



# **Residential Revitalization in New Port Richey**

New Port Richey, FL

February 21-22, 2018



## Tampa Bay

*Serving Pinellas, Hillsborough, Manatee, Sarasota, Pasco, Citrus and Hernando Counties*

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## About ULI

**The Urban Land Institute (ULI)** is a nonprofit education and research institute supported by its members. Its mission is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. Established in 1936, ULI has more than 40,000 members internationally representing all aspects of land use and development disciplines. The Tampa Bay District Council has more than 400 members in 7 counties including Pinellas, Hillsborough, Pasco, Manatee, Sarasota, Hernandez and Citrus.

## About ULI TAPs

**In keeping with the Urban Land Institute mission, Technical Assistance Panels (TAPs)** are convened to provide planning and development assistance to public officials and local stakeholders of communities, nonprofit organizations and private sector representatives who have requested assistance in addressing their land use challenges.

A group of diverse professionals representing the full spectrum of land use and real estate disciplines typically spend two days visiting and analyzing the built environments, identifying specific planning and development issues, and formulating realistic and actionable recommendations to move initiatives forward in a fashion consistent with the applicant’s goals and objectives. Panel members are not compensated for their time, but they are reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses, such as overnight lodging and transportation to attend the TAP.

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## Residential Revitalization in New Port Richey

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# Context

## TAP Scope

The City of New Port Richey engaged ULI Tampa Bay to provide technical assistance on improving the image and quality of the City's residential neighborhoods, particularly through City-wide recommendations on design, policies, programs, and partnerships that can transform areas that experience deteriorated conditions or blight.

*The Technical Assistance Panel was asked:*

- What role can the city play in motivating the occupancy of both foreclosed and unoccupied residential properties in the next 12, 24, 36 months?
- With the City's limited resources, what programs and initiatives can be implemented to motivate cohesive and proactive neighborhoods?
- There are 5 mobile home parks located in the city. These mobile home parks vary in size, but all have a consistent level (poor) of condition and value. What programs can be developed to encourage a more dedicated stewardship and focus on raising the value of the structures in these parks?
- Should the city consider reinvestment programs geared towards improving the percentage of home ownership vs. rental properties?
- What can the city offer as an incentive for positive reinvestment in our residential housing stock to improve the appearance of properties and the sense of community throughout the City?

## Panel Process

ULI Tampa Bay assembled a group of accomplished ULI members who have expertise in development, market analysis, municipal law, neighborhood planning, community development and design for an intensive two-day workshop to address opportunities for New Port Richey.

Prior to convening the Technical Assistance Panel (TAP), panelists received background information including the City's Comprehensive Plan, Community Redevelopment Area Plan, housing market studies, demographic information and a variety of maps identifying existing and future land use, zoning, flood hazard, and the location of mobile home parks.

ULI had preliminary meetings with the city to prepare for the panel and better define the scope of work for the two-day TAP.

Day one of the TAP included a trolley tour of a variety of areas within the City of New Port Richey as well as stakeholder presentations and interviews. Stakeholders included City of New Port Richey leadership, City staff and business and community leaders.

Day two focused on potential strategies and solutions to the issues. Panelists formalized their observations and developed recommendations. At the day's end, the TAP panelists made a presentation of their observations and recommendations at a City Council meeting.

## Background

The City of New Port Richey is 4.6 square miles with a traditional grid street pattern, an established downtown area, and commercial corridors. The Pithlachascotee River runs through the City and there are a multitude of parks throughout the City – with Sims Park in downtown being the center piece.

As of the 2010 census, the total population was 14,911. The median age is 46.5 and the median household income is \$31,000. At the time of the census, 22% of individuals were below the poverty level. As of the 2016 American Community Survey, the population had risen to 15,503, a 4% increase. Household income and poverty levels remained mostly unchanged.

The downtown area of New Port Richey has recently been enjoying public and private reinvestment, including through a renovated

Sims Park, the construction and proposal of new retail and residential projects and a vibrant mix of retail and entertainment uses.

The City offers a variety of housing types ranging from single family to multi-family. In addition to apartments, condominiums, townhouses, mobile homes and single-family units, New Port Richey has numerous duplexes, triplexes and quadplexes scattered throughout the city. Much of the City's residential housing stock dates to the 1960s and 1970s, when the City was particularly known as a retirement destination.

Many of the lot sizes and houses are small - including many units that are 2-bedroom, one bathroom. The City is generally viewed as more affordable than surrounding communities.



Throughout the City, the quality of the residential neighborhoods is mixed. Some riverfront areas include high end properties, while problematic properties challenge others. The city has been challenged by incidents of blight, abandoned homes, and substandard housing conditions in pockets throughout the entire city. There are five mobile home parks within the City limits, some of which have been a source of nuisance for the City.



The City also has a problem of reduced quality hotels, particularly along US Highway 19, which are run-down facilities that have taken on permanent residents.



The entire city is a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), a dependent taxing district established by City government for the purposes of carrying out redevelopment activities that include reducing or eliminating blight, improving the tax base, creating and retaining employment opportunities, and encouraging public and private investments within the designated area.



The City has several policies, programs and initiatives focused on the improvement of the residential neighborhoods:

- **Housing Rehabilitation:** A matching grant program designed to help homeowners repair and improve their home's exterior.
- **Rental Inspection program:** The Rental Housing Inspection Program is designed to proactively identify rental properties, blighted, deteriorated and substandard rental housing stock and to ensure rehabilitation or elimination of such housing that does not meet minimum standards.
- **Slums and Blight program:** The City has a blighted property and remediation ordinance for unoccupied properties.
- **Lien foreclosure program**
- **Adoption of Property Maintenance Code:** this code sets a clear standard for property condition.
- **Off-Street Parking Ordinance:** This prohibits cars from being parked on front lawns.
- **Various Code Amendments:** These include addressing shopping carts on residential streets and the regulation of donation bins.

- **Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Update:** The City is working on a CRA Redevelopment Plan Update.
- **Public investment:** The City has undertaken streetscape projects, Sims Park, upgrade of municipal facilities such as the Recreation and Aquatics Center, pavement management and street lighting programs, and more.

Additionally, the City has other initiatives in process, such as seeking to become a direct recipient of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the state, requiring registration of unoccupied structures, and establishing alternative means of collecting code enforcement liens.

# Perceptions & Potential

## Stakeholder Input

Every ULI Technical Assistance Panel begins with and relies on outreach to get a substantive insider perspective on the state of the community and the aspirations of residents, city leaders and staff, employers, and business representatives.

For the City of New Port Richey TAP, the chance to make a personal connection and listen to over 25 individuals, who brought varied perspectives, allowed the panel to achieve a very quick immersion into the City's history and happenings. Each individual or group of stakeholders was asked to identify the primary challenges and concerns for the City, and to discuss what aspirations they have.

## What We Heard

Common themes heard from stakeholders included the following:

- The City has terrific leadership in place and in a short time has made great strides to transform the City – particularly in the downtown area through bold and innovative public investment.
- The recent revitalization of downtown, including the renovation of Sims Park, has spurred a resurgence of interest in the center of the City – with several active redevelopment projects underway.
- While there is a lot of momentum and activity in the City, there is still an undercurrent of lack of 'pride in place' and/or a lack of desire to get involved in civic activities. At the same time, there are residents that are eager to get more involved and help the City. They are looking for avenues to do so.

## What We Heard (continued)...

- Within the Tampa Bay region, there is a lack of awareness and/or a negative perception of New Port Richey.
- New Port Richey is perceived as a draw for low income households and transient residents due to low rents and a high percentage of absentee landlords.
- Some of the current City programs, such as the façade improvement program, are not working the way that they are intended. Improvements would greatly expand their reach and potential.
- The river is a wonderful asset for the City, but is underutilized.
- There is a lack of neighborhood identity throughout City and it's not clear where the city's borders are.
- There is a lack of local employment options, but there are opportunities for entrepreneurship.
- The quality of public schools is an issue for attracting families and is perceived to affect property values.
- There are pockets of blight and derelict homes in all neighborhoods of New Port Richey, presenting a problem for how to make positive neighborhood improvements that provide a significant impact.
- There is an ongoing problem with 'slumlords' and absentee landlords that perpetuate neglect for their properties.
- The scale and patchwork nature of the challenges (vacancy, derelict structures, crime) can seem overwhelming and difficult to tackle with available resources.



# New Port Richey in the Region

## Pasco County Overview

Pasco County is one of the fastest growing Counties in the United States, including a surge of residential development.

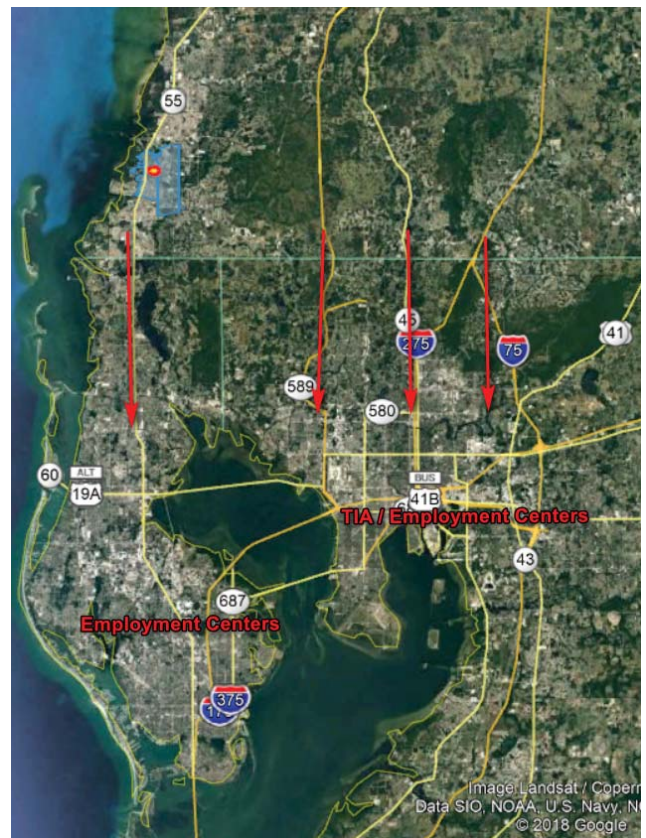
According to the 2010 census, the population of Pasco County was 464,697. As of 2016, the county's population has increased to 512,368 (10.3% increase). Pasco County is primarily considered a bedroom community for Tampa/Hillsborough to the south.

Like other counties along the coast, most development has historically been created proximate to the Gulf of Mexico along US Highway 19. Most new development is occurring easterly in Trinity or in Wesley Chapel. The county benefits from interstate transportation routes such as Interstate 75 and US Highway 19, as well as intrastate routes such as SR 54 and SR 52.

Moreover, the Suncoast Expressway developed in the last 20 years is being widened to allow quick access to the south, into Tampa and the major nodes of the region.

New Port Richey is located in southwestern Pasco County. Major employment centers are located south of Pasco County in southern Pinellas County and central Hillsborough County (Westshore, Carillon/Gateway and Downtown Tampa).

The map below reflects the most recent online average annual daily traffic of the major transportation corridors leading from Pasco County to the employment centers of the greater MSA (located in Pinellas and Hillsborough County). US Highway 19 generated 66,000 daily trips, the Suncoast Parkway produced 40,400 trips, and Interstate 75 in the Wesley Chapel area generated an average daily traffic volume of 89,700 trips.



## Development Potential

With its downtown walkable core, unique identity and affordability, the City of New Port Richey offers an alternative to many of the communities in other places in Pasco County.

On the map on the right, the red highlighted boundary reflects the immediate core of New Port Richey. The yellow highlighted area reflects the commercial core. These areas have been the subject of increased public and private investment over the past 5 years.

In assessing future development potential, the development community will analyze a number of factors including:

### **The strength and potential of the market**

The City has the potential to seize the opportunity that a current strong real estate market in Tampa Bay offers to attract new development and redevelopment.

The City should tout the findings of the 2015 Zimmerman Volk study, which clearly identifies the demand for development.

A robust branding and communication effort will help the City to share its assets in the Tampa Bay region and beyond. See recommended strategies on Page 14.

### **Available land**

The strategic reuse of urban vacant land and abandoned structures can represent a key opportunity for encouraging desired revitalization. To motivate redevelopment, the City should focus on areas proximate to the core areas to identify and assemble parcels of land.

The City should work to acquire select residential and commercial properties to provide lots and commercial land at a competitive price and use as a tool to induce development. To attract development in specific areas, targeted initiatives should be considered. See recommended strategies on Page 16.

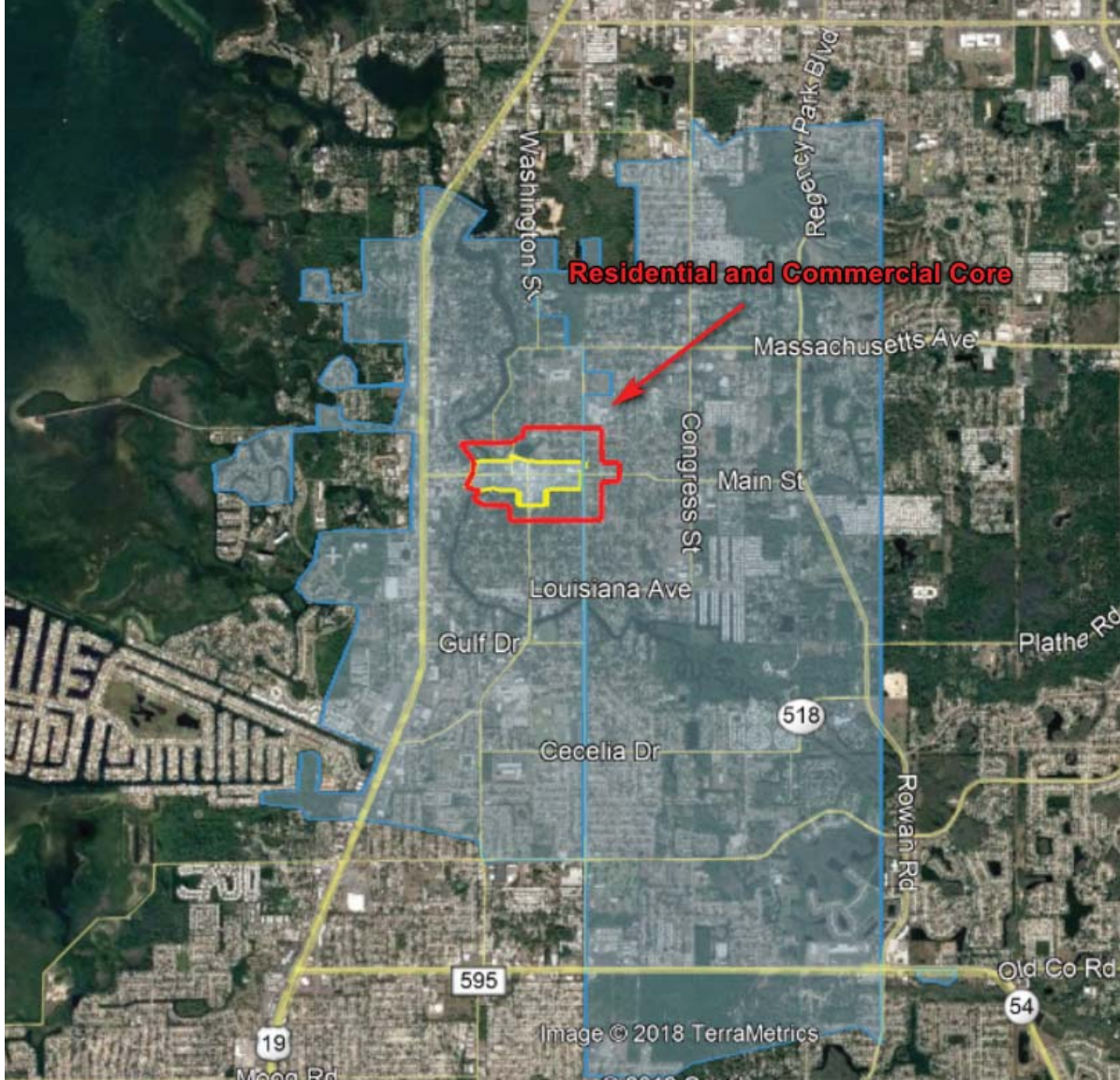
### **City regulations and permitting/review process**

The development community looks favorably on communities with a culture of predictability and transparency within the development review and permitting process. This includes ensuring that the current standards for homebuilding and commercial development are clearly communicated and available.

To ensure best practice, the City should engage in an audit of the review process to ensure it provides certainty for the consumer and make any necessary changes. Investing in technology that allows for electronic submittal may help to streamline the review process and reduce the cost for the consumer.

A review of current zoning, specifically where development is desired, should be undertaken to ensure that codes serve to revitalize and strengthen the core rather than acting as hurdle to development.

More detailed recommendations are available on Pages 13 and 14.



# Panel Recommendations

## Analysis and Recommendations

Neighborhood transformation for communities that have experienced disinvestment requires more than just one program, policy or project that promises to make a difference. A catalytic set of actions will lead to positive planned and unplanned activities and comprehensive change to the physical, social, cultural, and economic aspects of a neighborhood. Successful transformation requires trust, vision, cooperation, consensus, partnership, and investment to be successful.

The ULI team agreed that the City of New Port Richey offers something distinct in Pasco County and within the region – an attractive walkable downtown that is growing in vibrancy through the addition of new local businesses, new apartment housing and the redeveloped Sims Park. The ULI Panel was impressed with the progress made by the City over the last 5 years and in particular with the creativity and courage of the leadership to be innovative. Specifically, investment in public projects has demonstrated the City's belief that the City's best days are ahead of it.

With limited capacity and resources, the City has introduced various policies, regulations, programs and initiatives with the goal of revitalizing residential areas. The panel observed that perhaps the City's biggest challenge is being over ambitious and not clearly focusing resources to generate measurable outcomes. Taking on too many programs can lead to a lack of focus and diminished ability to prioritize, implement and measure.

The fact that the entire City is a Community Redevelopment Agency presents a

challenge to identifying priority areas and opportunities and reinforces the perception of the city as a place consumed by blight, when this is not the reality.

Through a renewed focus on highest priority community redevelopment projects with measurable results, the City can demonstrate and promote how those efforts contribute to the quality of life for residents and business alike. The promotion of those positive results will improve community goodwill and increase political trust which will lead to further private sector investment. Measuring program outputs and outcomes and sharing these through strategic communications is an essential part of running a successful program.

The following is a set of overarching principles by which the City can improve implementation of programs and policies to increase effectiveness. The next section, beginning on page 16, provides recommendations that take a deeper dive into the questions asked of the ULI team.

### **Invest in Open Data**

Data can be a valuable asset to the City because it can help assess a problem, track progress, communicate results and evaluate a program's effectiveness.

Collecting data in a user friendly and efficient way can be the bedrock of performance management programs that allow for continuous evaluation and improvement. Reliable data can drive decision-making, facilitate collaboration, improve partnerships with the private sector, and expand public engagement. Innovative uses of data allow cities to enforce regulation and improve services.

Working with those outside government can be key to carrying out a successful data program. Leveraging the power of your community, borrowing tools and volunteers from local businesses, nonprofits, the media, and schools can help achieve data goals.

This report addresses specific data needs in subsequent sections.

### **Measure and Communicate Performance**

Tracking data and measuring performance is a vital way for any City to set goals, be strategic with its programs and evaluate effectiveness. Measuring and communicating performance can also be a terrific way to engage the community in City wide programs and progress.

The City can simply start by developing a community scorecard with 'easy to track' indicators that index a variety of measures related to economic development, planning, quality of life and other specific data.

Making this scorecard accessible and interactive to all can stimulate community conversations and action. It is also a valuable tool for assessing the viability and effectiveness of programs and ensuring the City is heading in a direction that aligns with its goals. Ultimately, this tool can help demonstrate accountability and engender community trust and support for city initiatives.

### **Focus on key programs and discontinue others**

Collecting data and measuring performance will allow the City to better assess the efficacy of current policies, programs and initiatives. This can allow the City to tweak programs to make them more effective or to eliminate programs that aren't getting results.

### **Focus your efforts geographically**

While the City is geographically small, with limited resources and capacity, it can be daunting to try to address all issues across the entire City effectively. For that reason, doing pilot projects in certain neighborhoods can lead to quick victories that can serve as catalysts. These kinds of geographically defined projects are easier to track and assess so that a program can be better tested, delivered, amended and then duplicated elsewhere.

### **Facilitate renovation, redevelopment and new development**

- Today, New Port Richey has the chance to seize the opportunity that a strong real estate market in Tampa Bay offers to attract new development and redevelopment. There are short and long-term actions the City can take to improve the development review process and encourage the kinds of development that align with the city's strategic vision.
- Invest in building staff capacity and staff learning to ensure best practices can be gained, learned and shared among the entire city team. Associations like the Urban Land Institute offer the opportunity to network and learn from peers across the region and the country. This is also a terrific way to spread New Port Richey's story to audiences that need to hear about it, such as the development community.
- Reexamine the development review and approval process to ensure that it's clear, provides certainty for applicants and is not overly onerous or expensive. Special cases should be the exception, not the rule.

## Analysis and Recommendations Cont..

- Consider doing administrative site plan approvals for projects that are aligned with the comprehensive plan and comply with development regulations. Pre-zone rather than rezone. Decide as a community what you want to see where and allow it by-right with administrative review. Amend the zoning ahead of time to be consistent with that vision.
- Create a clear path for new and different development types within City zoning and other regulations.
- Engage in a review and possible re-write of the land development regulations with an eye towards making sure they are clear, provide certainty and are aligned with the most current Comprehensive Plan. Reach out to local developers for input into this process.
- Consider the role that density can play in encouraging redevelopment, particularly in and around the downtown core. Review and revise the development code to allow diverse and dense uses, including mixed use and multi-family residential development. Specifically, revisit requirements for setbacks, minimum parcel area, car parking, and accessory dwelling units.
- Invest in electronic submittals technology to make it easier and less cost prohibitive to submit applications for projects. This can result in a return on investment from staff efficiency as well. However, to minimize cost, align City business practices to the system, not the system to the city. Otherwise costs for implementation are higher and implementation is frustrating to staff and customers.
- Consider adjusting the 50% threshold within the City ordinance that triggers a requirement that the whole property complies to the standards. Current assessed property values may be too low, making it difficult or prohibitive for property owners to reinvest and make improvements before reaching this threshold ratio of costs of improvement to home value. The City could also work with the Pasco County's Appraiser's Office on assessed values within the City, since some of these thresholds will also be triggered by the FEMA requirement to bring the whole property up to current floodplain management standards.

### **Define a brand and identity for New Port Richey to foster pride and counter negative perceptions**

New Port Richey has an exceptional story to tell and can greatly improve how it markets itself within Tampa Bay and beyond. Unfortunately, the City is often in the spotlight for negative crime related stories. The City has the chance to help turn this around. Creating a positive marketing image and story can also help to foster 'pride in place' by current residents who can become the city's best ambassadors.

- Create a dynamic branding campaign in consultation with the community that demonstrates the value of investing in New Port Richey. This brand should be infused through the City's website and social media channels. This can also help address the current confusion around borders and identity (i.e. defining what is actually within the City limits).
- Take every opportunity to tell the City's

story of success through sharing at conferences, working with the local and regional media, and through champions of the City.

- Improve communication with the community about redevelopment projects.
- Work with local realtors and realtor organizations, as well as schools that train real estate agents, to:
  - Educate on local planning and development review, including local land use and zoning regulations.
  - Cultivate unofficial spokespersons for the City's brand campaign and share common messages by:
    - Hosting a forum and tour for local real estate agents.
    - Developing a portfolio of the most attractive and available homes - posting online and distributing flyers.
    - Hosting home tour weekends and showings.



## Responses to the TAP Questions

### Question 1:

What role can the city play in motivating the occupancy of both foreclosed and unoccupied residential properties in the next 12, 24, 36 months?

The City of New Port Richey has a sizable number of unoccupied and foreclosed structures throughout its residential neighborhoods. Vacant residences can fall into disrepair, become safety hazards, and invite crime. These can also be eyesores for neighborhoods and have a negative impact on property values, community image and quality of life.

In managing vacant properties, a balance needs to be struck between the use of fines and fees that might force landowners to abandon their property entirely and the application of incentives to motivate owners to rehabilitate and reuse residential properties.

#### ***Recommended Action Steps Include:***

##### **Consider Enacting a Vacant Property Registration Ordinance**

The City is considering registering vacant properties. A vacant property registration ordinance could ensure that owners of vacant properties are known to the city and other interested parties. It also ensures that owners of vacant properties are held to minimum standards of care for their properties. Fees associated with registration can help with costs of administration and serve to motivate property reuse.

However, this may be difficult to administer. Before introducing, the City should consider what data may already be available, easily attainable and frequently updated. For instance, utility usage may be one way to understand and track vacancies. Identifying who will administer, maintain and update this database is important. Is this something that code enforcement can

create and maintain? Is tracking being done already that can be easily expanded to include this and other metrics?

An ordinance that encourages vacant property owners to reuse their properties is also likely to be effective in areas where conditions make reuse economically feasible; that is, where the owner can sell or rent the building for more than it costs to rehabilitate or where public funds are offered to make up the difference. For this reason, this ordinance should be administered along with an education campaign about the costs of renovation and any resources that may be available to aid with renovation costs.

##### **Use Data: Complete a Full Inventory of Properties**

Understanding the full inventory of vacant and foreclosed property is the first step in tackling the challenge. By taking a data-driven approach to tackling vacant and abandoned properties and using a digital platform to increase transparency to the public, the City can set goals, evaluate progress and better engage residents. This can be done in conjunction with a vacant property registration ordinance and should be considered alongside the rental registration information to capture all data in one place.

Many cities across the country are deploying a wide range of digital and data-driven strategies to address vacant and abandoned properties. Deploying data in the fight against blight can significantly improve the code enforcement process to prevent vacancies before they happen, give residents a window into a city's progress



and bring residents directly into the process of mapping properties to increase citywide knowledge.

This inventory should include detailed information on the ownership of vacant and foreclosed dwellings and should be kept current with code enforcement data, including the time for compliance and the details on lien “priority” for problem properties.

### **Keep up the Code Enforcement**

Armed with a comprehensive inventory, the City should keep up with its code enforcement and ensure that it is tracked, mapped and measured.

Code enforcement sweeps should be regular. The Fire Marshall and a Deputy Police Officer should accompany the code enforcement officers. Flyers should go out a couple of weeks ahead of time. In addition, a dumpster can be made available a week prior so residents can do a neighborhood cleanup beforehand.

### **Investigate innovative tools for addressing problem properties**

There are a variety of tools that the City can explore, including lien forgiveness and property acquisition techniques. These include:

- Donation by the bank of foreclosed properties to partner non-profit, such as Habitat for Humanity (tax benefit)
- Donation by the investor of properties to partner non-profit, such as Habitat for Humanity (tax benefit)
- Foreclosure on liens by City (limitations apply if the property is homesteaded or if there are substantial mortgages and liens on the properties)
- Outright acquisition through purchase - for resale or placement with partner non-profit.

- Encouraging others to acquire properties through administrative code lien forgiveness, which provides a streamlined, transparent process for removing code enforcement liens on properties which will be renovated.
- Master planning for future infrastructure and services as a tool that can align possible vacant sites or properties with future opportunities.

*Refer to the sidebar on the following page about the City of Largo’s program, originally published in Quality Cities January/February edition.*

An acquisition program should be paired with demolition funds to clear the property upon acquisition to abate the blight. Largo uses funds from their Housing Program (eligible activity for blight abatement).

Temporary control can be more challenging from a legal perspective and must include the appropriate nuisance ordinance and Minimum Property Maintenance Codes. Tools available include city board-ups (securing doors and windows); fencing of nuisance properties; and mowing and/or clean-up of yards for overgrowth and trash. All of these activities would result in a lien against the property for the city’s cost.

Demolition of abandoned homes without acquisition is a tool used by some jurisdictions in Florida, but the legalities of this need to be studied carefully.

# CITY OF LARGO SPOTLIGHT

## Dealing with Derelict Properties: Lien forgiveness and city purchase of abandoned houses improve neighborhoods

by Carol Stricklin, City of Largo

Almost every city has them – derelict properties with overgrown yards, broken windows and deteriorating structures. Abandoned houses, a legacy of the recession and property foreclosures, attract criminal activity, depress property values and discourage new investment. The City of Largo is abating these problem properties through innovative strategies including lien forgiveness and the acquisition of properties through the city's affordable housing program.

### Code Lien Forgiveness

Code liens are created through the assessment of fines by the Code Enforcement Board (CEB) after a property owner fails to correct a code violation. These unresolved code enforcement cases can result in thousands of dollars in unpaid fines, but the chronic nuisance properties remain. The CEB can only reduce liens once the code violations are corrected.

Liens dissuade buyers from purchasing and fixing up properties, due to financing and title impediments. The CEB process provides no guarantee to buyers reluctant to invest in the properties because of the risk that they would not receive the lien reduction upon project completion.

Largo's New Owner Code Lien Release Program, created in 2016, allows new property owners or contract purchasers to administratively obtain the release of code liens. The program seeks to stabilize neighborhoods through renovation and rehabilitation of houses and requires a city inspection to identify any violations of the standards identified in the Minimum Property Maintenance Code.

The new property owners or contract purchasers enter into an agreement with the city whereby they agree to correct all code violations in return for the release of the liens associated with the properties. The new property owner must obtain permits and perform all work within 90 days. Upon successful completion and inspection of the work, the city releases the liens administratively.

The program has resulted in the renovation of four properties. Code violations dating back for more than 10 years on these properties had resulted in almost \$400,000 in code liens. One vacant house with code violations related to a structure fire in 2011 had accrued fines of more than \$140,000. An investor bought the property for \$51,000, completely renovated it and sold it within five months for \$187,000.

One of two additional programs created in 2017, Code Lien Forgiveness for Non-Profit Affordable Housing Organizations, allows the city to administratively release the liens for properties purchased by qualifying organizations that intend to renovate, or demolish and replace, residential structures for use as affordable housing. The second program, Code Lien Forgiveness for Demolition, addresses the elimination of code violations through the removal of structures. It also allows liens to be administratively released upon demolition and the

issuance of building permits for a new home.

### Property Acquisition

The city's housing program has also addressed nuisance properties by building strong partnerships with nonprofit affordable housing developers, such as Habitat for Humanity and the Largo Affordable Housing Development Corporation (LAHDC). During the recession, financial institutions voluntarily donated abandoned properties in poor condition to Habitat for Humanity, and the city funded demolition. Largo helps finance the purchase of derelict properties for rehabilitation or demolition and construction of replacement houses by nonprofit affordable housing developers.

Recently, the city acquired two adjacent substandard lots in the Clearwater-Largo Road Community Redevelopment District, both containing derelict structures. The city worked with LAHDC to acquire and combine the properties, demolish the structures and construct a new affordable house.

The city has foreclosed on properties with liens when the owner had died, and no heirs were willing to take the property through probate. This process was lengthy and incurred legal costs, but ultimately resulted in the city taking possession of two properties, one of which was renovated through the city's housing program. The house on the other property was demolished and the lot donated to Habitat for Humanity, which constructed a new home.

### Lessons Learned

Derelict properties represent a chronic nuisance that can harm an entire neighborhood. Code enforcement techniques are not always effective, because properties often lack clear title or are subject to unfinished foreclosure or probate proceedings. Creating a database of these properties, and focusing on individual cases for nuisance abatement, requires flexibility, as each one is different. Monitoring problem properties and city actions such as boarding or fencing hazardous properties provide only temporary relief.

The success of the city's code lien forgiveness program in revitalizing derelict properties required partnerships between code enforcement, housing and legal staff. Direct city purchase or foreclosure can serve to abate nuisance properties, but the process can be lengthy and expensive.

Creating code lien forgiveness programs provides incentives for the private and nonprofit sectors to invest in these properties and shows great promise. Each derelict property brought back to life through rehabilitation or new construction has a lasting benefit to the quality of the city's neighborhoods.

*Carol Stricklin, AICP, is community development director for the City of Largo.*

## Question 2:

With the City's limited resources what programs and initiatives can be implemented to motivate cohesive and proactive neighborhoods?

The City of New Port Richey is employing several tools for residential revitalization. These include code enforcement, a façade grant program, and a rental registration program among others.

To catalyze these efforts, City residents need to be mobilized to be part of the solution. Given the resurgence in the City's downtown, there is no better time to reach out beyond City Hall and invite and empower community members to take an active role. The ULI team observed that there are residents that are eager to participate and contribute but are unsure of how to connect.

A first step is to engage the community in a robust and creative conversation of the City's re-branding campaign, as discussed on page 14. This will help to catalyze the interest and excitement of residents from across the City in a collective future vision and direction.

### ***Recommended Action Steps Include:***

#### **Empower Community Champions**

The City should consider creating a position or positions (volunteer or staff) for individuals to serve as neighborhood champions— who provide outreach assistance into residential areas. This person can become a trusted link between neighborhoods and City Hall with tasks including:

- Create lists of concerns and priorities in concert with residents;
- Build relationship with residents;
- Keep residents aware of City endeavors, opportunities, and initiatives and;
- Provide education and build awareness on code enforcement, law enforcement, and crime prevention.

Identifying and empowering a champion or

network of champions can be the first step in forming more cohesive community groups that can transform into more organized neighborhood associations.

The City can leverage online tools such as NextDoor.com to promote and garner interest. The City of St. Petersburg is a good role model for using this web application for community outreach and information sharing.

#### **Promote Community Neighborhoods through Neighborhood Associations**

While this map of New Port Richey designates neighborhood boundaries, most neighborhoods lack identity, community and voice.

Providing the opportunity for residents to form neighborhood associations encourages residents to work together to identify problems and tackle challenges with shared resources. Neighborhood associations can become an outreach arm for the City on planning and development questions. Bringing neighborhood associations on board helps makes them part of the solution in planning the community's future.

While associations can take many forms, it would benefit the City and the neighborhood organization to create structure and support for the associations to ensure a positive and ongoing relationship is formed.

To leverage this possibility, consider:

- Creating a support structure for neighborhood associations at the City level, including registering associations with the City and providing sample association by-laws. Identify a 'go to' person in City Hall.
- Actively seek feedback from the associations on city issues and opportunities, such as the future potential of properties. Require that developers also liaise with the associations.

- Working together to prepare neighborhood plans.
- Creating a neighborhood improvement grant program for active associations.

**Example:** See the City of St. Petersburg’s neighborhood association program: <http://www.stpete.org/neighborhoods/>

**Define your Place: Work to discover and solidify your unique identity and then communicate that identity through public improvements and promotional materials.**

The City of New Port Richey undeniably offers something unique and distinctive within the Tampa Bay region, but it is unclear what that is or why it is important. Effort should be placed on clearly defining what it means to live or work in New Port Richey. Once that brand is identified, it must be consistently

reinforced through media, logos, signage and public statements. Signage represents the highest level of communication and should be undertaken only after careful consideration for the brand has been completed.

How residents perceive the built environment can determine how they navigate from place to place and leave lasting impressions. There are a variety of ways – large and small – that the City can create and enhance its distinctive identity.

One critical issue that must be addressed is clear identity for the downtown area. Currently, there is a fair amount of confusion about the boundaries of the City. Proper placement of signage and wayfinding graphics will create a greater sense of place which can further enhance marketing and development efforts. It is critical to use effective signage and graphics to shine a light on what the City has to offer.

## MANATEE COUNTY SPOTLIGHT

Manatee County, Florida employs interns and millennial employees in its Neighborhood Services Department. The staff attends homeowner association meetings, community meetings, community events and represents the County. They inform residents of County programs, amenities and provide assistance to neighborhoods.

For some neighborhoods it is more of a maintenance effort, limited to attending a neighborhood meeting quarterly and providing an update on County activities within the area.

Other neighborhoods are more challenging. Staff helps these neighborhoods create a neighborhood association where one no longer or never existed. They also work with the neighborhood over a period of months to create a long-term community plan for improving the area. This usually identifies infrastructure and service issues, law enforcement needs, and like New Port Richey, addressing code enforcement issues.

Many tasks that come out of these plans are for the County in the form of maintenance and capital projects, but many tasks are also for the association and residents. Some examples of activities include organizing community

events. These include neighborhood festivals and cleanup days, crime prevention expos, Cycloviva, and business expos. They are also great for identifying community members with special needs and working with neighbors and area businesses on addressing those needs.

This team of dedicated interns and millennial employees has shown great passion for their neighborhoods and communities, giving them a sense of purpose by helping great neighborhoods get back their pride and sense of place.



- Create a clear and simple brand identity that can be simply communicated through graphic and media communication.
- Incorporate the brand message within a new signage and wayfinding program. Priority should be placed on clear identity of the city limits and downtown district, particularly the major gateway corridors into the City. As neighborhoods form and organize, there are opportunities to do the same at the neighborhood scale.
- The City should prioritize capital improvement projects that connect and increase mobility of all forms between neighborhoods and between parks and communities.
- Continue to improve walkability and mobility. The golf cart ordinance has the potential to create a unique environment in and around downtown and the neighborhoods. The City should also encourage bicycle travel through dedicated lanes and providing bike racks throughout downtown.

### **Motivate and Nourish Creativity**

Build on the City of New Port Richey's point of difference by embracing creative strategies for urban regeneration through the celebration of New Port Richey's history and culture. Festivals and events are an important part of spotlighting the City, but innovative interactive installations can invite more sustained and day-to-day excitement about the City.

### **Foster strong relationship between neighborhoods and schools**

Communities with great schools are attractive places for investment. Currently the City of New Port Richey does not have a strong reputation for its public schools, though it is understood that school leaders are working hard to make improvements. Strong partnerships between residents, neighborhoods, local businesses, schools and the City can help transform schools into important anchors in the community.

## **SPOTLIGHT: GAP FILLER IN CHRISTCHURCH, NZ**

Gap Filler is a creative urban regeneration initiative in Christchurch, New Zealand that facilitates a wide range of temporary projects, events, installations and amenities. This program was introduced following a devastating earthquake in the City and this initiative helped to reinvigorate and re-inspire residents of all ages.

These short-term and comparatively small-scale projects are far less risky than new permanent developments – and consequently open opportunities for experimentation: trying innovative ideas, pushing social boundaries, adopting participatory processes to get everyday people involved in creating their city. Working with local community groups, artists, architects, landowners, librarians, designers, students, engineers, dancers – anyone with an idea and initiative – Gap Filler activates city spaces for temporary, creative, people-centered purposes.

By recycling materials, teaming up with suppliers, harnessing volunteer power and being creative, Gap Filler proves that the regeneration of the city does not rely solely on large-scale developments by the private or public sectors. Remarkable things can be achieved with community power and resourcefulness. They can be flexible and swift in adapting to the changing city.

Ultimately, Gap Filler aims to innovate, lead and nurture people and ideas; contributing to conversations about city-making in the 21st century.

<https://gapfiller.org.nz/>

## Question 3:

What programs can be developed to encourage a more dedicated stewardship and focus on raising the value of the structures in the mobile home parks in the City?

Mobile homes in communities represent a mix of challenges and opportunities for cities. They are often the only affordable housing choice for many residents, particularly seniors. They can also provide a unique and desirable sense of community and fellowship that isn't necessarily found in traditional residential neighborhoods.

Aging mobile homes can pose significant issues for the City and for residents. Many contain structurally deficient buildings that present code enforcement challenges and health, safety and wellbeing hazards for residents.

In strong markets, mobile home parks can also represent prime land for development/redevelopment, as the location and size of the parcels can be an attractive prospect.

### ***Recommended Action Steps Include:***

#### **Understand the ownership arrangements**

Before any action can be taken, it is important for the City to fully understand the current ownership arrangements of the 5 mobile home parks. In an assessment, the City should establish the following data points, which will help determine appropriate next steps in planning and possible redevelopment.

- Land ownership patterns to assess the potential for land assembly and redevelopment
- Current occupancy rate and rents
- Demographics of the parks – ages, families, children
- Relationship between the owner and the tenants

- Do residents own or lease their home?  
Number of lease agreements?
- Age of development

Understanding this information can help determine appropriate options and inform future planning and regulatory alternatives. For example, in a mobile home in which the resident only owns the structure, not the land – a home is likely to lose value the same way a car does. This kind of arrangement does not inspire investment and is more likely to be plagued by problems.

Companies who own the infrastructure in mobile homes that are profitable and in high demand have little incentive to make ongoing investments to maintain and/or improve this infrastructure. This may be one of the reasons why many of the manufactured home parks in New Port Richey look worn down.

In other locations, mobile home parks that have transformed in positive ways have changed the mechanics of ownership into a co-op or condominium situation. This can help transform nominal clusters of transients to being communities of owners deeply invested in where they live. Residents are then more empowered and economically incented to be part of the community decision-making and can organize in ways that inspire fellowship and companionship and encourage ongoing maintenance and upkeep of common area infrastructure.

Organizations like Resident Owned Communities USA have helped educate residents and transform communities across America. (<https://rocusa.org/about-roc-usa/>)

### **Consider Amending Comprehensive Plan Land Use Categories and Avoid Coastal High Hazard Areas**

To prepare for future redevelopment opportunities in the mobile home parks, the City should consider amending its future land use categories in the comprehensive plan that are applicable to mobile homes to:

- Reflect their existence, but also expand allowable uses to incentivize redevelopment.
- Provide “bigger and better” uses and options for mobile home parks and parcels.
- Amend zoning regulations to allow redevelopment to other uses. Think pre-zoning instead of rezoning. What is the City comfortable allowing at these locations by-right?

In storm events, particularly in Coastal High Hazard areas, mobile homes are extremely vulnerable and can be unsafe for residents. Florida State Coastal High Hazard Area regulations won't allow their reconstruction in these areas. Therefore, in future City plans and regulations:

- Be explicit that no new mobile homes be allowed or reestablished/redeveloped in the Coastal High Hazard Area
- Land use regulations should provide for alternative options that provide for redevelopment opportunities at these sites

### **Keep Pursuing Code Enforcement, Law Enforcement, and Education**

The City should continue to deliver code enforcement pressure on the problematic communities. At the same time, use this opportunity to educate tenants on the required standards. The first goal is to educate residents of what the standards are and give them reasonable time to get compliant.

### **Explore Redevelopment Opportunities in the Long Term**

In strong markets, there are opportunities to consider the redevelopment potential for mobile home parks, especially ones that are in prime areas.

The City could consider amending the land development regulations for these areas to provide an incentive to redevelop the sites into something that is more sustainable, healthy and safe for its residents. Some mobile home park sites may be better served as non-residential uses.

Assign a staff person and train them in redevelopment, focused on this topic. These sites provide little economic benefit and are generally occupied with unsafe structures. A city professional could assist property owners in marketing or redeveloping their properties for other uses that are more economically beneficial to the property owner and the city.

## Question 4:

Should the city consider reinvestment programs geared towards improving the percentage of home ownership vs. rental properties?

Nationally and in Florida, the trend is towards declining home ownership and increasing renter-occupied units. The existence of many rental properties is not inherently negative if the landowner and the tenant have the resources and the motivation to maintain and make improvements. Properties can become problematic when landlords are absentee and do not do upkeep and respond to tenant's requests. Communicating community standards and code enforcement is critical to renters and property owners.

The City can introduce a variety of strategies – from incentive programs to community building exercises that will help achieve the primary goal, which is to promote quality residential neighborhoods.

The addition of the rental registry program in the City is a good step to understanding the breadth of rentals and to create a database to keep track of their location and standards.

Investing in community aesthetics is critical. The City has made great progress with community investment in its parks and open space. These investments need to continue with a long-term implementation plan that is communicated at every neighborhood meeting, community event, etc., so the community knows what is coming and when. Business partnerships should be encouraged, where major businesses can sponsor events and specific projects and maintenance activities that are beneficial to the business and the entire community.

### ***Recommended Action Steps Include:***

#### **Work to build and engage the community**

Many renters in the City, particularly newcomers, may be future homebuyers. As they identify with the City, they will look for opportunities to purchase homes and reinvest in the community. Refer to the strategies on page 19 on strategies for engaging community.

#### **Develop Zoning for Infill Properties That Provide for Modern, Marketable Residential Units**

Explore opportunities within the zoning code to encourage and incentivize vertical development such as townhomes, rather than single-story duplexes or multiplexes. Work with homebuilders to identify infill opportunities for new development and explore what is required for new, economically viable residential development.





### Turn Around Problem Properties

For problem properties, which can often be those owned by absentee landlords, there are several strategies for incentivizing rehabilitation or redevelopment. See pages 17-18 for the discussion of this.

Problem properties must receive consistent and constant pressure by code enforcement, law enforcement, and the fire marshal. In addition, community leaders (e.g., chamber, etc.) need to be engaged on these issues so the proper peer pressure can occur via private, interpersonal relationships.



### Build Relationship with Local Real Estate Professionals

The City should work with local real estate professionals to understand the rental and sales market and receive up to date market information on average rental rates and home prices. Realtors have current data about properties listed on the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) at their fingertips. In many instances, City staff would be welcome to attend local real estate meetings in exchange for updates from the city on planning, zoning changes and a general overview of city activities.

However, it should be noted that many rental properties are not on the MLS. Craigslist, Zillow, Airbnb and various other online services offer alternative ways to match owners with renters or buyers. It is important that city staff stay apprised of these sources to obtain a more accurate picture of the New Port Richey housing market.



## Question 5:

What can the city offer as an incentive for positive reinvestment in our residential housing stock to improve the appearance of properties and the sense of community throughout the City?

There are numerous factors that contribute to whether homeowners and landowners feel able, inspired and empowered to reinvest in their properties. The ability to renovate and redevelop often comes down to financial viability, driven by individual equity and the surrounding market. For older homes, the costs of renovations can often exceed the value of the house itself.

To attract buyers and fill vacant homes with families, the City of New Port Richey must market itself as a city of opportunity and address the prohibitive costs of renovations that remain a barrier to homeownership.

When residents, businesses and cities work together to improve residences and neighborhoods a sense of community pride and empowerment is created that has value and benefit reaching beyond an individual project or program. Neighborhood groups feel engaged and relevant and community champions emerge to work on common projects together. The ULI team experienced this sense of pride and empowerment amongst those groups already active in the numerous projects that are leading downtown's renaissance. Please refer to the recommendations on page 19 on strategies to build community.

Focusing and targeting efforts geographically can work to inspire residents and greatly improve pockets of neighborhoods, resulting in a spin-off effect to nearby areas. Piloting programs and projects in specific areas can be an effective way to make and see a real difference take shape that can lead to a wave of transformation.

Alternatively, many older homes within the community that represent various ages,

generations and styles of housing have already been fixed up. Documenting and marketing these examples to homeowners is crucial. For example:

*Cindy Lu-hu used Sherwin Williams Number 5 red on the front door, made the shutters from pinterest.com out of old pallets, planted groundcover XYZ, got mulch for free from the city and turned her house from a dump to a dream.*

Local design professional associations (AIA, AICP, LAs) can be engaged at community events or at chamber meetings. They take a picture of a volunteer building and through the magic of digital design, paint choices, inexpensive landscaping, general cleanup and minor fenestration additions, the dive bar now looks like a dream bar. The owner gets a "prescription" list of what they need and how much and gets to it. If the community is active, they all get engaged and provide the free labor to turn the building around.

### **Create Wealth Building Opportunities for Residents**

The economics of homeownership often prohibit prospective buyers from investing in or upgrading their current properties.

The City should explore a variety of programs and policies that encourage and motivate wealth building among its current residents. These programs can have multiple benefits. They can help inspire residents to invest cash equity and sweat equity in their home and place, but also position the City as a partner in progress which is positive for the City's image and helps to attract new residents.

- Investigate programs that would allow current residents to purchase vacant side

lots or vacant properties that have been acquired by the City.

- Understand the ownership arrangements in mobile home parks and encourage a new resident-owned model (see page 22).
- Explore and invest in technology that enables local business and entrepreneurs to thrive, such as improved cell service and Wi-Fi in the downtown area.
- Consider adding a provision for homeowners to create an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) to offer an income gaining opportunity for residents committed to the city. ADUs are becoming popular across the country again. Some new homebuilders are including ADUs in new product because of the strong demand, particularly among younger generations.

### **Examine Opportunities within the Zoning Code**

Examine and remove permitting requirements for cosmetic improvements to properties, such as a fence, that can deter residents from improving their properties because the process for approval can be expensive and difficult.

### **Evaluate the Home Improvement Reimbursement Grant Program**

- Reconsider the income requirements, as the economics may not make sense in its current form and are not core to the goals for the program.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of structuring the program as a reimbursement grant.

It may be difficult for individuals to pay for something up front.

- Consider providing home improvement grants for committed landlords as well as homeowners.

### **Educate on the true costs of rehabbing**

- Partner with a community organization that can provide guidance to buyers and existing homeowners.
- Host information sessions on housing resources for existing owners and potential buyers, including financing and home improvement
- Identify and work with key landlords in the City. Create an association of landlords that works and meets regularly with code enforcement and law enforcement.
- Provide education on landlord and tenant rights.
- Start a user-friendly database of neighborhood rehabs to better understand the cost of rehabilitation locally

### **Improve solid waste pick-up.**

Improve the quality of service by working with only one provider and increasing the frequency of bulk pickup to better avoid litter being a nuisance throughout the City. Set a future date a few years out. Remind the existing haulers regularly that this will happen. Stick to it.

## Next Steps

The city and the community should work together on the following next steps:

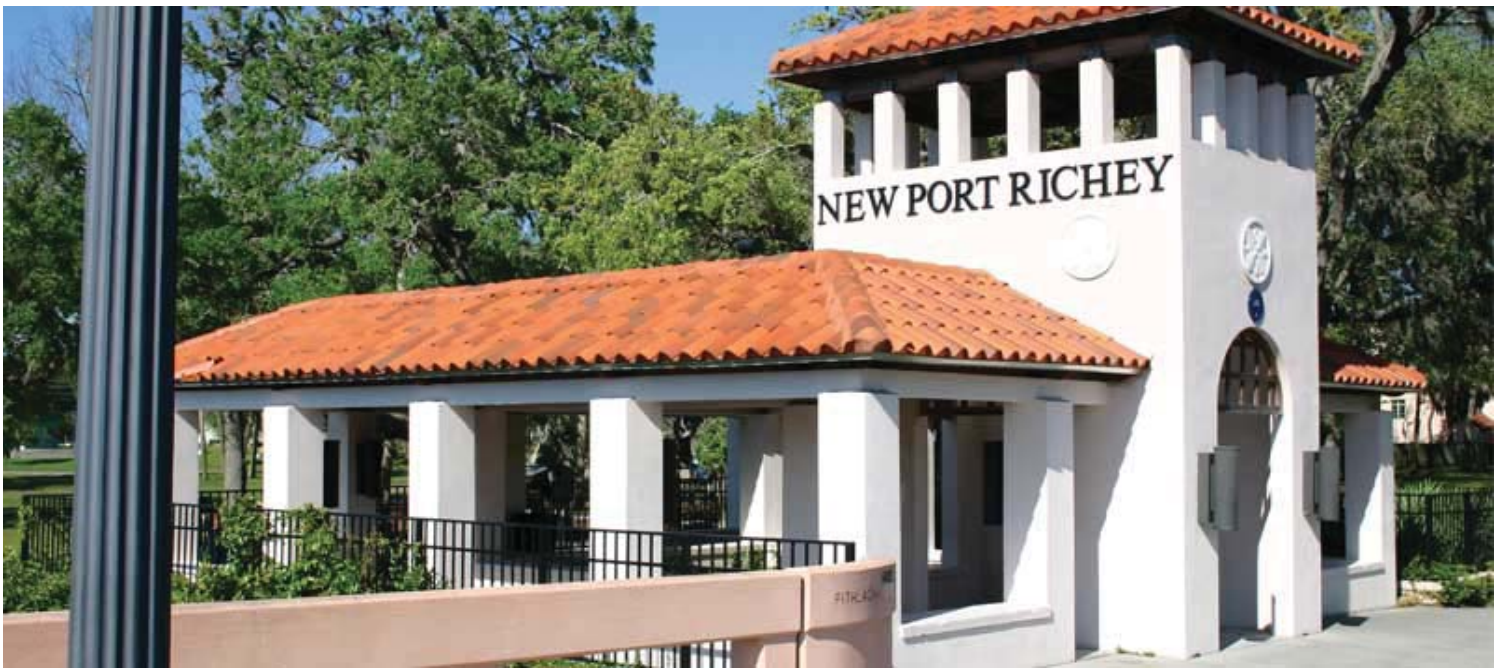
1. Convene a Neighborhood Revitalization Task Force. (Including city staff, stakeholders, realtors, development industry professionals, residents, local businesses, etc.)
2. Review the Technical Assistance Panel findings.
3. Identify top priorities.
4. Develop an actionable implementation strategy that assigns specific responsibility & accountability, time lines and resources to each action item.
5. Get the word out! Report and share successes with the community stakeholders and the greater Tampa Bay market.

## In Closing

The panel's recommendations build upon the strong foundation of the City and respond to the concerns heard throughout the panel.

Reaching the multifaceted, interlocking goals outlined in this report will require the city, community and property owners to work closely together on establishing a vision, plan of action, and creative solutions for New Port Richey's neighborhoods.

New Port Richey is bursting with potential. The City has a growing entrepreneurial spirit and great ability to leverage limited resources for ambitious goals. Creating a vision and refining focus, as outlined in this report, will serve the City well. The panel is enthusiastic about New Port Richey's upward trajectory and continued evolution.



# Panelist Bios



**Stuart Rogel**  
President  
Graylan Ventures  
TAP Chair

Stuart Rogel is an entrepreneurial-minded executive who is serious about creating economic prosperity by building successful businesses. In his current role as President of Graylan Ventures and previously as Founding CEO of the Tampa Bay Partnership, Stuart has spent more than 30 years building paths to prosperity for companies that range from startup to Fortune 500. With broad and deep expertise in business development and economic development, Stuart identifies opportunities for growth and puts in place the strategies, structures, partnerships, and programs to reach ambitious goals.

Previously, he launched the first Florida office for a Boston-based real estate investment firm and served as Economic Development Director and Assistant City Manager for the City of Miami Beach. Stuart currently serves on the Board of Advisors of BBVA Compass Bank and the Board of Directors of United Way Suncoast. He is a Trustee for the Florida Chamber Foundation. Nationally active with the Urban Land Institute, he regularly speaks before the International Economic Development Council.



**David Conner**  
President  
David Conner +  
Associates

David is the President of David Conner + Associates, a firm that provides design solutions that reshape our environment into safe, walkable, and enjoyable outdoor spaces. The firm includes planners, landscape architects, and urban designers who understand human movement and the interactions we have as we commute, circulate, socialize, and work. The firm provide design solutions in balance with environmental systems, thereby improving sustainability, reducing maintenance, and increasing value. They partner with clients to realize site improvements that meet their goals and objectives, albeit still motivated to design stimulating and financially successful projects. Through their work, they strive to present opportunities where people can experience outdoor environments with appreciation and enjoyment. Their values are solidified with integrity and strong workmanship, establishing DC+A as a firm known for quality work.



**Jim McCarthy**  
Vice President  
Domain Homes

Jim McCarthy is the Vice President for Land Acquisition for Domain Homes. In this role, he analyzes lot positions and areas in Tampa and St. Pete urban core (infill) markets, negotiates and approves lot contracts in target areas and develops lot purchase budget on quarterly and annual basis

Domain Homes defines themselves as an urban renaissance new home builder. They procure home sites in Tampa Bay's sought-after, established neighborhoods including South Tampa, West Tampa, North Hyde Park, the Heights, and St. Petersburg.



**Nicole Nate**  
Attorney  
Bryant Miller Olive

Nicole "Nikki" Nate is a member of Bryant Miller Olive's State & Local Government and Litigation practice groups, where her primary practice includes representing city, county, and state governmental entities in all manner of legal matters, including corporate governance, public finance, and complex litigation. Ms. Nate is board certified by The Florida Bar in City, County & Local Government Law and serves as Special Counsel to local governments throughout the state. She also regularly represents private entities in commercial and construction disputes.

Prior to joining BMO, Ms. Nate was an associate with Zimmet, Unice & Salzman, P.A., where she focused her practice on all matters of local government representation, including commercial and governmental transactions, and litigation. In the tradition of many of the firm's attorneys, Ms. Nate worked as a law clerk with BMO while attending law school. During her clerkship, she was extensively involved in issues surrounding local government, high-profile government litigation, Florida Constitutional law, and employment law. Her work experience prior to law school includes working in accounting as a Finance Assistant for Global Spectrum, a leading event facility management company, and as an accountant for a C.P.A. firm in St. Petersburg.



**John Osborne**  
Infrastructure  
Planning Official &  
Interim Deputy County  
Administrator  
Manatee County

John Osborne, AICP is the Planning Official for Manatee County Government in Southwest Florida. John started in land development in high school, working as a draftsman for a local developer. He has worked in the public and private sectors in Florida and North Carolina, working in land development and related occupations. Currently as the Planning Official for Manatee County, he works across agencies, departments and disciplines to provide a more holistic approach to infrastructure and services planning and financing in a fast-growing community.

A former member of the FL Army National Guard's 53rd Brigade, John is also a graduate of St. Petersburg College and the University of South Florida. An advocate of lifelong learning, he is finishing up a graduate degree in Environmental Management from American Military University.



**Carol Stricklin**  
Community  
Development Director  
City of Largo

Carol Stricklin has over 30 years of experience in public sector planning in Florida. She has served as the Community Development Director for the City of Largo since 2017. She leads a team of 47 professionals within the Economic Development, Housing, Building, Planning, and Code Enforcement Divisions. Under her leadership, the department takes an integrated approach to economic development and neighborhood revitalization.

Ms. Stricklin has extensive experience in municipal, county and regional organizations. Prior to her position with the City of Largo, she was the Growth Management Director for Lake County and held positions in the City of Orlando and Orange County. Mr. Stricklin holds an undergraduate degree, with honors, in Political Science from the University of Florida and a Masters Degree in Public Administration from the University of Central Florida. Carol is a certified planner and is a member of the American Planning Association. She is active in the Urban Land Institute and serves on the Tampa Bay Management Committee.





**Chris Worley**  
Founder  
Landmark Reports

Chris Worley is the Founder of Landmark Reports, a real estate database and reporting system based upon a primary MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area). Landmark Reports not only provides listing data throughout the MSA from major brokerage firms, but identifies the most active residential markets in the greater MSA providing a top to bottom analysis. Market professionals understand that commercial office, retail, and industrial growth is generally fueled by residential growth.

Landmark reports identify all aspects of land development: active selling communities, proposed communities, and vacant future land tracts. They also identify various property types: commercial, industrial, and residential in order to paint a more accurate picture. Each report provides a broad brushstroke view of pertinent data such as building permits and employment demographics important to gauge the overall health of a MSA. This is followed by a more detailed analysis including recent bulk lot and land sales, typical lot sizes, sale price points, monthly sales velocity, and remaining VDL (vacant developed lot) inventory.



# Urban Land Institute

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