearby residents (Map c-2.58).

In addition, the socioeconomic conditions indicate that the district has low unemployment rates compared to the rest of The Harbors. All but one census tract within the district have an unemployment rate below 0.08% (Section 2.10). The district also has a concentration of high income households when compared to The Harbors. Between 31% and 62% of households in

Figure 3.10: The Spring District SWOT Summary



almost every census tract in the district are classified as high income (Section 4.3). Further, this district has low rates of poverty when compared to The Harbors as a whole, with all but one of the census tracts reporting only 2-10% of households below the poverty line, which is notably lower than The Harbors’ poverty rate of 14.3% (Section 2.9). The high income households, in conjunction with low unemployment and poverty rates, indicate that the district consists of a very well-established population that could support and sustain additional commercial investment in the area. In addition, Parcel Analysis revealed there is an abundance of undeveloped commercial land located on Rowan Road and Little Road adjacent to existing commercial development that could be utilized for greenfield commercial development (Map C-2.57). This has the potential to build upon the momentum of the district’s relatively new commercial and residential development.

*ii. Weaknesses and Threats*

The existing and socioeconomic conditions indicate a few weaknesses that could threaten future development in the Spring District. As seen in Map 1.7, portions of the district are prone to flooding which can affect the character of future development (Section 1.3.2). Also, the district

lacks street connectivity due to many cul de sacs and dead ends. This lack of connectivity hinders the district's ability to be a walkable community, which The Harbors Plan identifies as an important factor in its Urban Design Element (The Harbors Plan, pg. 58). Finally, there is only one park in the Spring District (Section 1.3.2). Increased recreational opportunities will likely be necessary to continue to attract new and wealthier residents.

#### *3.10.4 Conclusion*

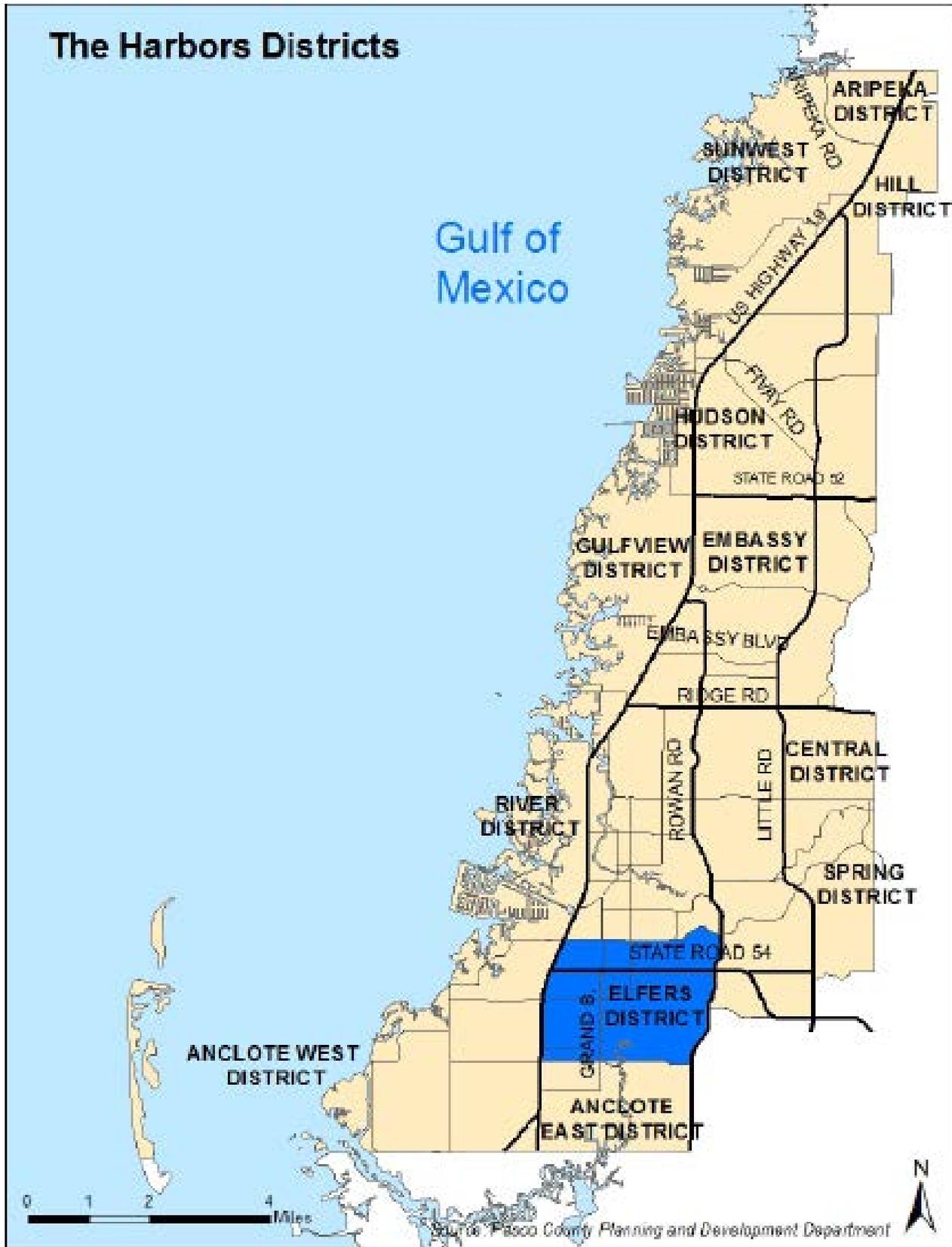
The Harbors Plan envisions the Spring District as a community-oriented district with viable neighborhood centers and a well-connected street network that links neighborhoods with commercial and recreational opportunities. The district's favorable demographics (low unemployment, low poverty, and high median household income) and ample undeveloped land offer plenty of opportunities for commercial investment. The Western Hub Redevelopment Plan also offers opportunity for the district to create neighborhood and commercial centers, and will provide much needed park space. However, as the district moves to capitalize on these opportunities, it will need to carefully address several weaknesses and threats including its risk of flooding, and its lack of street connectivity. The lack of connectivity will pose a challenge as the district attempts to achieve its goal of walkability. The district's lack of access to natural/coastal resources and lack of recreational amenities could also discourage residents from moving to the area. However, many of the district's strengths provide great opportunities to address these issues.

### **3.11 The Spring District**

#### *3.11.1 Introduction*

Located west of the Spring District and south of the River District, the Elfers District covers 3,547 acres and currently has a population of 21,452 residents (The Harbors Plan, 2013). Similar to several other districts, the Elfers District is characterized by an aging housing stock built mostly in the 1960s and 1970s and is also plagued by commercial vacancies along the US 19 corridor (The Harbors Plan, 2013). The area has various potential development and redevelopment opportunities including the "Harvey-Madison/S.R. 54" development, a centrally located, 200-acre undeveloped greenfield site that is planned for mixed-use development. It includes high-density residential, commercial, and industrial uses as well as conservation lands. Finally, the Elfers District also has a number of historic buildings that The Harbors Plan seeks to preserve (The Harbors Plan, 2013).

Map 3.20: The Elfers District



DISTRICT  
PROFILES

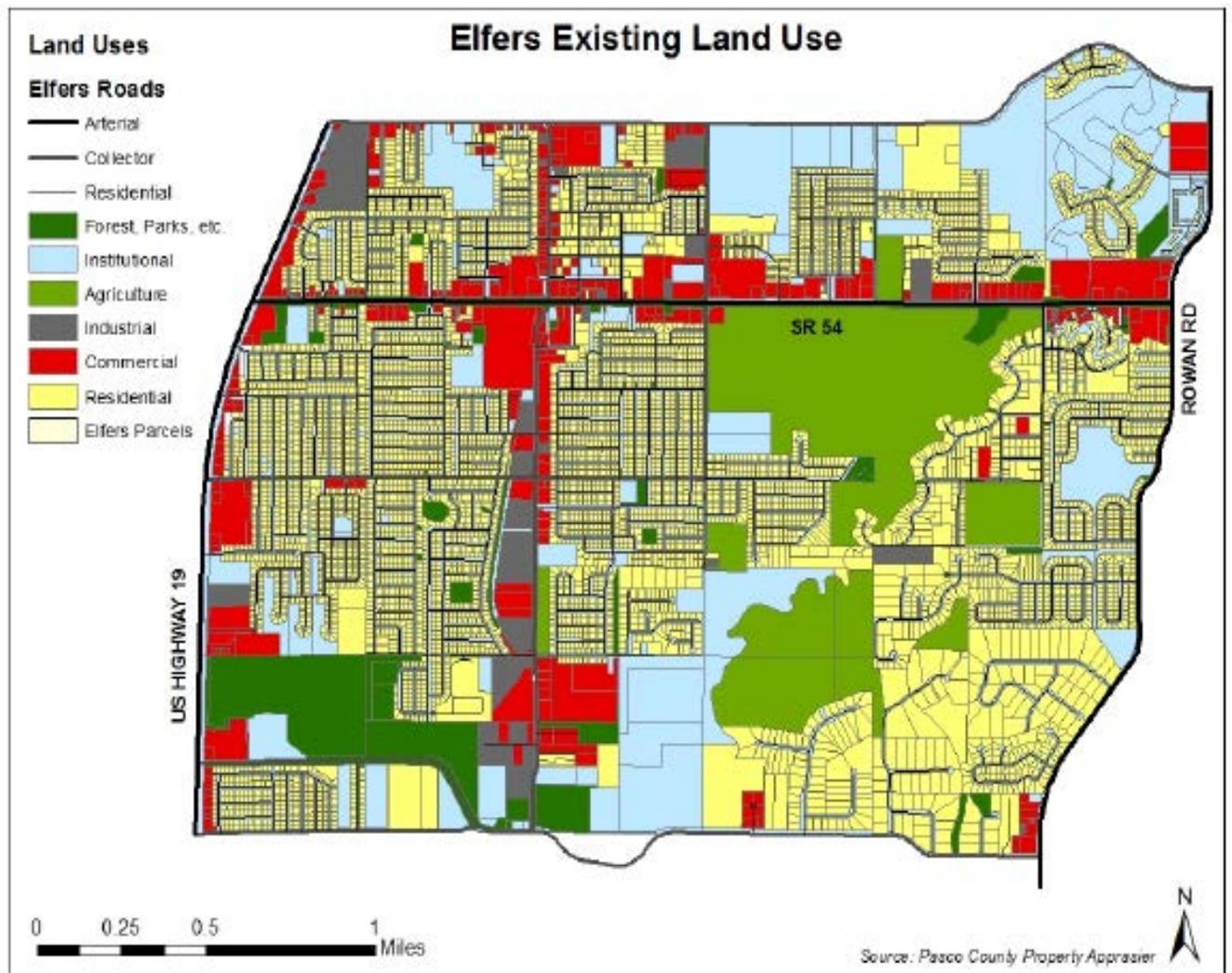
THE HARBORS

3.11.2 Parcel Analysis

As seen in Map 3.21, the Elfers District’s existing land use pattern is characterized by residential and commercial uses with large pieces of agricultural and institutional, and forest land filling in the gaps in between. The commercial uses are concentrated along US 19, SR 54, and Rowan Road, while the residential uses are spread throughout the district. Pasco County’s FLUM anticipates that the district’s development patterns will largely go unchanged in the next 25 years, expect that much of the currently undeveloped forest and agricultural land will be developed into commercial and residential uses (Map C-2.62).

The Elfers District contains a total of 360 commercial parcels, comprising 4.4% of the district’s land use. The major commercial uses in this district are one-story retail stores, one-story offices,

Map 3.21: The Elfers District Existing Land Use Map



and professional service buildings. One challenge facing the Elfers District is its aging commercial building stock. Approximately two-thirds of the Elfers District's commercial building stock was built before the enactment of the Coastal Building Zone and Code in 1986 (Table C-2.2). While this is slightly less than The Harbors' as a whole (69.1%), this still represents a notable issue. The district's aging commercial stock could increase redevelopment and rehabilitation costs for future development in the River District because most of the existing building stock will need significant repairs and rehabilitation to ensure it is compliant with the current Coastal Building Code. Until then, these buildings will also present another issue by being less resilient in the event of natural disasters.



*Image 3.23: Residential Neighborhood in the Elfers District*

Source: FSU Project Team

Property values in the Elfers District are similar to that of The Harbors. Approximately 46% of the commercial parcels in the district property are valued between \$0 and \$50 per square foot. This is almost equal to The Harbor's as a whole which has 48.7% in that value range (Table C-2.6). These relatively low commercial property values will provide an opportunity for more affordable redevelopment. Also, businesses will be likely to locate in this area due to the low cost of investing in a building.

Potential commercial development in the Elfers District will also be encouraged by the sizeable number of undeveloped commercial properties in the area. 99 (27.5%) of the district's commercial parcels are currently undeveloped (Table C-2). This is consistent with the vacancy rate for the entire Harbors area (30.6%). Almost all of these vacant parcels are located along major arterials, with a small concentration located at the intersection of SR 54 and Grand Blvd. In addition, windshield surveys indicated that there currently are several unoccupied buildings adjacent to US 19.



*Image 3.24: Vacant Residence in the Elfers District*

Source: FSU Project Team

Largely a residential district, the Elfers District contains a total of 7,365 residential parcels. Approximately 85% of these parcels are single-family homes; however the district also contains some mobile homes, condominiums, multi-family units, and one retirement community. These residential parcels are spread throughout the entire district (Map 5.21). The Elfers District

contains a very old residential housing stock. Approximately 53% of the district's housing stock was built before the enactment of Florida's building code in 1974. This is a significantly higher proportion than The Harbors as a whole (37.7%) (Table C-2.1). Consequently, the district's housing stock will be more susceptible to natural disasters and it will be harder to attract new residents to this area. Many of the Elfers District's oldest housing units are concentrated in the western half of the district in neighborhoods such as Beacon Hills and Valencia Heights. Windshield surveys found that many of these areas show obvious signs of aging including deteriorated houses, cracked driveways, poorly maintained yards, and dirt roads (Table E-2). Although the most of Elfers District's housing units are relatively old, there are a few areas, such as the Summer Lakes and Riverside Estates neighborhoods, that have much newer housing units built after 1995.

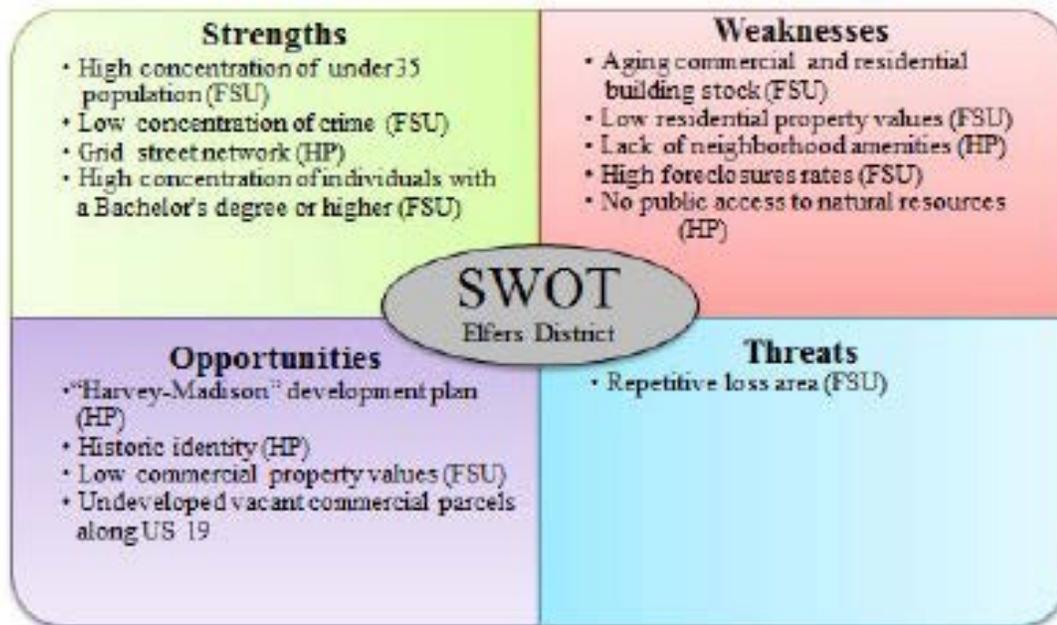
The Elfers District also contains relatively low residential property values. Approximately 96% of the residential parcels in the Elfers District are valued at \$50 per square foot or less compared to 87% of parcels in The Harbors (Table C-2.6). These low property values are due in part to the older housing stock and unmaintained properties. This presents an issue for the Elfers District because low property values will likely dissuade people from the area.

According to Pasco County's Property Appraiser, there are 181 (2.5%) vacant residential parcels in the Elfers District. Windshield surveys confirmed that all but two of these parcels are undeveloped. Thus the Elfers District has relatively few undeveloped residential parcels relative to The Harbors as a whole where 6.4% of the residential parcels are vacant (Table c-2.5). These vacant parcels are located throughout the district but there are small concentrations in the north and east portions of the district (Map C-2.65). However, the lack of vacant residential parcels does not mean that there is no room for new development. As discussed earlier, the large tracts of forest and agricultural land provide ample opportunity for future development. In addition, windshield surveys found that there are many unoccupied vacant residential homes in neighborhoods throughout the district (Table E-1.2). Finally, there are 708 residential foreclosures in the Elfers District. This equates to a residential foreclosure rate of 9.6%, which is slightly higher than The Harbors' foreclosure rate (7.97%) (Table c-2.7). While many of these homes in foreclosure are still occupied, they may provide additional opportunities for redevelopment.

### *3.11.3 SWOT Analysis*

Based upon the FSU Project Team's analysis of The Harbors Plan, Existing Conditions, Socioeconomic Analysis, and Parcel Analysis/Windshield Surveys, the following Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses, and Threats were identified for the Elfers District:

Figure 3.11: The Spring District SWOT Summary



Items in the SWOT Analyses were drawn from the following three sources:  
 FSU= Florida State University Project Team  
 HP= The Harbors Plan  
 WS= Windshield Survey

*i. Strengths and Opportunities*

As seen in Map 3.21, the Elfers District has a grid street network throughout the western half of the district providing better connectivity and a potential to create walkable areas. This district also benefits from a number of historic locations such as Mitchell Bank, Elfers Historic School, and the Baker House. This historic character can be a foundation for developing a unique district identity. In addition, the Elfers District has a high number of undeveloped vacant commercial parcels along US 19 (Table C-2.3). These parcels provide the opportunity for redevelopment and expansion of commercial uses. The majority of these parcels also have low property values making them more affordable for development (Table c-2.6).

The Elfers District has a very low rate of violent, nonviolent, and property crimes compared to other districts and The Harbors as a whole. Violent and property crimes rates range from 0-7% and nonviolent crime ranges from 0-5% (Table D-2.3). This can be used to improve the public perception of the Elfers District and to attract families and other potential residents to the area.

The Elfers District also has a relatively young population with 35-52% of residents age 35 or younger (Section 2.3). Additionally, the district has a well-educated population. Between 25% and

36% of residents in the eastern portion of the district have a Bachelor's degree or higher (Section 2.11). In comparison, only 14% of The Harbors' residents earned a Bachelor's degree or higher (Section 2.11).

### *ii. Weaknesses and Threats*

The Elfers District contains valuable natural resources, such as wetlands, however residential developments were built up to the edge of these resources cutting off public access. Locating residential development so close to wetlands has also caused flooding problems. As seen in Map 1.7, there are also a few small repetitive loss areas located in the district's residential areas (Section 1.3.2). This poses a concern when considering redevelopment in these areas because the majority of the commercial and residential buildings were built before the enactment of coastal building codes (Table C-2.1). As such, many of these buildings will be more susceptible to damages caused by flooding and natural disasters. This will make it more difficult to attract businesses and residents to the Elfers District.

In addition, the Elfers District contains a high foreclosure rate and low residential property values (Table C-2.6, Table 2.7). These factors will dissuade potential residents from investing in the Elfers District because many of these homes are aging, unmaintained, and in need of repair. High foreclosure rates also lessen the overall quality of neighborhoods and are often correlated with property crime.

### *3.11.4 Conclusion*

Pasco County envisions the Elfers District as a place where historic features are enhanced and preserved and where livable neighborhoods can be created that provide, "safe and comfortable access to parks, green open spaces, community facilities, and neighborhood centers" (The Harbors Plan, pg. 92). The existing characteristics of the Elfers District present several opportunities to achieve this vision. The combination of low commercial property values and large amounts of undeveloped land provide opportunities to purchase and aggregate these lands for future development. In addition, low crime rates, a younger population, and the district's historic character can be used to attract more people to the area. Although the Elfers District presents many opportunities, there are significant threats that must also be addressed to ensure viability of these efforts. These threats include a high commercial vacancy rate, an aging housing stock, and a lack of public access to natural resources. These issues will need to be addressed and considered when planning for redevelopment.

## 3.12 The Anclote West District

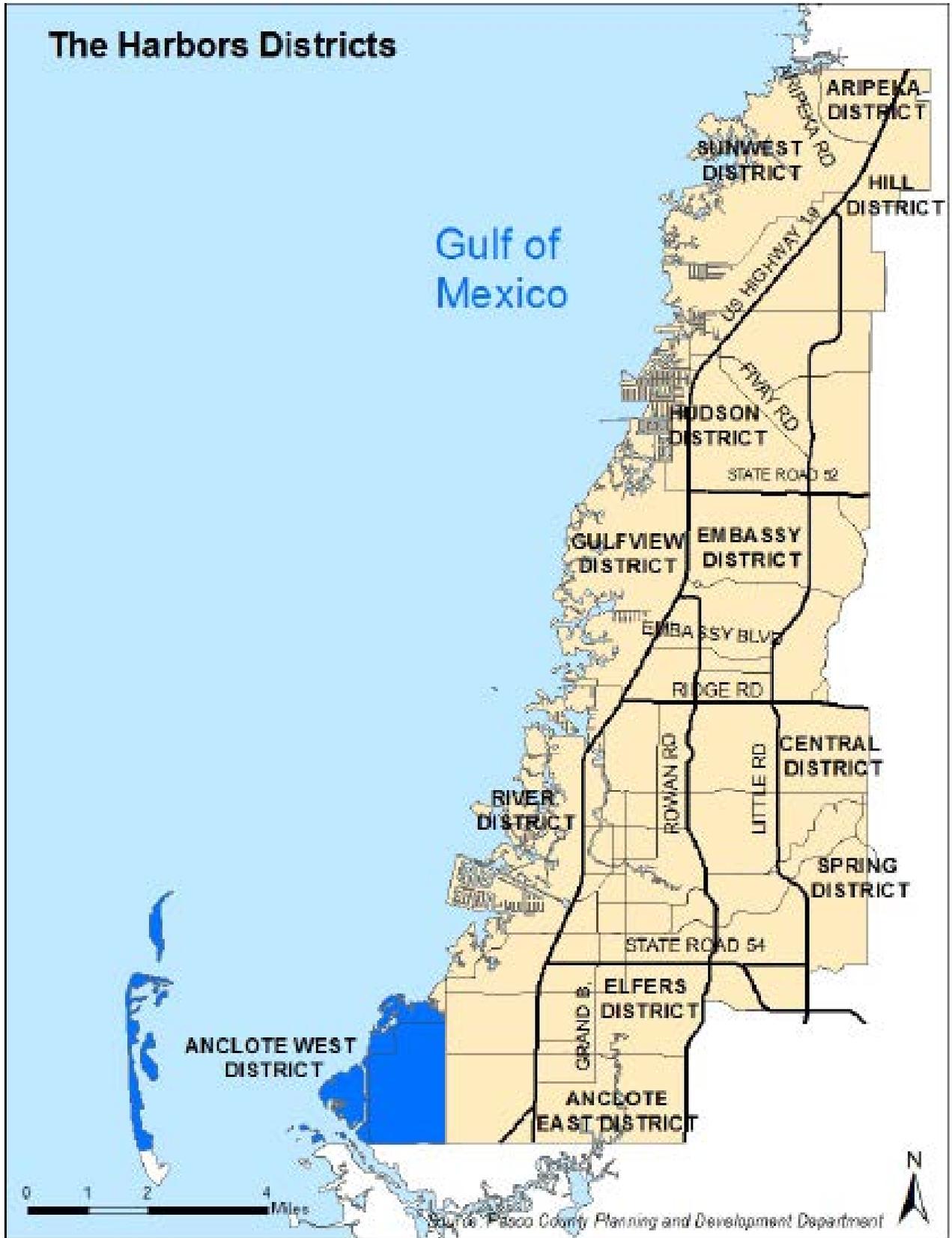
### 3.12.1 Introduction

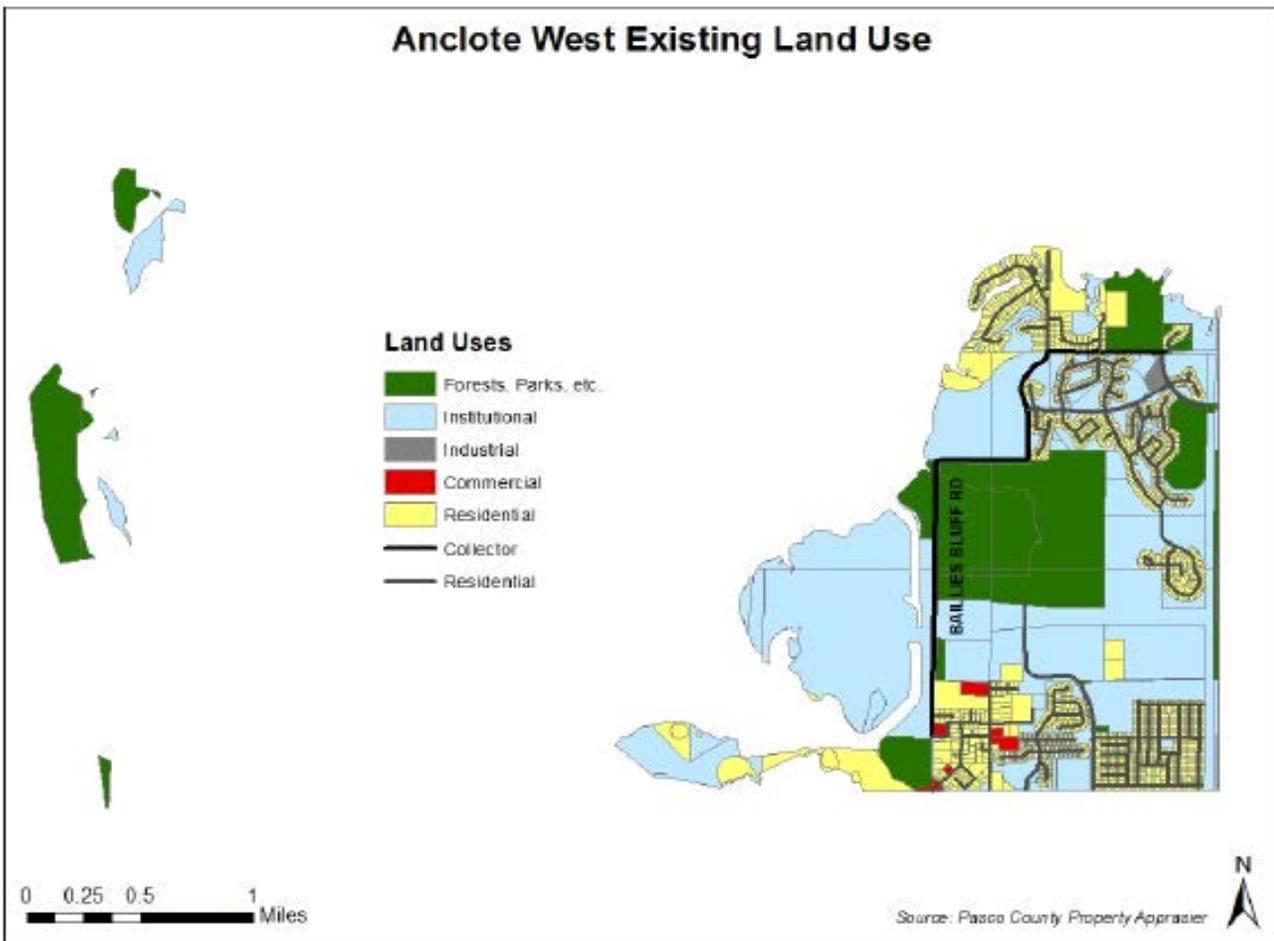
The Anclote West District is a small, coastal district comprising 2,233 acres that is largely undeveloped but currently has a population of 3,779 people. This district is defined by its coastal resources and natural features including the Anclote Gulf Park, Key Vista Nature Park, Eagle Point Park, and Anclote Key Preserve State Park. However, like most of the coastal districts, the Anclote West District currently lacks public access to these amenities. In fact, the State Park is only accessible by boat. In addition to increasing access, The Harbors Plan emphasizes the need to better connect the parks in this district through transit opportunities and the addition of trails, boardwalks or riverwalks. The district also benefits from a relatively new housing stock as well as a younger, wealthier, and more educated population than much of the rest of The Harbors. Building upon its proximity to other tourist destinations, such as Tarpon Springs, the Anclote West District has the potential to be another ecotourism destination within The Harbors.

### 3.12.2 Parcel Analysis

As seen in Map 3.23, the major types of land uses in the Anclote West District are forests, parks, institutional land, and residential uses. There is very limited commercial, office, and retail development in this district. All of the district's residential development is located in the northern and southern edges of the district. Significant portions of the district are designated as forest and park lands including the Key Vista Nature Park, which is located in the northwest portion of the mainland of this district. Much of the institutional land is also undeveloped including parks and wetlands, but it also includes a middle school, a high school, and a power plant. In this way, much of the district is currently undeveloped. However Pasco County's FLUM anticipates major increases in development in the Anclote West District (Map C-2.68). The FLUM designates the entire eastern portion of the district for residential use indicating that much of the district's current open space will be developed. Much of the remaining institutional land in the western portion of the Anclote West District is planned for heavy industrial uses along the coast. This includes the already existing power plant and the surrounding area. The remaining portion of the district, including Anclote Key is designated for coastal, conservation, or open space.

Map 3.22: The Anclote West District





The Anclote West District has very limited commercial development. In fact, the district contains 1,845 residential parcels and only seven commercial parcels. All seven of these parcels are located in the southern portion of the district (Map 3.23). These commercial uses include one-story retail stores, a marina, and mobile home rentals/RV parks.

The Anclote West District has an older commercial building stock compared to The Harbors. All six commercial buildings (100% of developed commercial property) were constructed before the 1986 Coastal Building Code (Table C-2.2). This could pose a challenge to the district if it attempts to expand commercial development in the future. Since the Anclote West District is a coastal district, the aging housing stock will be a stronger disincentive to reinvestment because they are not compliant with current code and likely will be less resilient in the event of a hurricane or other natural disaster. In addition, the condition of the aging commercial stock will require repairs and rehabilitation therefore increasing redevelopment costs should the county chose to invest in redevelopment in this area.

Commercial property values in The Anclote West District range widely but generally are slightly lower than The Harbors'. Five of the six (85.1%) commercial parcels are worth between \$26 and \$100 per square foot. The one remaining commercial parcel is a mobile home/RV park worth \$549 per square foot. This parcel is a 4.2 acre property has one 1,307 square foot permanent structure. Thus, 85.1% of the district's commercial properties are worth less the \$100 per square foot compared to only 76.2% of The Harbors' commercial properties. So, while none of the district's commercial properties have very low property values (\$0 to \$25), on average the district's commercial property value are not very high.

Only one commercial parcel in the Anclote West District is classified as vacant by the Property Appraiser. This parcel is located next to the Anclote Village Marina on the southern border of Pasco County and is 0.33 acres in size (Map C-2.7). It is currently being used as a dirt parking lot for the Anclote Village Marina. In this way, without significant changes to the district's zoning maps, there is almost no room for new commercial redevelopment. However, since the FLUM call for expansive residential development, this may not be a problem.



*Image 3.25: Residence in Anclote West District*  
Source: FSU Project Team



*Image 3.26: Residence in Anclote West District*  
Source: FSU Project Team

The Anclote West District has limited residential development containing 1,845 residential parcels. Most of these residential parcels are located in the northern or southern portion of the district with only a small subdivision in the middle of the district (Map 3.2). Approximately 91.5% of these parcels are classified as single-family homes; while another 3.0% are mobile homes. The majority of this housing stock is relatively new. Approximately 43.4% of the housing stock was built after 2002, compared to only 4.3% of The Harbor's stock (Table C-2.2). Similarly, only 24.3% of residential parcels in the Anclote West District were built before the Coastal Building Code of 1986. This is a huge contrast from the rest of The Harbors where 78% of the housing was constructed before 1986. The majority of the district's newer housing is located in the Key Vista and Gulf

Winds neighborhoods. This indicates that recent growth in residential development has been occurring in the Anclote West District. In fact, the Anclote West District has the largest proportion of newer housing units out of all districts in The Harbors. This is one of the district's strengths especially because the Anclote West District is located on the Gulf Coast, and these houses are more likely to be resilient to hurricanes and other natural disasters. Also, families and other potential homeowners are more likely to invest in property in this area because it is newer, and likely in better condition. However, even though most of the district's housing is relatively new, there are small concentrations of older units, built in the 1960s and 1970s. These older housing units are concentrated in Holiday Lakes West, Sand Bay, and Bailey's Bluff Estates.

Residential property values in the Anclote West District are also higher than that of The Harbors as a whole. The majority (60.4%) of the district's residential properties are valued between \$51 and \$75 per square foot, while the majority of The Harbors properties are only worth \$26 to \$50 per square foot (Table C-2.6). These high property values can be attributed to the newer housing stock, the type of housing constructed, and the district's coastal location.

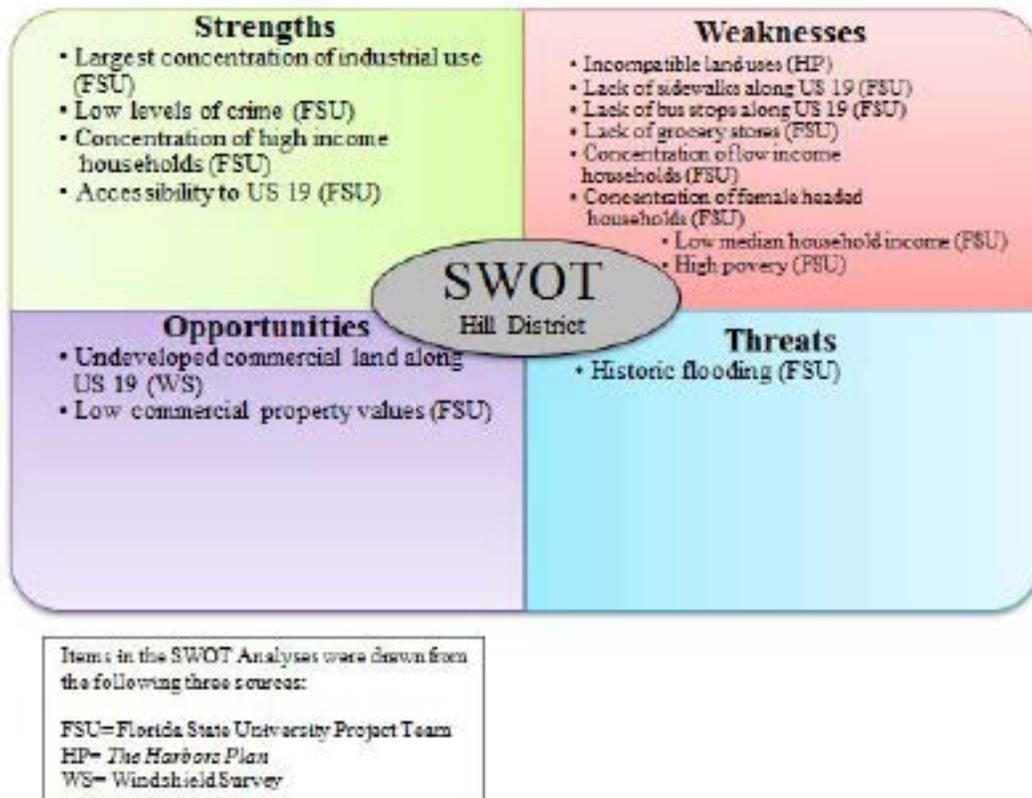
Of the Anclote West District's 1,845 residential parcels, 73 (4%) residential parcels are classified as vacant by the Pasco County Property Appraiser (Table C-2.3). This is a lower proportion than The Harbors as a whole (6.4%). However, this does not mean that the district does not have space for additional residential development. Several of the district's vacant parcels, especially in the southwest part of the district, are large undeveloped parcels with plenty of room for new development (Map C-2.72). Even more than that, large portions of the district's institutional land are planned for residential development (Map C-2.69). In this way, the Anclote West District has plenty of opportunity to continue to create new residential development.

The Anclote West District contains 126 homes in the foreclosure process (Table C-2.7). This equates to a residential foreclosure rate of 6.8%, which is slightly lower than The Harbors' residential foreclosure rate of 8.0% (Table C-2.7). These 126 properties are scattered throughout the district in existing residential neighborhoods (Map C-2.73). Many of these homes are still occupied. However, in addition to the foreclosures, the FSU Studio Team did observe vacant homes throughout the Anclote West District (Table E-1.2). Neighborhoods with a high number of vacant foreclosures can be good candidates for investment in redevelopment or rehabilitation.

3.12.3 SWOT Analysis

Based upon the FSU Project Team’s analysis of The Harbors Plan, Existing Conditions, Socioeconomic Analysis, and Parcel Analysis/Windshield Surveys, the following Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses, and Threats were identified for the Anclote West District:

Figure 3.12: The Anclote West District SWOT Summary



i. Strengths and Opportunities

The Anclote West District has many existing conditions that present unique strengths and opportunities for it to be successful as an ecotourism destination. The district has an abundance of parks with valuable natural and coastal resources, a marina, trails, scenic roadways, and a boat ramp providing access to the Gulf. These features provide the Anclote West District with the potential to create the recreational activities and sense of place necessary to attract many people to the area. The district’s location just north of Tarpon Springs is another characteristic that can be capitalized on. Tarpon Springs is already a successful, well known tourist destination. Advertising for ecotourism and other leisurely activities in the Anclote West District can be targeted to tourists already visiting the Tarpon Springs area.

This area also has a higher concentration of individuals age 35 or younger. Between 35% and 52% of the population of most census tracts in Anclote West District is age 35 or younger (Section 2.3). The vast natural resources in this district present an opportunity to provide many nature-based recreational activities for the Anclote West District's young, active population.



*Image 3.27: Anclote West Coastline*

Source: FSU Project Team

Another notable characteristic is that the Anclote West District's population is wealthier than much of the rest of The Harbors. Almost all of the census tracts in this district contain 31% to 62% high income households with the exception of one census tract in the southeast corner of the Anclote West District where 20%-30% of households are high income. Further, this is a well-educated district when compared to The Harbors. Between 25% and 36% of the district's residents have a Bachelor's degree or higher (Section 2.11). This is almost double The Harbors' average of 14% (Section 2.11).

Finally, the Anclote West District has a much newer residential housing stock, mostly constructed after 2002 (Table C-2.2). This is a strength of the district because these buildings are compliant with current building codes and are likely to be more resilient to natural disasters. These homes also have higher residential property values, which can attract families and other residents to the area, particularly families of a higher median household income (Table C-2.6).

### *ii. Weaknesses and Threats*

There are several weaknesses and threats facing the Anclote West District that could prevent the district from reaching its full potential. One of these weaknesses is a lack of adequate public access to the coast. While the district provides one boat ramp, the few access points to the Gulf are tucked behind residential developments. Residents without waterfront properties may face obstacles in regards to enjoying the natural resources this district offers. However, the district's ability to provide access and higher intensity development near the coast will be constrained by coastal flooding hazards. The coastline of the Anclote West District is located in the coastal high hazard area, indicating a high potential for flooding from storm events (Section 1.3.2). This poses a threat to the district's aging commercial building stock, but even more than that, it will impose additional restrictions on new development near the coast (Table C-2.2).

Although the district has an abundance of natural parks, it is lacking adequate signage and way-finding for these parks. The Anclote West District would benefit from signage indicating the existence and location of these parks along major roadways. Additionally, the Anclote West District provides no pedestrian or bicycle connectivity between existing parks and neighborhoods and no access to public transit. The district's circuitous street network is full of cul de sacs and dead ends that are not conducive for pedestrian connectivity.

#### *3.12.4 Conclusion*

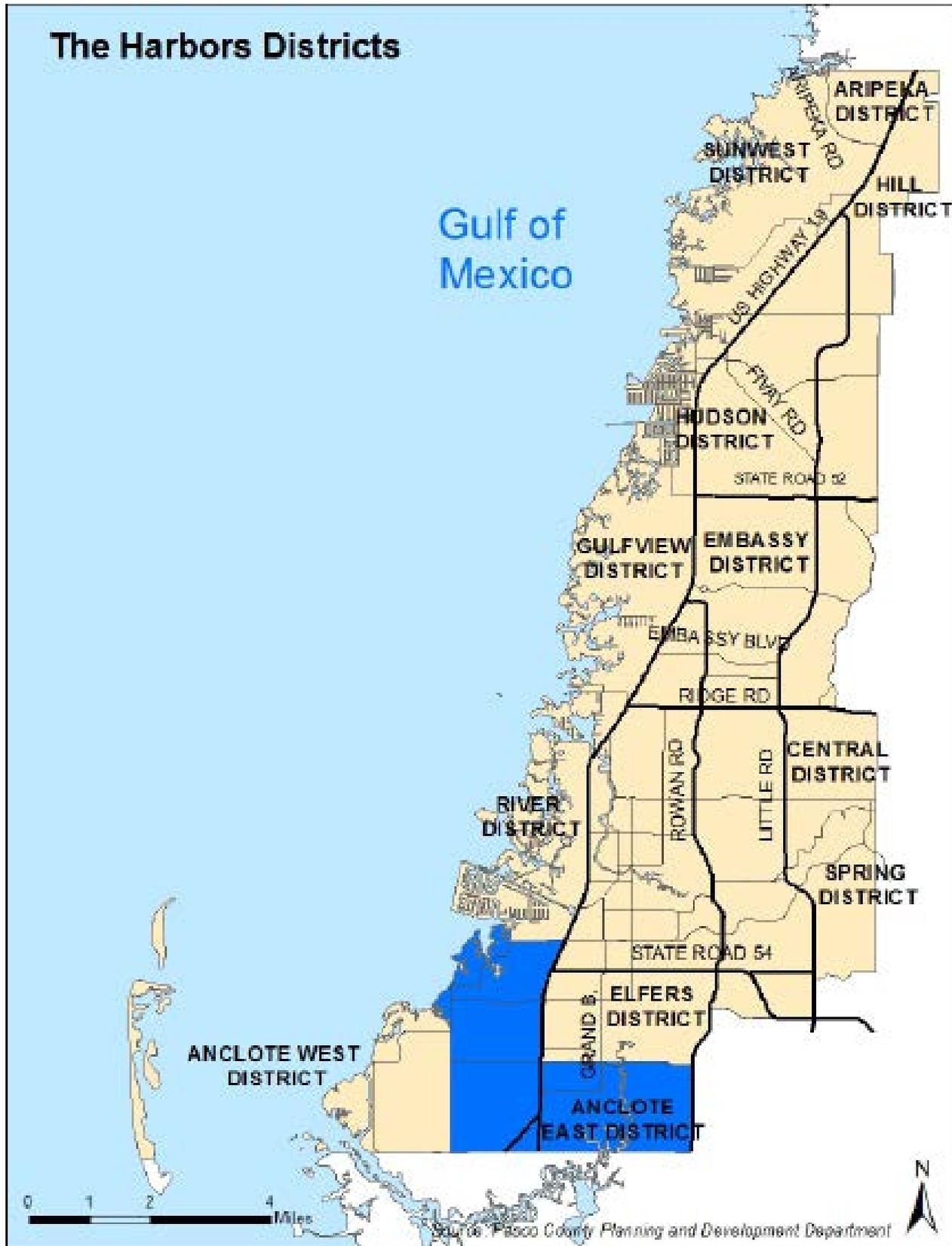
The Anclote West District has great potential to be a key destination in The Harbors area. Its coastal location and natural resources provide recreational and scenic opportunities for both tourists and residents. Pasco County's vision for the Anclote West District is to preserve its coastal resources, enhance its connectivity to the coast, and market it as an ecotourism destination (The Harbors Plan, pg. 94). The Anclote West District shows a lot of potential to achieve this vision due to its high median household income, newer residential housing stock, high residential property values, coastal location, existing parks, and proximity to Tarpon Springs. Although the district has many strengths and opportunities, there are several weaknesses that could threaten the district's ability to achieve this vision. Increasing visibility and awareness of existing coastal destinations, if not addressed, could continue to cause the area's potential to be underutilized. Additionally, the current lack of pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, grocery stores, and public transit, and aging commercial building stock could make it difficult to attract future residents and investors to the area. If these issues are addressed, the Anclote West District could become a thriving part of The Harbors.

### **3.13 The Anclote East District**

#### *3.13.1 Introduction*

The Anclote East District is located directly west and south of the Elfers District. With 32,579 residents, the Anclote East District has the second largest population of any district in The Harbors. The district serves as the entry point or gateway from Pinellas County into Pasco County, yet it is characterized by vacant and visually unappealing strip development that fails to provide a good first impression of The Harbors. The area also has a much older housing stock and lacks the natural and coastal features seen in other districts. Further highlighting the district's need for revitalization is its high rates of crime, homelessness, and foreclosures. The district's high rate of unemployment, low median household income, and competition with Pinellas County to the south.

Map 3.24: The Anclote East District



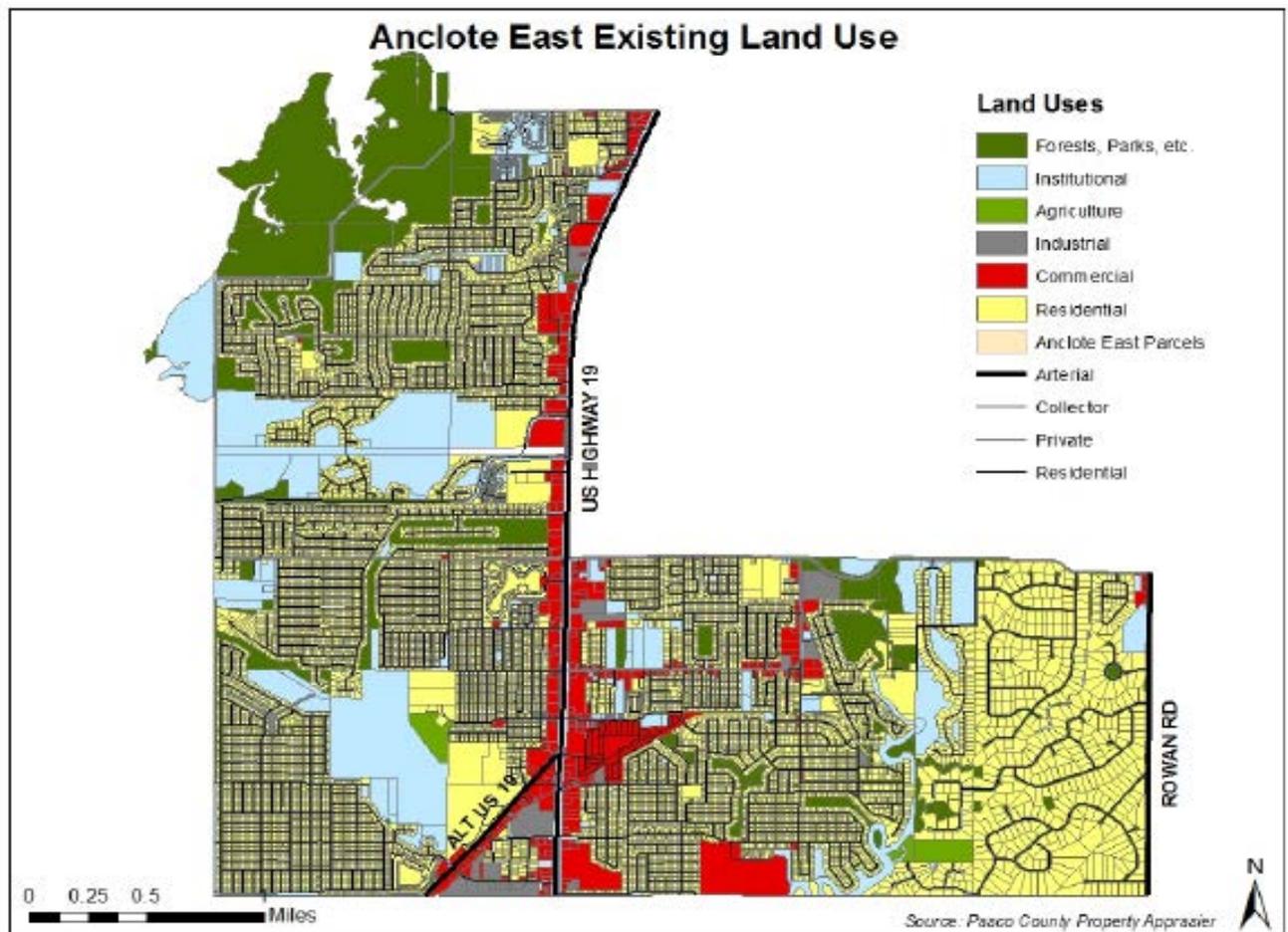
DISTRICT  
PROFILES

THE HARBORS

### 3.13.2 Parcel Analysis

As seen in Map 3.25, the existing land use in the Anclote East District is mainly characterized by residential uses with large institutional parcels (including Gulf Trace Elementary School and the Lake Conley) scattered throughout the district and commercial uses concentrated along US 19 and Alternate Road 19. Smaller portions of the district are also being used for agriculture, forests, and parks. The largest of these areas is the Pasco Palms Preserve in the northwest corner of the district. Since the Anclote East District is largely built-out already, Pasco County's FLUM does not indicate significant changes to the district's land use patterns (Map C-2.74). The majority of the land is planned for residential development, with commercial uses concentrated along US 19 and Alternate Road 19 and conservation lands in the northwest corner. However, the FLUM does display the potential for some future growth as most of the current smaller park and forest parcels are currently scattered throughout the district are planned for future residential development.

Map 3.25: The Anclote East District Existing Land Use Map



The Anclote East District contains a total of 331 commercial parcels. Major commercial uses in this district include one-story retail stores, stores and offices, and auto sales and services. Almost all of the commercial parcels are located along the US 19 or Alternate US 19 (Map 3.25). The Anclote East District struggles with having an older commercial building stock. Approximately 52.2% of the buildings were constructed before the Florida Building Code in 1974 compared to only 37.2% in The Harbors (Table C-2.2). Many of these buildings are not compliant with the current code and, as a result, will not be as resilient to natural disasters. Also, because of their age, many of these structures are not in good condition and will likely require expensive rehabilitation. These factors can cause businesses to choose to invest their money elsewhere, instead of in the Anclote East District.



*Image 3.28: Aging Commercial Strip in the Anclote East District*

Source: FSU Project Team

Commercial property values in the Anclote East District are slightly lower than that of The Harbors. Approximately 52% of the Anclote East District's commercial parcels are valued at \$50 per square foot or less compared to 48% of The Harbors' commercial properties (Table C-2.6). Low property values can reduce the barriers to entry in the commercial market creating opportunities for the county to provide affordable redevelopment options. For this same reason, investors may be attracted to these low property values and chose to buy property in the Anclote East District.

According to the Pasco County Property Appraiser, 68 (20.5%) of the district's commercial parcels are undeveloped (Table C-2.3). The majority of these vacant parcels are located in the southern portion of the Anclote East District, however there are a few vacant parcels scattered in the central and northern portions (Map C-2.77). Parcel analysis confirmed that all of these vacant parcels are still undeveloped however; windshield surveys indicate that many of the developed properties are also unoccupied. One of the most notable of these vacant commercial parcels is a strip

development on the east side of US 19 and north of the Pasco-Pinellas County border. This area is zoned as a shopping center community and is 91,369 square feet. The building is in very poor condition and could serve as a potential site for redevelopment and to create an identity as “The Harbors Gateway.”

The Anclote East District is predominately residential containing 15,996 residential parcels. The majority (77.4%) of these residential parcels are single family homes, while 10.8% are mobile homes and 8.7% are condominiums. These residential parcels are distributed throughout the entire county with the exception of the conservation and parkland in the northwest corner (Map 3.25). A significant amount of the district’s



*Image 3.29: Residence in the Anclote East District*

Source: FSU Project Team

homes are older units. 69.4% of homes in the Anclote East District were built before the enactment of the Florida Building Code in 1974, and 93.8% were built before the Coastal Building Code in 1986 (Table C-2.2). This is significantly higher than The Harbors where 37.7% and 78.8% of its housing stock was built before 1974 and 1986 respectively. These older housing units are distributed throughout the entire district with pockets of newer housing units dispersed throughout. The age of the housing stock is beginning to show and windshield surveys found that cracked driveways, unkempt yards, poor building conditions, and deteriorating roofs were common (Table E-2). This will make it hard to attract new residents to the Anclote East District and to persuade people to invest in this community. However, the district does have a notable concentration of newer housing in the Oak Ridge neighborhood located on the eastern edge of the Anclote East District. This area also represents the lowest density housing in the district.

The Anclote East District contains low residential property values compared to The Harbors with 54.3% of its residential properties valued at \$25 or less per square foot, while only 36.8% of properties in The Harbors are valued in this same range (Table C-2.6). These low property values are likely due in part to the age of the housing stock. This is a weakness for the Anclote East District because families and other potential residents do not want to invest in homes that need repair and are not likely to sell in the future.

The Anclote East District currently has very little undeveloped residential land. There are only 332 vacant residential parcels in the district, constituting only 2.1% of the district’s residential parcels

(Table C-2.3). These vacant parcels are scattered throughout the entire district (Map 3.25). However, the lack of vacant residential property may not mean that the district lacks space for new development. According to the FLUM, much of the undeveloped institutional land will also be turned into additional housing development. Windshield surveys also indicate that many existing residential units are unoccupied (Table E-1.2).

There currently are 1,393 residential properties in the foreclosure process in the Anclote East District. This equates to a residential foreclosure rate of 8.7%. This is similar to, but slightly higher than The Harbors' foreclosure rate of 7.8% (Table C-2.7). Foreclosures in the Anclote East District are prevalent throughout the entire district and do not appear to be clustered in a particular neighborhood. Windshield surveys observed many vacant homes that were in poor condition. These homes had broken windows, unkempt yards, and deteriorating roofs (Table E-1.2). Foreclosed and vacant homes will present opportunities for redevelopment and rehabilitation to improve these neighborhoods.

### *3.13.3 SWOT Analysis*

Based upon the FSU Project Team's analysis of The Harbors Plan, Existing Conditions, Socioeconomic Analysis, and Parcel Analysis/Windshield Surveys, the following Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses, and Threats were identified for the Anclote East District:

#### *i. Strengths and Opportunities*

A major strength of the Anclote East District is its higher concentration of young people and families. Between 34% and 52% of individuals in the majority of census tracts in the Anclote East District are age 35 or younger (Section 2.3). There also is a high concentration of families with children under 18 years old in this district. As many as 35% of households in several census tracts have children under 18 years old (Section 2.5). These demographic characteristics are especially notable because of The Harbors' relative lack of both of these demographic groups. With more young people and families already living in this area, the district can capitalize on amenities that suit the lifestyle needs of this age cohort.

The Anclote East District is also supported by its accessibility to US 19. Its proximity to US 19 along with its access to the Gulf Coast will make this area attractive to future residents (Map 3.25). This area also presents an opportunity to be marketed as the "Gateway to The Harbors." The Anclote East District gives travelers from the south a first impression of Pasco County;

Figure 3.13: The Anclote East District SWOT Summary



therefore, redevelopment in the district could be a catalyst for growth throughout the entire area. Another opportunity for the Anclote East District is its low commercial property values (Map C-2.75). This presents an opportunity because these parcels cost less and can therefore be more attractive to business owners or the county for investment and redevelopment purposes. Low-valued vacant commercial properties in the Anclote East District can be purchased for redevelopment to create a more aesthetic “Gateway to The Harbors.”

### *ii. Weaknesses and Threats*

The poor visual appearance of many buildings and strips along US 19 is a notable weakness because it provides an uninviting entrance to Pasco County (Table E-1.1). The district would benefit from redeveloping these commercial strips to an updated and aesthetically pleasing design. This will provide an impressive gateway to The Harbors to capitalize on the strength of the district’s location.

Several large areas in the southern portion of the Anclote East District are subject to storm flooding (Section 1.3.2). These susceptible areas are mainly located in residential areas. This will

need to be considered for future development in the district. This district also has a lack of public parks (Section 1.3.2). Parks provide valuable public space that is important to the community. Without an improved park system, the Anclote East District could struggle to provide the amenities necessary to attract new residents to the district.

The Anclote East District also suffers from low residential property values and a high residential foreclosure rate (Table C-2.6, Table C-2.7). These factors can dissuade potential residents from investing in the Anclote East District community because many of these homes are aging, unmaintained, and in need of repair. High residential foreclosure rates lessen the overall quality of neighborhoods and are sometimes correlated with property crime in an area. In addition to low residential property values, a majority of the building stock is aging and was built before the costal building codes. Consequently, it is less likely to be resilient to storms, flooding, and natural disasters (Table C-2.2.).

Another condition that can be expected to influence development in Anclote East District is the existence of multiple utility providers. Within the Anclote East District alone there are six utility providers (Section 1.3.7). This will complicate the provision of infrastructure for future development.

Additional weaknesses include concentrations of low-income individuals and high unemployment rates. At least 46% of households in every census tract in the district are low-income households (Section 4.5). In addition, three census tracts in the Anclote East District have very high unemployment rates ranging from 17% to 26% (Section 2.10, Map B-4). High crime rates, especially just east of US 19, could also pose a threat to the district's future well-being (Table D-2.5; Section 1.3.5). The northern and eastern portions of the Anclote East District contain higher concentrations of violent, nonviolent crime, and property crime. Crime rates in the north and east Anclote East District range from approximately 20-35% for violent crime, 18-37% for nonviolent crime, and 10-27% for property crime (Table D-2.3).

The Anclote East District also has several transportation related weaknesses. There are only four known bus stops in the Anclote East District, all located on or near US 19 (Map C-2.80; Table E-1.1). This may not have been a major issue if residents had access to private vehicles. However, two census tracts in the Anclote East District have significantly larger proportions of residents with no access to a private vehicle (Section 2.13; Map B-7). Finally, three food deserts were identified in the south and northwest portions of the Anclote East District (Section 2.14). In this way, the lack of transit options and food sources could provide major problems for the district's residents.

### 3.13.4 Conclusion

Part of Pasco County’s vision for the Anclote East District is to “retrofit strip development and create a gateway to West Pasco” (The Harbors Plan, 2013). Some major challenges that the Anclote East District faces in achieving this vision are addressing its high crime rates, limited food access, aging building stock, low residential property values, and high commercial vacancy rates. However, as the district moves toward revitalization, both the low property values and the vacancies could provide an opportunity for inexpensive redevelopment. Improvements to the visual appearance of this strip development would give visitors and passersby a great first impression of the county. Other opportunities presented by this district are its access to the coast and its high concentrations of young individuals and families. If these strengths and opportunities are capitalized upon, the Anclote East District has the potential to be a thriving community that will give visitors an appealing impression of Pasco County.

### 3.14 Conclusion

Each district within The Harbors has a distinct character and a unique set of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. A detailed analysis of the relevant parcel and socio-economic data was incorporated into a SWOT analysis that revealed potential focus areas for opportunity and reinvestment in each district, as well as challenges that could hinder redevelopment efforts within each district. It is important to conduct a fine-grain analysis of each district in an effort to identify areas that are most ripe for reinvestment projects that will ultimately help address the challenges that are also identified through this analysis. Based upon the information presented in this section, the FSU Project Team was able to identify distinct geographic areas within each district that should be considered for reinvestment and redevelopment projects moving forward. Section 4 will discuss specific geographic areas at the district level that rise to the surface as focus areas for potential reinvestment and redevelopment.

# **SECTION 4 FOCUS AREAS**

## Section 4 – Focus Areas

### 4.1 Introduction

In keeping with the primary objective of The Harbors Plan to address community decline and further support area strengths and opportunities through catalyst projects and other directed investments, this section identifies smaller planning areas within The Harbors where future redevelopment efforts should be targeted (Section 1.1). Following the completion of the district profile analyses, the FSU Project Team identified smaller planning areas, referred to as “Focus Areas”, for further study. Figure 4.1 illustrates, and the following section describes, the FSU Project Team’s approach to identifying Preliminary, Refined and Final Focus Areas in The Harbors. The approach used by the FSU Project Team to identify Preliminary Focus Areas is described, followed by a detailed discussion of the refinement process to determine the Final Focus Areas. A description of the Final Focus Areas follows, which describes each of the identified Final Focus Areas, along with specific findings extracted from the data analysis and stakeholder input gathered throughout Phase I of this project.

Figure 4.1: The Anclote West District SWOT Summary



### 4.2 General Approach

Building off of The Harbors Plan and the separate analyses presented in this report (socioeconomic profile and the district-level parcel and SWOT analyses), the FSU Project Team determined that Focus Areas should be determined in part through the delineation of areas of economic strength and the identification of areas facing challenges related to key indicators of distress. The FSU Project Team classified the Focus Areas into two main categories of inquiry: areas of distress, or “Challenge Areas,” and areas of prosperity, or “Opportunity Areas.”

- Challenge Areas: Portions of The Harbors showing evidence of current distress or potential distress along key indicators. These areas require public and private investment and comprehensive redevelopment strategies to yield successful revitalization.
- Opportunity Areas: Portions of The Harbors showing evidence of economic strength along key economic indicators. These areas represent portions of The Harbors where public investment has the greatest possibility of capitalizing on existing economic activity.

Next, the FSU Project Team developed specific criteria used to identify Challenge Areas and Opportunity Areas. For the Challenge Areas, criteria were drawn from planning literature that points to indicators that best capture and forecast neighborhood distress (Williams, Galster, and Verma, 2013, p. 201). Similarly, Jennings (2012) noted that identifying the major distress indicators within an area of interest is key to the formation of successful, place-based revitalization strategies. Among the key indicators of distress identified by this literature are housing foreclosures, per capita income, poverty rates, number of homicides, and FBI crime index data (Jennings, 2012, p. 4). Opportunity indicators were similarly identified based upon planning literature on economic development. Common indicators of economic strength include employment, industrial diversity, sales activity, income, and wages (Blakely and Greenleigh, 2013).

The FSU Project Team identified and assessed the utility of a wide range of potential census tract level socio-economic variables, including many presented in the Socioeconomic analysis (Section 2, e.g. poverty rates, home ownership, and population density), these tract level variables ultimately were not chosen as key indicators of distress or opportunity. The most up-to-date literature indicates that census tract level variables are not reliable indicators of distress currently taking place within the community (Williams, Galster, & Verma, 2013, p. 202). The following variables were selected due to their utility, accuracy, and insights into neighborhood distress and existing major economic nodes:

- Crime locations and rates
- Foreclosure locations and rates
- Employment Locations and Density
- Annual Sales Locations and Density
- Median Household Income

Crime locations and rates were chosen as a key variable when identifying Challenge Areas because it is a prime indicator of distress. High crime rates can deter investment and cause migration of residents and businesses from established neighborhoods, reducing property values and increasing housing turnover (Williams, Galster, & Verma, 2013, p. 203). Identifying areas with high crime rates provides an opportunity to identify, deter, and invest in communities suffering from this condition. Crime density was created using data collected from the Pasco County Sheriff's Office and Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE). Crime data from the City of Port Richey was also incorporated into the Phase I analysis. Point-level crime data for New Port Richey were requested by the FSU Project Team, but was not provided as of the date of this report. However, the FSU Project Team did incorporate at-large crime data for New Port Richey into the crime density mapping and analysis. Specific crimes were analyzed using major crime categories as provided by the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Section 1.3.5.

Housing foreclosure locations and rates were selected as a Challenge Focus Area variable because high foreclosure rates are an indicator of current and future neighborhood distress (Jennings, 2012). Foreclosures represent a lack of community resources and high rates can lead to an increase in crime and continued deterioration of existing housing stock, as confirmed by our statistical analyses. Williams, Galster, and Verma (2013, p.208) write that "completed foreclosures should be forwarded as an early warning indicator of many subsequent neighborhood changes of crucial concern to planners." Foreclosure density visualization maps were developed using data collected from the Pasco County Property Appraiser, City of Port Richey, and City of New Port Richey then confirmed by the FSU Project Team during windshield survey visits (Table E-1, Table E-2). The provided point data were analyzed and visualized using the kernel density tool in ArcGIS (Map 4.2).

Two key indicators of economic activity were used as the foundation for the identification and selection of Opportunity Focus Area, Employment and Sales. These variables represent key indicators for identifying the flow of commercial capital into The Harbors and the level of activity and resiliency in local business activity (Williams, Galster, Verma, 2013, p. 205). The FSU Project Team analyzed Employment Density across The Harbors using data received from the Site to Business Database provided by the Pasco County Long Range Planning Department. This Employment Density analysis determined areas with the highest concentration of employment, and these areas were confirmed during site visits and windshield surveys (Table E-1, Table E-2). Similarly, the Project Team analyzed Annual Sales Density using the same dataset. This variable captures the revenue streams of existing current businesses, much of which is then invested into the community through wages, taxes, and local business purchases.

### 4.3 Statistical Analysis of Selection Criteria

Analyses of the statistical relationship between several of the selection criteria were conducted to determine the strength and utility of the criteria used to identify the Challenge Focus Areas. Table 4.1 presents the results of our analysis of the statistical significance of these variables. The three crime rate categories were correlated positively with Percent Poverty and Percent of Low-Income Households, and negatively with Median Income. These results confirm what the literature indicates, that areas of low income within The Harbors also struggle with violent, non-violent and property crimes. Among the three categories of crime, only the Violent Crime Rate had a positive relationship with Foreclosure Rate, which indicates that these measures of distress only partially overlap within The Harbors. Surprisingly, there were no statistically significant relationships between the Foreclosure Rate and Percent Below Poverty, Median Income, or Percent of Low-Income Households. This finding illustrates quite powerfully that foreclosures are to be found in both high-income and low-income areas of The Harbors. However, the Foreclosure Rate had statistically significant relationships with Percent under 35 years of age and Percent over 65 years of age, indicating that foreclosures have been experienced across the full age spectrum of households.

Taken as a whole, this statistical work reinforces the utility of using this panel of criteria to identify areas in greatest distress in The Harbors. High crime areas often lead to reduced property values, the loss of business activity, and a cycle towards greater crime. Foreclosures often provide site level, visual indicators of distress that can lead to a loss of confidence in an area and can contribute to a cycle of disinvestment. Underlying both of these indicators is income, a basic measure of the ability of a community to be resilient during economically tough times and thrive during boom periods. These three separate indicators of distress provide a broad, yet interconnected set of measures of the core challenges facing The Harbors and they serve as the foundation for identifying the Challenge Areas presented below.

The FSU Project Team did not conduct a statistical analysis for the opportunity criteria due to the data limitations for several of the selected variables. Most notably, the Site to Business database, which provided data on employment and annual sales, consists of information only for those businesses within 200 feet of major road corridors in Pasco County: US 19, Little Road, Ridge Road, SR 52, and SR 54. As a result, business activity in areas outside of these narrow corridors was unavailable to the FSU Project Team at the time of this report. This hindered the ability of the team to calculate tract-level statistical relationships between on employment and sales which

could be analyzed in conjunction with household income data. Consequently, the team determined any statistical analyses of these variables were not appropriate.

Table 4.1: Relationships/Correlations between Criteria and Other Relevant Data

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	P-Value	Pearson's Correlation Coefficient	Strength/Direction of Relationship <sup>1,2</sup>
Violent Crime Rate	% Under 35	0.024	0.030	
Violent Crime Rate	% Over 65	0.174	-0.060	
Violent Crime Rate	% Below Poverty	3.74*	0.430	Moderate
Violent Crime Rate	Median Income	0.631*	-0.340	Moderate
Violent Crime Rate	% Low-Income Households	0.000*	0.320	Moderate
Violent Crime Rate	Foreclosure Rate	0.062	0.070	
Non-Violent Crime Rate	% Under 35	0.071	-0.080	
Non-Violent Crime Rate	% Over 65	0.041	0.050	
Non-Violent Crime Rate	% Below Poverty	5.98	0.420	Moderate
Non-Violent Crime Rate	Median Income	0.658	-0.360	Moderate
Non-Violent Crime Rate	% Low-Income Households	0.000*	0.310	Moderate
Non-Violent Crime Rate	Foreclosure Rate	0.113	0.180	
Property Crime Rate	% Under 35	0.498	-0.080	
Property Crime Rate	% Over 65	0.318	0.030	
Property Crime Rate	% Below Poverty	0.025	0.220	
Property Crime Rate	Median Income	0.862	-0.360	Moderate
Property Crime Rate	% Low-Income Households	0.141	0.100	Moderate
Property Crime Rate	Foreclosure Rate	0.659	0.240	
Foreclosure Rate	% Under 35	7.31	0.500	Moderate
Foreclosure Rate	% Over 65	2.12	-0.390	Moderate
Foreclosure Rate	% Below Poverty	.0013	0.030	
Foreclosure Rate	Median Income	2.68	0.040	
Foreclosure Rate	% Low-Income Households	5.62	-0.080	
% Below Poverty	% Under 35	1.77	0.240	
% Below Poverty	% Over 65	0.001*	-0.090	
% Low-Income Residents	% Under 35	5.55	0.100	
% Low-Income Residents	% Over 65	4.28	0.160	

<sup>1</sup>Denotes a statistically significant relationship with a P-Value  $\leq 0.05$

<sup>2</sup>\*For strength of relationship: Strong =  $\pm 1.00 - \pm 0.70$ ; Moderate =  $\pm 0.70 - \pm 0.30$ ; Weak =  $\pm 0.30 - 0.00$

\*\*For direction of relationship: Positive = Green; Negative = Red

## 4.4 Preliminary Focus Areas

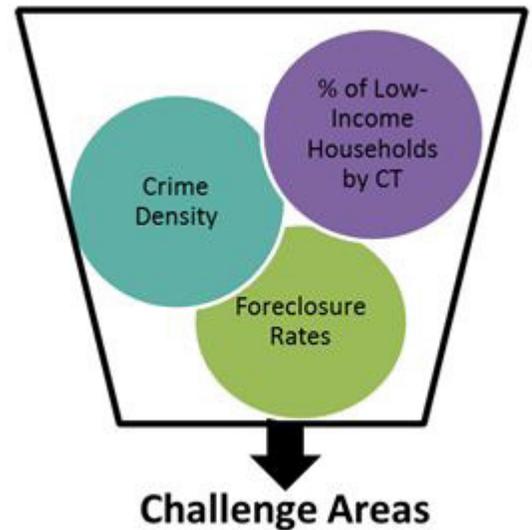
### 4.4.1 Preliminary Challenge Focus Areas

Preliminary Challenge Focus Areas were identified by overlaying areas with concentrations of Crime Density, Foreclosure Density, and Percentage of Low-Income Households by Census Tract (Figure 4.1). Comparison of these variables provided an initial indication of areas containing distress or challenges occur in The Harbors. The Preliminary Challenge Focus Areas (Map 4.4) represent the spatial distribution of areas in need of public intervention through catalyst projects and/or community based initiatives (Jennings, 2012, p. 2).

The FSU Project Team used the kernel density tool in ArcGIS to create density maps for each of the selected variables. Density maps showing the concentration of three different types of crime (each in a separate map) are located in Section 1.3.5. The FSU Project Team overlaid the three crime density maps to develop an aggregated map showing violent, non-violent, and property crimes within The Harbors (Map 4.1). The resulting density map shows areas of higher concentrations of crime along US 19 and within the Hudson District, the Embassy District, and the Anclote East District. In addition, the Project Team mapped The Harbors crime rates per 1,000 residents by census tract to ensure these three districts were not highlighted simply because of their larger populations. However, areas with higher crime rates, and therefore less neighborhood stability, roughly corresponded to areas with higher total concentrations of crime (Map 1.18).

Foreclosure rates and densities were calculated for The Harbors area incorporating foreclosures within the unincorporated county, the City of Port Richey, and the City New Port Richey. Note that while the overall number of foreclosures in the City of New Port Richey was gathered and incorporated into this analysis by the FSU Project Team, specific point data was not available for the City of New Port Richey. As a result, the overall foreclosure rate for The Harbors and at the census tract level is accurate, the foreclosure density map within the boundaries of the City of New Port Richey underreports foreclosure densities within that city due to the lack of point data (Map 4.2). The resulting density map indicated higher concentrations of foreclosures are located in

Figure 4.2: Preliminary Challenge Area Process



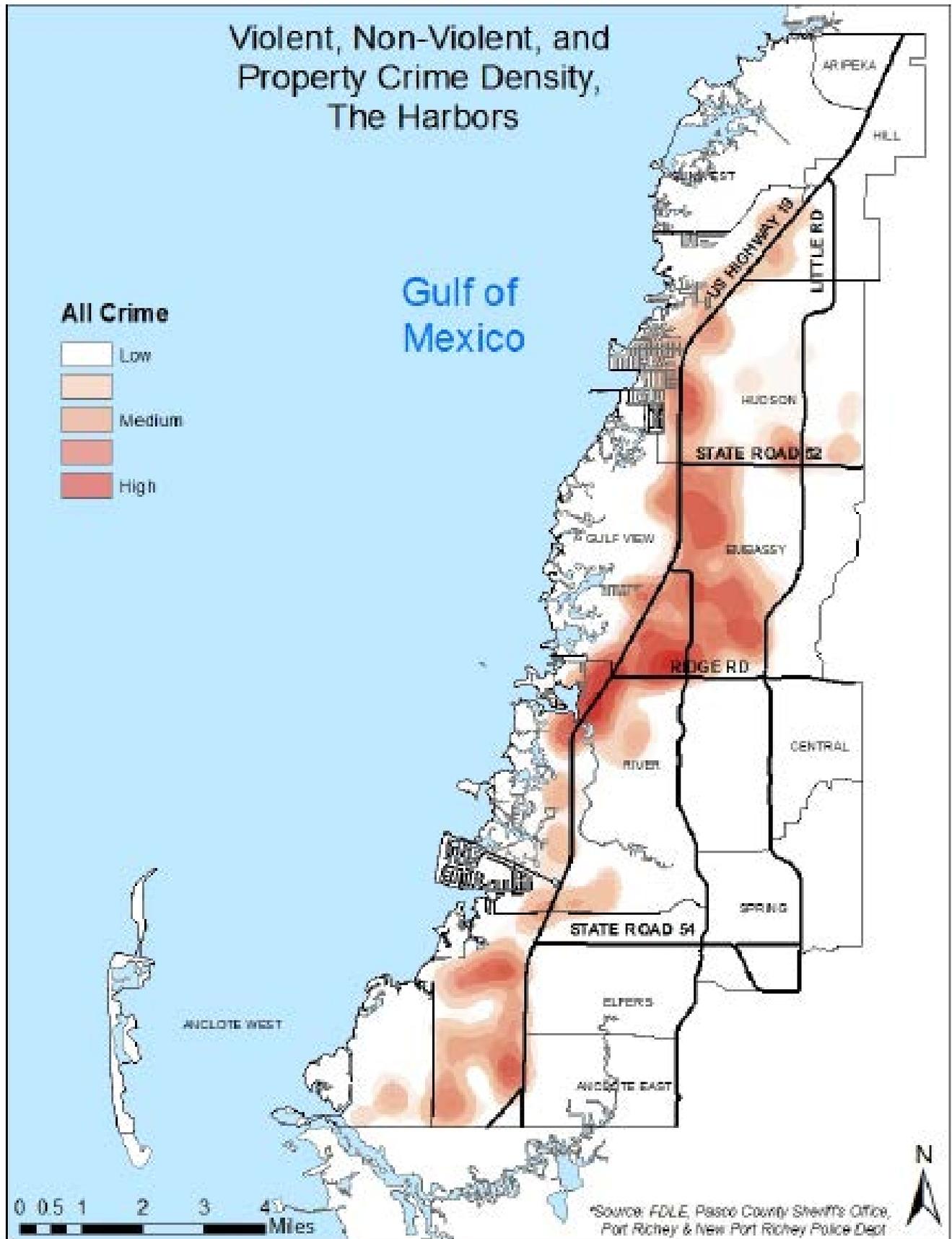
the central and southern portions of The Harbors mainly in the Embassy, Elfers and Anclote East Districts.

The FSU Project Team used Percent of Low-Income Households by Census Tract as a base (Map 4.3). Next the Crime Density and Foreclosure Density maps were layered onto the Percent of Low-Income Households by Census Tract base. The resulting GIS heat map (Map 4.4) that served as the basis from which the FSU Project Team identified 20 Preliminary Challenge Areas. These areas capture concentrations or “hot spots” of economic distress within The Harbors.

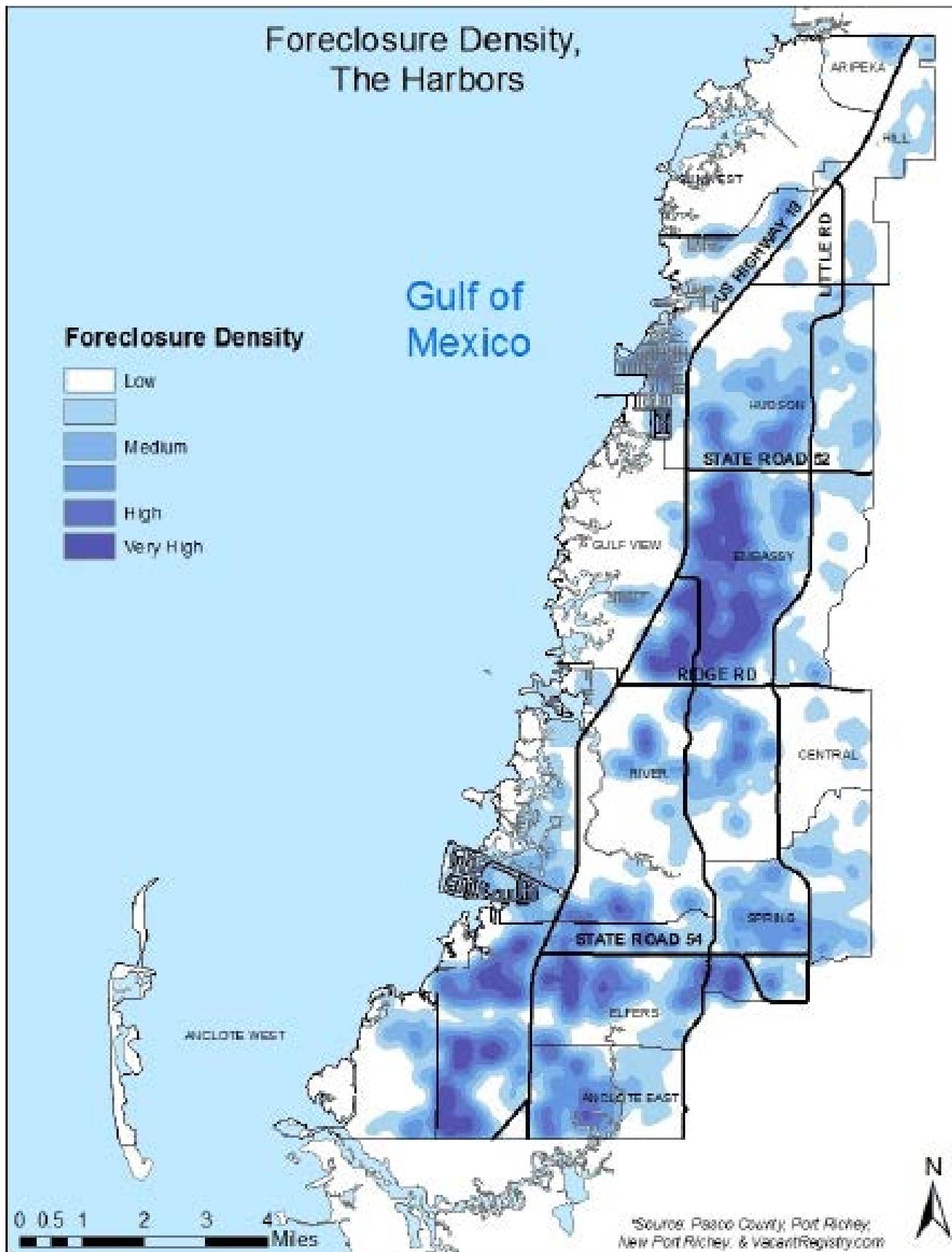
Map 4.1: Violent, Non-Violent and Property Crimes, The Harbors

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Map 4.2: Foreclosure Density, The Harbors



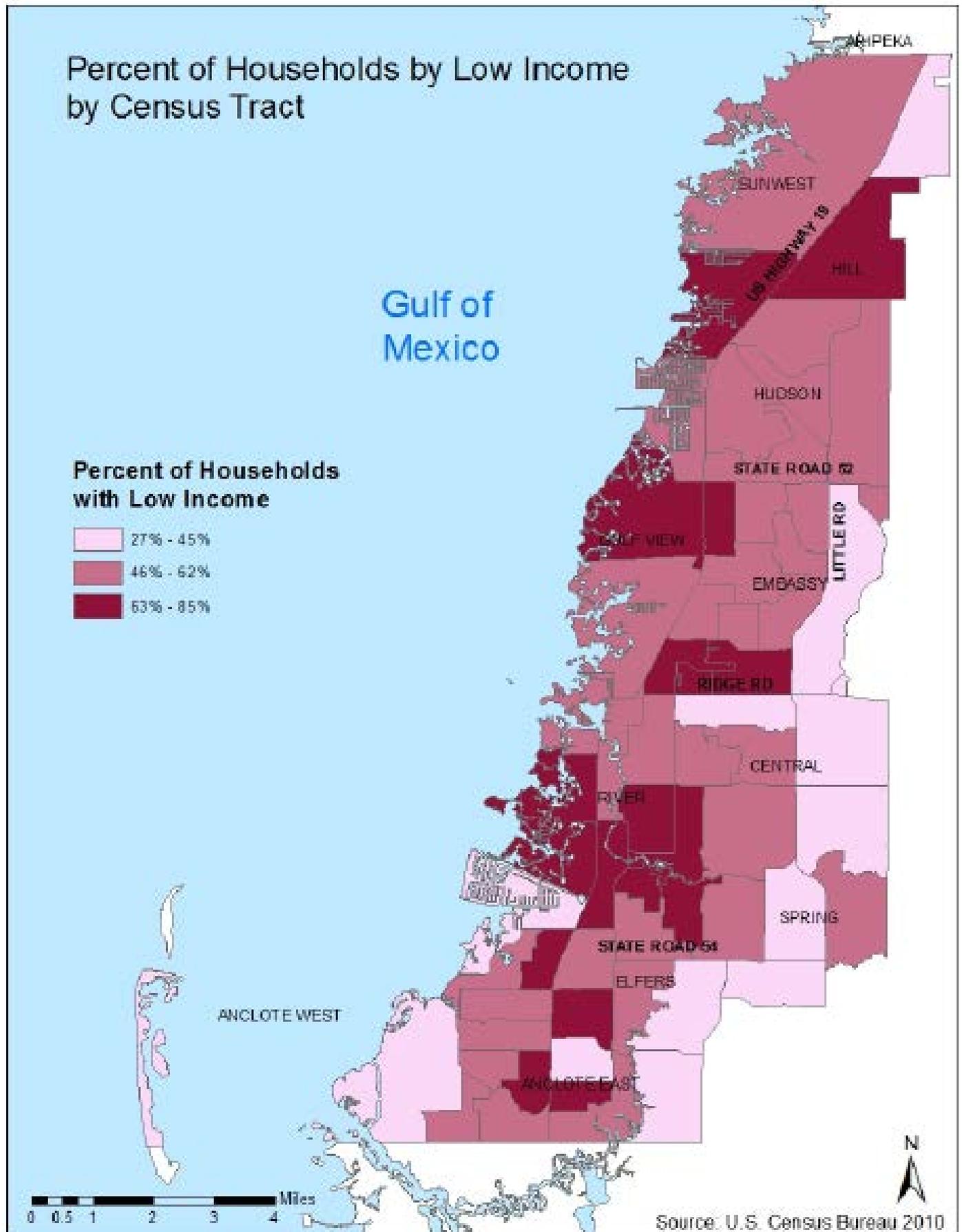
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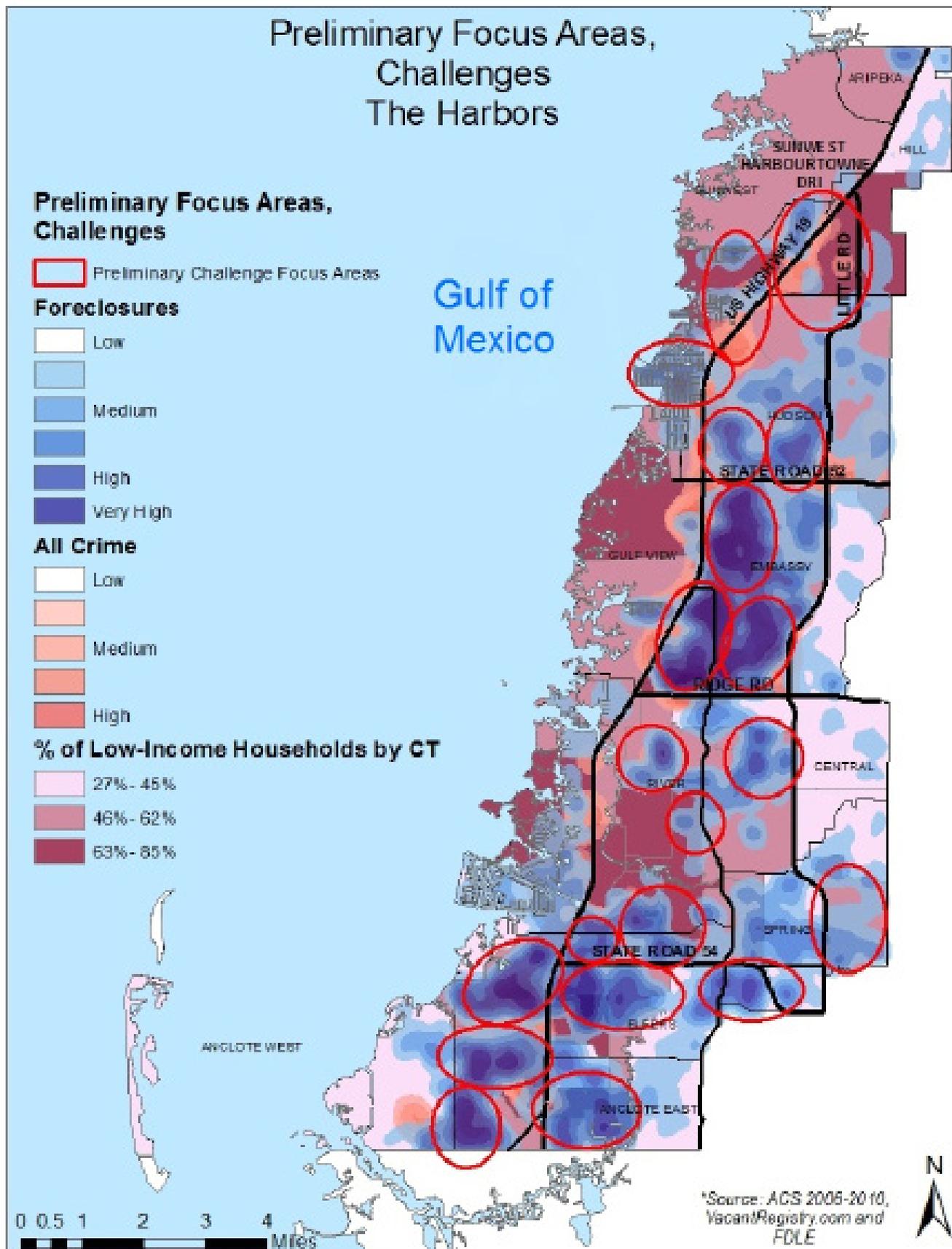
Map 4.3: Percent of Low-Income Households by Census Tract, The Harbors

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Map 4.4: Preliminary Focus Areas, Challenges, The Harbors



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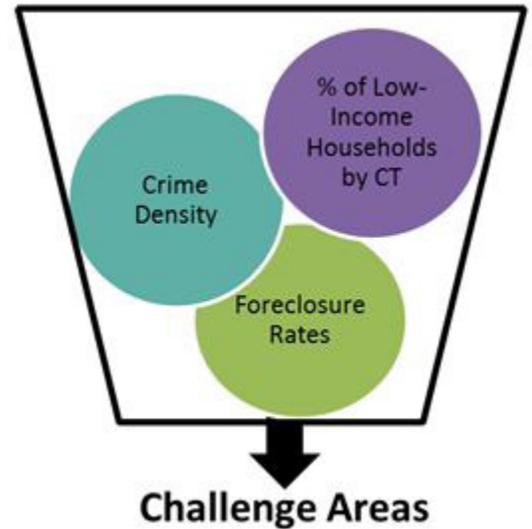
#### 4.4.2 Preliminary Opportunity Focus Areas

Preliminary Opportunity Focus Areas were identified by overlaying areas with concentrations of Employment Density, Annual Sales Density, and Percent of High-Income by Census Tract Map 4.8. Since the majority of The Harbors' economy is comprised of service sector employment, comparison of these three variables identified areas containing successful commercial nodes (Section 1.3.2) within The Harbors. The Preliminary Opportunity Focus Areas (Map 4.8) show the spatial distribution of areas of employment, annual sales and income within The Harbors. As shown on Map 4.5, areas of increased employment density occur along the major corridors within The Harbors. This result is expected as the Site to Business dataset includes businesses within 200 feet of the major corridors within The Harbors. When visualized through the GIS-generated heat map, nodes of concentrated employment appeared at the intersections of Hudson Avenue and Fivay Road, along US 19 between Stone Road and Fox Hollow Road, the intersection of US 19 and SR 54, and along US 19 between Green Key Road and Avery Road. Employment density is illustrated in Map 4.5. Medium employment density represents between 2,500 and 5,000 employees and high employment density represents between 7,500 and 9,700 employees. This concentration was confirmed when the FSU Project Team conducted windshield surveys in the area and was also confirmed through parcel analysis of property values, building attributes and land use codes (Table E-1, Table E-2).

The visualization of sales density within The Harbors is shown in Map 4.6. Medium sales density represents between \$600,000 and \$1,000,000 in annual sales (Map 4.6). Key economic nodes for sales are generally concentrated along major corridors in the district, including US 19, Little Road, Ridge Road, SR 54, and SR 52 and at key intersections of these corridors, most noticeably at US 19 and SR 54, Hudson Avenue and Fivay Road, and along US 19 between Stone Road and Fox Hollow Road.

As with the analysis of indicators of distress, tract-level income was used to confirm areas of economic success within the district. For the Opportunity Focus Area analysis, the percent of High-Income Households by Census Tract is presented in Map 4.7. The FSU Project Team classified

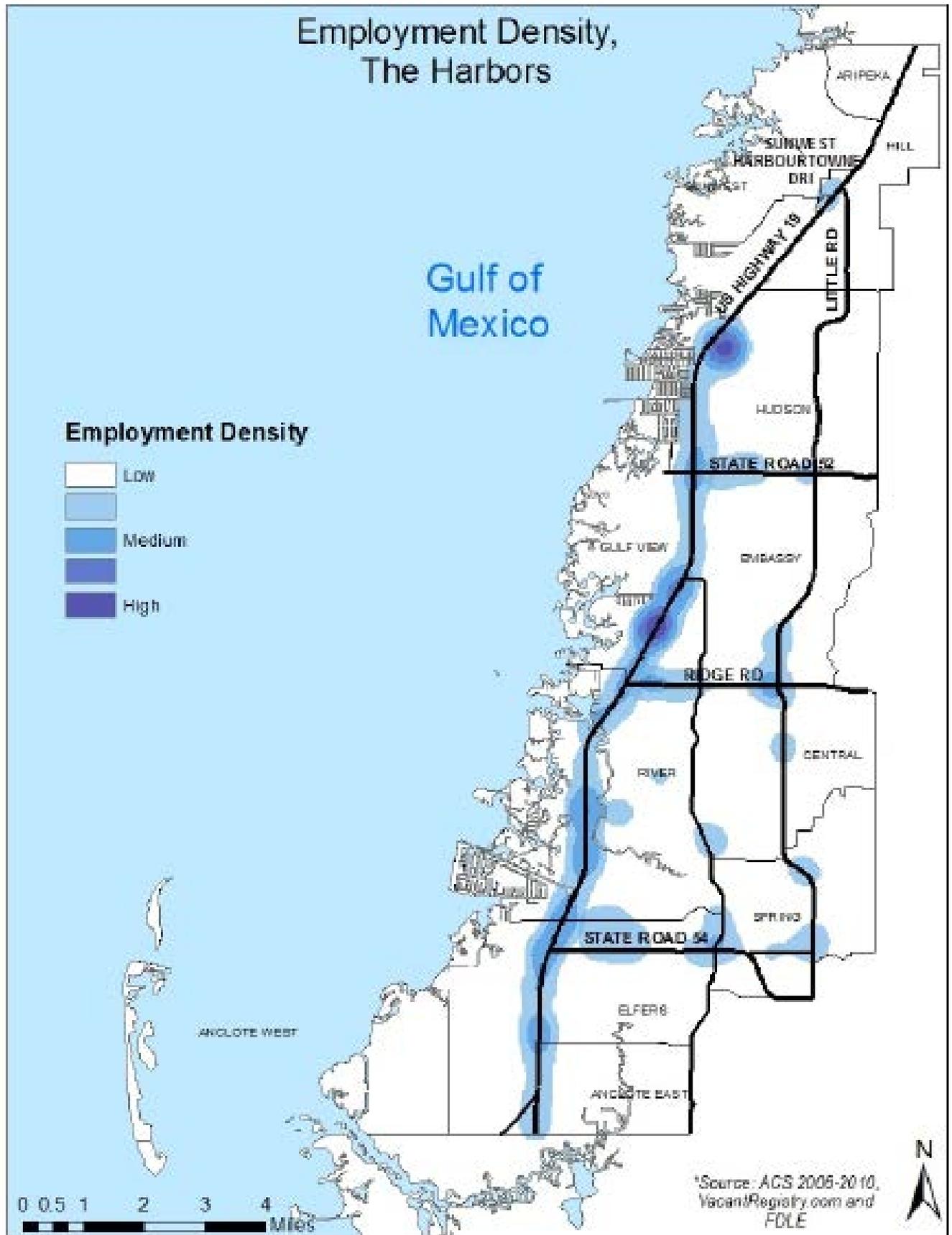
Figure 4.3: Preliminary Opportunity Area Process



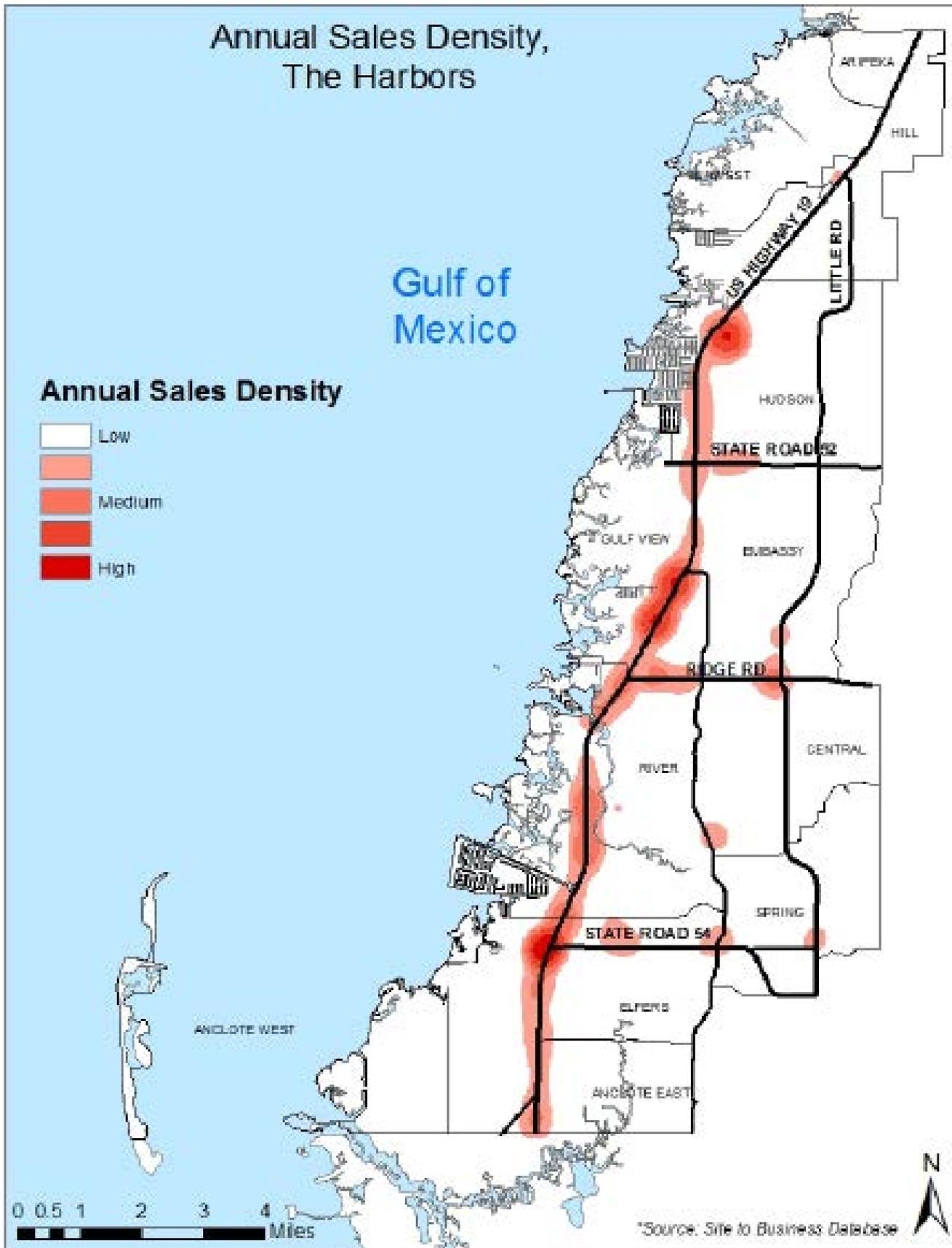
high-income as 96% or more of the average median household income for the MSA in the region (section 4.1.3). Map 4.7 illustrates that concentrations of high-income households reside along the eastern boundaries of The Harbors.

When Employment Density, Annual Sales Density, and Percent of High-Income Households by Census Tract were layered together, nodes of economic strength were identified. These hotspots capture those areas within The Harbors where Employment Density, Annual Sales Density, and Percent of High-Income Households by Census tract are concentrated. The FSU Project Team identified 18 Preliminary Opportunity Focus Areas (Map 4.8). Most of the Preliminary Opportunity Focus Areas are located along the major road corridors throughout The Harbors.

Map 4.5: Employment Density, The Harbors



Map 4.6: Annual Sales Density, The Harbors



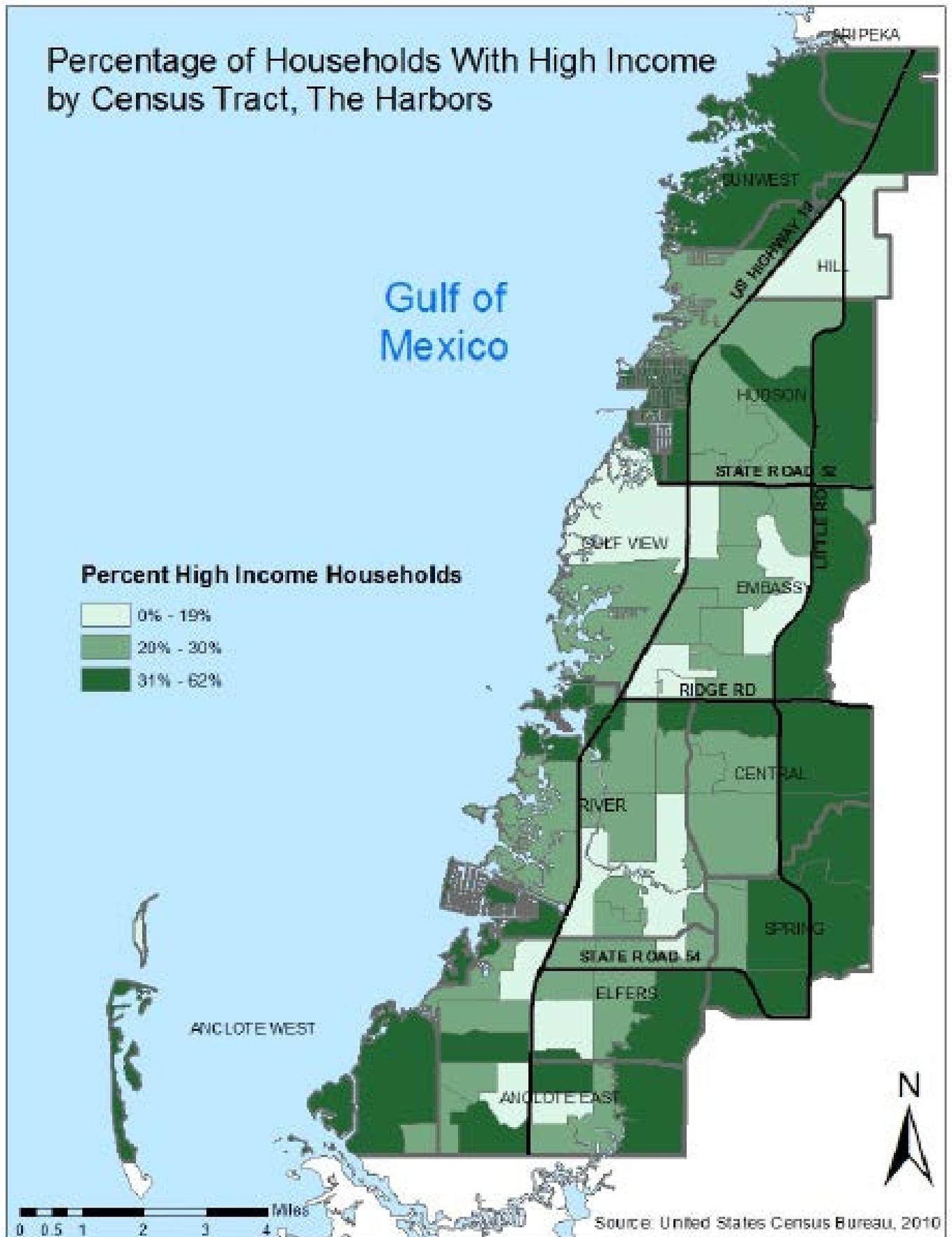
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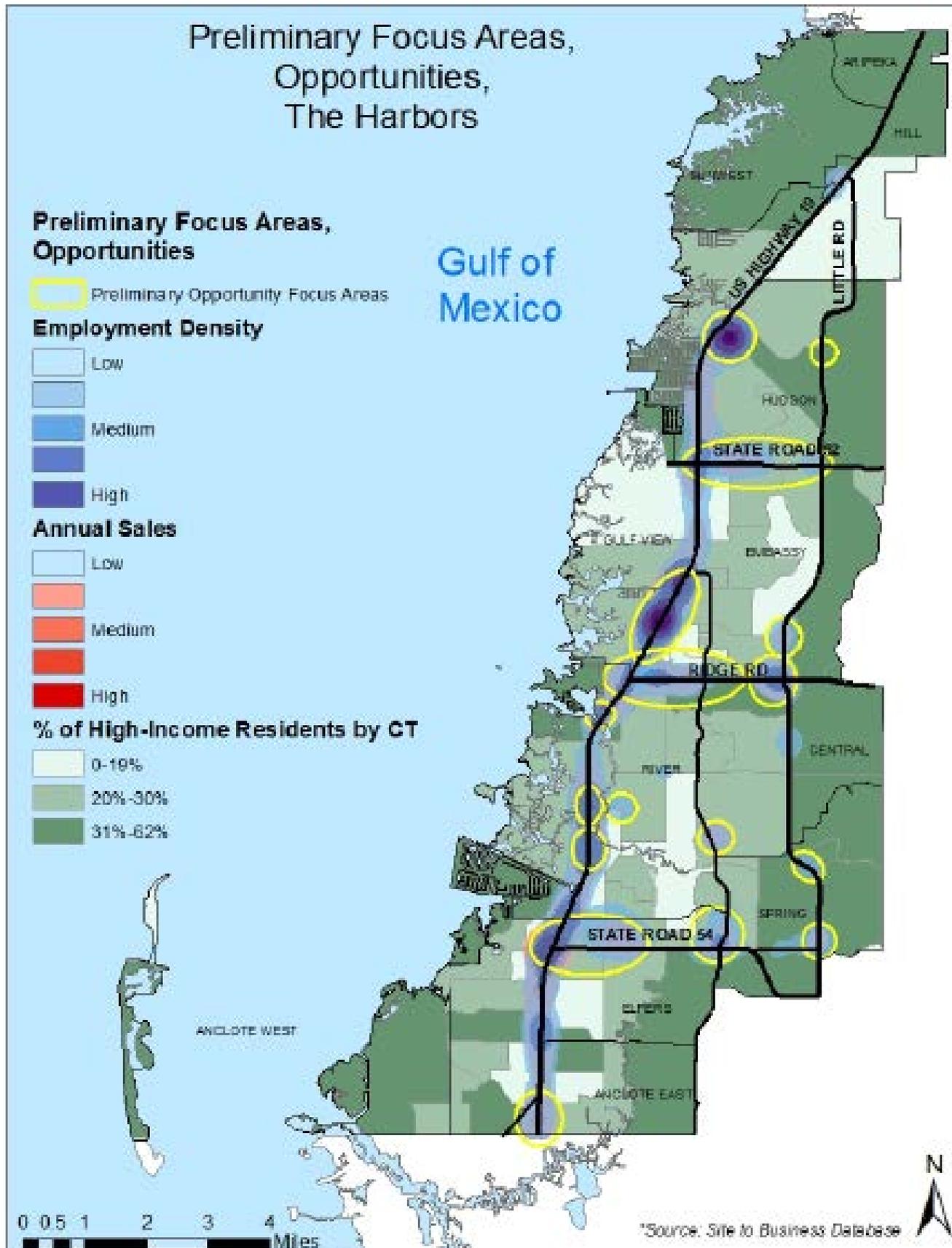
Map 4.7: Percent of High-Income Households by Census Tract, The Harbors

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Map 4.8: Preliminary Focus Areas, Opportunities, The Harbors



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#### 4.4.3 Challenge and Opportunity Focus Area Refinement

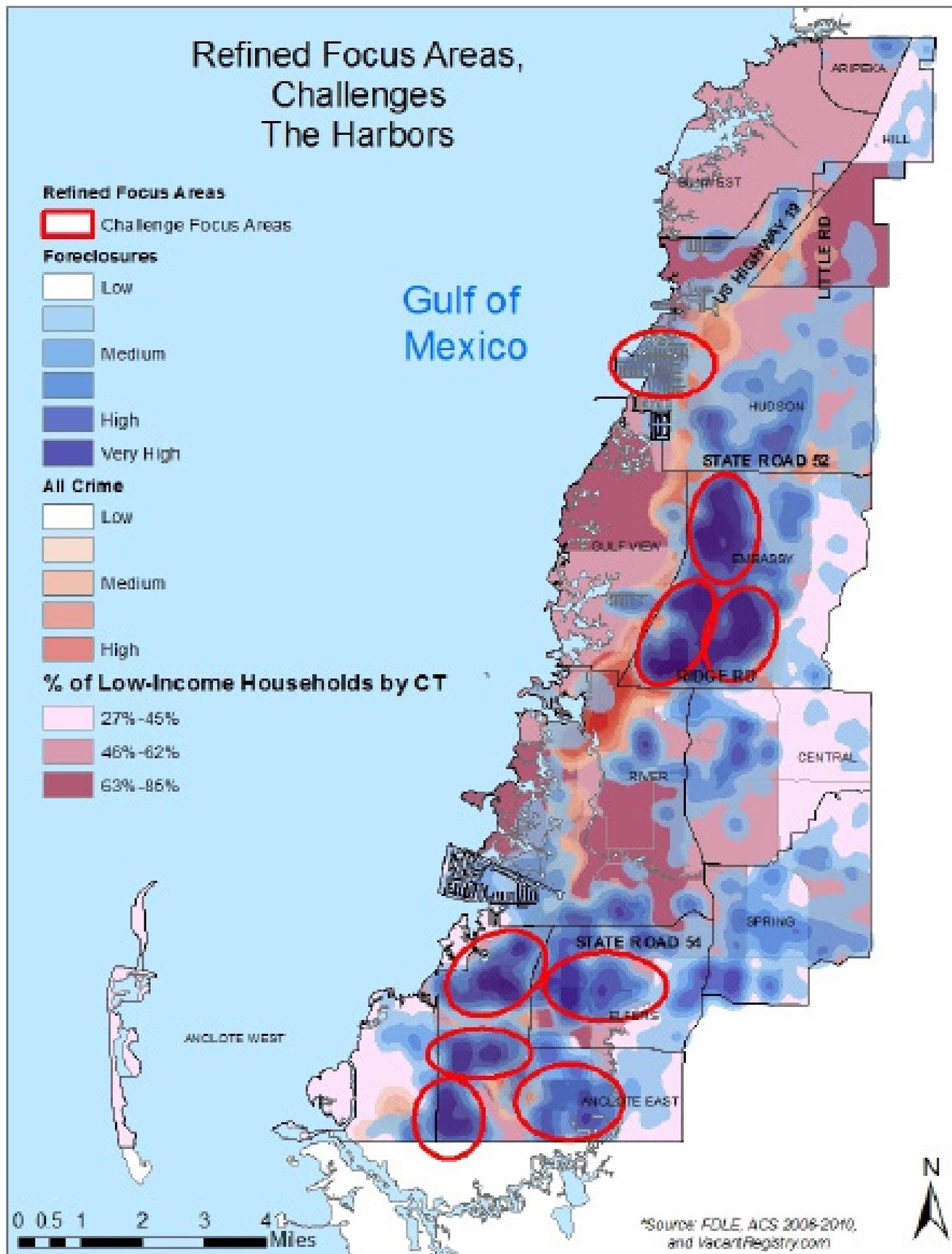
The Harbors. Following the identification of Preliminary Challenge and Opportunity Focus Areas, the FSU Project Team narrowed the number of viable Focus Areas by seeking prioritizing areas with the greatest concentrations of challenges and opportunities and seeking areas where challenges and/or opportunities were co-located. For example, most of the Preliminary Challenge Areas located in the eastern portion of The Harbors were eliminated due to the area's propensity towards lower foreclosure rates, lower crime rates, and higher concentration of high-income households (Map 4.1, Map 4.2, Map 4.3).

After comparing the maps on the key indicators and the preliminary set of Challenge Focus Areas nine Refined Challenge Areas were identified, shown in Map 4.9. The Refined Challenge Areas are located predominately in Embassy District, Anclote East District and Elfers District, three of the most populous and distressed districts in The Harbors. These challenges faced by these particular districts were highlighted by county staff during the Project Team's initial tour of The Harbors. Site visits corroborated the mapped results.

Many of the Preliminary Opportunity Areas were eliminated due to an area's propensity towards lower employment density, lower annual sales, and lower concentration of high-income households (Map 4.5, Map 4.6, & Map 4.7). In addition, several possible opportunity areas were eliminated due to their location along the more vibrant Little Road corridor or their setting in less populous areas of The Harbors. A total of seven Refined Opportunity Areas were identified based upon the highest concentration of opportunity criteria, as shown in Map 4.10. The Refined Opportunity Areas are located around US 19, SR 54, Ridge Road, and SR 52, and are found at the edges of the Anclote East, Elfers, Embassy, and Hudson districts.

Taken together the Refined Challenge and Opportunity Focus Areas are predominantly located in the central and southwestern half of The Harbors, concentrated on and around the US 19 corridor. These areas represent some of the highest co-location of population, housing, and employment in The Harbors, reflecting county staff's preference to focus redevelopment efforts in commercial areas where the greatest impact of any public investments may be seen and compounded by private investment.

Map 4.9: Refined Focus Areas, Challenges, The Harbors



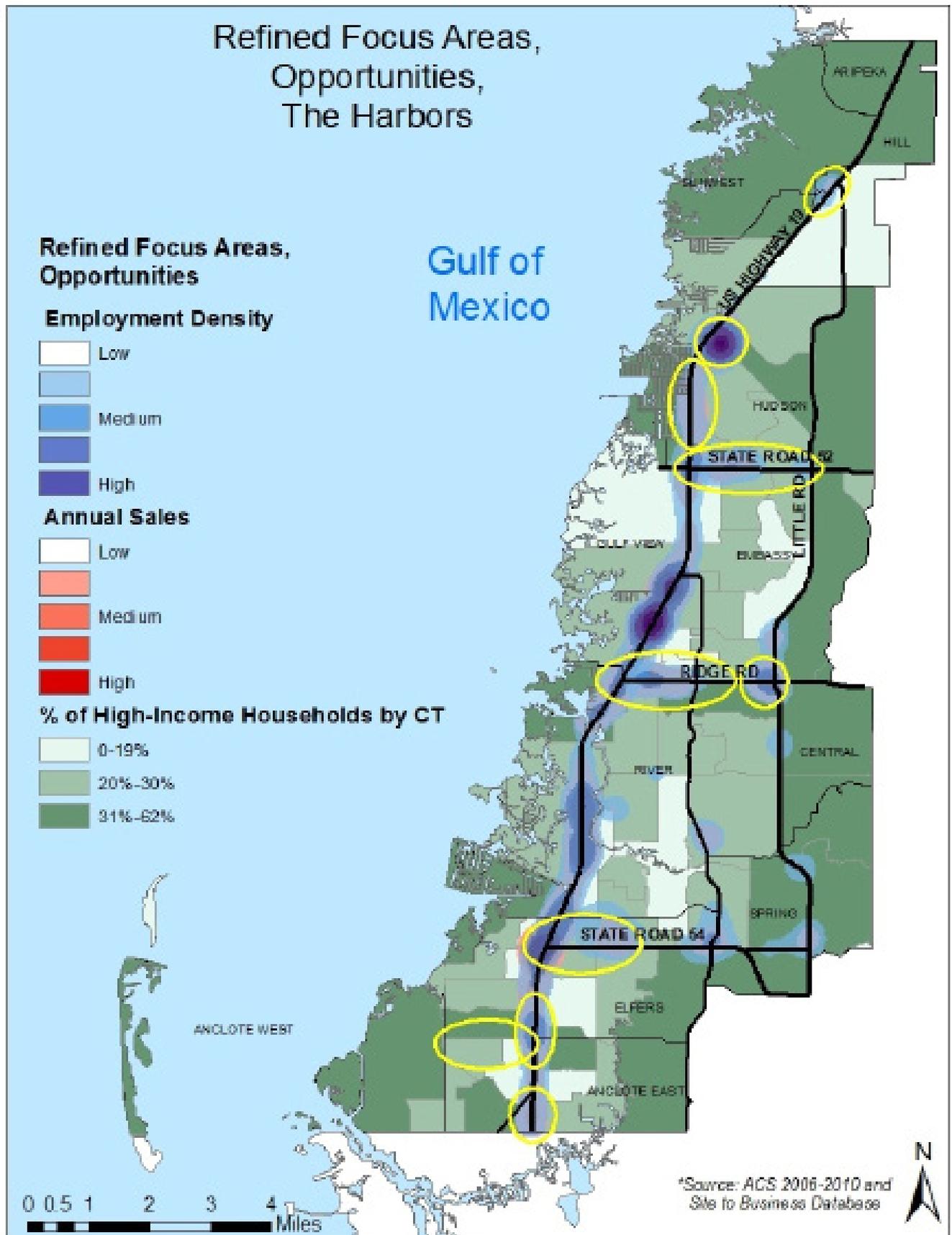
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Map 4.10: Refined Focus Areas, Opportunities, The Harbors

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## 4.5 Selection of Final Focus Areas

To identify Final Focus Areas, the FSU Project Team simultaneously considered the location of the Refined Challenge Focus Areas with the Refined Opportunity Focus Areas. As shown in Map 4.11, the majority of the Refined Challenge Focus Areas are adjacent to the Refined Opportunity Focus Areas. Recognizing that areas of challenge and opportunity areas in close proximity present the greatest potential for impact from targeted investment, the FSU Project Team selected a set of six Final Focus Areas. As detailed below, these areas focus primarily upon commercial areas along major corridors in the district, prioritizing those over neighborhoods that sit in the center of the districts. The Project Team pursued an economic development-oriented selection process after consultation with County Staff and following the logic that the successful revitalization of these employment nodes would positively impact adjacent neighborhoods, bringing improved housing values and conditions and yielding a growing property tax base (United States Environmental Protection Agency, 2012, p. 7).

The six Final Focus Areas identified using this systematic, statistical, and mapping-based approach are shown in Map 4.13. The FSU Project Team also branded these areas based upon local characteristics, yielding a set of named districts that the team believes will help build support for future revitalization efforts. Note that these Focus Area names are subject to change based upon client input and/or once catalyst projects have been identified.

- Hudson District Focus Area
- Beacon Woods Focus Area
- Salt Springs Focus Area
- Ridge Road Focus Area
- Pasco Palms Focus Area
- Harbors Gateway Focus Area

Section 4.6, to follow, describes the identified Final Focus Areas and provides specific data and unique characteristics to consider in the evaluation of future investments and catalyst projects.

### *4.5.1 Areas of Special Interest as Final Focus Areas*

The FSU Project Team also considered and explored other areas of The Harbors as possible Final Focus Areas based upon information obtained outside of the team's mapping and statistical work. Unlike the Final Focus Areas presented previously, these "Areas of Special Interest" represent

unique local challenge or opportunities only somewhat related to the criteria central to the mapping/statistical work. The Areas of Special Interest were identified from a review of The Harbors Plan and other planning documents, interviews with Pasco County Long Range Planning Team, citizen input during visits to the county, input from members of the Board of County Commissioners, and windshield surveys.

Ultimately, four Areas of Special Interest were identified as additional Final Focus Areas by the FSU Project Team. These Focus Areas include portions of The Harbors with unique placemaking opportunities (Millers Bayou and Main Street), an area with a massive development proposal in place (Sunwest), and a former economic node that has lost its key tenant (HCA Hospital site). The Areas of Special Interest (Map 4.11) include:

- Sunwest Harbortowne
- Millers Bayou
- HCA Community Hospital
- Main Street in New Port Richey

Each Area of Special Interest contains unique characteristics which will be discussed in further detail in Section 4.4.4, Section 4.5.5, Section 4.5.6, and Section 4.5.7.

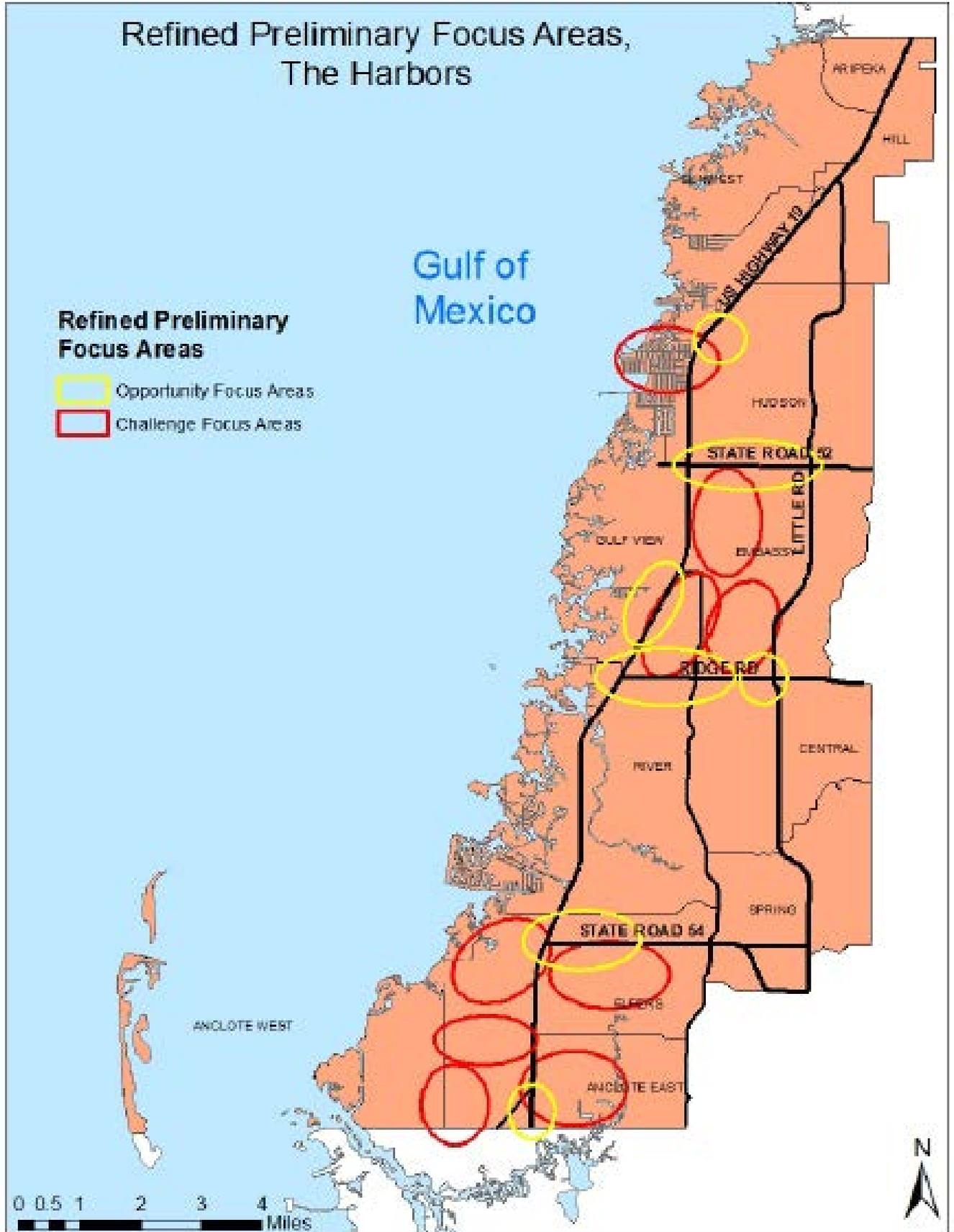
Map 4.11: Areas of Special Interest, The Harbors



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Map 4.12: Refined Preliminary Focus Areas, Challenges and Opportunities, The Harbors



Map 4.13: Combined Focus Areas and Areas of Special Interest, The Harbors



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### 4.5.2 Focus Area Refinement and Final Selection

When the statistical/mapping work was completed and the areas of special interest were combined, a total of ten potential Final Focus Areas were identified by the FSU Project Team (Map 4.13). Internal discussions by members of the Project Team, and subsequent discussions with county staff, concluded that this was too lengthy a list of areas for which further analysis should be pursued. It was therefore determined that the Focus Areas list should be reduced further to center around commercial areas of opportunity where targeted public investment can build upon private market reinvestment activities already underway. Accordingly, potential Final Focus Areas were eliminated if they had development plans in place (such as the Sunwest Harbortowne DRI) or were deemed vibrant, but isolated economic nodes (such as the Hudson District and Ridge Road focus areas).

### 4.5.3 Hudson District Focus Area

The Hudson District Focus Area was chosen as a focus area due to the area’s economic vitality. The windshield surveys found that the commercial parcels which surround the regional medical center to be occupied by doctor’s offices and other supporting businesses (Table E-1). The remaining commercially regional medical center are undeveloped. One of the very few unoccupied office buildings have renovated the parcel by updating the parking lot, repainting the façade, and providing new signs for each office as shown in Image 4.1. Undeveloped commercial parcels require less investment for developers to



*Image 4.1: Office Renovation*  
Source: FSU Project Team



*Image 4.2: Undeveloped Parcels*  
Source: FSU Project Team

bring investment when compared to retrofitting existing buildings. Due to this lower cost, developers are more willing to select greenfield sites over retrofitting existing buildings. The windshield surveys observed that the majority of commercial parcels along the US 19 Corridor to be undeveloped as shown in Image 4.2.



#### 4.5.4 Ridge Road Focus Area

The Ridge Road Focus Area was eliminated as a focus area due primarily to its location. The Ridge Road Focus Area is adjacent to housing built after 1990, commercial development built after 1980, and 31-62% of high income households per census tract (Table C-2.2, Map 4.7). The newer residential and commercial buildings are more resilient to natural disasters and are compliant with current building codes. Since much of the commercial development occurred as Ridge Road transformed into a major corridor, the area currently contains updated infrastructure, such as sidewalks and public transit stops. Little Road represents the high level of service and integration of sidewalks and public transit (Section 1.3.4). Sidewalks line the major corridors with bus stops at regular intervals to increase walkability and connectivity as shown in Image 4.3.



*Image 4.3: Little Road*  
Source: FSU Project Team

#### 4.5.5 Sunwest Harbourtowne Focus Area

The Sunwest Harbourtowne Focus Area was eliminated as a focus area because on an existing large-scale planning initiative which contains a catalyst project, funding, local champions, and community support. There are already ongoing efforts to redevelop this mining site into a regional, recreational destination. The Board of County Commissioners conveyed the future development potential of the current mining site during FSU Project Team’s visit in May 2014. The Sunwest Harbourtowne DRI is divided into two phases. Phase I will create a natural park around the current southern lake including beaches, a boardwalk, and an amphitheater. Phase II will redevelop the larger, northern lake into a regional destination. Image 4.5 shows the turquoise waters that fill the northern lake. Phase II is currently planned to include a convention center, a hotel, restaurants, a water park, harbors, and connection to the Gulf of Mexico through a specialized transition from the widened canal. Since the Sunwest Harbourtowne Focus Area has such active champions and a plan of action, this Focus Area was eliminated from the Final Focus Areas.



*Image 4.4: Sun West Mine Sign*  
Source: FSU Project Team

Map 4.15: Ridge Road Focus Area



Map 4.16: Sunwest Harbortowne Focus Area

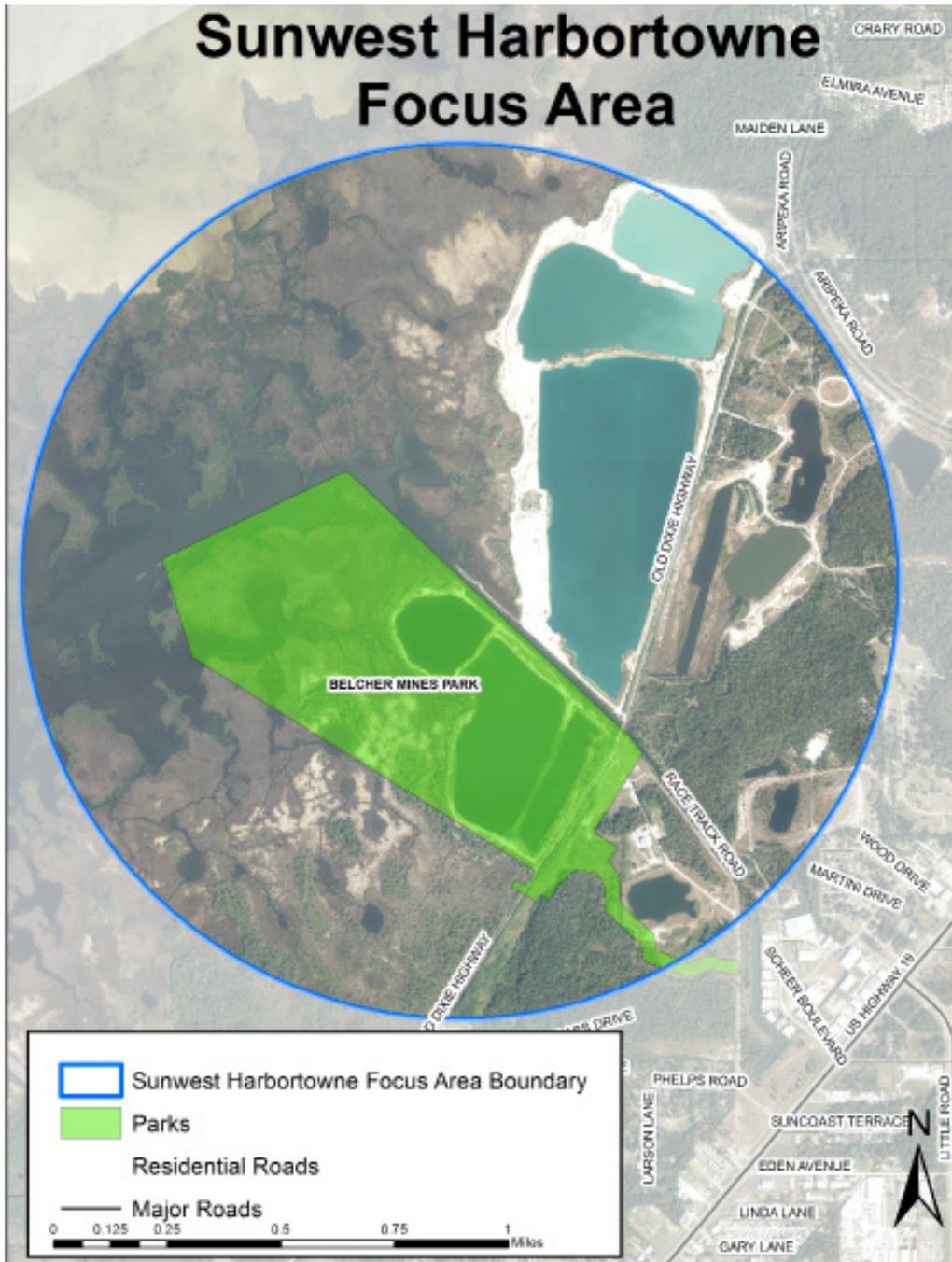


Image 4.5: Current Mining Site  
Source: FSU Project Team

## 4.6 Final Focus Areas

Ultimately, the FSU Project team identified seven Final Focus Areas for further consideration by county staff. Data gathered to inform the existing conditions, socio-economic analysis, and district profiles will be used to identify and refine the redevelopment catalyst projects during Phase II.

Map 4.17 shows the seven Final Focus Areas.

Map 4.17: Final Focus Areas, The Harbors



#### 4.6.1 Beacon Woods Focus Area

Beacon Woods Focus Area is located along SR 52 from the intersection of US 19 to Little Road connecting Hudson District and Embassy District (Map 4.18). Future planning for catalyst projects in the Beacon Woods Focus Area should consider the following conditions that the existing conditions, socio-economic, and parcel analysis revealed about this focus area. The socio-economic analysis shows that Hudson District and Embassy District have aging populations with median household incomes between \$25,001 and \$35,000 (Section 2.3, Section 2.7). There is one food desert within the Beacon Woods Focus Area located in Embassy District west of Enterprise Drive in the Bayonet Point neighborhood (Section 2.14). Food access is generally not a concern for the remainder of this focus area due to the four food sources within a mile buffer (Map 2.8). The Hudson and Embassy Districts struggle with high concentrations of low commercial and residential property values, and high crime rates when compared to The Harbors (Section 3.5.2, Section 3.7.2).

There are several nodes of emerging business and employment activity along the SR 52 corridor and center around Oak Trail Professional Center, Beacon Woods Professional, and Harbor Oaks commercial developments. These commercial nodes include medium employment density and annual sales density (Map 4.5, Map 4.6). Directly below this pocket of successful economic activity is a residential area, named Bayonet Point, challenged with high foreclosure rates, high crime rates (violent, non-violent, and property), and high density of low income households (Map 4.2, Map 4.1, Map 4.3). Vacancy is not an issue in Bayonet Point. When reviewing the traffic accident data, there is a high density of car and bike/pedestrian collisions occur at the intersections of US 19/SR 52 and Cannon Avenue/SR 52 (Section 1.3.5). Sidewalks and bus stops are located along both the north and south sides of SR 52, as indicated earlier in Section 1.3.5 and verified by windshield surveys (Table E-1, Table E-2).



*Image 4.6: Vacancy in Beacon Woods Focus Area*  
Source: FSU Project Team

The windshield surveys revealed that a high number of commercial businesses along SR 52 are for sale or lease as shown in Image 4.7. These currently unoccupied buildings are scattered throughout the entire Beacon Woods Focus Area, an example is shown in Image 4.6. Some of the unoccupied commercial buildings are showing neglect through deteriorated roofs, crumbling

Map 4.18: Beacon Woods Focus Area



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facades, boarded up windows, and ill maintained landscaping (Table E-1).

The windshield surveys revealed that much of the infrastructure is in place along the SR 52 corridor (Table E-1). This includes existing sidewalks and bus stops. Several of the unoccupied commercial parcels are adjacent to each other and offer an opportunity to consolidate the parcels into a larger commercial endeavor.



*Image 4.7: Unoccupied Business*  
Source: FSU Project Team

Within the Beacon Woods Focus Area, public or private investment could capitalize on the existing strengths (currently business ventures) by investing in small nodes along the SR 52 corridor. These investments could potentially include some type of redevelopment or rehabilitation incentives within specified blocks. Since the sidewalks and transit infrastructure currently exists in this area, potential public investments could concentrate on beautification efforts such as landscaping, façade, and accessibility improvements. SR 52 is one of only a few east-west corridors within The Harbors, and the flow of traffic can be fast paced. Transportation improvements might include the transformation of an existing traffic lane into a dedicated right turn lane that could ease traffic flow once business activity increases, but such a concept would require further study. When discussing this possible future option, attention will need to be paid to the pedestrian safety concerns such as crossing times and visibility (Ada County Highway District, 2014).

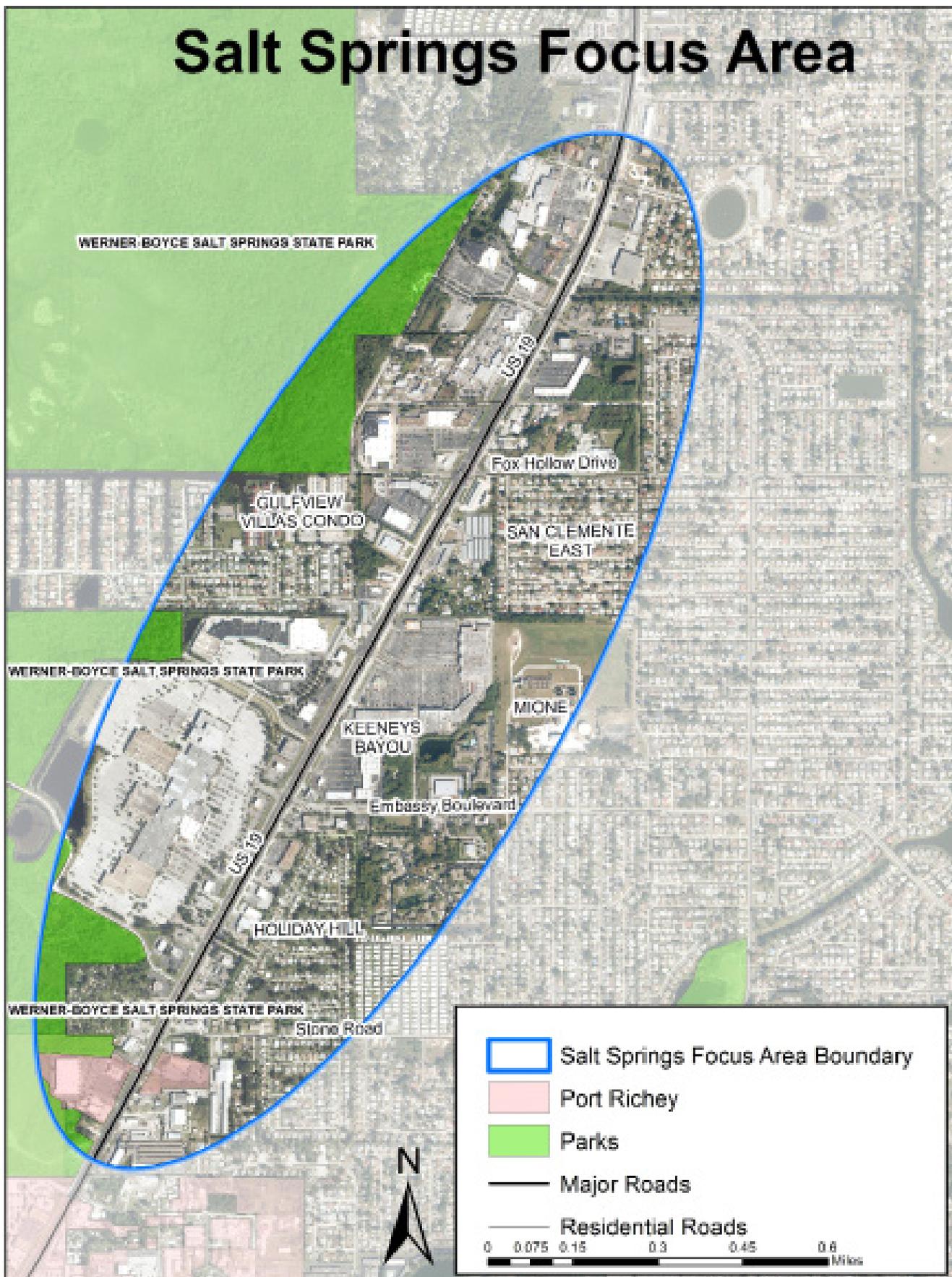
#### 4.6.2 Salt Springs Focus Area

The Salt Springs Focus Area encompasses the US 19 Corridor between Ridge Road and Jasmine Boulevard. The Salt Springs Focus Area straddles the Gulf View and Embassy Districts (Map 4.19). The Gulf View District and Embassy District are comprised of populations with high poverty rates, median household incomes below \$35,000, and higher concentrations of younger residents (Section 2.3, Section 2.7). Food access is an issue for the northern half of the Salt Springs Focus Area specifically in the Jasmine Estates neighborhood (Map 2.8).



*Image 4.8: Vacancy Directly North of Gulf View Mall*  
Source: FSU Project Team

The earlier district profiles for the Gulf View and Embassy Districts reveal aging commercial stock along US 19, high poverty rates, high crime rates, little to no access to the coast, and high



concentration of unoccupied commercial properties (Section 3.6.2, Section 3.7.2). Additionally, The Salt Springs Focus Area includes a concentration of residential foreclosures in the southern half of Gulf View District centered in the Emerald Pointe and Gulfview Villas Condo neighborhoods (Section 3.6.2).

This Salt Springs Focus Area was identified by the FSU Project Team because the opportunity area includes two strong employment nodes at the intersection of US 19/Regency Park and Gulf View Mall, high density of annual sales along the corridor, and high number of unoccupied commercial parcels along US 19 (Map 4.5, Map 4.6). The Emerald Pointe and Gulfview Villas Condo neighborhoods directly west of this opportunity area are challenged with very high foreclosure rates, high crime rates (violent, non-violent, and property) and concentrations of low income (Map 4.1, Map 4.2, Map 4.3). Located within the Salt Springs Focus Area are Gulf View Mall, Werner-Boyce Salt Springs State Park, The Piers, Jasmine Estates, Embassy Plaza, and other commercial strip malls.

The windshield surveys observed a number of deteriorating buildings along the portion of the US 19 corridor between Jasmine Boulevard and Ridge Road (Image 4.8, 4.9; Table E-1). This Focus Area is cluttered with strip malls containing only a few anchor stores. As shown in Image 4.10 and Image 4.11, many other strip malls within the Salt Springs Focus Area remain unoccupied. New businesses, such as Panera Bread and Rooms-To-Go, have located directly adjacent to US 19 and bring some commercial activity to the area. However, many of the parcels behind these newer businesses remain unoccupied.

The Piers is a strip mall directly north of Gulf View Mall and the three anchor stores open for business are Toys-R-U's, H.H. Gregg, and GameStop. The windshield surveys found that the only anchor stores remaining in The Piers are located on opposite ends of the strip mall (Table E-1).



*Image 4.9: Vacancy in Salt Springs Focus Area*

Source: FSU Project Team



*Image 4.10: Empty Gulf View Mall Parking Lot*

Source: FSU Project Team



*Image 4.11: The Piers*

Source: FSU Project Team

The configuration of the shopping center is typical of The Harbors and consists of a strip mall positioned on the rear of the commercial parcel with a large parking lot located near the US 19 Corridor.

In addition for the need to re-imagine The Piers, the Gulf View Mall is also underutilized. The vast underutilized parking lot and lack of landscaping leaves the impression that there is little business activity within the Gulf View Mall as shown in Image 4.10. Examples of Gulf View Mall’s anchor stores are Sears, Macy’s, Ultra, and Dillard’s. The windshield surveys observed that one anchor store, JC Penney, was in the process of closing its location within the Gulf View Mall due to a new store location in Hernando County. The windshield surveys found that the interior of Gulf View Mall had fewer unoccupied storefronts than initially believed. Many of the interior businesses were open and patrons were shopping. The Salt Springs Focus Area can be transformed into a dynamic local asset by combining the Gulf View Mall and the surrounding 24 acres of underutilized parcels including The Piers into a mixed use community including commercial, residential, and office uses. The mixed use can help retain the businesses currently located within the focus area and attract further economic development.

Additional challenges and opportunities have been identified for the Salt Springs Focus Area through the windshield survey, site survey, and SWOT analysis. The former Service Merchandise building is in disrepair, as noted by the windshield surveys (Table E-1). Many repairs, such as façade improvements, parking lot repair, and landscaping, need to be included if the building will be retrofitted for an alternative use. On the western boundary of



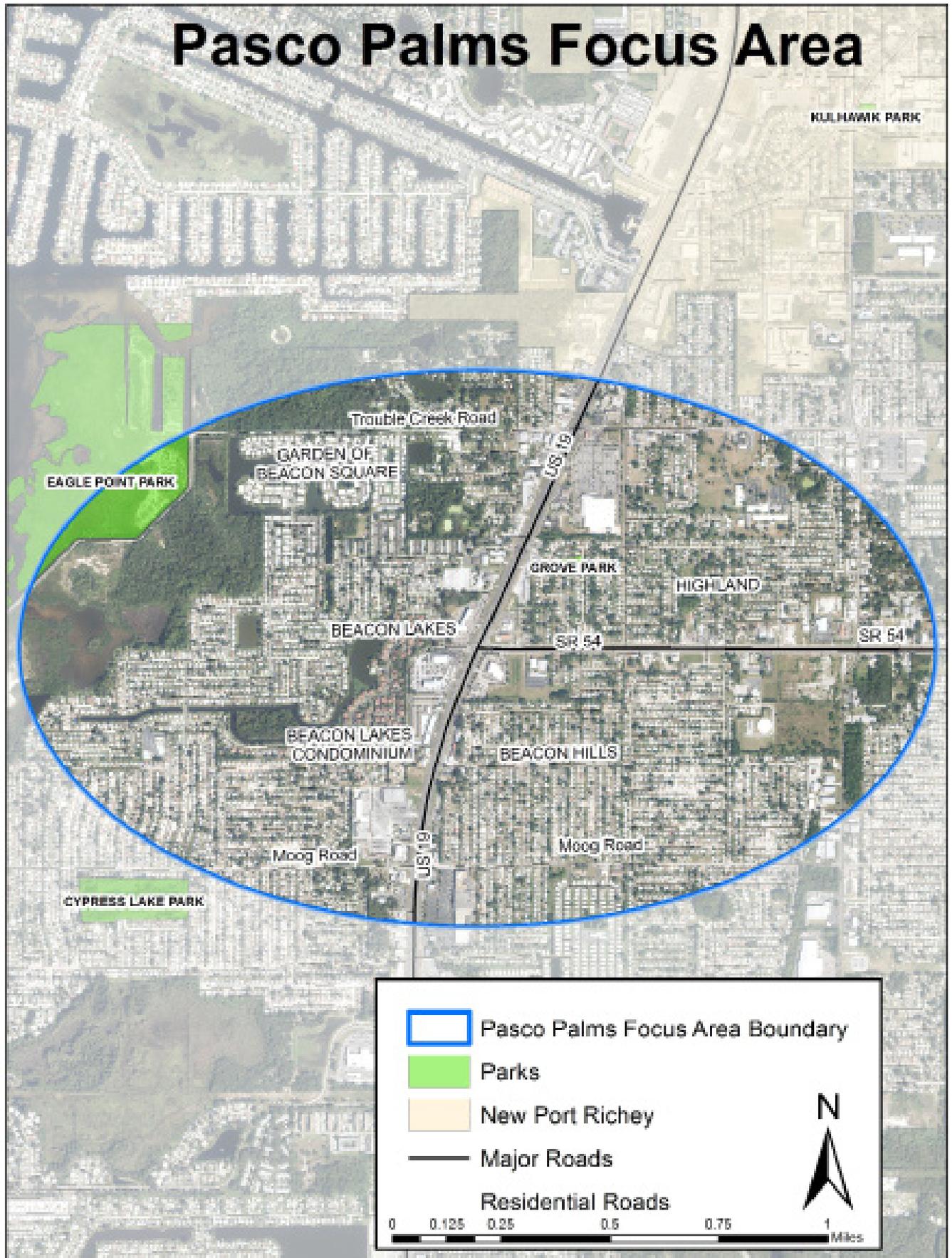
*Image 4.12: Werner-Boyce Salt Springs State Park*  
Source: FSU Project Team

Salt Spring Focus Area is Werner-Boyce Salt Springs State Park as shown in Image 4.12. The current commercial configuration does not utilize this vast natural amenity. Any redevelopment should capitalize on and incorporate this unique feature. Through increased access to the state park and coast, high urban design standards, and consideration for the local identity, Salt Springs has the potential to become a place where people want to live, shop, and work.

#### 4.6.3 Pasco Palms Focus Area

Pasco Palms Focus Area is located surrounding the US 19/SR 54 intersection and east along SR

Map 4.20: Pasco Palms Focus Area



54 to Madison Avenue (Map 4.20). The Pasco Palms Focus Area is labeled in reference to Pasco Palms Reserve which is located on the western boundary. The Pasco Palms Focus Area integrates the Anclote East and Elfers Districts. The Pasco Palms Focus Area is comprised of an educated, younger population, but with higher poverty rates (Section 2.3, Section 2.9). There are no food deserts within the focus area due to the five food sources located on SR 54 (Section 2.14). The earlier district profiles for the Anclote East and Elfers Districts reveal lower overall crime rates, aging commercial stock along US 19, limited access to the coast, and high number of residential foreclosures throughout both districts.

There are two nodes of emerging employment and annual sales along SR 54 (Map 4.5, Map 4.6). The first node is on the intersection of US 19 and SR 54. Businesses include three car dealerships, Wawa, Gulf Coast Boat Sales, Insurance One, and fast food restaurants. The second node is located on SR 54 at the intersection of Madison Avenue. This node includes business such as Winn Dixie, several banking institutions, Chevron, and various small medical offices. Located east of US 19, Place in the Sun, Beacon Square, and Holiday Oaks Condo neighborhoods are challenged by high foreclosure rates, high property crime rates, medium violent crime rates, and concentrations of low-income households (Map 4.1, Map 4.2, Map 4.3). Many of the businesses along US 19 in Pasco Palms Focus Area are struggling with empty storefronts and building deterioration as shown in Image 4.13.



*Image 4.13: Closed Business on US 19*

Source: FSU Project Team

Other weaknesses that emerged through the SWOT analysis are lack of public access to natural resources and lack of neighborhood amenities in the Elfers District. These weaknesses could be overcome by connecting this focus area to the current natural amenities such as Pasco Palms

Preserve, Eagle Point Park, Fillman’s Creek, and Sawyers Basin by creating sidewalks, trails, and bike paths.

According to The Harbors Plan, a proposed community named “Harvey-Madison” is slated for the large undeveloped parcel south of SR 54 between Madison Street and Celtic Drive (The Harbors Plan, pg. 92). The Harvey-Madison development will integrate commercial, industrial, and residential land uses. This mixed use development will help provide the additional residential, commercial, and industrial zoned parcels for The Harbors’ projected needs through 2050.

Local character is abundant along SR 54. The demand for small scale services and lack of food access has driven local residents to start their own businesses. As shown in Image 4.14 and Image 4.15, these businesses fulfill the demand for goods and services while creating a unique experience. Sunshine Groves provides fresh fruit and vegetables while giving the patrons picnic tables to relax and enjoy their ice cream. Sunshine Groves even has photo opportunities as shown in Image 4.14. The Computer Repair Shop uses unique art and signage to promote the business including a rare car and a robot made of scrap computer parts.



*Image 4.14: Sunshine Groves*  
FSU Project Team

Pasco Palms Focus Area should capitalize on the naturally occurring character and support small scale local businesses development. The Elfers District contains active citizens who want the area to succeed. Pasco Palms Focus Area could become the incubator for small business ventures. Its location between The Harbors Gateway and New Port Richey seems to have some success for small scale business incubation, which can inform future private or public sector investment decisions.



*Image 4.15: Unique Business Characteristics*  
Source: FSU Project Team

#### 4.6.4 The Harbors Gateway Focus Area

The Harbors Gateway Focus Area is located along US 19 directly north of the Pinellas County line (Map 4.21). The Harbors Gateway Focus Area is located within Anclote East District. The Anclote East District is comprised of a higher proportion of residents under 35, median household income under \$45,000, and identified food deserts east of US 19 in the Siesta Terrace and Dixie



Manor neighborhoods (Section 2.3, Section 2.7, Section 2.14). As shown in Map 2.8, there are no food sources within The Harbors Gateway Focus Area. The earlier district analysis revealed concentrations of deteriorated, unoccupied commercial parcels along US 19 and alternate US 19, aging commercial and residential buildings, and lack of multifamily housing (Section 3.13).



*Image 4.16: Unoccupied Strip Mall*  
Source: FSU Project Team



*Image 4.17: Focused View of Anchor Store Located in the Unoccupied Strip Mall*  
Source: FSU Project Team



*Image 4.18: Interior of Deteriorated Building*  
Source: FSU Project Team

Although the current conditions reveal limited business success along the US 19 Corridor and struggling neighborhoods, such as Siesta Terrace, Pinewood Villas, and Cool Acres, faced with high crime and foreclosure rates, as well as high concentrations of low-income households (Map 4.1, Map 4.2, Map 4.3). The Harbors Gateway Focus Area was named because of the unique opportunity to create a gateway to The Harbors and Pasco County. There is a concentration of medium annual sales stemming from the local businesses such as The Home Depot, Wells Fargo Bank, Advanced Veterinary Hospital, and various small local businesses ventures (Map 4.6). Data analysis revealed that while residential areas struggle with crime, the commercial corridor within the Harbors Gateway Focus Area are not faced with a significant crime issue (Map 4.1).

The windshield surveys found many challenges within The Harbors Gateway Focus Area. Many of the strip malls along US 19 were unoccupied and severely deteriorated as shown in Image 4.16 and Image 4.17. This strip mall indicated in Image 4.16 and Image 4.17 is located at 1112 US 19 directly north of the county line and is showing severe deterioration, as shown in Image 4.18. Businesses have closed permanently or moved to new locations as shown in Image 4.19. Newly constructed restaurants are not



*Image 4.19: Abandoned Auto Repair Shop*  
FSU Project Team



*Image 4.20: Boarded-up Restaurant*  
FSU Project Team



*Image 4.21: Unoccupied Strip Mall*  
FSU Project Team

excluded from the deterioration and business failure within The Harbors Gateway Focus Area as shown in Image 4.20. Image 4.21 is indicative of the unoccupied strip malls in The Harbors Gateway Focus Area.

The SWOT analysis revealed additional challenges within this focus area including minimal signage, lack of parks, historic flooding throughout the Anclote East District, and lack of public transit stops along the US 19 Corridor.



*Image 4.22:  
Holiday Sign  
FSU Project Team*



*Image 4.23:  
Pasco County Sign  
FSU Project Team*

The Harbors Gateway Focus Area is the southern entrance to The Harbors and is highly visible to residents and visitors.

Investment into the Harbors Gateway Focus Area could take the form of rebranding efforts for The Harbors District, due to its highly visible location. In the face of the many identified challenges, the FSU Project Team believes that the Harbors Gateway Focus Area holds great potential to become a welcoming first impression for The Harbors District and Pasco County. Within The Harbors Plan, the goal is to “create an identity for the West Market Area that effectively represents the individual community visions as well as creates a unified brand for the Area” (Pasco County Planning and Development, 2013). Currently the only two signs indicating you have exited Tarpon Springs and entered Pasco County are a very small green sign that says, “Holiday” as shown in Image 4.22 and a Welcome to Pasco County sign as shown in 4.23. Signage should be created to indicate the separation between Pasco County and Pinellas County. The signage should also stress and even leverage the strengths of the area including the proximity to the coast, abundant natural resources, and rich history.

#### 4.6.5 Millers Bayou Focus Area

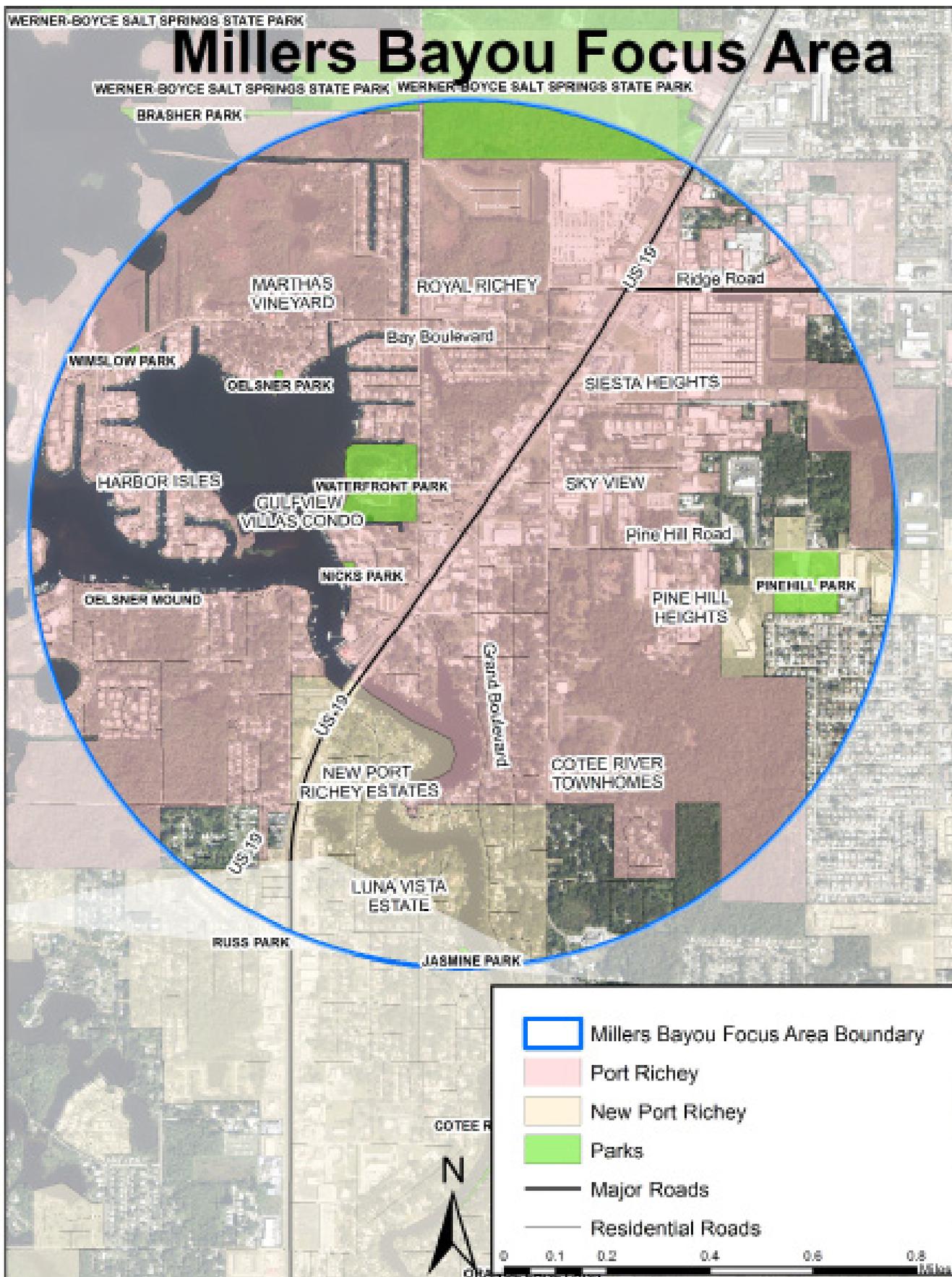
The Millers Bayou Focus Area is located in Port Richey directly south of Ridge Road along the US 19 Corridor (Map 4.22). This Area of Special Interest is located inside the CRA boundaries of Port Richey. The FSU Project Team selected the Millers Bayou Focus Area due to its unique coastal atmosphere and emerging successful local businesses which exude a coastal-casual vibe.



*Image 4.24: Harbor on ‘Cottee River  
FSU Project Team*

The Millers Bayou Focus Area is comprised of a higher percentage of residents with bachelors’ degrees, a median household income between \$25,000

Map 4.22: Millers Bayou Focus Area



FOCUS AREAS

THE HARBORS

and \$35,000, and 20-29% poverty rates. Due to its location, the Millers Bayou Focus Area is located within a coastal high hazard area, contains many repetitive loss areas coupled with a housing and commercial stock. Additionally, the value of residential parcels is higher within the Millers Bayou Focus Area.

The Millers Bayou Focus Area draws its personality directly from the local water features, including Millers Bayou and the Pithlachascotee River. Directly north of the bayou is a small park which includes walking trails, piers, playground, and limited parking. The majority of businesses are concentrated around water recreational activities and restaurants. Businesses such as Gill Dawg’s, Hooters, SunCruz Casino, Seaside, and Paladin Fishing Charters have started to create a sense of place through their water-centric focus as shown in Image 4.24. The residents of The Harbors visit Millers Bayou Focus Area to partake in the dining and entertainment offered by these businesses.

Gill Dawg’s is a locally owned restaurant and bar located on the waterfront of Millers Bayou. There are currently several boat slips along the water’s edge that enable patrons to visit the establishment via water. The owners have expanded their business to foster recreational opportunities such as canoeing, kayaking, bicycling, sailing, and paddle boarding. The adjacent parcel has been combined with the restaurant and bar and is now used for a variety of social purposes including outdoor concerts, movie screenings, and volleyball games as shown in Image 4.26.

This fenced lot can be rented out to large groups for weddings, birthdays, and community parties. The owners are currently searching for additional parcels to combine and provide additional services to the residents of The Harbors. The owners are in discussions to acquire a commercial parcel (formerly a trailer park site) located on US 19 within two blocks of Gill Dawg’s in hopes of redeveloping it into a camping site or a parking lot.



*Image 4.25: SunCruz Casino*  
FSU Project Team



*Image 4.26: Gill Dawg's Outdoor Space*  
FSU Project Team



*Image 4.27: Millers Bayou Business Expansion*  
FSU Project Team

Some additional strengths unique to the Millers Bayou Focus Area are a public boat ramp, a variety of restaurants, and water-related recreation. The public boat ramp is one of only four along the coastline of Pasco County. There is free public parking with spaces large enough to keep boat trailers attached and restroom facilities. Pub-style seafood and sandwich restaurants abound providing a variety of eateries. Several waterfront restaurants provide live music and entertainment in the evenings. Patrons can also take a nature tour on the boat “Miss Daisy,” or charter a private fishing excursion with Paladin Fishing Charters.

The SWOT analysis identified additional weaknesses within the Millers Bayou Focus Area. The windshield surveys found many commercial parcels that were unoccupied or undeveloped throughout the Millers Bayou Focus Area (Table E-1). Landscaping and parking was sporadic. In addition, first time visitors may have difficulty navigating to the coastline. There is little to no signage to brand the area as a restaurant and entertainment destination. The primary entrance into the waterfront area is shown in Image 4.28. This image faces towards the water and illustrates the lack of signage which would indicate where to enter and how to proceed to the coastline. Patrons current must navigate their way on narrow roads to park in a small dirt lot that serves several businesses. Adding necessary signage would increase visibility and ease navigation.



*Image 4.28: Grand Boulevard and US 19  
Courtesy of: Google.com*

The Millers Bayou Focus Area can be redeveloped into a major restaurant and entertainment district within The Harbors. The area needs to be promoted and branded through signage along US 19 where visibility is the highest. Overflow parking can be provided on the eastern side of US 19 if a redesign is completed for the intersection of Grand Boulevard and US 19. The redesign needs to include sidewalks for the all sides of the intersection (only the southern and western sides

currently have sidewalks) with bolder paint to increase accessibility and visibility of pedestrians. The intersection could also be redesigned into a “pedestrian scramble”. This style of intersection is useful when there is a high density of pedestrian traffic (Walker, 2014). Pedestrian scramble is where there are no “beg buttons” for pedestrians to press to indicate the need to cross the street. Instead, vehicle traffic is halted in all directions including right turns thus allowing pedestrians to cross the intersection in any direction they choose for a limited timeframe (Walker, 2014). Many larger cities use these where there is high pedestrian traffic to increase the flow of pedestrian and automobile traffic (Walker, 2014).

Other minor interventions can include adding sidewalks along the smaller roads that lead to the water, promoting the boat ramp through signage, and linking the entertainment opportunities together through community building activities. Case studies detailing best practices for possible catalyst projects for riverwalk developments are explained further in Section 5.5.

#### 4.6.6 HCA Community Hospital Focus Area

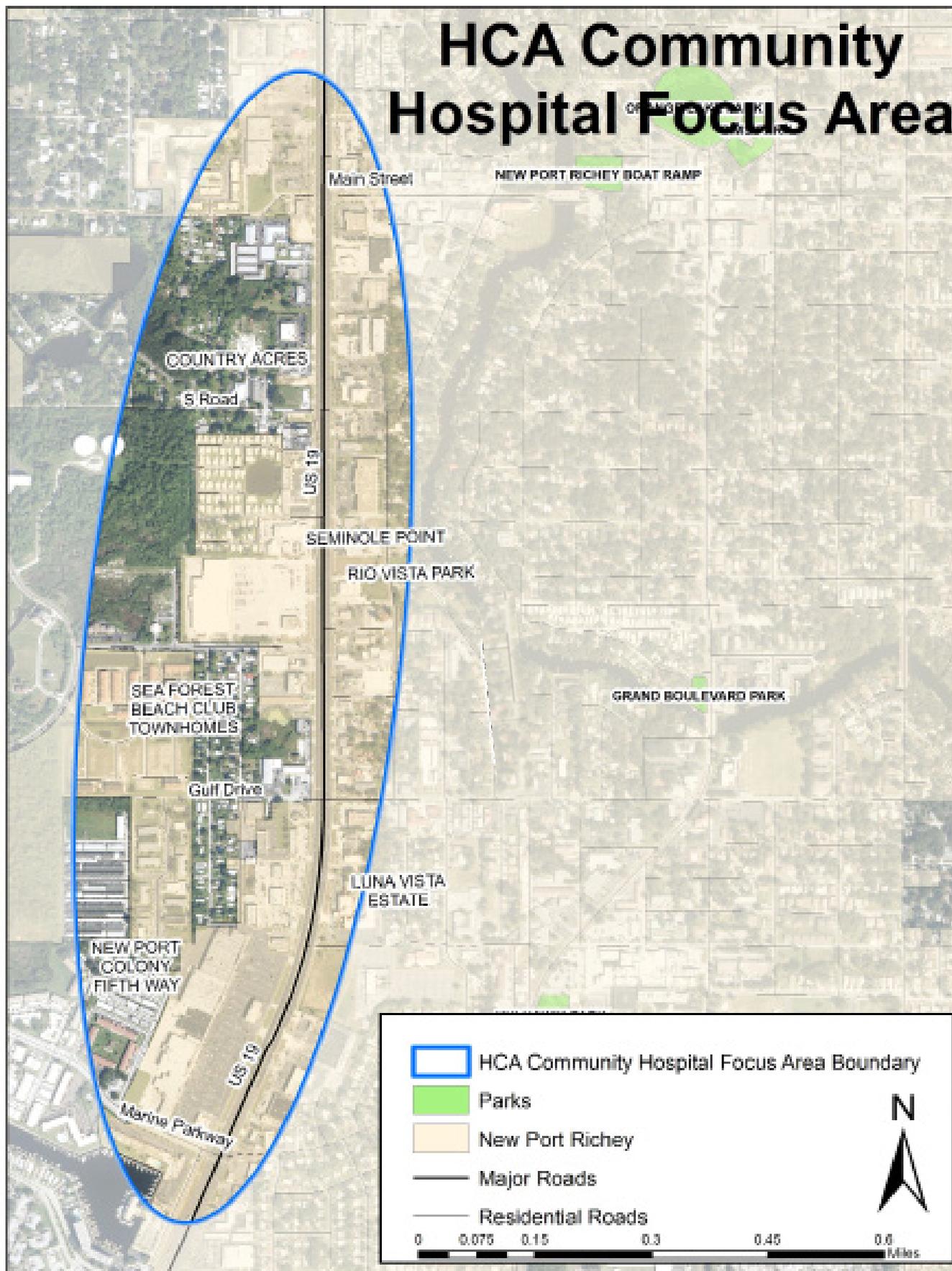
HCA Community Hospital is located at 5637 Marine Parkway in the River District approximately one half mile east of US 19 (Map 4.23). This site is within the city limits and CRA boundary of New Port Richey. Since the hospital relocated to eastern Pasco County in 2012, employment and annual sales numbers have dropped. (Map 4.5, Map 4.6). The only services which remain in the building today are psychiatric services, as the hospital’s emergency services closed in 2013.



*Image 4.29: Deteriorated, Former Doctor's Office*  
FSU Project Team

The 40 year-old abandoned hospital covers over 24 acres. The main building is over 273,000 square feet. Windshield surveys revealed that many parcels that surround the abandoned hospital are vacant and these buildings are deteriorating, as physicians associated with the hospital relocated their practices in tandem with the hospital move (Table E-1). Windshield surveys also revealed crumbling facades, overgrown landscaping, empty parking lots, and only minimal business activity for the hospital and surrounding parcels. The former doctor’s office, shown in Image 4.29, has been vacant for over a year and shows signs of neglect. The majority of the surrounding parcels are unoccupied as indicated by for sale or lease signs.

Map 4.23: HCA Community Hospital Focus Area



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The windshield surveys were able to locate a few medical based businesses that continue to serve the local community, as shown in Image 4.30. Even though St. John’s Plaza is not located on the same parcel as HCA Community Hospital, this building is indicative of the relationship between the hospital and surrounding neighborhood. Eye care centers, rehabilitation centers, and family physician’s offices were open for business. Several of the surrounding commercial buildings have converted from medical uses into other commercial establishments such as daycare centers and security services.

In June 2013, local and state leaders came together for a brainstorming session on the future of the HCA Community Hospital and surrounding parcels. Many suggestions for redevelopment of the former hospital were discussed at this session, including a bus transit station, veteran’s hospital/services, veterans housing, a fire station, a medical school, a trauma facility, pharmaceutical researchers, a community center, a performing arts center, and a sports center. There was little support for reopening a hospital in the same location due to the lengthy process to procure a certificate of need from the state and large renovation costs. Local government leaders are continuing to cultivate redevelopment project ideas for the site.



*Image 4.30: St. John’s Plaza*  
FSU Project Team

The Centro Asturiano Hospital Redevelopment case study highlights the hospital redevelopment of an abandoned hospital in Tampa, Florida. The former hospital was transformed from an abandoned waste dump into a housing complex for seniors. The Centro Asturiano Hospital Redevelopment case study details funding options through public-public partnerships, grants, and CRA funding. Additionally, the Barnert Medical Arts Complex case study explored the redevelopment of the Barnert Hospital in Paterson New Jersey from an abandoned hospital into a “medical mall.” The case study highlights funding options through private investment and a community retuning needed services.

The HCA Community Hospital Focus Area is a large redevelopment opportunity that can account for the needs of the existing and future populations, current business needs, and the economic health of the surrounding area. The regional medical center in the Hudson District is the only large scale medical facility in the entirety of The Harbors. Redevelopment of the HCA Community Hospital Focus Area could help revitalize the surrounding struggling neighborhoods and increase the tax base for the area. The older population within the Harbors may indicate the need for

additional medical facilities (Section 2.3). Redeveloping the HCA Community Hospital Focus Area into a mix of veteran’s services and senior living facilities is one potential solution. This option would re-create the market for various doctor’s offices while providing services to local clients.

*4.6.7 Main Street in New Port Richey Focus Area*

The Main Street in New Port Richey Focus Area extends east to west along Main Street, from US 19 to Rowan Drive, and is within the New Port Richey city and CRA boundaries (Map 4.24). This area is unique compared to much of The Harbors with a distinct sense of place, historic structures, and a pedestrian-oriented urban form. Main Street in New Port Richey Focus Area is a downtown area



*Image 4.31: Main Street  
Courtesy of: Google.com*

comprised of narrow, two-lane streets lined with sidewalks and trees as shown in Image 4.31. Main Street does widen occasionally to include dedicated turn lanes. At the western entrance of the Focus Area, New Port Richey developed signage accompanied by native plants and flowers as shown in Image 4.32.

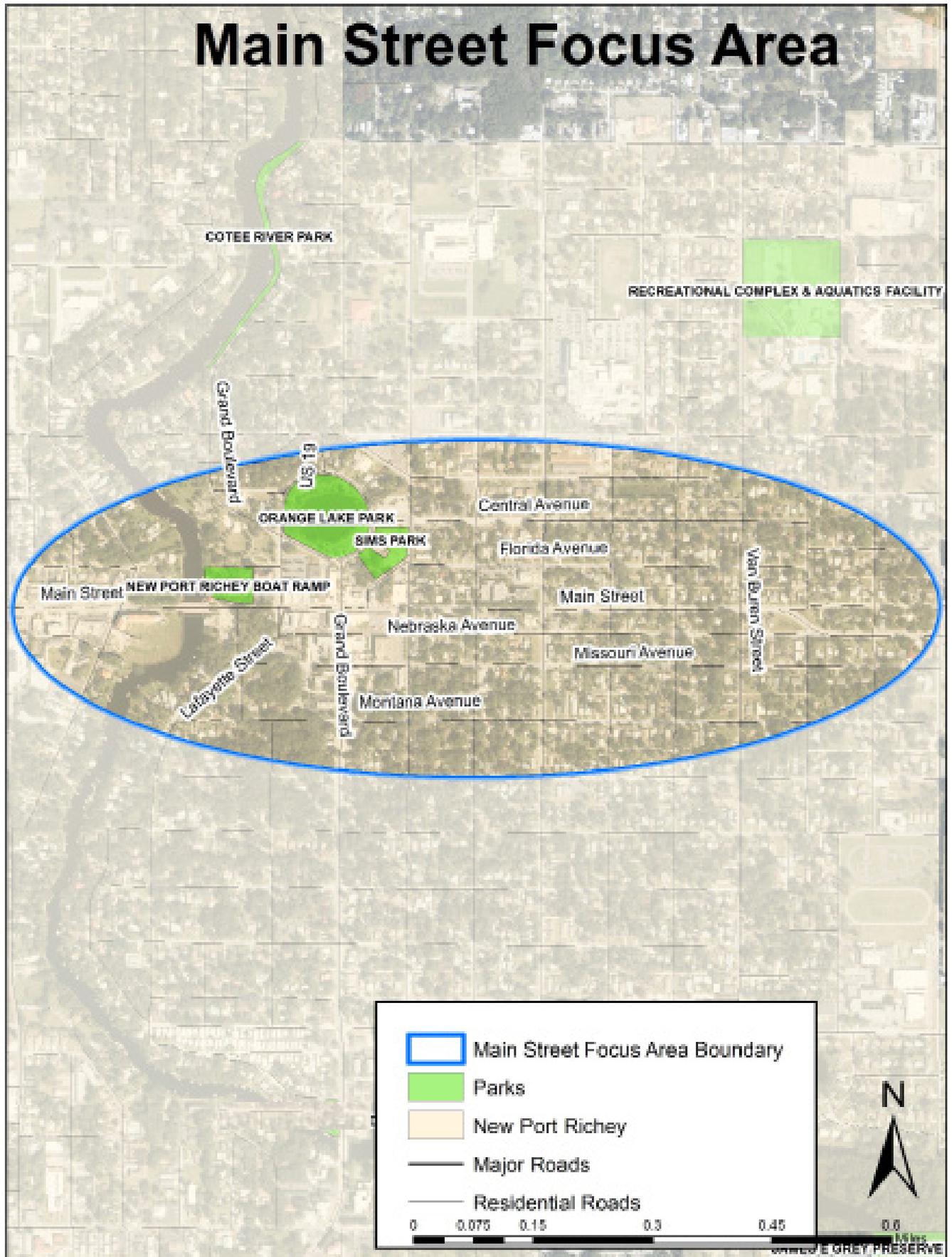


*Image 4.32: New Port Richey Sign  
Courtesy of: Google.com*

The signage indicates that visitors are entering a specific location, which adds to the sense of place in the Main Street in New Port Richey Focus Area. Local restaurants professional offices, and the city library lend a quaint feeling to this

area as shown in Image 4.33 and Image 4.34. The human scale is carried throughout the area with maximum building heights of two stories on most buildings. The Pithlachascotee River intersects Main Street between River Road and Lincoln Street as shown in Image 4.35. The Hacienda Hotel is a hotel located in the downtown area. This hotel was listed on the National Registry of Historic Places as shown in Image 4.36. Federal historic preservation funding has been earmarked to revitalize and renovate this local landmark. Upon completion, the hotel will add character, preserve history, and accommodate overnight guests. This hotel can serve as a

Map 4.24: Main Street Focus Area



cornerstone for redevelopment within the area by spurring investment in retail shops, recreational opportunities and restaurants in adjacent underutilized parcels.

The local government has taken the initiative to promote community building through civic engagement activities. Many of these activities are located at the New Port Richey Library as shown in Image 4.37. The local library has an extensive seed bank to aid in the building of edible yards. A farmer’s market is open weekly for local residents to sell their wares and locally grown produce. There is even a community kitchen which residents can use to cultivate their talents. Kathy’s Rollin’ in the Dough is a bakery which was created from the community kitchen and continues to thrive. The local library is used for many community events including community meeting. All of the various activities located in the library bring the residents together to foster a sense of place and community.

The Main Street in New Port Richey has less intense employment and annual sales density when compared to the Harbors (Map 4.5, Map 4.6). There are no large-scale employers such as a hospital or regional retail establishment. This area was highlighted in the employment and annual sales density maps, but these figures are much lower in comparison to the larger-scale commercial establishments along US 19.

As indicated in the SWOT analysis, there is a perceived lack of connectivity in the River District, especially flowing from intersection at US 19 into Main Street. On the positive side, sidewalks line



*Image 4.33: Main Street Businesses  
Courtesy of: Google.com*



*Image 4.34: New Port Richey Library  
Courtesy of: Google.com*



*Image 4.35: Pithlachascotee Bridge  
Source: FSU Project Team*



*Image 4.36: Hacienda Hotel  
Source: FSU Project Team*



*Image 4.37: New Port Richey Library  
Courtesy of: Google.com*

both sides of the street and grid pattern road system were observed in the windshield surveys (Table E-1). Though the River District has seen substantial flooding in the past, the majority of Main Street is located in an elevation above the 500 year flood zone.

By emphasizing the history, architecture, and walkability, the Main Street in New Port Richey Focus Area can capitalize on its historic, main street feel while cultivating its strong sense of community. If plans to renovate the Hacienda Hotel proceed successfully, this building can serve as a building block for future redevelopment projects. Building upon the locally engaged citizenry, there are also opportunities to employ tactical urbanism for small scale interventions and to pursue placemaking projects on Main Street such as repainted crosswalks and planters. Given its historic importance, walkability, and desirable

urban pattern, this area has substantial potential to serve as one of the most memorable and important places in Pasco County.

#### 4.6.8 Conclusion

After review and analysis of existing conditions, the development of district profiles, and the consideration of other possible areas for inclusion in a targeted redevelopment strategy, the FSU Project Team selected seven Final Focus Areas for further consideration by county staff (see Map 4.17). Each of these Final Focus Areas have unique assets and strengths that offer Pasco County opportunities to succeed with targeted revitalization efforts in selected areas. However, given limits in local fiscal capacity to support this redevelopment strategy and the need to focus the public and private efforts and resources, county staff needs to prioritize these Final Focus Areas and identify a smaller subset for further analysis in Phase II of this project. The FSU Project Team believes that a list of no more than two or three Revitalization Areas should be selected from this subset of seven Final Focus Areas, and that these Revitalization Areas should be the sole focus

of in the initiative's second phase. The Conclusions and Recommendations section of this Report (Section 6) provides two redevelopment scenarios for Pasco County to select from which includes a "Necklace of Beads" and "Heart of the Harbors" option. Selecting one of these two redevelopment scenarios could provide Phase II and future redevelopment efforts with the narrow focus necessary to achieve a critical mass of public investment to be a catalyst for continued private growth and investment.

**SECTION 5  
CASE STUDIES**

## Section 5 – Case Studies

The FSU Project Team developed case studies that identify strategies for redevelopment in other communities that share similar characteristics with The Harbors. The following case studies were selected because they illustrate effective strategies for redevelopment, applicable to the selected focus areas. These case studies can help inform and inspire Phase II of the project in further by identifying catalyst projects for the focus areas identified in Phase I.

### 5.1 Hospital Case Studies

The following case studies examine redevelopment opportunities for vacant hospitals. These case studies were selected to provide inspiration for redeveloping the HCA Community Hospital focus area.

#### *5.1.1 Centro Asturiano Hospital Redevelopment- Tampa, Florida*

**Description:** Centro Asturiano Hospital is located on 7 acres in the V.M. Ybor neighborhood of Tampa, Florida where it provided services to the area since 1928. In 1991, the hospital went bankrupt and was shut down. The City of Tampa, who took control of the site after bankruptcy, let the structure sit vacant for over a decade until 2001 when Bank of America expressed interest in developing a partnership with the Home Association, a neighboring long term care facility, to redevelop the hospital. Because the hospital had been abandoned for an extended period of time, the site became an area for illegal dumping. Along with the dumping issue, the buildings on the site were insulated with asbestos and also had several other structures with negative environmental impacts, including underground storage tanks, medical waste stocks, and a leaking transformer.

**Planning Intervention:** In 2003, the City of Tampa designated Centro Asturiano as a brownfield site in order to assist Bank of America's efforts to clean up the site. The City of Tampa also worked to build trust within the neighborhood through various means of public outreach. Outreach extended beyond required meetings, and included door to door campaigns and informal meetings/discussions with community members, which rebuilt the trust of the citizens.

**Results of Intervention:** As a result of the clean-up efforts and meetings with citizens, the City of Tampa was able to partner with the Bank of America CDC, and the Home Association, Inc. to

develop Centro Place Apartment Homes. Completed in October 2005, the project developed 160 new units in a senior living community, with 26 of those units providing housing for individuals with 35% or less of the median income. The project's total cost of \$15.1 million was funded by the partnership and HUD HOME funds (\$600,000 for 8 units) and State SHIP funds (\$900,000 for 30 units), as well as \$9.6 million in Low Income Housing Tax Credits. These redevelopment efforts also won the following awards:

- 2006 Annual Community Design Awards
  - o Best Residential Project Best Affordable Housing, Best Urban Infill for Re-Use
- 2005 Tampa Bay Business Journal
  - o Best Rehabilitation/Re-Use
- 2005 NAIOP Awards
  - o Outstanding Rehabilitation

**Role of Public Sector:** Through the partnership with Bank of American CDC and Home Association, Inc., and citizen participation efforts, the Centro Hospital was redeveloped into the senior living facility Centro Place Homes.

The efforts of the public sector enabled the project to involve meetings and outreach for public participation and input. In addition, the City of Tampa found many funding opportunities through grants, tax credits, and federal funds in order to assist in the costs of the development. By facilitating these efforts, as well as providing grant support, the City of Tampa was able to foster a successful partnership with the Bank of America CDC and Home Association, Inc with the development of the Centro Place Apartment Homes.

**Key Takeaways:**

- Public-Private Partnerships are critical to leverage funding.
- A range of private and public funding is available to rehabilitate and revitalize historic buildings and designated environmental clean-up programs.
- Public input is key to the ultimate success of a redevelopment project.



*Image 5.1: Abandoned Centro Asturiano Hospital, 2001*



*Image 5.2: Abandoned Centro Asturiano Hospital, 2003*



*Image 5.3: Centro Place Apartment Homes, 2005*  
*Source: East Tampa CRA Photo Gallery*

### 5.1.2 Barnert Medical Arts Complex- Paterson, New Jersey

**Description:** The Barnert Hospital in Paterson, New Jersey was a privately owned institution that went bankrupt and shut down in February 2008. As a result, the hospital and its land were turned over to the state of New Jersey, who in turn, sold the site to Community Healthcare Associates. The former hospital was then chosen as a site to develop a “medical mall” called the Barnert Medical Arts Complex, which houses an urgent care center, a Planned Parenthood facility, three surgical centers, and a drug rehabilitation facility. With \$25 million of investment for renovation, the former hospital is now 95% occupied, employs over 700 people, and pays almost \$600,000 in property taxes to the city. While this redevelopment is not the best provision of care to patients who are low-income, the Barnert Medical Arts Complex has attracted private investment from medical professionals and is profitable. Also, the complex allows for more specialized medical care, than what a primary care facility can provide.

**Planning Intervention:** The planning aspect of this redevelopment project came from the state level, with legislation passed to give tax credits to Community Healthcare Associates and other private developers for repurposing vacant hospitals into new sites for medical uses. The redevelopment also provided economic development to the city of Paterson through private investment, employment opportunities, and property tax revenue.

**Results of Intervention:** As a result, there has been private investment in the Barnert Medical Arts Complex as well as the development of further medical care facilities including a dialysis center and breast cancer health center. Through reinvestment and private development, the city of Paterson was able to take back their abandoned hospital and provide new and improved medical care facilities to its residents.

**Role of Public Sector:** The public sector helped with the redevelopment of the Barnert Medical Arts Center by establishing policies such as tax credits to provide an easier means of investment in the facility. State Senator Bob Gordon, representative of parts of Bergen and Passaic Counties, reintroduced legislation to provide tax credit for the repurposing of the hospital for medical use (Kaysen, 2014).

**Key Takeaways:** Private investment in abandoned properties opens the gateway to many possibilities and allows for economic development in the form of employment opportunities and additional tax revenue.

## 5.2 Corridor Redevelopment Case Studies

The following case studies examine corridor redevelopment. The US 19 corridor is essential to the appearance, identity, and economic vitality of The Harbors. The purpose of these case studies is to inspire Phase II in identifying strategies to bring both identity and economic development to the US 19 corridor. These could be applied to the Salt Springs, Millers Bayou, Pasco Palms, and The Harbors Gateway Focus Areas as they are located along the US 19 corridor.

### *5.2.1 Seminole County US 17-92 Redevelopment Master Plan: Final Context Report-2009*

**Description:** US 17-92 is a 13 mile corridor in Seminole County, Florida that runs through the City of Casselberry, the City of Lake Mary, the City of Longwood, the City of Sanford, and the City of Winter Springs. In 1997, Seminole County established the US 17-92 Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and is “intended to address blighted conditions and assist in the revitalization and redevelopment of US 17-92 corridor” (US 17-92 Corridor Redevelopment Master Plan, 2009, 6). In 2009, the US 17-92 CRA began to implement a five year CRA Action Plan to initiate “capital improvements that are intended to improve public infrastructure and services within the corridor, providing a safe and attractive environment for existing and new businesses” (US 17-92 Corridor Redevelopment Master Plan, 2009, 6).

**Planning Intervention:** The CRA Action Plan is a five year plan to “build upon information from previous reports, plans, and parcel inventories to create revitalization concepts for both the public realm and the private realm” (US 17-92 Corridor Redevelopment Master Plan, 2009, 8). Funding for this project came from the US 17-92 CRA and from the CRAs of the municipalities within the corridor area. Through the plan, the following were established:

- Redevelopment Framework Criteria
- Visual Property Assessment
- Finding of Necessity Report

The purpose of the Redevelopment Framework Criteria was to establish design patterns to be followed in future development projects and is categorized by both private and public investment. The Visual Property Assessment, similar to windshield surveys, assessed properties located along the corridor and categorized their utility. The following categories were developed for the Visual

### Property Assessment:

- Category 1: New, Fully Utilized
- Category 2: Good Condition, Well Utilized
- Category 3: Needs Some Repairs, or Somewhat Antiquated
- Category 4: Dilapidated, Needs Replaced
- Category 5: Vacant

The Finding of Necessity Report characterized the US 17-92 corridor as a blighted area, based upon the following conditions:

- Defective street layout, resulting from undefined or excessively wide driveway openings and unsafe ingress to parcels
- Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness
- Unsanitary or unsafe conditions, resulting from pavement and sidewalk deterioration and trash and/or uncontained debris on site
- Deterioration of site or other improvements
- Visual blight created by non-cohesive, excessive or dilapidated signage
- Increasing accident rate and decreased traffic safety between 1993 and 1995
- Static tax value growth

The action plan also called for a market analysis to “provide background on the physical and operating characteristics of land uses that are within the US 17-92 Corridor and, as such, is intended to be used as a tool in projecting future property tax revenue from the Corridor CRA, as well as to identify opportunities for redevelopment” (US 17-92 Corridor Redevelopment Master Plan, 2009, 11). Similar to The Harbors, the corridor has a high commercial vacancy rate, 18% (US 17-92 Corridor Redevelopment Master Plan, 2009, 6).

In order to address the transportation aspects of the Finding of Necessity Report, Seminole County developed a “Preferred Alternative” (US 17-92 Corridor Redevelopment Master Plan, 2009, 18) in which “the existing US 17-92 structure consisting of four travel lanes (ranging between 12-foot and 13-foot in width), with a 5-foot outside paved shoulder in each direction and a 40-foot median that separates travel lanes” would be “widened into a six-lane divided urban roadway and would include three 12-foot lanes and a 4-foot bike lane in either direction with a 30 foot wide median”. Along with this, “per request of the Seminole County Government, sidewalks will be incorporated as part of this project with a 5-foot sidewalk on the east side of the roadway; and an

8-foot sidewalk on the west side of the roadway” (US 17-92 Corridor Redevelopment Master Plan, 2009,18). Through these changes, Seminole County was able to redesign the US 17-92 corridor to make it safer for multi-modal transportation uses.

**Results of Intervention:** Based on the various assessments and public input initiatives, the US 17-92 CRA has found that a large portion of the commercial and industrial parcels along the corridor are unoccupied and that there are many different areas of opportunity for potential redevelopment locations. A strong foundation is needed to begin the implementation process and redevelop the corridor.

**Role of Public Sector:** To provide support to the CRA Action Plan by exploring into the following:

- Summaries of previous CRA studies and plans
- Field inventory of CRA parcel use and condition
- Comprehensive Plan analysis for each CRA jurisdiction
- Land Development Code analysis for each CRA jurisdiction
- Benchmark economic market analysis
- Analysis of planned capital improvements
- Existing and projected transportation conditions

**Key Takeaways:** US 17-92 corridor is very similar to the US-19 corridor in The Harbors. Like the US-19 corridor, the US 17-92 corridor study area contains several different municipal governments, struggles with high commercial vacancy rates, and is in need of catalyst projects for redevelopment. Also, there is a need for improvements to existing transportation infrastructure to address safety issues along the US 19 corridor for multimodal uses. However, through the development of the US 17-92 CRA, funding opportunities are available for the implementation of redevelopment projects.



Image 5.4: Example from Visual Property Assessment



Image 5.5: Example from Visual Property Assessment



Image 5.6: Example from Visual Property Assessment

- 1 Category 1: New, Fully Utilized
- 2 Category 2: Good Condition, Well Utilized
- 3 Category 3: Needs Some Repairs, or Somewhat Antiquated
- 4 Category 4: Dilapidated, Needs Replaced
- 5 Category 5: Vacant

### 5.2.2 The Livernois Corridor- Detroit, Michigan

**Description:** The Livernois Corridor in Detroit, Michigan was formerly known as “The Avenue of Fashion.” With large stores such as Woolworths, it had become a regional destination for shopping. Also, the Livernois Corridor shares in the music history of Detroit and is home to the oldest operating jazz club in the United States, Baker’s Keyboard Lounge. The corridor redevelopment was split into three different areas where parcels were classified as: steady, distressed, or transitional. Along with those classifications, there was also a category of “markets varying from strong to distressed” (ULI Presentation: Livernois Corridor, 2013). Compared to other neighborhoods in Detroit, Livernois did not experience as much decline in the recession, but vacancy, deterioration, and inadequate retail mix became more apparent and noticeable. According to a ULI Presentation, there is over 1 billion square feet of retail space, specifically empty large retail stores (ULI Presentation: Livernois Corridor, 2013).

**Planning Intervention:** In 2010, Detroit submitted the Revitalization of The Livernois Corridor for the Urban Land Institute Rose Center Fellowship Program. The city then began a study through the ULI to assess the best means for revitalization. Through the ULI’s work, public and private partnerships were developed among the public sector, business owners, anchor institutions, residents, community organizations, and property owners. From this partnership, a collective vision was created and the implementation process began.

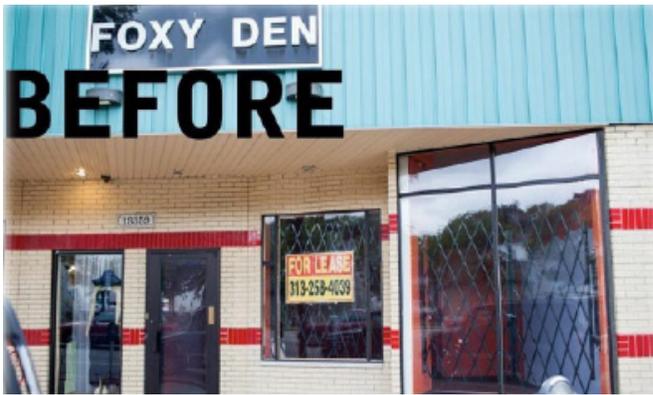
**Results of Intervention:** Through the funding contributions of ArtPlace America, MEDC, and the Knight Foundation, Art + Retail On The Ave acted as a catalyst project for the Livernois Corridor Redevelopment. Within four months, on two different blocks that had ten vacant storefronts, 26 projects were completed including: 8 art installations, 8 pop-up businesses, and 10 art based events. Along with these 26 projects, there were also 5 future permanent businesses ready for implementation. Through the implementation of these projects, the goal of retail reintroduction in the corridor would provide the spark for neighborhood revitalization. The project is expected to be completed within the next few years and has plans to implement a \$1.7 million streetscape improvement project, as well as continued efforts to improve facade and support for local entrepreneurs and artists.

**Role of Public Sector:**

- Work for collective action through partnerships with the private sector
- Research and apply for various funding opportunities from private entities and grants
- Identification of sites along Livernois Corridor for redevelopment

**Key Takeaways:**

- The history of an area can provide ideas for revival,
- The arts can provide opportunities for creative redevelopment, and
- Improvement in one area can spread to other areas.



*Image 5.7: 19363 Livernois Avenue- Before, 2012*



*Image 5.8: 19363 Livernois Avenue- After, 2012*



*Image 5.9: American Art Place Mural- Before, 2012*



*Image 5.10: American Art Place Mural- After, 2012*

### 5.2.3 State Road 7/ US 441- Broward County, Florida

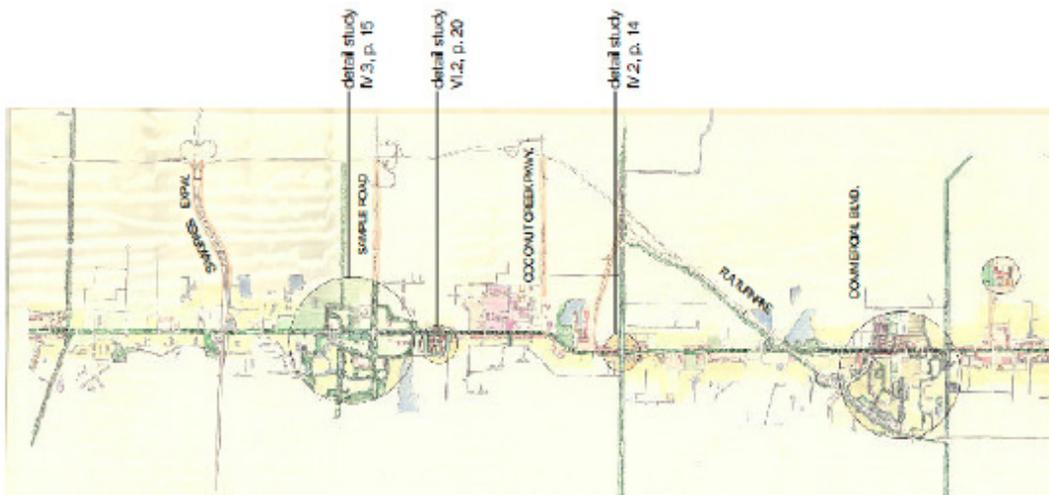
**Description:** State Road 7 is an arterial section of U.S. Highway 441 that runs north-south through Broward and Miami-Dade Counties. State Road 7 experienced commercial strip development through the 1960s and 1970's. These are now deteriorating businesses due to increased competition from newer retail developments elsewhere in the county. In 2000, the local government leaders along the State Road 7 corridor established the State Road 7/U.S. 441 Collaborative with the goal "to create a mixed use, transit oriented corridor with high-density activity centers located at primary intersections" (ULI Report: Shifting Suburbs, 2012, 7). According to Florida State Road 7/US 441 Sustainable Corridor Study, "the Collaborative is a voluntary body consisting of 13 municipalities and Broward County. The South Florida Regional Planning Council, Florida Department of Transportation, MPO and South Florida Water Management District serve as ex officio members of the Collaborative" (Florida State Road 7/US 441 Sustainable Corridor Study, 2002, 27). Since its establishment, the State Road 7/ U.S. 441 Collaborative has completed various community outreach activities through a \$1.9 million grant from the U.S. Federal Highway Administration. Public outreach conducted in the form of charettes and interviews, highlighted citizens desire for redevelopment, better public transit services and facilities, and housing for all income levels. Additionally, the idea to create nodes of major redevelopment along the corridor with smaller redevelopment projects between these was an idea spurred through a visit from the ULI Advisory Services.

**Planning Intervention:** In 2004, Broward County adopted a new strategic master plan that changed the land use designation of parcels along State Road 7 to "transit oriented corridor" (Florida State Road 7/US 441 Sustainable Corridor Study, 2002, 7) and suggested smart growth principles such as a right-of-way improvement plan and streetscape improvements. It was also suggested to widen certain areas of SR-7, as well as a reduction of street width in other areas to assist the urban scale redevelopment

**Results of Intervention:** Over the last decade, the State Road 7 corridor has benefited from over \$165 million of investment, including \$137 million in right-of-way acquisition and construction, \$10 million in transit enhancements, \$10 million in sewer line infrastructure updates, and \$4 million in bus shelter construction. Numerous sources funded these projects, including: the U.S. Department of Transportation, the State of Florida, regional planning bodies, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, local in-kind services and funding from local governments. As a result of these investments State Road 7 has achieved its goal of becoming a mixed use transit oriented corridor.

**Role of Public Sector:** The ultimate role of the public sector in the State Road 7 Redevelopment Project was as a collaborator to the different municipalities located along the corridor, and as the head of public outreach. Through the collaboration of the municipalities as well as regional entities, the redevelopment of State Road 7 is in the process of implementation.

**Key Takeaways:** The State Road 7 Corridor Redevelopment Project exhibits the need for collaboration among stakeholders, particularly the different municipalities along the corridor. There is also a need for public involvement to ensure that the planned and budgeted projects are meeting the needs and desires of the citizens.



*Image 5.11: Example of Nodal Development Along S.R. 7*



*Image 5.12: Bus Stop Before Implementation*



*Image 5.13: Transit Stop with New Amenities*

#### 5.2.4 Aurora Corridor- Shoreline, Washington

**Description:** The Aurora Corridor in Shoreline, Washington, is an arterial of the suburbs north of Seattle. The corridor is highly congested and has one of the highest accident rates in the state of Washington. The corridor experiences almost one accident per day and one fatality per year. Further, this corridor lacks pedestrian infrastructure. A major issue on the Aurora Corridor was the “strip development of gas stations, shopping centers, convenience stores, as well as ‘colorful’ businesses like adult clubs and tobacco and alcohol stores” (ULI Report: Shifting Suburbs, 2012, 16).

**Planning Intervention:** The City Council adopted a concept design for the Aurora Corridor in 1999, which catalyzed economic growth while also improving safety and aesthetics. The City of Shoreline began redevelopment of the 3 mile corridor in 2005. The project was split into four segments: the first 2 segments (1, 2) were comprised of the first 2 miles of the corridor, and the third and fourth phases (3A, 3B) were comprised of the third mile of the corridor. The first mile began construction in 2005 and was completed in 2007, and included the construction of pedestrian bridges to create better connectivity. Construction on the second mile began in January 2010 with completion in 2011 and implemented the use of natural water quality treatments to clean and control runoff while promoting healthy vegetation. The 3A segment construction began in January 2011 and was completed in summer of 2012. In this phase, wider sidewalks and landscaped medians with left and U-turn pockets were constructed as well as the Rain Garden Plaza which assists in the collection of stormwater along the corridor. The final segment of the project, 3B, which is currently in the construction phase, will include the construction of 23 retaining walls of varying types to support the change in elevation of this area as well as sidewalks and medians to help improve stormwater management. Once the project is complete, the corridor will also have better street lighting, upgrades to utility infrastructure, safer pedestrian infrastructure, and natural stormwater treatments.

**Results of Intervention:** As a result of \$120 million in investment and implementation of the Aurora Corridor Project, the project’s of the first mile won numerous awards including the 2008 Award of Excellence for Best City Project by the Federal Highway Administration and WSDOT and Vision 2020 Award from the Puget Sound Regional Council. Due to the corridor improvements, the City of Aurora experienced a 60% decrease in the number of accidents within five years of implementation. The redevelopment and reinvestment of the corridor also helped spur economic development and led to the construction of a new YMCA facility, housing for seniors as well as

market rate and affordable housing. Further, the City of Shoreline also improved its stormwater management through the implementation of more stormwater management tools such as rain gardens. Overall, the reinvestment and redevelopment of the Aurora Corridor has had positive effects on the City of Shoreline.

**Role of Public Sector:** The City of Shoreline played a major role in the Aurora Corridor Redevelopment. First, the city conducted a large amount of public outreach, which included an information guide on when construction would take place as well as contact information for citizens to voice their questions and concerns. Additionally, the city promoted and encouraged investment along the corridor through local landowners by “increasing the spread between costs of rental income” (ULI Report: Shifting Suburbs, 2012, 18). Also, the city played a major role in funding, looking to various opportunities in the form of county, state, and federal funds, as well as grants and funding from the capital improvement program. In 2006, the RapidRide, six high-usage bus corridors, received \$70 million in local capital investments, and a one-cent sales tax (ULI Report: Shifting Suburbs, 2012, 18).

Some other funding sources included the following: City of Shoreline Roads Capital Fund, the Federal Surface Transportation Program (STP), New Transportation Partnership Act (TPA) Funds, King County Metro, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program, Washington State Regional Mobility Transit Grant, and Washington State Transportation Improvement Board (City of Shoreline, 2013).

**Key Takeaways:** The Aurora Corridor Redevelopment Project exhibits how the reinvestment in one aspect of an area can lead to improvement in other areas of the community. By improving the Aurora Corridor, investment occurred in the community that spurred economic development. Through the corridor improvement the area became safer for the citizens who utilize it. Also the city's active role as a facilitator and communicator of the project allowed for greater public involvement and support for the Aurora Corridor Redevelopment Project.



*Image 5.14: Pedestrian Bridge over Aurora Avenue*



*Image 5.15: Before Implementation of Aurora Corridor Redevelopment Plan*



*Image 5.16: After Implementation of Aurora Corridor Redevelopment Plan*

## 5.3 Mall Redevelopment Case Studies

The following case studies examine corridor redevelopment. The US 19 corridor is essential to the appearance, identity, and economic vitality of The Harbors. The purpose of these case studies is to inspire Phase II in identifying strategies to bring both identity and economic development to the US 19 corridor. These could be applied to the Salt Springs, Millers Bayou, Pasco Palms, and The Harbors Gateway Focus Areas as they are located along the US 19 corridor.

### *5.3.1 Winter Park Village (Lifestyle Center) - Winter Park, Florida*

**Description:** The Winter Park Mall was built in 1963 in Winter Park, Florida. North of Orlando, Winter Park is an affluent suburb and boasted the first enclosed mall in the region. When planning the mall, there were expectations that it would compete against Winter Park's main street, Park Avenue. The mall was once successful, but declined during the late 1980's and early 1990's due to competition from newer malls. Before redevelopment in 1996, the mall had fallen to a vacancy rate of 30% (Casto, 2006, 2).

Casto Lifestyle Properties invested \$2 million in the predevelopment expenses and received two loans for development totaling \$117 million. Excluding residential development, the cost was \$54 million. The anchor store Dillard's was converted into 'the Lofts, which comprised 52 industrial style apartments (Casto, 2006, 6).

**Planning Intervention:** Redevelopment was initiated by the mall owner, Commercial Centers Management, in 1996. Casto Lifestyle Properties was responsible for the management and development of this plan. The acquisition process was complicated due to the property comprising of three ground leases and a fee simple parcel. The primary objective of this redevelopment was to establish an "urban sense of place where a typical 1960s -era shopping mall had been" (Casto, 2006, 1). The plan included a pedestrian scale streetscape, with two-story buildings aligned along a main street and secondary streets. The plan also restored the street grid that existed prior to the 1950s. To improve the pedestrian experience and slow down traffic, the roads were 'jogged' in some areas and the width and lengths of the street were kept short and narrow (Casto, 2006, 3). In order to increase neighborhood walkability to the development, the sidewalks along the private streets were connected to the interior of Winter Park Village. The redevelopment included pockets of green space that offered residents a pleasant place gather around trees, grass, benches, and fountains.

The site plan was impacted by the Dillard's department store, which remained operational throughout the redevelopment plan creation. An earlier departure of Dillard's would have resulted in the complete demolition of the mall. This would have allowed a movie theater to be placed on the site of Dillard's and at the hinge at of main street and other streets.

Winter Park Village opened in 2000 and is comprised of 525,000 square feet of mixed-use lifestyle center. This includes 350,000 square feet of retail space, 115,000 square feet of office space, and the 52 loft apartments. Key tenants include a Regional Cinema, Publix, Pier 1 Imports, The Cheesecake Factory, and a Starbucks.

Casto also worked to resolve the surface water drainage problems caused by the mall site. These problems were addressed by raising the site 18 inches, in order to prevent water draining to adjacent parcels, and adding an underground exfiltration system responsible for treating on site stormwater. The clean water drains into a lake south of the development. This allowed Casto to avoid using part of the Winter Park Village as a stormwater retention area.

**Results of Intervention:** The goal of the Winter Park Village was to complement Park Avenue, not compete against it. According to the Urban Land Institute (ULI), this allowed Winter Park Village to "fill a hole in the north Orlando market" (Casto, 2006).

**Role of Public Sector:** The project was eligible for funding from the city since the site was blighted and located in a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA). However, the city and Casto made an agreement not to establish a private/public relationship. Residential development and structured parking were taken out of the plan to avoid the need for public funding from the city. Since the project did not require public funds it received little opposition. The community opposition that did occur came from concern citizens who feared that the project would have a negative impact on Park Avenue. Overall, the community and citizens wanted to see this plan approved and implemented. The city made sure that rezoning was not needed for the completion of this project.

**Key Takeaways:** According to the ULI, an important quality of lifestyle centers is their ability to evolve and create more value overtime. Properly designed lifestyle centers allow their owners to respond to changing market conditions and changing demographics (Casto, 2006, 8). Synergy is also an important component to a successful lifestyle center. Office space occupants and residents must be interested in shopping and eating at the Winter Park Village (Casto, 2006, 8).



*Image 5.17: “Before” Aerial - Winter Park Village*  
Source: MTS Advisors, Inc., 2014



*Image 5.18: “After” Aerial - Winter Park Village*  
Source: MTS Advisors, Inc., 2014

### 5.3.2 Mizner Park in Boca Raton, FL

**Description:** In 1974, the Boca Raton Mall opened in downtown Boca Raton. The mall was located on a 30 acres site near Interstate 95, single-family homes, and low-density density strip centers. The Boca Raton Mall was overshadowed by the Town Center that was built in 1967. The mall has been described as “never been fully occupied” or “never successful” (City of Boca Raton, 2010, 2; Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2011).

Casto Lifestyle Properties invested \$2 million in the predevelopment expenses and received two loans for development totaling \$117 million. Excluding residential development, the cost was \$54 million. The anchor store Dillard’s was converted into ‘the Lofts, which comprised 52 industrial style apartments (Casto, 2006, 6).

**Planning Intervention:** In 1987, the City of Boca Raton initiated the mall redevelopment project. In 1989, the existing site was demolished, and a public/private partnership was created between the City of Boca Raton, the CRA, and the developer, Crocker and Company. According to Cooper Carry (2013), prior to the development of Mizner Park, the city’s zoning officials lacked experience

in the integration of suburban residential models into an urban setting (Cooper Carry, 2013). Cooper Carry, a firm that offers planning, architecture, landscaping, environmental graphic design, interior design services, was responsible for creating the master plan for the project.

The public infrastructure and park improvements were paid for by the CRA, and cost \$3,450,000. The City of Boca Raton invested \$50 million in the infrastructure improvements. Using a \$68 million revenue and tax-increment bond, the CRA and Crocker Partners Development acquired the mall site. The construction of the commercial development was completed in phases. The commercial development consists of office tenants, 7 restaurants, an 8 screen cinema, 47 retail shops, 272 residential units, and 170,000 square foot office building. The development also has a portion of the site dedicated for cultural facilities. In January of 2001, Phase 1 of the Centre of the Arts opened the Boca Raton Museum, which is 40,000 square feet. In November of 2002, the Count de Hoernle Amphitheater was completed in Phase 2. Phase 3 of the project added an indoor performance art center that opened in 2010.

**Results of Intervention:** According to Dunham-Jones and Williamson in their book *Retrofitting Suburbia*, this was the “first successful replacement of an enclosed shopping mall with a mixed-use town center” (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2011, 123). The project has received many accolades, which includes National Association for Industrial and Office Parks (NAIOP) South Florida, Best Mixed-Use Award.

However, the Project has also received criticism for Mizner Park not being integrated with surrounding areas. The boulevard and park are not connected to the local streets. Mizner Park has been defined as ‘attachable fragment of urbanism’ by Charles Bohl (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2011, 125). However, despite the lack of street connectivity, this project has sparked development in adjacent blocks.

In the recent years, the city has worked on creating connectivity in the downtown area. In 2011, the Palmetto Park Road Improvements and Downtown Boca Raton Pedestrian Promenade Project were completed. This project entailed street reconstruction, landscaping, and creating connections to Mizner Park and another mixed-use area, Plaza Real South (Florida Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, 2012). The purpose of this project was to improve pedestrian safety and walkability along Palmetto Park Road in order to improve the pedestrian connection between plaza Real South and Mizner Park. In 2012, this project received the Award of Merit from the Florida Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects.

**Role of Public Sector:** The project was eligible for funding from the city since the site was blighted and located in a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA). However, the city and Casto made an agreement not to establish a private/public relationship. Residential development and structured parking were taken out of the plan to avoid the need for public funding from the city. Since the project did not require public funds it received little opposition. The community opposition that did occur came from concern citizens who feared that the project would have a negative impact on Park Avenue. Overall, the community and citizens wanted to see this plan approved and implemented. The city made sure that rezoning was not needed for the completion of this project.



*Image 5.19: Wide Crosswalk and Bollard Leading from Mizner Park*

Community input contributed to the redevelopment of Mizner Park into a mixed-use, cultural center, and open public space (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2011, 124).

#### **Key Takeaways:**

- With shared visions, public/private partnerships can result in the revitalization of otherwise economically distressed areas.
- Mizner Park has been criticized for lacking connectivity to surrounding infrastructure, so redevelopment needs to be sensitive to connectivity issues with existing infrastructure such as street networks and sidewalks.



*Image 5.20: Mizner Park*

*Source: Boca Raton Tribune*

### 5.3 3 CityCenter Englewood in Englewood, Colorado

**Description:** In 1968, the Cinderella City Mall opened in Englewood, Colorado (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2011). Located on a 1.3 million square-foot site, the mall was once a thriving force and an economic generator for Englewood. In 1974, the mall accounted for 52% of Englewood’s sales tax revenue. However, the mall began to decline, and by 1994, the mall only accounted for 2.6% of Englewood’s sale tax revenue (“Greyfields into Goldfields”, 2001). By 1995, the mall was deserted due to competition from other retail centers and a downturn in the economy (“History of Cinderella City Mall”, 2014). In 1997, at a community planning session, Englewood examined the idea of transportation-oriented development to revitalize the deserted mall (“CityCenter Englewood”, Colorado, 2014). This spurred an initiative to revitalize the deteriorated Cinderella City Mall into a growing transit-oriented development.

**Planning Intervention:** The transportation-oriented development, now called CityCenter, was completed in 2001. CityCenter is made up of more than 800,000 square feet of development, which includes 440 residential units, 330,000 square feet of retail space, an inter-modal transit station, 50,000 square feet of restaurant space, and a city hall (“CityCenter Englewood”, Colorado, 2014). Wal-Mart is one of the major retailers at the CityCenter. To ensure that Wal-Mart helped retain the suburb’s existing character, the city negotiated that Wal-Mart would have a non-standard façade and a tree lined ‘street’ (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2011, 134). Another aspect of the project is the Civic Center. The Civic Center is a reuse of a former department store building. The Civic Center includes a library, municipal courts, city offices, and cultural art center. According to the City of Englewood, the development is centered on a two-acre public piazza (“CityCenter Englewood”, Colorado, 2014). The light-rail station is at one end of the piazza.

**Results of Intervention:** Some of the initial challenges the city faced while taking over the mall site include the following: hesitance of mixed-use design, changing developers, a lack of full cooperation from the transit authority incorporating the adjacent light-rail station, and keeping the small retail shops open (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2011, 131). The City of Englewood was able to gain private buy-in through the city’s investment into the project. The project has been criticized for its lack of walkability, and some aspects of the project appear to have no purpose. Mirzayi (2010) states that these issues are related to the city and the developer’s concerns about generating tax revenue versus creating a livable space. The project has also had positive outcomes, as it created 750 new jobs and generates an estimated annual sales tax revenue of \$2.5 million per year (Virginia Transit Association, 2014).

**Role of Public Sector:** Community planning sessions fostered the discussion regarding potential redevelopment opportunities for the site. Englewood was responsible for most of the development’s up-front costs. Public and private investment totaled approximately \$150 million, attracting national retailers to the development (Virginia Transit Association, 2014).

Some other funding sources included the following: City of Shoreline Roads Capital Fund, the Federal Surface Transportation Program (STP), New Transportation Partnership Act (TPA) Funds, King County Metro, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program, Washington State Regional Mobility Transit Grant, and Washington State Transportation Improvement Board (City of Shoreline, 2013).

**Key Takeaways:**

- Public and private partnerships can leverage funding and other resources to make large-scale projects manageable.
- A mixed-use transit station can be a catalyst to address walkability and livability issues in urbanized areas such as the CityCenter Englewood.



Image 5.21: Cinderella City Mall



Image 5.22: CityCenter of Englewood



Image 5.23: Englewood CityCenter  
Source: CityCenter Englewood Mixed-Use Transit Station, 2014



Image 5.24: CityCenter Englewood Mixed-Use Transit Station  
Source: trybaarchitects.com, 2014

## 5.4 Main Street Case Studies

### National Main Street Program

The National Main Street Center, Inc. is a notable program that has worked to bring preservation and revitalization to main streets across the country. In 1980, this program was established under the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The National Main Street Center, Inc. provides technical assistance to main street communities, performs research and analysis on key revitalization issues, and holds conferences and workshops (National Main Street Center, Inc, 2014). The National Main Street Center, Inc. provides assistance to the main street communities by working with state Main Street programs. There are Main Street Programs in each state and the District of Columbia. New Port Richey is a designated Florida Main Street. The following main street case studies feature designated Florida Main Streets and provide inspiration for revitalization of the Main Street New Port Richey and the Main Street Focus Area.

#### 5.4.1 MainStreet DeLand

**Description:** The City of DeLand is located in Volusia County, Florida. DeLand is 40 miles north of Orlando and 23 miles southwest from Daytona. DeLand is described as one of Florida’s “small town treasures” and the “Athens of Florida” (City of DeLand, Florida, 2014). According to the 2010 U.S. Census, DeLand’s total population is 26,980 (United States Census Bureau, 2014). In 1985, MainStreet DeLand Association was created, and according to MainStreet DeLand, was the first community to receive a Main Street designation. Prior to becoming a designated Main Street, the downtown area of DeLand had a vacancy rate of 75%. In the early 1980’s, occupants left the downtown for the mall built in Daytona Beach and shopping centers south of the area.

**Planning Intervention:** Community commitment along with the Main Street Program were used to help prevent DeLand from falling into “stagnation and anomalously sprawl” (National Main Street, 2008). After DeLand became part of the Main Street Program, the city received a \$10,000 grant that was used to improve the façades of downtown. Since DeLand was designated as a Main Street Program, MainStreet DeLand had 268 construction and rehabilitation projects that totaled \$80.6 million (Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, 2014). Some of the major program initiatives included façade improvements, underutilized building grants, the Woodland Boulevard Streetscape, Indiana Avenue Streetscape, Athens Theatre Restoration, park creation, Florida Museum for Women Artists, and a mural and arts program (Florida City and

County Management Association, 2013). In the past, MainStreet DeLand has received funding from the City of DeLand Redevelopment Agency.

Designed in 1921, the Athens Theatre can be described as a classic American theatre. The theatre once held a vaudeville show and eventually evolved overtime. The theatre deteriorated after renovations in the 1950's, and closed in the early 1990's. Recognizing that the theatre was a treasure to DeLand, restoration of theatre began in the mid 1990's. Today, the theatre serves as a location for film festivals, classic film festivals, concert, plays, and educational services (Athens Theatre).

Through the MainStreet DeLand Association, the city has offered grants for six competitive grant programs. The purpose of these grants is to offer financial incentive to downtown property owners to make building improvements in the downtown redevelopment area (City of DeLand , 2014 ).

The Downtown DeLand Grant Programs include the following:

- **Lighting Grants:** Downtown property owners and merchants can receive matching grants for providing exterior lighting for the store front and lighting for the rear of the building. The eligible projects can receive a grant for up to 50% of the total project cost. However, no single grant exceeds \$1,000.
- **Residential Grants:** Downtown property owners can receive matching grants to create residential units. Property owners can receive up to 50% of the total project's cost with no single grant exceeding \$5,000.
- **Retail Grants:** Downtown property owners can receive matching grants to create additional retail occupancies. This grant can be up to 50% of the total project's cost, and no single grant exceeding \$2500.
- **Upper Floor Grants – CRA:** Downtown property owners are offered matching grants for refurbishing upper floors for uses that include office, retail, service or residential or any combination of the services listed. Storage and warehouse space is not eligible for the grant. This award can be up to 50% of the total project cost with no single grant exceeding \$5,000.
- **Façade Grants – CRA:** Downtown property owners are offered matching grants for rehabilitating exterior façades, particularly store fronts. This award can be up to 50% of the total project's cost, and no single grant exceeding \$2,500.
- **Underutilized Building Grants:** Downtown property owners can receive a grant for rehabilitating buildings that have been vacant for two or more years. The eligible projects are awarded up to 25% of the total project cost, and no single grant will

exceed \$30,000.

**Results of Intervention:** DeLand has been voted Best Main Street in Florida' five times in a row (Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, 2014). According to the MainStreet DeLand Association, MainStreet DeLand is responsible for bringing 200,000 shoppers downtown each year (MainStreet DeLand Association, 2014). As of the final quarter of 2013, the vacancy rate of downtown was down to 6%. Improvements to the downtown resulted in an increase of the property values and MainStreet DeLand organizes more than 50 events each year.

**Role of Public Sector:**

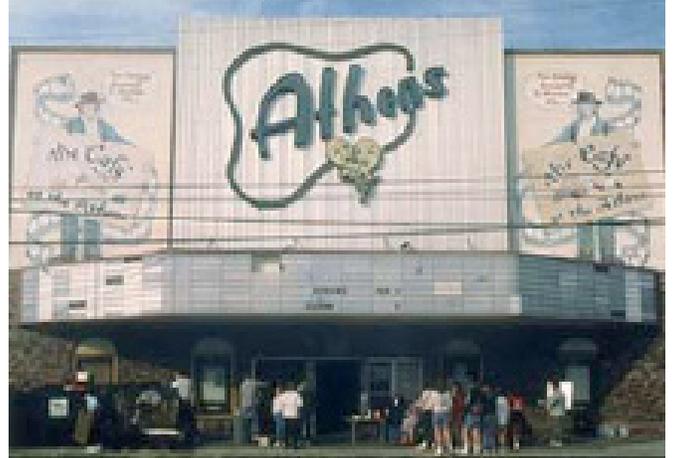
- The "Magnificent 7" led the transformation of downtown DeLand. The "Magnificent 7" are the original founders of the MainStreet DeLand Association and were a small group of community volunteers that worked together to find strategies for the declining downtown (DeFeo, 2014). The "Magnificent 7" consisted of the following;
  - o Richard Kelton (Government Consultant) President
  - o Jim West (Stetson Flower) Vice President
  - o Donna Lutz (Realtor) Secretary
  - o Michael (Mick) Aleno (Florida Bank) Treasurer
  - o Steve Burley (Volusia/Lake/Flagler Private Industry Council)
  - o Jim Stepp (Stepp Office Supply)
  - o John Gregory (Feasal's Paint and Glass) (West Volusia Beacon Online, 2010)
- Community Development Areas designated in Downtown DeLand consist of 92.6 acres of land, 340 parcels, and 68 historic buildings. The DeLand Community Redevelopment Agency funds downtown redevelopment grants, such as the façade grants.
- Residents also played a role in raising money for projects.

**Key Takeaways:**

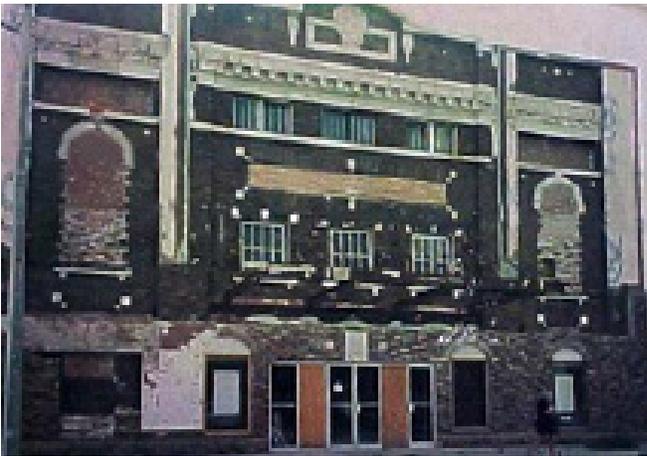
- The historical character of the downtown area provides a sense of place in DeLand.
- DeLand used its unique features and assets of a historic downtown to create a new chapter in its history through renovation and reinvestment.
- The creation of MainStreet DeLand was the result of a public/private partnership of community volunteers and the city to revitalize the downtown. The CRA works with MainStreet DeLand in the creation and funding of revitalization initiatives to improve the downtown.



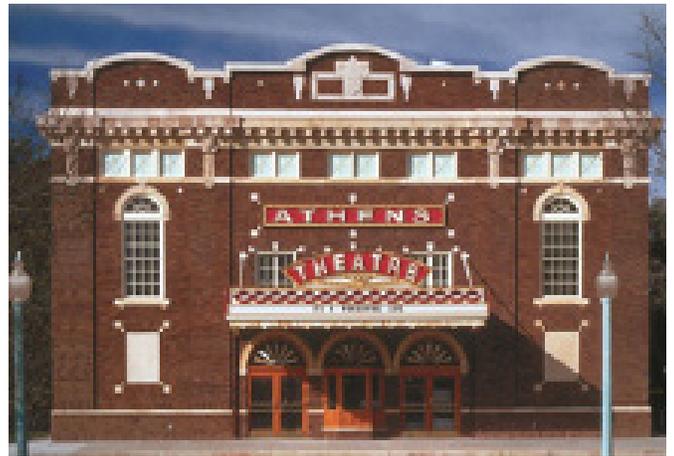
*Image 5.25: Athens Theatre 1920's- 1940's*



*Image 5.26: Athens Theatre 1960's - 1990's*



*Image 5.27: Athens Theatre Pre-Restoration*



*Image 5.28: Athens Theatre Restored 2009*

#### 5.4.2 Main Street Fort Pierce, Inc.

**Description:** The City of Fort Pierce, Florida is located in St. Lucie County, a region known as the 'Treasure Coast'. The region is named after the 16th century Spanish treasure fleet that shipwrecked (Swift, 2014). Incorporated in 1901, Fort Pierce is one of the oldest east coast communities in Florida. According to the U.S. Census, Fort Pierce had a population of 41,858 in 2010 (United States Census Bureau, 2014).

**Planning Intervention:** In 1988, Main Street Fort Pierce, Inc., a not-for-profit, was established to revitalize the downtown area. According to Main Street Fort Pierce, Inc., their mission is to "preserve, promote and build on the historic and natural treasures of our downtown waterfront community" (Main Street Fort Pierce, Inc., 2013). In 1995, the original Fort Pierce City Hall

was renovated by Main Street Fort Pierce, Inc. and St. Lucie Preservation. The building was constructed in 1925 and was vacant from 1983 to 2006. The Historic City Hall is owned by the city and operated by Main Street Fort Pierce, Inc. In 1997, Main Street Fort Pierce, Inc. purchased a vaudeville theatre that was built in 1923. This theatre is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and was once the “largest theatre on Florida’s east coast between Jacksonville and Miami” (Sunrise Theatre “History”, 2012). Main Street Fort Pierce, Inc. purchased the entire vaudeville site two years later and then reopened it as the Sunrise Theatre that debuted a performance by Dionne Warwick in 2006 (Main Street Fort Pierce, Inc., 2013). The Sunrise Theatre was later donated to the city, which is now responsible for daily operations and maintenance. In 2007, Main Street Fort Pierce, Inc. completed restoration of the Platts/Backus House, a home built in 1895 by the first physician in Fort Pierce. Other accomplishments include the construction of Manatee Observation Center, Saint Lucie County Library, and the creation of Downtown Murals (Main Street Fort Pierce, Inc., 2013).

**Results of Intervention:** In 2011, Main Street Fort Pierce, Inc. won the Great American Main Street Award due to their ability to foster downtown revitalization. According to the National Main Street Center (2011), Main Street Fort Pierce, Inc. lowered the vacancy rate from 40% to 8%. Main Street Fort Pierce, Inc. has also shown that they are resilient, dealing with Hurricane Frances in 2004 while construction was in progress in the historic district (National Main Street Center, Inc. 2011).

**Role of Public Sector:**

- In 1982, the Fort Pierce Community Redevelopment Agency was established to bring revitalization and rehabilitation to the city.
- The Platts/Backus House received over \$400,000 in grants. This includes a \$350,000 grant from Fort Pierce Redevelopment Agency and \$50,000 grant from the State of Florida Historic Preservation Division (Pardo-O’Kane, 2008).
- The Sunrise Theatre received over \$2.7 million in state grants, and received \$8 million in funds from the Fort Pierce Redevelopment Agency (Beach, Dennis W., 2007).
- The Historic City Hall received over \$480,000 in grants from Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation.

**Key Takeaways:**

- Public/private partnerships can be key to leveraging funding sources.
- Reinvestment and rehabilitation of existing structures allows for resiliency and the ability to bounce back from natural disasters and low vacancy rates.



*Image 5.29: Platts/Backus House*  
 Source: Photo by Doris Tillman Flickr, 2007



*Image 5.30: Sunrise Theatre*  
 Source: Inside Florida



*Image 5.31: Historic City Hall*  
 Source: Sunshine State News

## 5.5 Waterfront Case Studies

The Harbors has many waterfront assets. Many of the waterfront assets are underutilized with little or no public access. The following case studies explore waterfront redevelopment and can be used to inspire similar redevelopment within The Harbors. These case studies are applicable specifically to the Millers Bayou Focus Area. revitalization issues, and holds conferences and workshops (National Main Street Center, Inc, 2014). The National Main Street Center, Inc. provides assistance to the main street communities by working with state Main Street programs. There are

Main Street Programs in each state and the District of Columbia. New Port Richey is a designated Florida Main Street. The following main street case studies feature designated Florida Main Streets and provide inspiration for revitalization of the Main Street New Port Richey and the Main Street Focus Area.

### *5.5.1 Detroit International Riverfront in Detroit, Michigan*

**Description:** The Detroit River runs 32 miles from Lake Claire to Lake Erie and is one of the busiest ports on the Great Lakes. The Detroit Riverfront was lined with vacant buildings prior to 2003. This case study highlights best practices that can be used to revitalize waterfront areas by increasing public access (Hemming, 2005).

**Planning Intervention:** In 2003, the Detroit RiverFront Conservancy, Inc. (DRFC) was created to revitalize the Detroit Riverfront through increased public access. One of the strategies to increase public access to the riverfront was by creating a “recreational waterfront.” Recreational waterfront, defined as a place where “leisure time on the water, whether fishing, swimming or quiet contemplation,” is used as a measure of public access to the waterfront (Ward, 2011, 9). DRFC selected SmithGroupJJR to plan and design a riverwalk for the region. The 5.5 mile Riverwalk was planned as the centerpiece of the project (Detroit Riverfront Conservancy, 2014). The Riverwalk includes a landscaped pathway for walking and biking and is expected to be a place where people can recreate and enjoy art or music.

The DRFC planned this project in phases. The first phase of the project was the East Riverfront, which spans from Johns Arena to Gabriel Richard. Currently, 80 percent of the East Riverfront is completed. The attractions along the East Riverfront include pathways, green space, parks, plazas, and a pavilion (Detroit Riverfront Conservancy, 2014). The private sector, including companies such as General Motors, has also been involved in the creation of the Riverwalk by partnering with the DRFC. GM headquarters, the Renaissance Towers, is located near the Detroit River. General Motors was responsible for donating the first ½ mile of the Riverwalk to the DRFC. During the renovations of Renaissance Towers, GM created the GM Plaza and Promenade, which serves as a gathering spot for special events. Some of the key features of the GM Plaza and Promenade include fountains, restaurants, and a theater.

The DRFC has also revitalized existing buildings along the Riverwalk. A major project along the East Riverfront was the construction of the Outdoor Adventure Center located near the Dequindre Cut (Detroit Riverfront Conservancy, 2014). The historic Globe Building, also known as the Detroit

Dry Dock Building, was built in 1892 and is being redeveloped into the Outdoor Adventure Center which includes rock climbing, an interpretive forest, classroom space, and archery (Detroit Riverfront Conservancy, 2014). This redevelopment project will cost \$12.8 million. The acquisition of the Globe Building was paid for by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and will be the anchor tenant.

The Dequindre Cut Greenway is another important feature of the Riverfront, which opened in 2009. This below-street level greenway is 1.5 miles long (Detroit Riverfront Conservancy, 2014). The greenway includes a 20 foot wide pathway that includes separate lanes for bicycles and pedestrians. Local artwork and graffiti are also displayed along the greenway. Currently, there is another planned construction phase for the Dequindre Cut Greenway that will extend the greenway a half-mile north.

The second phase of the overall redevelopment project is the construction of the West Riverfront. During this phase, the project will include three pathways that will link the riverfront to West



*Image 5.32: GM Renaissance Center Along the Detroit International Riverfront  
Source: E.C. Korneffel CO.*



*Image 5.33: The Globe Building Prior to Redevelopment  
Source: Detroiturbex, 2012*



*Image 5.34: The Planned Outdoor Adventure & Discovery Center  
Source: Detroit Riverfront Conservancy, 2014*

Riverfront. During this phase, the project will include three pathways that will link the riverfront to West Jefferson Avenue (Detroit Riverfront Conservancy, 2014). Some of the amenities will include trash receptacles, benches, and green space.



*Image 5.35: Gabriel Richard Park Before & After*  
*Source: Detroit Riverfront Conservancy*



*Image 5.36: Dequindre Cut Before & After*  
*Source: Detroit Riverfront Conservancy*



*Image 5.37: Rivard Plaza Before & After*  
*Source: Detroit Riverfront Conservancy*

**Results of Intervention:** The Detroit RiverFront Conservancy, Inc. has received awards for their implementation of the Detroit Riverfront Project. The American Planning Association awarded the DRFC with the 2014 National Planning Excellence Award for Implementation (American Planning Association, 2014). The DRFC has also contributed to the overall economic development of Detroit. The DRFC generates \$4.5 million in tax revenue annually (American Planning Association, 2014). The reported annual spending by residents, visitors, employees, and other operations along the riverfront is estimated at \$43.7 million. The DRFC estimates that there are 3 million visitors annually. Riverfront improvement supported 16,700 construction jobs and provides annual support of 1,300 additional jobs (Economic Impact Study, 2013). The collapse of the auto industry in Detroit resulted in major economic decline, but the Riverwalk is one example of successful economic redevelopment.

**Role of Public Sector:** In 2002, former Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick approved the formation of the East Riverfront Study Group, which spent 90 days preparing a revitalization strategy for the East Riverfront (Hemming, 2010, 398). The East Riverfront Study Group was comprised of 34 members and was co-chaired by Derrick Miller, the Chief Administrator of the City, and Matthew Cullen, General Manager of Economic Development and Enterprise Services with General Motors (Hemming, 2010, 398). The study resulted in a redevelopment plan for the East Riverfront which included \$500 million in public, private, and foundation funds. DRFR sponsored public meetings and workshops to receive community feedback regarding the design of the redevelopment. The community's input was used to develop the design concept. Some of the community's concerns were related to transportation, access issues, historic preservation of Detroit, and public safety.

**Key Takeaways:**

- Public/private partnership with companies and organizations, such as General Motors, led to the creation of the Riverwalk.
- The Riverwalk is a source of economic development for Detroit through increased employment and tax revenue.

### 5.5.2 Riverwalk in Tampa, FL

**Description:** The idea to create a Tampa Riverwalk came in 1975 when former Mayor Bill Poe envisioned a Riverwalk as a “bicentennial event” (“Riverwalk History”, 2014). In 1989, Tampa officially adopted an ordinance that set design standards for a riverwalk. The design standards were implemented in segments, which included parts of the Cotanchobee Fort Brooke Park and Marriott Waterside Hotel. In 2003, former Mayor Pam Iorio placed importance on the development of a Riverwalk and the Tampa Riverwalk Master Plan. In July 2005, EDAW, Inc. was selected by the City of Tampa to create the Master Plan (Company Overview of EDAW, Inc., 2014). In 2006, the Tampa Riverwalk Master Plan was completed. According to the City of Tampa, the vision was to “create a vibrant and interactive waterfront experience for residents and visitors that reflect the spirit and uniqueness of Tampa” (City of Tampa, 2014). This vision would create a destination that supported cultural activities, artistic expression, and economic revitalization. The Riverwalk also provided a walkable area for pedestrians including access to restaurants, museums, and retail. The Tampa Riverwalk was also intended to function as a catalyst for revitalization efforts in areas adjacent to the riverwalk.

**Planning Intervention:** The Tampa Riverwalk will encompass 2.6 miles from North Boulevard Bridge to the Hillsborough River along the Garrison District to the Channelside District. Currently, 1.5 miles of the Riverwalk has been completed including from South Plaza to MacDill Park. The pedestrian path links museums, parks, and concert centers downtown. The estimated total cost of the project is approximately \$33 million (City of Tampa Website, 2014). The Curtis Hixon Waterfront Park is the centerpiece of the Tampa Riverwalk. According to the City of Tampa (2014), this waterfront park incorporates “unique urban design, sustainable construction, and operational features including reclaimed water for irrigation and LED lighting” (City of Tampa Website). Some of the features of the park include a green lawn, a dog run, a pavilion with bathrooms, a kiosk with bathrooms, and a place for future vendors (City of Tampa, 2014). Another major attraction along the Riverwalk is the Channelside Bay Plaza located at the easternmost point of the Riverwalk. Some of the features of the plaza include shopping, bowling, and dining.

**Results of Intervention:** Some of the continuing challenges with the Riverwalk redevelopment project include:

- The need for amenities, including restaurants and entertainment venues;
- Limited number of shaded areas;

- Limited water access;
- Limited places to cross Hillsborough River.

**Role of Public Sector:** EDAW hosted Riverwalk kickoff meetings with representatives of city offices and departments. Former Mayor Iorio emphasized how the objectives of the Riverwalk would benefit residents and visitors of Tampa.

- Public meetings were held to discuss the concept plan of the Riverwalk. The public input was used to inform and shape the master plan.
- The Riverwalk project received public funding and is included in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget. Funding sources include grants (54%), public (41%), and private (5%).

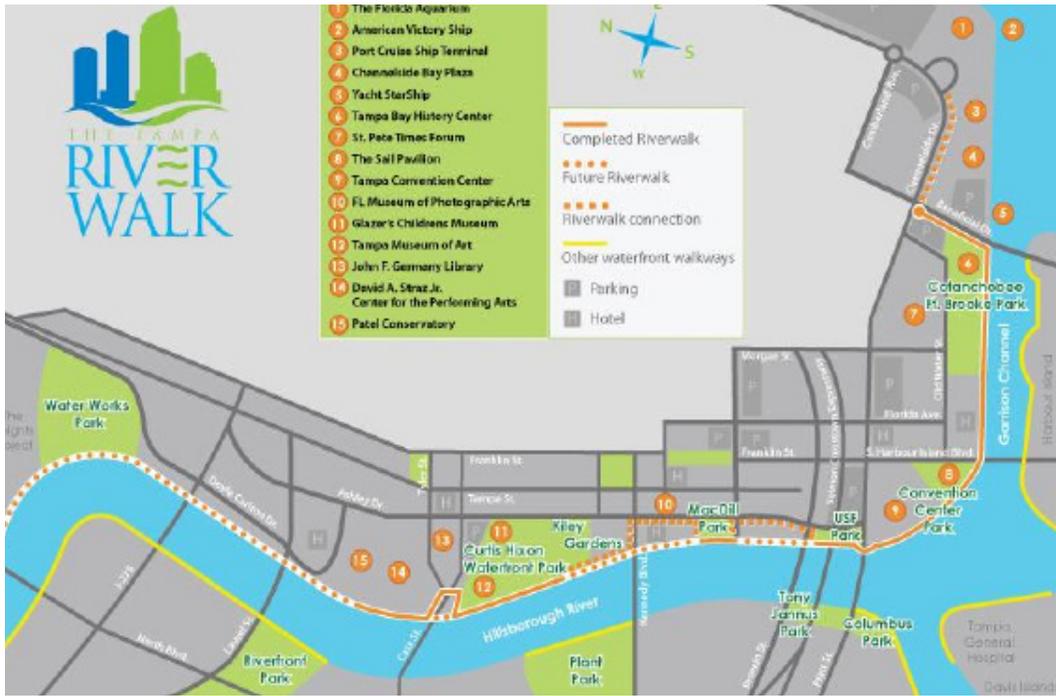
The U.S. Department of Transportation grants covered 44% of the total cost. Recently, Tampa received a grant for \$10,943,100 from the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery. This organization grant will be used for the Riverwalk sections including Kennedy Boulevard Plaza, Doyle Carlton, and Selmon Greenway. This project is a Capital Improvement Program funded through federal tax revenue not including property taxes (City of Tampa, 2014).

**Key Takeaways:**

- Public/private partnership with companies and organizations, such as General Motors, led to the creation of the Riverwalk.
- The Riverwalk is a source of economic development for Detroit through increased employment and tax revenue.

## 5.6 Conclusion

The cases studies discussed previously share similar demographic and economic characteristics with The Harbors and are applicable to the Final Focus Areas developed in Phase I. The case studies provide strategies and best practices for redevelopment projects that can inspire Phase II with the identification of catalyst projects.



*Image 5.38: The Tampa Riverwalk  
Source: Friends of the Riverwalk*



*Image 5.39: Curtis Hixon Park  
Source: MacDill Happening*



*Image 5.40: Tampa Riverwalk  
Source: The Friends of the Riverwalk , 2014*

**SECTION 6  
CONCLUSIONS  
AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

## Section 6 – Conclusions and Recommendations for Moving Forward

As detailed in this report and in prior work by staff, most notably in The Harbors: West Market Redevelopment/Infill Plan, there are substantial challenges facing the eastern region of Pasco County. Among the most pressing challenges in The Harbors are high foreclosure and crime rates, overloaded and outdated infrastructure systems, aging and deteriorating housing and commercial stocks, and a lack of a sense of place. Individually, any one of these challenges would present a concern for elected officials and planning staff, but taken as a whole these issues point to the need for a major, strategic initiative aimed at arresting these problems and moving toward a more promising future.

In this report, the FSU Project Team documented the spatial distribution of these challenges with an eye towards providing guidance for the staff and elected officials of Pasco County in pursuing an effective strategy for promoting reinvestment and economic development in The Harbors. The FSU Project Team also identified a number of Focus Areas to which the County and its partners might focus public investment, regulatory reform, and placemaking initiatives.

However, given the range of challenges, the large number of potential Focus Areas, and limited public resources for this redevelopment strategy, a comprehensive and broad-based approach is almost certain to fail. As a result, the FSU Project Team identified two revitalization strategy options that will guide work in Phase II of this project. Each of the identified revitalization options has its strengths and weaknesses, and focuses upon different geographic areas of The Harbors. It is essential to note that the FSU Project Team recommends these as discrete options; an approach that attempts to pursue both strategies will result in investments and regulatory reform that is insufficient to address the problems in any area. Narrowing the focus on one of these strategies could enable a critical mass of reinvestment and momentum to overcome the plethora of challenges.

### *Revitalization Strategy Option 1: The US19 Necklace of Beads*

Under this option the FSU Project Team recommends that Phase II investigate in detail three Focus Areas and key economic nodes along the US 19 corridor, as set forth below. If successfully redeveloped, these nodes would create a “necklace of beads” of economic success running along US19 from Pasco County’s southern border to mid-county.

1. Harbors Gateway: As the entry way into The Harbors from Pinellas County, the Harbors Gateway area provides the first experience of Pasco County to northbound traffic, which includes commuters, visitors and local residents. With several largely vacant and/or dilapidated strip malls, little sense of place, and a lack of connection to nearby water bodies, the Harbors Gateway sends signals of economic distress and urban decline. However, data analysis revealed some business successes occurring in the area, as well as a relatively low-incidence of crime along the commercial strip. Given this strategic location and potential redevelopment opportunities, the Harbors Gateway rests at the top of our recommended Phase II Focus Areas.
2. Millers Bayou: Data analysis, staff input, and site visits have identified that the lack of a sense of place and connection to water are major challenges for The Harbors. Project work determined that Millers Bayou is a key node to the future of any Pasco County placemaking initiatives. With successful established and emerging businesses already in place, available land and underutilized parcels, access to US19, and a beautiful coastal setting; Millers Bayou offers a powerful opportunity for the community to create a people-oriented, mixed-use place that residents and visitors of all ages would enjoy. While not a distressed area, Millers Bayou represents a key node in The Harbors, and success here area would likely spur reinvestment in surrounding areas and showcase West Pasco as a place with exciting redevelopment potential, and settlement potential for younger adults.
3. Salt Springs: The Salt Springs area represents a unique mix of economic vitality and economic challenge. Centered upon the Gulf View Mall, this area is one of The Harbors' most important commercial nodes. There has been some recent investment around the mall indicating that retailers see potential in this market, although the mall itself is struggling (as are many shopping malls across the country). Residential areas surrounding the mall are many of the most challenged neighborhoods in The Harbors, with very high foreclosure rates and high numbers of crimes. As a major economic node in The Harbors, the Salt Springs area could be a foundation for the economic vitality of West Pasco.

Taken as a set, these proposed Phase II Focus Areas represent a mix of a highly challenged area (Harbors Gateway), a promising entertainment district (Millers Bayou), and a key economic center surrounded by distressed neighborhoods (Salt Springs). These Focus Areas would each require a slightly different mix of investment and redevelopment strategies, which could present a challenge for the County and its partners moving forward. However, these different district strategies could be used as models for redevelopment efforts in other areas of The Harbors in the coming years.

## Revitalization Strategy Option 2: The Heart of The Harbors

Under this option the FSU Project Team recommends that Phase II investigate, in detail, two Focus Areas that would build upon two districts within The Harbors that demonstrate a solid foundation for successful placemaking: Millers Bayou and the New Port Richey Main Street. Unlike Option 1, this strategy relies less upon investment in a mix of nodes along US19, instead emphasizing the redevelopment of a key section of US19 between Millers Bayou and the Main Street as well as emphasizing the community's connection with the Pithlachascotee River, an area that we have labeled "The Heart of The Harbors."

1. Millers Bayou: Data analysis, staff input, and site visits have identified that a lack of a sense of place and connection to water are major challenges for The Harbors. Project work determined that Millers Bayou is a key to the future of any Pasco County placemaking initiatives. With successful established and emerging businesses in place, available land and underutilized parcels, access to US19, and a beautiful coastal setting; Millers Bayou offers a powerful opportunity for the community to create a people-oriented, mixed-use place that residents and visitors of all ages would enjoy. While not a distressed area, Millers Bayou represents a key node in The Harbors, and success in this area would likely spur reinvestment in surrounding areas and showcase West Pasco as a place with exciting redevelopment potential, and settlement potential for younger adults.

2. New Port Richey Main Street: This area represents the historic heart and cultural center of The Harbors. Main Street in New Port Richey has many of the elements of a classic, small-town downtown: pedestrian scale, small setbacks, architectural detail, and connections to the river. As Main Street approaches US19 the character reverts to modern, efficient, placeless suburban strip development. This area is largely more economically vibrant than other areas in The Harbors, although most of the businesses are smaller-scale.

Under this redevelopment strategy, the County would aggressively pursue a strategy of promoting redevelopment within and then connecting these two districts along two axes - the River and US19. This approach would build upon existing strengths within The Harbors, but would largely overlook the most distressed areas in the entire study area. Given a solid economic foundation, the primary benefits of this strategy are that it is easier to pursue due to similar district characteristics and a more focused redevelopment area, and that near-term successes are most likely given the solid economic and market attributes in these locations.

Regardless of which redevelopment strategy is ultimately selected to be the focus of the Phase II project work, the FSU Project Team will develop detailed, implementable catalyst projects to act as significant jumping off points for sustained reinvestment and revitalization of The Harbors.

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