I-4 Corridor
Hillsborough County, Florida
December 10–15, 2017
About the Urban Land Institute

THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE is a global, member-driven organization comprising more than 40,000 real estate and urban development professionals dedicated to advancing the Institute’s mission of providing leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide.

ULI’s interdisciplinary membership represents all aspects of the industry, including developers, property owners, investors, architects, urban planners, public officials, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, and academics. Established in 1936, the Institute has a presence in the Americas, Europe, and the Asia Pacific region, with members in 80 countries.

ULI’s extraordinary impact on land use decision making is based on its members’ sharing expertise on a variety of factors affecting the built environment, including urbanization, demographic and population changes, new economic drivers, technology advancements, and environmental concerns.

Peer-to-peer learning is achieved through the knowledge shared by members at thousands of convenings each year that reinforce ULI’s position as a global authority on land use and real estate. In 2017 alone, more than 1,900 events were held in about 290 cities around the world.

Drawing on the work of its members, the Institute recognizes and shares best practices in urban design and development for the benefit of communities around the globe.

More information is available at uli.org. Follow ULI on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram.
THE GOAL OF THE ULI ADVISORY SERVICES program is to bring the finest expertise in the real estate field to bear on complex land use planning and development projects, programs, and policies. Since 1947, this program has assembled well over 700 ULI-member teams to help sponsors find creative, practical solutions for issues such as downtown redevelopment, land management strategies, evaluation of development potential, growth management, community revitalization, brownfield redevelopment, military base reuse, provision of low-cost and affordable housing, and asset management strategies, among other matters. A wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit organizations have contracted for ULI’s advisory services.

Each panel team is composed of highly qualified professionals who volunteer their time to ULI. They are chosen for their knowledge of the panel topic and are screened to ensure their objectivity. ULI’s interdisciplinary panel teams provide a holistic look at development problems. A respected ULI member who has previous panel experience chairs each panel.

The agenda for a five-day panel assignment is intensive. It includes an in-depth briefing day composed of a tour of the site and meetings with sponsor representatives, a day of hour-long interviews of typically 50 to 100 key community representatives, and two days of formulating recommendations. Long nights of discussion precede the panel’s conclusions. On the final day on site, the panel makes an oral presentation of its findings and conclusions to the sponsor. A written report is prepared and published.

Because the sponsoring entities are responsible for significant preparation before the panel’s visit, including sending extensive briefing materials to each member and arranging for the panel to meet with key local community members and stakeholders in the project under consideration, participants in ULI’s five-day panel assignments are able to make accurate assessments of a sponsor’s issues and to provide recommendations in a compressed amount of time.

A major strength of the program is ULI’s unique ability to draw on the knowledge and expertise of its members, including land developers and owners, public officials, academics, representatives of financial institutions, and others. In fulfillment of the mission of the Urban Land Institute, this Advisory Services panel report is intended to provide objective advice that will promote the responsible use of land to enhance the environment.

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Acknowledgments

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Finally, the panel would like to thank the approximately 93 residents, business and community leaders, and representatives from the Greater Hillsborough County community who shared their perspectives and unique insights during the panel’s stakeholder interviews and throughout the panel week.
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GROWTH IN AND AROUND HILLSBOROUGH County is imminent. Hillsborough County can choose whether that growth will lead the county to positive change or whether it will erode what makes the Tampa Bay area unique. The panel was asked to focus on several questions, described in detail below, centered on the region’s major transportation corridor, Interstate 4.

The panel believes this area can be used to demonstrate how Hillsborough County wants to grow in the future, and how this area grows can become a demonstration for how the region grows. The panel believes that change is needed not only in the current form of the development that occurs, but also in the systems that are used to support that form—systems that include infrastructure and the process and communication methods needed to match Hillsborough County’s future growth challenges and opportunities. Because other regions are planning and implementing responses to changes in technology, demographics, and development drivers, Hillsborough’s efforts must likewise be unified to meet its competition.

Since 1993, Hillsborough County has used an Urban Service Area (USA) as a tool to guide more compact development as the county grows. The USA is intended to concentrate new growth and redevelopment where services are available and will be most needed, but it also serves as a boundary for development, promoting dense development within its boundaries, and only allowing less dense and horizontal land development patterns outside its bounds. As Hillsborough County continues to grow, pressure will increase to expand the USA boundary.

The Panel’s Assignment

Hillsborough County invited the Advisory Services program to assess the feasibility of future development opportunities in the I-4 corridor and to provide strategic recommendations regarding sustainable development strategies linking future land use policy and infrastructure investments to desired economic development outcomes. The panel was also asked to consider what new types of development would elevate Hillsborough County’s economic prosperity and quality of life while shifting or offsetting the county’s infrastructure and service costs. Distilled further, the panel was assigned the task of examining whether the study area should be a target area for development through 2040 and, if so, what future development could look like, what tools it recommended for managing the process, and which financial strategies were realistic for supporting future growth and economic development.

Specifically, the panel was asked to address the following categories of questions:

- Target industries and identity
  - How can the I-4 corridor be leveraged for future sustainable development and create a sense of place to incentivize opportunities that will achieve desired economic development outcomes, such as attracting targeted industries, skilled labor, and higher-wage jobs?
  - What are recommended, feasible development scenarios given our county’s and region’s current business environment and attributes in light of real estate and technology market trends?
Figure 1: Tampa Bay/Hillsborough County Density versus Other Regions, 2016

- How can Hillsborough County help cultivate a unique identity for the identified study areas along the I-4 corridor?
- Future growth scenarios
  - Identify optimal and competitive sites for potential development in the study areas.
  - What is the optimal mix of jobs, retail, and residential development, including workforce housing?
  - Provide recommendations regarding the implementation and timing of regulatory considerations that will facilitate future planning and development in the study areas.
  - What are optimal community engagement strategies and tools to help foster public education and community participation related to future planning and development in the study area?
- Feasibility, financing, and strategy
  - What are the most financially feasible strategies to achieve optimal economic outcomes?
  - What are the challenges, strategies, and benefits of investing in future high-quality job creation along the I-4 corridor?
  - What are the risks of taking no action in the I-4 corridor?
  - What are possible financing and funding mechanisms for future development, and what governmental and quasi-governmental models could serve

Sources: Hillsborough County and U.S. Census Bureau.
Note: HC = Hillsborough County; HC Uninc = unincorporated Hillsborough County.

Figures 1 and 2 reflect 2016 and projected 2040 density levels for Hillsborough County and competing regions, illustrating how the county’s competitors continue to embrace density.
as an alternative to, or work in partnership with, county-provided infrastructure and services?

- **Policies, regulations, and infrastructure**
  - What are potential land use and regulatory opportunities and constraints that will optimize future development in the I-4 corridor?
  - What policies, regulatory processes, and infrastructure considerations should be evaluated when considering development outside the Urban Service Area?
  - Evaluate opportunities for transfer development rights for future development.

### What the Panel Heard

The panel’s interviews with community stakeholders form a critical part of the panel’s weeklong visit. These conversations and the insights shared by stakeholders from across Hillsborough County helped inform the foundations for this report and the panel’s recommendations to ensure a sustainable future for the county.

Throughout the week, the panel heard the following priorities for the study area:

- Capturing an appropriate share of warehousing and distribution development that is now occurring in Plant City and across County Line Road in Polk County;
- Creating high-quality and higher-wage employment opportunities in this part of the county; and

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**Figure 2: Tampa Bay/Hillsborough County Density versus Other Regions, 2040**

Sources: Hillsborough County and U.S. Census Bureau.
Note: HC = Hillsborough County; HC Uninc = unincorporated Hillsborough County.

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I-4 Corridor, Hillsborough County, Florida, December 10–15, 2017
Accomplishing these goals with little or no upfront financial investment from the county.

These issues, however, pose additional questions that the panel grappled with throughout its visit: Is the study area the appropriate location for warehousing and distribution? Does warehousing and distribution achieve the second goal?

Following is a summary of the panel’s key takeaways from these interviews:

- **Leadership and public engagement**: Stakeholders expressed a need for more effective and consistent communication between the county and its constituents as well as across the multiple agencies involved in transportation, economic development, and the various aspects of planning and development. The interviewees also desire community meetings to be held within the community.

- **Transportation and infrastructure**: The panel heard from diverse stakeholders that thinking about transportation and infrastructure was outdated and reactive. Many felt that a better approach involves forward thinking rather than always playing catch-up with infrastructure. Stakeholders also mentioned an opportunity for better regional cooperation on coordinated and innovative transportation solutions.

- **Planning and development**: Many stakeholders feel development tends to come first and plans as an afterthought. The panel also heard that some stakeholders do not trust the government to do the right thing in land use planning and feel frustration that current plans are not followed. Many stakeholders voiced a general desire for appropriate and contextual treatment of the community. The panel also heard the desire to capture some of the industrial demand that is currently going to adjacent municipalities. Some stakeholders expressed concern that development and related mobility fees do not contribute to the true cost of their effects on transportation. The panel also heard a perception that developers want to pay rural service area prices for urban service area density. Some stakeholders voiced a concern about the hidden tax the community pays because of a lack of planning.

- **General economic development**: Stakeholders expressed the need for more jobs and related job training. The panel also heard a desire to capture the economic activity that is currently going to Polk County. Many stakeholders feel quality of life has not improved and economic development serves only the development community.

- **Density and growth**: Stakeholders acknowledge that growth will happen, and many expressed a desire for it to be controlled by the community rather than developers alone. The panel also heard that a lot of land is still available within the USA where growth could occur. Many stakeholders believe the desire to open up the I-4 corridor is because of its cheaper land values.

**Summary of the Panel’s Recommendations**

It was evident to the panel during its interviews with community stakeholders, its review of previous studies and reports, and its multiple study tours throughout Hillsborough County that a tremendous amount of work has already gone into studying the county’s long-term planning and development options. This panel is another stride forward in defining thoughtful and actionable steps. However, the county is at a crossroads with how to plan for the significant growth projected for the county and the region and to
lay the foundation for a sound and sustainable economic development strategy that leverages growth to improve both its economic prosperity and quality of life.

Growth is imminent—now is the time to choose whether growth will lead to positive change or erode what makes Hillsborough County unique. Hillsborough County can choose to use responsible development practices, try to control the effects of coming change with its more urban land use development patterns, and commit to maintaining the current USA boundary throughout the county, as the panel recommends in this report. The panel hopes this report serves as a road map to develop sustainable planning and development strategies to ensure a prosperous and successful future for Hillsborough County.

In the remainder of this report, the panel presents its recommendations in more detail. The panel’s review of the region’s demographics, market, and growth patterns show clearly that Hillsborough County must anticipate growth that exceeds its ability to accommodate using traditional density and current development patterns. The panel’s primary recommendations are summarized as follows:

- **Market:** The panel strongly recommends that Hillsborough County focus on how it stacks up with competitive regions, which are planning and implementing responses to changing technology, demographics, and development drivers. Success in regional competition is likely to rest on the quality of responses to these challenges.

- **Planning and development strategies:** The panel recommends Hillsborough County implement a phased approach to planning and development: “Plan, then expand.”
  - Stick to the plan and severely limit piecemeal amendments.
  - Begin with and fully utilize the existing USA. The panel encourages Hillsborough County not to underestimate the amount of developable space that still exists in the USA. Be prepared to revisit the USA boundary in an orderly way, looking to other regions for best practices on how to regularly reassess the USA boundary.
  - Plan for mixed-use nodal development along the I-4 corridor. A mix of uses—for example, residential, commercial, and industrial—will make Hillsborough County a more competitive region in the long term. The panel did hear from several real estate industry professionals about the value of logistics and industrial uses, and there is no question that the market would quickly fill new space if it became available. However, these are low-intensity uses that generate relatively few jobs and ancillary economic activity. Therefore, the panel feels that focusing on logistics and industrial uses will not serve the county’s long-term interests or help grow the region’s competitive strengths for a sustainable future.
  - Develop an overlay for development in the existing unincorporated USA.

- **Preservation of Hillsborough County’s unique character:** The panel recommends that Hillsborough County preserve its existing rural landscape as an asset to leverage. One of the benefits of promoting increased density within the USA is that less pressure will exist to expand the USA boundary, thereby fostering preservation of the county’s more rural landscapes.

- **Economic development strategies:** Revise key documents and approaches, such as the county’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, to be a guiding policy document that informs regulatory documents.

- **Quality of life and job creation:** If the county creates a place that people want to be, the people and jobs will come.

- **Fiscal impacts:** Do not rob Peter to pay Paul. In other words, growth comes with a cost. Hillsborough County can either start planning and paying for it now, or the county can pay exponentially more later. The panel applauds the progress the county has made with passage of the 2016 transportation funding; however, the county
also needs to begin investing in long-term growth and economic prosperity. The panel recommends Hillsborough County incentivize its vision for future planning and development by disincentivizing those things that are not in alignment. In addition, the county should explore a menu of suggested finance mechanisms, including community development districts (CDDs), transportation improvement bonds, active transportation programs, social impact bonds, tactical urbanism, community land trusts, and beyond.

- **Public engagement and regulatory framework:** The panel recommends that Hillsborough County build on recent efforts to make further progress and refinements in its engagement and outreach efforts. Remember that perception is reality—and Hillsborough County currently struggles with a perceived lack of communication and trust between the county and its residents, and within county departments themselves. Consistency, transparency, and reliability are the hallmarks of both internal and external communications. The panel recommends the county create a uniform policy, made up of guidelines and best practices, to establish standard approaches to engage and communicate with the larger community and that land use agencies and partners convene regularly to share information and exchange ideas.
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY is in the Tampa Bay Area region, on the west central coast of Florida. The Tampa Bay Area generally consists of Hillsborough County and neighboring Pinellas County to the west; Pasco, Hernando, and Citrus counties to the north; Polk County to the east; and Sarasota and Manatee counties to the south. Within Hillsborough County are three municipalities: Tampa, Plant City, and Temple Terrace. With 1,048 square miles of land and 24 square miles of inland water area, Hillsborough County covers nearly 1,072 square miles, or 593,014 acres. Unincorporated area accounts for more than 84 percent of the total county area, or 909 square miles, with the remaining acreage located within Tampa, Plant City, and Temple Terrace.

As estimated for January 2016 by the University of Florida’s Bureau of Economic and Business Research, Hillsborough County has about 1.35 million residents, with future population expected to exceed 2 million by 2045. The majority of residents (68 percent) live within unincorporated Hillsborough County, while most remaining residents (27 percent) reside in the city of Tampa. Plant City and Temple Terrace each house about 2 percent of the total population. Between 2010 and 2016, overall population increased in Hillsborough County by more than 120,774 persons.

Notably, the study area has not experienced significant development because it is located mostly outside the USA. The USA was created in 1993 primarily as a tool to help focus growth and maximize infrastructure investments within a targeted boundary that encourages infill with higher-density development; encourages mixed-use development that makes it easy for people to walk, bike, or use transit; and encourages redevelopment of already developed areas with existing infrastructure, among other goals.

The study area is centered on a key scarce asset—the I-4 corridor—which serves as a major transportation corridor not only for the county but also for the greater region. It...
also encompasses another scarce asset—Tampa Bay’s unique rural character. The study area can play a critical role in demonstrating what Hillsborough County wants to look like in the future and set the stage for how the region’s growth affects its overall regional competitiveness.

The study area is generally defined as those areas along I-4 in Hillsborough County, between the cities of Tampa and Plant City. The aerial photo on page 13 depicts the study area, highlighting primary subareas, described as Area 1 and Area 2.

Area 1 is generally bound by Joe Ebert Road on the north, Broadway Avenue on the south, Orient Road on the west, and Taylor Road on the east, containing about 13,348 acres. Area 2 is generally bound by Thonotosassa Road on the north, Haynes Road on the south, Kingsway Road on the west, and Bethlehem Road on the east, comprising about 9,855 acres.

Land uses in Area 1 are predominantly agricultural north of I-4, with commercial and office uses centered on the County Road 579/I-4 interchange and suburban-scale residential and commercial uses south of I-4. Land uses in Area 2 are predominantly agricultural both north and south of I-4 with a substantial number of suburban-scale residential developments interspersed. Commercial uses in this area are largely focused on the I-4/McIntosh Road intersection.
Economic and Market Snapshot

**METROPOLITAN TAMPA, WHICH INCLUDES** the four-county area of Hillsborough, Hernando, Pasco, and Pinellas, is enjoying substantial growth in its leading socio-economic indicators. This growth, however, is taxing existing and needed infrastructure.

**Market Trends**

As shown in figure 3, as of 2017 the four-county metro area had about 3,039,500 people in 1,480,100 housing units. Through 2040, the Tampa region is projected to grow by about 886,400 people in 363,800 housing units. Hillsborough County’s economic growth will occur in the real estate, finance, and insurance sectors, along with the professional and technical sectors and health care and social assistance sectors. As of 2017, the county had about 1,388,400 people in 639,400 housing units, and annually the county is projected to grow by 9,800 housing units. By 2040 Hillsborough County will grow by 568,100 people and 225,300 housing units.

**Land Demand**

Metropolitan Tampa has 182.9 million square feet of industrial space, of which 98.8 million square feet is in Hillsborough County. Of the total industrial market, 12.6 percent is composed of research and development (R&D). Metropolitan Tampa is projected to enjoy an annual industrial market demand of 5.2 million square feet through 2040. Hillsborough County’s industrial market demand will be for 2.7 million square feet per year with 535,000 square feet for R&D. Through 2040, Hillsborough County will need land for 61.5 million square feet of industrial space, including 12.3 million square feet of R&D. Assuming a building coverage of 40 percent to meet the need through 2040, Hillsborough County would require 3,530 acres of industrial land, of which 706 acres would be R&D.

### When Does Hillsborough County Run Out of Land?

The numbers used throughout this section illustrate what greenfield consumption would look like under traditional land development patterns. However, land consumption at traditional densities is impractical in the long term. As the table provided here illustrates, Hillsborough County would soon run out of land, if it continues to allow land development patterns at suburban densities. The numbers in this section are provided for contextual and informational reference to help illustrate the magnitude of Hillsborough County’s challenge.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hillsborough County Growth at Current Densities</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current population</td>
<td>1,388,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population growth through 2040</td>
<td>568,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compounded growth rate</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acres required at suburban densities</td>
<td>47,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acres per person total (all development types)</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total county developable acreage</td>
<td>155,759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population that can be added at preceding density of development</td>
<td>1,861,310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total potential population if every square foot of land developed</td>
<td>3,249,710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Hillsborough County runs out of land at compounded growth rate</td>
<td>2074</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Hillsborough County, ULI panel.*

of that figure, 45 percent would be likely to locate in the study area.

As illustrated in figure 4, metropolitan Tampa’s office market includes 147.8 million square feet, of which Hillsborough County has 124.4 million square feet. The
Figure 3: Trends in Socioeconomic Forces Shaping the Tampa Metropolitan Region and Hillsborough County

| Year | Employment | | Population | | Housing units |
|------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| | Four-county area | Hillsborough County | Four-county area | Hillsborough County | Four-county area | Hillsborough County |
| 1980 | 717,538 | 340,216 | 1,613,582 | 646,939 | 763,431 | 279,933 |
| 2017 | 1,766,707 | 933,861 | 3,039,473 | 1,388,380 | 1,480,073 | 639,377 |
| 2027 | 2,191,700 | 1,155,000 | 3,432,000 | 1,635,400 | 1,638,200 | 737,337 |
| 2040 | 2,744,200 | 1,442,200 | 3,925,900 | 1,956,500 | 1,843,900 | 864,677 |

Annual change

| Year | Employment | | Population | | Housing units |
|------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| 2017–2040 | 42,500 | 22,100 | 39,300 | 24,700 | 15,820 | 9,800 |

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Hillsborough County, ULI panel.

Metropolitan Tampa office market is projected to grow annually by 3.1 million square feet, of which 1.65 million is projected to locate in Hillsborough County. Through 2040 Hillsborough County will need just under 38 million square feet of office space, which left unchecked using its current development model, would require 3,485 acres, of which 18 percent, or 627 acres, could locate in the study area.

Through 2040 Hillsborough County would need about 2,000 acres of retail commercial with 150 acres of demand in the study area. In total, to meet the projected industrial, office, retail, and commercial markets through 2040, Hillsborough County would need 9,015 acres. It should be noted that the future of retail space and demand is more uncertain than other land use types because of the impact of online delivery methods, the failure of the traditional shopping mall, and the oversaturation of retail in many markets.

Metropolitan Tampa will need to add about 1.2 million square feet of retail space per year, of which 750,000 square feet annually will be in Hillsborough County. Through 2040 Hillsborough County would need about 150 acres of demand in the study area. In total, to meet the projected industrial, office, retail, and commercial markets through 2040, Hillsborough County would need 9,015 acres. It should be noted that the future of retail space and demand is more uncertain than other land use types because of the impact of online delivery methods, the failure of the traditional shopping mall, and the oversaturation of retail in many markets.

Residentially, the four-county metro Tampa area is projected to grow by 15,820 residential units per year, and

Figure 4: Hillsborough County Land Demand Based on Traditional Densities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of demand</th>
<th>Four-county area</th>
<th>Hillsborough County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Industrial annual market (square feet)</td>
<td>5.2 million</td>
<td>2.675 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 23 years (square feet)</td>
<td>120 million</td>
<td>61.525 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acres (40% coverage)</td>
<td>6,890</td>
<td>3,530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R&amp;D acres (20%)</td>
<td>1,380</td>
<td>706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office annual demand (square feet)</td>
<td>3.1 million</td>
<td>1.65 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 23 years (square feet)</td>
<td>71.3 million</td>
<td>37.95 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acres (25% coverage)</td>
<td>6,550</td>
<td>3,485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total housing growth (units)</td>
<td>15,820</td>
<td>9,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental apartments</td>
<td>4,900</td>
<td>2,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Townhouse and condominium</td>
<td>2,100</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detached single family</td>
<td>8,820</td>
<td>5,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail (square feet)</td>
<td>1.2 million</td>
<td>750,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ULI panel.
Hillsborough County is expected to capture 62 percent, or 9,800 units per year, including 2,900 rental apartments, 1,300 townhouses and condominium units, and 5,600 detached single-family units. To accommodate this residential demand, Hillsborough County through 2040 will require 38,525 acres.

In total, at current development densities, Hillsborough County would need 47,540 acres to meet the 2040 projected growth. As should be clear in the following discussion, land consumption at these traditionally low densities would require significant expansion of the USA, contrary to the panel’s recommendation.

Greenfield Development
Hillsborough County has 682,660 acres of land, of which 382,491 acres are located outside the USA and 300,169 acres located within the USA. The county has 155,759 acres of undeveloped potentially buildable land, of which 26,888 are outside the USA and its three cities (see figure 5).

This demand for 47,540 acres of developable land far exceeds the 26,888 acres of undeveloped land available in the three cities as well as unincorporated Hillsborough County and far surpasses the 19,323 acres of remaining developable land capacity within the USA that lies within unincorporated Hillsborough County. If only greenfields were developed, the need would be twice the size of one study area; in fact, 210 neighborhoods with land area equivalent to ten football fields with 50 units will be needed each year through 2040.

Unincorporated Hillsborough County has sufficient developable greenfield land in the unincorporated portion of the USA to accommodate about nine years of development activity, but this period could be shorter given the remaining developable areas’ appropriateness for specific land use types.

To accommodate the entire demand for developable greenfield acreage in the USA of the three cities as well as unincorporated Hillsborough County, the average densities of the residential development would have to nearly double to 40 units per acre for rental apartments, 20 units per acre for townhouses and condominiums, and eight units per acre for detached single-family housing.

Historically, of the total Hillsborough County industrial market, about 46 percent is in the east county study area. Through 2040, 1,620 acres of industrial land is estimated to be needed (3,530 acres × 46%), of which 20 percent, or 325 acres, would be for R&D land uses.

Regarding office space, Hillsborough County would need 3,485 acres of office land by 2040, about 18.5 percent of which is projected to locate in the study area, demonstrating a demand for 645 acres of office land by 2040.

Annual retail space demand in the study area would average six acres; therefore, about 150 acres would need to be reserved for total demand through the year 2040.

Figure 5: Developable Greenfield Acreage, Demand versus Supply by 2040

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hillsborough</th>
<th>Total acreage</th>
<th>Developable acreage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total county acreage</td>
<td>682,660</td>
<td>155,759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside USA and three cities</td>
<td>300,169</td>
<td>26,888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unincorporated Hillsborough service area</td>
<td>211,647</td>
<td>19,323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Hillsborough County 2040 demand</td>
<td></td>
<td>47,540</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Hillsborough County.
The residential market demonstrates that the study area on average will capture 15 percent of Hillsborough County’s annual residential market: thus annual demand will be 460 rental apartments, 460 townhouses and condominiums, and 960 single-family homes. By 2040, the study area would see 529 acres of rental apartments, 1,058 acres of townhouses and condominiums, and 5,520 acres of detached single-family homes, for a total of 7,107 acres of residential land.

In total for R&D, office, retail, and residential, when using traditional low-density and suburban-scale development patterns, 8,377 acres would be required for development through 2040.

The panel strongly recommends that Hillsborough County hold the existing USA boundary line throughout the county and resist piecemeal exceptions. Instead, it should establish a structured, periodic evaluation of the boundary every few years, expanding only when property available for development or redevelopment has become unavailable within its current boundary. The first expansion would be along the I-4 corridor, where the panel recommends Hillsborough County begin by pursuing nodal development patterns as described later in the report.
EVERY COMMUNITY IS VULNERABLE in some way, whether to natural or manmade hazards. These hazards, or extreme events, as Hillsborough County has directly experienced, can include floods or storms, major infrastructure failures, or other crises—increasing global competition and economic disruptions.

The county’s population is expected to grow significantly. At the same time, severe weather events have become more frequent. Increased population growth, housing needs, and development in coastal areas are resulting in extensive storm-related weather losses. According to reinsurer Munich RE, property losses in coastal areas have risen exponentially over the past several years.

The combination of increasing frequency and intensity of weather events alongside new construction and density results in greater exposure and larger property claims. A 2013 AECOM study prepared for the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) estimated that by 2100 those areas requiring flood insurance would increase by 45 percent. One study shows almost 1.9 million homes in the United States are at risk of being underwater by 2100 if the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s predictive models for sea-level rise based on unchecked climate change are correct. And even when communities do not take a direct hit from a tropical storm or hurricane, the deluge of rain puts a tremendous strain on the water and sewer collection system.

Some evidence indicates that real estate owners in certain areas are beginning to factor natural hazard risk into their decisions. “Counter to the national trend, home price appreciation is slower in Florida and Louisiana cities with the highest flood risk than in cities with the lowest flood risk” (https://www.attenocom/news/risk/2017-u-s-natural-hazard-housing-risk-index/). Homeowners and investors more broadly are taking a closer look at risk and their ability to insure their properties at a reasonable cost, if at all. In a 2016 report, Standard & Poors noted “while the overall impact of climate change on the insurance industry is difficult to quantify, the multilayered effects of regulation, reputation and litigation will be ‘considerable’ over the long term.” And in a November 2017 report to its clients, Moody’s Investor Services noted that in response to a growing call from investors, they are incorporating climate change exposure into their municipal and state bond ratings. This will affect bond ratings and consequently borrowing costs for communities at risk.

The need for resilience planning has risen in conjunction with these factors. How can Hillsborough County leverage its existing resources—those things both natural and structural, unique to the community—to create place, to be as efficient as possible, to minimize the impact of growth on the existing infrastructure, leveraging community assets in ways that redefine place, quality of life, and economic prosperity?

The “Five Guiding Principles,” a document developed by the Board of County Commissioners, aligns with these smart development principles and a sustainable, resilient community. These principles recognize the significance and aim to preserve Hillsborough County’s unique combination of rural and suburban lifestyles, proximity to the urban core, tourism corridor, natural beauty, cultural heritage, and community values.

Resilient communities rely on interdependent principles of sustainability, mobility, and livability. Land use decisions can lock in permanent systemic relationships that are either inherently resilient over the long term or exacerbate
risk. Communities facing an influx of population and rapid urbanization are often reactive rather than proactive. A lack of forethought, loose or nonexistent codes and zoning result in economic, environmental, and social damage often worse than need be. Resilience demands thoughtful decisions about how and where to develop.

A well-designed walkable, mixed-use neighborhood, like the nodes recommended earlier in this report, integrates housing mix and density, commercial development, and green space to create a cohesive village. This approach optimizes investment dollars, primes the area for new transit options, enhances economic returns, property values, and revenues, and prudently uses taxpayer dollars. Use of green infrastructure creates the dual benefit of flood control and urban parks. Water and energy conservation programs mean reduced cost and dependence on limited natural resources. A mix of affordable housing creates community cohesion.

ULI has studied how communities and property owners who take resilience into consideration fare over the long haul when faced with these hazards and recently published *Ten Principles for Building Resilience*. A few are particularly relevant in planning the future of Hillsborough County.

- **Strengthen job and housing choices:** Communities with a broad range of jobs and housing alternatives are by nature more resilient in terms of preparedness for extreme events, as well as preparedness for the potential local impacts of external global forces, such as immigration patterns and economic trends.

- **Leverage community assets:** Identifying and building from existing assets, whether related to geography, economy, local skills, or community leadership, will enable communities to be more prepared to bounce back after a disruption.

- **Redefine how and where to build:** Increasing urbanization is more efficient; it is where changing demographics are driving desire to live and ultimately where the jobs are found.
  - Building resilience entails identifying and investing in places and infrastructure that are by nature and circumstance less vulnerable and that can thrive under changing conditions.
  - Land use and policy decisions should make it easier and more attractive for development, households, and businesses to prepare for adverse events.

- **Harness innovation and technology:** Innovations, including technologies and open data, allow for more nimble response after peak events and create other opportunities for efficiency and growth.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Glossary of Resilient Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainability:</strong> Integration of both natural resources (wetlands, open space, waterways, lakes, and parks) and technology (energy efficiency, renewable power, waste, water, and new mobility sources, such as autonomous vehicles):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Increases density in appropriate areas;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Leverages existing green and open space to multiple uses, such as stormwater management, natural parks, and recreation;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Embraces and celebrates the beauty of open spaces; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Takes into account heritage and historic buildings, aligning uses and development contextually.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resilience:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Addresses local risks; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Plans for resilience and disaster preparedness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mobility:</strong> Focus on how and when people move through the community rather than prioritizing how cars move.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Livability:</strong> Build with a consistent mindset toward creating a high quality of life. Celebrate your beautiful county, in all its facets, each community rich in its own individual culture, environment, and history. Facilitate community building through village centers and nodes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The panel’s planning study area, centered on the I-4 corridor.

The panel’s recommended strategic economic development node approach centers on phased development of three strategic nodes, shown in purple above.

Planning and Development Scenarios

**AS PART OF ITS EVALUATION**, the panel analyzed several different planning and development scenarios for what might be possible in the study area. The end result was the panel’s recommended approach for future planning and development, which is that Hillsborough County hold the line throughout the county and, when the time comes to develop the study area, phase development consecutively in three strategic nodes.

Most of the county’s projected population growth can easily be accommodated inside the current Hillsborough County USA, which now has an extremely low density estimated at 1.32 persons per acre, negating the need to build on rural and agricultural lands. Industrial demand can be accommodated in Temple Terrace and Plant City. Furthermore, the panel strongly believes that preserving the unique character and natural features of the county’s rural and agricultural lands has significant value while also promoting sustainable development practices.

**Strategic Economic Development Nodes**

The panel recommends that, rather than continuing the region’s historic low-density development practices, the county pursue the following approach:
- Hold the USA boundary line throughout the county.
- Phase development consecutively, in three discrete strategic nodes.

This approach will preserve 90 percent of the study area in a more rural form while providing 57,000 jobs and 8,330 attached residential units.

The strategic economic development scenario maximizes the use of available infrastructure and minimizes the number of acres needed to accommodate targeted job growth. Three compact development nodes (see map at lower left), will also include higher-density multifamily housing, providing a 50 percent housing/jobs balance, meaning that half the employees could be housed in the proposed nodes.

The center of each node is within an approximately 20-minute (one-mile) walk area that supports the mix of jobs and housing. The goal of channeling these jobs and residences in concentrated nodes is to preserve large areas of natural wetlands and the rural residential areas.
to the maximum extent possible. By creating separate nodes, development can be phased so the subsequent node develops as the previous one builds out. Based on estimated absorption rates, nodes would develop over four to ten years each, depending on size.

Using this approach to development, the proposed nodes could collectively accommodate 57,000 jobs, or about 25 percent of the projected total jobs by 2040, based on annual absorption rates consistent with historic capture of the targeted types of jobs in unincorporated Hillsborough County. The nodes meet all of Hillsborough County’s targeted employment demands that would “want” to be in the study area by 2040. Housing would consist entirely of attached product with a mix of apartments at 20 units per acre and condominiums and townhome units at ten units per acre, resulting in 18,330 units and a population of 33,222, or about 5.5 percent of the projected population growth of 600,000. The panel recommends these housing types to prioritize compact and dense development, to provide choice to the market in what is now an overwhelmingly single-family environment, and to efficiently accommodate projected growth and maximize access, connectivity, and infrastructure within the nodes (see figure 6).

The boundaries shown in the conceptual map (top right) encompass more than the net developable acreage used to project jobs and housing. This allows development flexibility, since the boundaries include some wetlands and existing residential. Development is envisioned to occur in three phases and should require the buildout of each area before services are extended to the subsequent phase. This recommendation does not propose any industrial development or single-family housing because the panel feels that focusing on logistics and industrial uses will not serve the county’s long-term interest in high-quality job creation and diverse economic activity, nor will it help reinforce the region’s competitive strengths. More dense housing development coupled with job centers that employ a diverse range of skill sets and disciplines, along with the ancillary retail and other active uses that come along with this environment, will go further to support a sustainable future and to more completely leverage the unique opportunity presented by the corridor.

Figure 6: Strategic Economic Development Nodes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land use</th>
<th>FAR or units per acre</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>SF/employee or people/unit</th>
<th>Square feet of development or number of units</th>
<th>Employees or population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R&amp;D</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>5,662,800</td>
<td>16,179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>7,024,050</td>
<td>35,120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>1,437,480</td>
<td>5,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,120</td>
<td></td>
<td>14,124,330</td>
<td>57,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multifamily</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>3,270</td>
<td>6,867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apartments</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>753</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>15,060</td>
<td>26,355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total attached units</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,080</td>
<td></td>
<td>18,330</td>
<td>33,222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total acres</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ULI panel.
Using the strategic economic development node approach, Area 1 includes new access to I-75 for the airport and allows about 400 acres of development, half of which will be commercial and half attached residential. The area will generate about 10,200 jobs from 3,400 attached units with a population of 6,150 residents developed over four years. Area 1 is entirely within the current Hillsborough County potable water looped system and seems to represent a logical extension of water service (see figure 7).

Area 2 includes street connections to Area 1 and the new access to I-75 as well as the existing interchange at County Road 579 and I-4 and allows about 820 acres of development, half of which will be for employment and half will be attached residential. Development in the area will generate about 21,400 jobs, 6,800 attached units, and a population of 12,300 (see figure 8). Development would occur over eight years. Area 2 is also adjacent to the Hillsborough County potable water system and can be served by extending the existing system.

Area 3 is centered on the interchange at McIntosh Road and allows the development of about 980 acres, half of which will be for employment and half will be attached residential. Development in the area will generate about 25,470 jobs and a population of 14,765 and would be developed over about ten years (see figure 9).

In addition to the preceding development impacts, the strategic economic development node approach allows dense residential development, preserves 90 percent of the unincorporated land within the study area, uses a pedestrian-oriented approach to development, and provides the opportunity for great placemaking.
Infrastructure

The strategic economic development node approach maximizes the use of available infrastructure; however, the following may be required:

**Water.** Extension of potable water service in Areas 1 and 2 will provide the option for the existing residents in and adjacent to the proposed development areas to connect to the potable water system in the future should the continued use of individual well and septic result in groundwater degradation. Area 3 can receive water service from the existing system located in Highway 92 at the eastern edge of the current service area. Fire hydrants would also be installed with the extension of water service, enabling a much higher level of fire protection to the adjacent existing residents.

**Wastewater.** Extension of wastewater service in Areas 1 and 2 will provide the option for the existing residents in and adjacent to the proposed development areas to connect to the wastewater collection system in the future should the continued use of individual well and septic result in groundwater degradation. Optimizing the wastewater service options will require an alternatives study to determine if it makes more sense to connect to the existing collection system or develop a new tertiary-level treatment facility centrally located in Area 2 that would serve all three development nodes. A new treatment facility would allow the production of reclaimed water for irrigation use in the development nodes.

**Stormwater Quality and Management.** The county has well-regulated and sophisticated policies for the protection of wetlands and the management of stormwater flows. Development in the three nodes should be consistent with the existing stormwater requirements, implement sustainable best practices including minimizing impervious areas to the greatest extent possible, and promote low-impact development strategies.

**Schools.** The proposed increase in population would require the construction of additional elementary and middle schools and potentially two new high schools, one in Area 2 and one in Area 3.

**Emergency Services, Libraries, and Other Public Buildings.** The combination of new employees and residents will require construction of fire stations and additional emergency services. Some libraries and other public buildings will also be needed. Where possible these facilities should be colocated and integrated into the nonresidential development.

**Transportation.** The circulation framework to serve new development relies on creating a more complete grid of streets north and east of the I-4/I-75 interchange based largely on the existing arterial spacing pattern (about one-mile spacing). Within development nodes, a finer-grained network of streets and paths would provide local access (see three maps on following page).
The panel recommends Hillsborough County explore the following transportation investments:

- Explore the potential for a new interchange on I-75 north of I-4 (aligned with Pruett Street). The panel recognizes that the spacing of a new interchange here may be a challenge but encourages the county to work with the Florida Department of Transportation to investigate innovative means to increase access from I-75 in the area. A partial interchange focused on higher demand movements will likely be required to aid access to this area.

- Extend Pruett Road west to I-75, and southwest past the airport to Sligh Avenue.

- Upgrade Sligh Avenue.

- Upgrade Joe Ebert Road and extend it west to Harney Road, enhancing connections to the University of South Florida and other areas north of I-4.

- Upgrade Joe Ebert Road east to an extended Kingsway Road to serve a new development node. Local roads for that development would connect with this extension.

- Extend Kingsway Road north to Joe Ebert Road for access to the new node. Again, local access roads would connect to Kingsway.

- Upgrade Williams Road between Joe Ebert Road and MLK Boulevard.

- Upgrade Pruett Road and Muck Pond Road east to McIntosh Road. With development in the McIntosh/I-4 node, traffic will seek this route as an alternative to I-4. It is prudent to plan for that demand by upgrading this route.

- Creating more transit routes and more frequent transit service as the nodes develop will be important to increase access to jobs and to give residents more mobility options.

Although the recommended road improvements mirror many projects evaluated by the county in its 2009 study, they emphasize greater connectivity from I-75 and from

This diagram conceptually depicts the panel’s proposed transportation strategy to capture the value of the I-4/I-70 crossroads and create a more complete network of arterial streets.
other arterials and realize transportation efficiencies by mixing residential and commercial land uses because mixed-use development reduces vehicle trips over single-use development. Increasing connectivity is the key to capturing the value that the I-75/I-4 interchange can give to this part of Hillsborough County as a regional crossroad. Additional access from I-75 and from the arterial system is required to make nearby properties competitive for employment and commercial development. Ultimately, as Hillsborough County grows, a more complete arterial street system with interstate highway connections will be needed.

The county should also closely monitor opportunities to accommodate the penetration of self-driving vehicles as a mode. Autonomous vehicles can potentially be accommodated in much narrower lanes and at controlled spacing, thereby significantly increasing the carrying capacity of the existing road network. In addition, if autonomous vehicles also become shared vehicles, peak trips will likely be reduced. What-if scenarios should be modeled to understand the potential and paradigm-shifting transportation impacts that may be mitigated by this emerging technology. Deferring development in the I-4 corridor in the near term will allow the nodes and extended road network to be optimized for this technology.

Revenue and Cost

This recommended approach would increase county revenues as each node develops. It would also increase expenses with each node. However, the scale of the nodes would allow one or more developers to take on their construction and finance infrastructure using an array of funding tools and partnerships (see “Funding for the Future” on page 41 of this report) with the public. Phased development also allows infrastructure to be constructed to meet actual demands, thereby optimizing infrastructure efficiency.

Phase 1: Hold the Line

Though countywide the boundaries of the USA may need to expand over time, the priority in the near to mid-term is to focus growth and development within the currently defined area, a direction consistent with decision making over the past 30 years. This strategy provides the county and its residents with the opportunity to reimagine the type of community they want to create in the face of major immigration and market pressure for development. Because of the limited stock of raw, undeveloped land within the USA, the panel believes the county needs to consider intensification of its existing land uses; density will need to be increased in a way that meets the goals of creating place, accommodating growth, and sparking economic vitality and self-sufficiency.

Holding to the existing boundaries of the USA throughout the county will affect community growth in several ways. These changes will present opportunities as well as challenges between today and the moment in the future...
Density as Placemaking

To grow and attract new development, a primary effect of holding the existing boundary must be an attendant increase in population density within the USA. Increased density has the potential to promote development patterns that foster a sense of place and create opportunities for alternative methods of mobility beyond the private use of an automobile. Because of their larger populations within smaller geographical areas, denser places can attract the types of uses desired by many in the community, as expressed by several interviewees the panel spoke with during the panel week. These include grocery stores, retail environments, cultural institutions, and community facilities. The creation of “complete communities”—where most or all of a person’s daily needs are met within a small walking or driving radius—is only possible under denser conditions than those that currently exist within the county and the USA.

Density and Mobility

A denser development pattern within the USA also allows a wider variety of transportation and mobility options. The county’s investment in bicycle and pedestrian facilities will see a greater return in the form of increased usership. Complete streets—those that accommodate many modes of mobility in balance—may be implemented to capture the changing desire and mode share of many people, especially younger generations. Notably, a denser development pattern, especially along key corridors, will allow for eventual investment in high-quality mass transit, such as bus rapid transit, light rail, and eventually new modes of advanced mobility such as autonomous vehicles. Autonomous vehicles and other transit options may substantially alter the land use needs and patterns of growth, and the county is advised to study these potential impacts.

Concentrating growth within the existing USA will increase traffic, transit, and nonmotorized demands, thereby triggering the need for additional investments in infrastructure. However, most of those investments would be focused on improving existing infrastructure rather than on extending it. It may be necessary to increase operating efficiencies at intersections, improve signal systems through real-time adaptive signal coordination, widen roads selectively, and better connect local streets. Evaluating the potential for autonomous vehicles to meet mobility needs will be an important component in determining appropriate improvements. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities will need improvement to accommodate more residents and create safer, more appealing opportunities to walk and bike for work and recreation. Transit service will need to grow by providing more routes and more frequent service. Access to transit will need attention as will the quality and location of its stops and shelters. New park-and-ride opportunities may also arise in more peripheral areas.

Density and Economic Development

Notably, large segments of the population (and not just millennials, though this cohort is most often cited) favor denser areas filled with retail, cultural opportunities, and a wider array of mobility options. Such areas are more likely to attract these users than the traditional, low-density development seen through much of the county. Many large, high-paying employers recognize the importance of attracting these populations, which should be seen as an economic development strategy in encouraging these types of employers to locate in the county.

The EmX bus rapid transit system in Eugene, Oregon.
Opportunity and Challenges

With density come certain challenges, however. Existing infrastructure will see an increased strain because of new users. For example, additional water and wastewater capacity will be needed. Encouraging conservation and efficiency can be a very effective method of creating additional capacity in the existing systems. Although the Tampa Metropolitan Statistical Area, including Hillsborough County, has in many ways led the nation in implementing requirements for water-conserving fixtures and investment in a nonpotable irrigation system using recycled water, considerable opportunity still remains to reduce indoor water use (and thus wastewater generation) and create capacity.

Similarly, existing transportation infrastructure will see increased use and will require certain improvements to compensate. All capacity-adding projects, however, should analyze the opportunity for the creation of improved bike and pedestrian facilities to promote active transportation options. Likewise, transit opportunities should be studied for any major corridor. Though new transit options may not be feasible today, any design must not preclude their potential implementation in the future.

Although infrastructure use in the USA will increase, this should be seen more as an opportunity to maximize previous investments in transportation and utility infrastructure than as a burden. A denser development pattern will reduce the vehicle miles traveled, so streets will see reduced wear and tear per car. Similarly, utility infrastructure will be used more efficiently in that development will occur over a smaller land area.

Holding the USA line throughout the county will have the effect of increasing land value within its boundaries, which is beneficial for property taxation and will increase revenue. An offsetting challenge is that, without introduction of compensating supply, it could reduce the stock of affordable housing in the county. The county should look for opportunities to supply and maintain more affordable housing within the USA. Denser development patterns could result in more housing types and thus provide opportunities for smaller-scale, more affordable options not currently prevalent in the county. The panel encourages the county to research national best practices and other data on housing affordability and successful strategies that might be replicable in Hillsborough County.

Holding the line on the current USA boundary does not mean that development will cease outside its bounds. The current low-density housing will continue to exist and, absent changes to the zoning code, grow as possible. Likewise, businesses willing to invest in or do without an extension of utility infrastructure will continue to appear. Although this development pattern is unlikely to engender a substantial increase in land value, it will result in less intense development and provide the opportunity to pre-
serve the rural character and natural resources (wetlands, wildlife habitat, and agriculture) that make the area unique.

That said, the type of development encouraged and allowed by the zoning code should be reviewed intensively to ensure that it matches the goals of the county and its residents. The challenge that continuing low-density development presents is that it will put strains on the county’s existing infrastructure, including transportation such as I-4, and the expanded reliance on septic systems and well systems, which will have long-term impacts on the quality of groundwater and drinking water. The panel recommends studying the long-term impacts on the groundwater and drinking water quality and the potential value of establishing a moratorium on the issuance of development permits with septic systems.

What to Do with Your Found Time

Though retaining the current USA boundary throughout the county is a solution that may last only ten years before other opportunities for development need to be identified, this time frame allows the county to take a more considered approach to its future buildout. In particular, the time allows the county to achieve three primary goals:

1. Holding the line on the USA throughout the county allows the county to identify key sites for new development and, as important, redevelopment. Identifying redevelopment sites in a manner similar to the current method used for greenfield properties around the county will recognize the value in underused land and its potential for more sustainable development patterns. The properties along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard near Mango Road and other nodes along the corridor offer a great example of this opportunity. In concert with the principles in the Seffner-Mango Community plan, this corridor can provide development opportunities that meet the county’s goals and needs as well as the community’s desires as expressed in the overlay district along this corridor. Future use of redevelopment areas can be honed with tools such as form-based codes to achieve desired development outcomes such as walkability, successful retail environments, and more.

2. The time afforded by holding the line will also allow the county to plan thoughtfully for the future expansion of its USA boundaries. Using a consistent and transparent community engagement strategy, the county should create a shared vision for the use of the land outside the USA. A shared vision for this area will promote ownership over the area’s future and will engender trust between the community and its representatives.

3. The time will also allow new revenue sources to be identified or existing sources to be better leveraged to accommodate the growth outside the USA boundaries and its attendant infrastructure needs. Existing impact fees could be reassessed, and opportunity for fees that fund not only the construction of new infrastructure but also its continuing maintenance can be identified. New tools such as public/private partnerships and certain types of improvement districts can be studied for their potential in funding new infrastructure.

Because the approach to maintaining the existing USA boundary line can be considered a first phase in a larger growth strategy, the county should regularly analyze the opportunities and the impacts of expanding the boundary in a defined, disciplined process. This should happen on a fixed and relatively frequent schedule, and the panel recommends that Hillsborough County begin by evaluating the USA boundary every five to eight years.
Community Overlay District Redevelopment Opportunities

The panel also encourages the county to consider establishing overlay districts consistent with the existing Community Plans. Examples for several of these opportunities within the I-4 corridor study area are included as examples to demonstrate how underused areas may redevelop over time, accommodating more jobs and housing within the existing USA.

Other communities find they need to review their urban growth boundary on a more frequent schedule. For example, Oregon mandates that this be done every six years, but given Portland, Oregon’s substantial population growth, the city finds that a reevaluation of the boundary should happen more frequently. If a quality plan has been adopted and opportunities for redevelopment and infill have been assessed, the county may respond to users that may approach them offering to pay for the increase in infrastructure. Beyond this, however, the county should allow growth outside the USA boundary only when the time is right and all the other opportunities within the boundary have been exhausted.

The intersection of County Road 579 and I-4 has significant potential for redevelopment with higher-intensity uses over the next 25 or more years. The area could include up to 400 acres. Assuming that one-half the acreage was targeted employment consisting of R&D, office, and retail and the other half was attached multifamily housing product including apartments and condominiums, the redeveloped area could provide as many as 10,000 target jobs and 3,400 attached units.

At Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and County Road 579 and at MLK Boulevard and Kingsway Road, the potential exists for an enhanced commercial downtown redevelopment/overlay area consistent with the Seffner-Mango Concept Map (left). This might be envisioned as a new village core with enhanced pedestrian focus and mixed use with some slightly denser housing as well as a possible transit station at the existing CSX rail line.
Economic Development Vision and Strategy

**EACH OF THE PANEL’S RECOMMENDED** planning and development strategies requires a well-thought-out economic development strategy. The extent to which the study area fulfills its identified role in Hillsborough County’s strategy for accommodating 2040 projected growth depends on identifying the specific strategic actions required and implementing the plan as envisioned.

One option, not described earlier in the planning section is the “do nothing” option. In the “do nothing” option, the USA remains in its current configuration and the ongoing subdivision of large parcels to allow for one unit per acre development on septic and well will also continue. Successful implementation requires identification and consistent and predictable application of specific economic development and community criteria to expand the boundary. In this way, the county can successfully capture its share of new employment and retail uses, which will allow attraction of high-quality end users for the R&D, office, and retail development. Comprehensive economic development planning targets the specific end users, discourages development contrary to the plan, and provides incentives to achieve the goal of the strategy.

Success also depends on willingness to wait for the appropriate development partners to achieve economic development and community goals. The USA should be expanded only to implement the county’s economic development strategy.

**Current Approach**

Hillsborough County Economic Development has a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategic Plan (CEDS) from 2010, which identifies targeted industries and tools. The panel recommends that this strategy be updated for current conditions and changing location decision criteria.

The panel also recommends that for areas considered for expansion of the USA, a CEDS-like process be used to identify the opportunities associated with the proposed area. This process would require a more specific approach around item number 8 of the following expansion criteria:

1. The expansion is adjacent and contiguous to the established USA.
2. The expansion would be an extension of an existing suburban/urban development pattern and/or has a functional relationship to development within the USA.
3. Expansion of the USA would result in development that would be compatible with its surroundings.
4. Public water and sewer service exists within a quarter mile of the site.
5. Adequate capacity for infrastructure (including transportation, schools, parks, fire/EMS, and sheriff’s office) is in place or planned to serve development within the expansion area. All improvements needed to support the proposed USA expansion with adequate public facilities shall be Hillsborough County Future Land Use 5 included by amendment into the Capital Improvements Element that is financially feasible.
6. Expansion of the USA would include full cost recovery to the county for the services needed by the new development.
7. The expansion would not adversely impact environmental, natural, historical, or archaeological resources, features, or systems to a degree that is inconsistent with the CEDS plan.
8. Data are available to support the need for additional land within the USA to provide for the projected...
population or economic development needs within the planning horizon of the Comprehensive Plan. The data methodology used shall be consistent with that used as the basis for the Comprehensive Plan.

9. The USA expansion would not conflict with any other goals, objectives, or policies of the Comprehensive Plan and is consistent with the county’s adopted buildout plan or long-term vision as outlined in Policy 11.2, if applicable.

10. The expansions of 20 acres or greater shall include a mixed-use development pattern that decreases the transportation impacts of the project; all other expansions should result in a mixed-use development pattern when considered with the existing and/or planned land uses within a quarter mile of the project site.

The panel also recommends that the criteria from section 2.2 in the Comprehensive Plan be amended to require an economic development analysis to identify how the proposed expansion fulfills the CEDS and the specific priorities addressed. This analysis must include measurable outcomes by which the county can evaluate performance. The panel strongly recommends that the county update its CEDS to create a specific geographic element that identifies specific measures to measure potential expansions of the USA.

Existing Assets

Throughout its weeklong visit, the panel explored the study area and identified several existing economic development assets that may provide opportunities for increased economic development and prosperity in the area. Each of these assets requires a specific focus and approach to land use development and identification of potential development partners.

Tampa Executive Airport

Tampa Executive Airport is located on the western edge of the study area, bounded by the Tampa Bypass Canal on the west and north, I-75 on the east, and I-4 on the south. Although the airport has limited visibility for the general population, its hangars are 95 percent occupied and it serves as the departure and arrival point for all professional sports teams in the Tampa Bay area. The airport is subsidized by Hillsborough County Airport Authority funds.

With the Bypass Canal as the western and northern boundary of the airport property, a landfill immediately adjacent to the northeastern boundary, and Eureka Springs botanical garden as the southeastern boundary, opportunity for development immediately adjacent to the airport has been limited. Current access is via local, rural-residential roads. As a result, any future economic development in the area is constrained.

Facilities for charter aircraft and private corporate aircraft may or may not attract businesses beyond those directly associated with the airport itself (which include aircraft maintenance, flight schools, and charter aircraft companies). Surveys of business aircraft owners in the United States, conducted by Cambridge Systematics of Cambridge, Massachusetts, indicate that ownership and use of private airplanes are associated with specific types of businesses, which do indeed value their use. The principal uses of private aircraft and key businesses relying on them were found to include the following:

- Aerial surveying for agriculture, forestry, fishing, and utilities;
- Delivering products such as electronics and machinery parts for manufacturing, utilities, and wholesale distributors;

The panel recommends improving access to Tampa Executive Airport from multiple points.
■ Receiving supplies for wholesale distributors;
■ Transporting clients for air taxi services, miscellaneous manufacturing, banking, and land development;
■ Transporting key corporate staff in retail, banking, manufacturing, land development, and specialized services; and
■ Transporting supply contractors for utilities and construction flight training as well as flight training schools.

For these types of businesses, the ability of Executive Airport to handle corporate jets and provide reliable service for night and inclement weather conditions can be an important business location factor. Failure to provide adequate airport service for such uses may diminish a community’s ability to attract and retain those kinds of businesses. These businesses do not require immediate adjacency to the facility to enjoy the benefits. In addition to the users identified in the Cambridge Systematics study, technological changes and innovations have created additional opportunities for general aviation airports, such as automated delivery and other uses of controlled airspace.

The panel recommends improving access to Tampa Executive Airport both from Highway 301 and an additional access point directly from I-75.

**Eureka Springs Park**

Eureka Springs is a 31-acre botanical garden created by Albert Greensburg, who donated it to the county in 1967. The park has special event room rentals for various events and occasions. The gardens are located immediately adjacent to Tampa Executive Airport and share the challenges associated with limited access. Trip Advisor lists Eureka Springs as a 4.5 out of 5-star activity in the Tampa area, identifying it as a hidden gem. Improvement of access to the airport will also improve visibility and access to the botanical gardens.

**Proximity to Downtown Tampa**

Just 15 minutes from downtown Tampa, the study area has great access to hospitals, universities, and existing office and housing stock. Because of this proximity and the minimal current development in the area, an opportunity may exist to attract a major single user into the area. Examples of major single users could include a major health care provider within the life sciences sector or a major R&D facility within the information technology sector. However, some interviewees the panel spoke to during the panel week see the area as very remote from the urban core.

Further extension and continuation of the area’s current development pattern threatens the opportunity to make a major economic development play such as the USAA Crosstown Campus Development in this area. To preserve the existing character in areas outside those contemplated for eventual extension of the USA, the panel recommends the county discontinue the practice of amending the future land use map to allow subdivision of current five-acre parcels and preserve larger development parcels in areas contemplated for future development.

**Two Existing I-4 Interchanges**

The County Road 579 interchange has been developed with traditional interchange uses including fuel stations, restaurants (Cracker Barrel), and a Rooms-2-Go store. The immediate interchange area is within the USA. This is a very low intensity development pattern with a long-term opportunity to redevelop. The McIntosh Road interchange has developed with traditional interchange uses including fast food. In addition, the area includes RV sales and repair uses. This area is not within the USA, but wastewater service has been extended to the south side of I-4 to serve...
Strawberry Crest High School. This facility will also serve the fast food outlets in the area.

Existing Development
Existing and currently unfolding development to the west, east, and south are putting increasing pressure on the study area. Some interviewees the panel spoke to referred to this area as the bar of the dumbbell. To the west is Temple Terrace with a full range of employment, entertainment, service, and residential uses. These include about 32 million square feet of primarily local-serving warehousing and distribution uses. To the east are Plant City and Polk County. These areas have a small-town development form, including about 30.45 million square feet primarily serving regional warehousing and distribution uses. The “shaft” area between these two weighted ends, even within the USA, has captured very little warehousing and distribution opportunity.

The proposed development described earlier in this report assumes R&D and office development in a mixed-use, nodal development form. It does not recommend that the study area attempt to capture any low-density industrial uses such as warehousing and distribution. These uses are more appropriately captured by Plant City and Polk County and do not serve Hillsborough County’s long-term interests or help grow the region’s competitive strengths.

Recommended Economic Development Approach
The panel recommends that economic development focus on employment within the R&D and office land use types, specifically seeking out partners and end users that fulfill this strategic vision. This focus fulfills the economic development goal of high-quality, higher-wage employment.

Other regions have found well-structured, well-implemented, and regularly reevaluated urban growth boundaries effective tools for limiting sprawl and increasing economic development. The panel recommends a strategic growth strategy for development. The option expands the USA boundary as justified by growth related to economic development opportunities. The panel’s recommendation is to evaluate the USA boundary every five to eight years to verify that it contains adequate area for anticipated growth for the next five years. When the point of five years’ capacity is reached, the county should begin planning for expansion of the boundary. When the expansion plan is in place, expansion should happen only in conjunction with the creation of areas of higher-intensity use that depend on identification of specific and measurable economic development opportunities.

However, rather than simply expanding the area just for new industrial or office buildings, the panel recommends expanding the USA boundary to accommodate those uses coupled with supportive residential and retail development, thus creating employment-driven mixed-use nodes. A clearly articulated economic development plan will guide identification of development partners for creation of the nodes and necessary infrastructure.

Holding the line throughout the county is the key first step in implementing the strategic growth strategy. It differs from “do nothing” in two ways. Holding the line increases density within the study area’s locations currently within the USA to attract new employment and housing in the
area. In addition, it assumes the elimination of the option to rezone current AR-zoned parcels to allow AS1 or PD zoning. Existing larger tracts should be preserved. “Hold the line” is essentially phase 1 of the recommended strategic economic development node approach described earlier in this report.

As part of its CEDS, the Tampa region has identified several communities in Florida and nationally as benchmarks or comparators of economic development. Many of the CEDS’s recommended measures address some elements that are key to successfully attracting the R&D and office users targeted in the study area.

The measures provide comparisons from 27 communities or regions as far away as Portland, Oregon, and as close as Lakeland and Pinellas County; while useful as a comparison, they should be placed in the context of the specific goals of the county’s CEDS. In addition, the county should identify goals, objectives, and measures specifically centering on quality-of-life elements. Some measures are included under other headings, but specific focus on quality of life allows the implementation of many of the amenities needed to compete regionally. As other regions are finding, if Hillsborough focuses on making a place that people want to be, the people and jobs will come.

A naval training center in Orlando, Florida, was transformed into Baldwin Park, a thriving neighborhood with a walkable mixed-use commercial environment.
Growth Comes with a Cost. Hillsborough County can either start planning and paying for it now—or pay exponentially more later. An influx of 600,000 people or more will completely redefine the look and feel of Hillsborough County. As a result, the county is at a significant inflection point, with the opportunity to frame how that development happens and the quality of life it brings.

Hillsborough County has made a strong commitment to studying the options—from the Community Plans (Seffner-Mango, Thanotosassa) to the 2009 I-4 Economic Corridor Study, from the Economic Prosperity Stakeholder Committee December 2012 Recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners, and the 2012 ULI Advisory Services Panel Report—and the panel applauds these efforts. Now is the time to act. It is clear Hillsborough County does not want to be a sprawling community of “anywhere United States,” mired in traffic, with low-productivity jobs.

In fact, Hillsborough clearly wants just the opposite. It recently approved “Five Guiding Principles” (see sidebar, following page), all of which align with the panel’s recommendations. The panel recommends Hillsborough County align activities and expectations with the “Five Guiding Principles.” Instead of being transactional, which has happened in the past, be guided by these principles.

Incentivize Hillsborough’s Vision

Prioritize and set specific metrics for these principles so that projects that come before the Board of County Commissioners are measured by clear and consistent standards and metrics by which they are approved or denied. Disincentivize things that are not in alignment. If the county continues to approve development outside the USA, it will continue to exacerbate the fiscal challenges and encourage sprawl. Leverage existing resources by focusing development within the existing USA and targeted expansion areas and by requiring new development to pay its own way. This approach helps reduce costs and frees up capital to invest in other important initiatives.

The panel is proposing a development model in the study area that provides a framework replicable across the county: one that will both enhance Hillsborough County’s
fiscal position and alleviate some of the burden of growth currently experienced in transit and infrastructure.

Of the nearly 600,000-person population and 225,000 housing unit increase, Hillsborough County’s growth management strategy targets accommodating 80 percent of that growth (480,000 people) inside the USA, 150,000 people in the city of Tampa, 330,000 within the existing USA boundary, and the balance of 120,000 in the remaining unincorporated area of the county.

Although a broad expansion of the USA (i.e., outward growth) to alleviate core structural pressure would seem to make sense, it is an inadequate solution that will be costlier and will diminish Hillsborough County’s regional competitive advantage. The market is clearly looking for new solutions, as indicated by the significant investment in redevelopment and density in downtown Tampa (as exemplified by Water Street Tampa—3,500 new residences; 2 million square feet of office space; 1 million of retail, medical, and educational projects; 13 acres of parks that emphasize live, work, and play). Projects of more urban density like this one help model smart development practices that should be a guide for the region’s future and help take pressure off the area outside the USA. Given increased regional competition, housing demand, shifting demographics, and rapidly changing technology, the county must strengthen its core assets, harness existing resources, and present a unified front (i.e., “hold the line”) to combat challenges of sprawl and promote economic prosperity.

The panel is recommending a five to eight-year emphasis on development within the USA boundary to promote density and sustainable best practices, followed by targeted expansion in the I-4 corridor as dictated by economic needs. The targeted nodal expansion in the I-4 corridor is the only USA expansion the panel recommends. Through smart planning and development, this phased expansion in dense nodes will leverage existing infrastructure by linking

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**Five Guiding Principles**  
(Adopted by the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners)

1. **Quality of Life**
   - Preserve urban, suburban, rural choices (form-based codes)
   - Maintain viable agricultural lands

2. **Fiscal Sustainability**
   - Prioritize limited resources
   - Leverage private capital investments
   - Capitalize on existing infrastructure
   - Provide alternative mobility options
   - Use the right tools for the right setting (i.e., Special Assessment District)

3. **Economic Prosperity**
   - Protect competitive sites for future job creation
   - Structure mobility fee to incentivize economic objectives

4. **Responsible Growth**
   - Recognize the difference between stable and transition areas
   - Redevelop declining commercial and industrial areas
   - Structure mobility fee to incentivize a productive development pattern
   - Use the right tools for the right setting

5. **Consistency of Action**
   - Provide certainty for community and development industry
   - Align programs and investment decisions
   - Link capital improvement program, land use and development standards
the existing water system, leveraging and expanding the transportation and utility networks, creating distinct communities, and preserving 90 percent of the unincorporated land as more rural uses. These nodes incentivize development of R&D, office, and retail, which attract targeted industries and higher-wage jobs.

The significant population growth will require densification within the existing USA boundaries. Current density within the unincorporated USA is 1.32 persons/acre. If the unincorporated area takes its share of the population growth (385,278), that density will grow to 5.46 persons/acre. Based on the panel’s recommendation, the panel anticipates about 33,200 residents and 57,050 jobs (25 percent of total 2040 anticipated jobs) will be located in the expanded area on I-4. This type of growth gives Hillsborough County a great opportunity to decide what kind of a community it wants, creating a sense of place. Further, the higher concentration of users stemming from added density justifies extension of transportation services, providing increased access to jobs and boosting mobility options for new and existing residents.

Although the recommended option has fiscal effects, the panel believes that in the long term the economic effect and quality of life will be enhanced by the recommended strategic economic development nodes. Further, it brings Hillsborough County to par as it relates to density of the cities with which it is trying to compete.

Hold the Line

Growth boundaries and their ensuing benefits only succeed when political support for limiting growth and directing it to urban centers is widespread. Redevelopment and infill development in the cores relieve pressure on the outer boundaries of the region, reducing sprawl, creating “community village” nodes, and optimizing service costs across the region. Appropriate incentives outside the boundary to limit development support the county’s goals for smart development and desire to enhance quality of life and economic prosperity. Although the panel notes the need to enforce the current boundary throughout the county, it also

King County, Washington: Transfer of Development Rights

In Washington state’s King County, 98 percent of development has been inside the urban growth boundary limits, both spurring economic value and taking the pressure off rural and resource (agricultural) lands. In 2008 an updated growth management act limited land use in King County to three types—urban, rural, and resource—eliminating “suburban” half-acre or one-acre lots. However, much of the predvelopment suburbs were grandfathered in, and they continue in their current suburban form. From 1994 to 2004, many changes have been made to the urban growth boundary. Some land was taken out of the boundary and turned into agricultural productivity areas, while other areas that were designated rural have become urban parkland.

In King County, transfer of development rights from the rural areas to inside the growth boundary has benefited farmers and the community. Farmers can sell rights within the urban services boundary, creating more density in the desired areas and reducing demand to subdivide. Agricultural land is protected, the cities are a little denser, economic diversity is retained, and the culture that makes the community unique is protected.

As part of its recommendations, the panel encourages Hillsborough County to find opportunities for redevelopment, including expanding its Competitive Sites program to focus on infill and redevelopment sites.
supports reevaluation of those boundaries every five to eight years to determine when the phased extension of the strategic economic development nodes is warranted.

The panel’s stakeholder interviews indicated that most development projects within the USA are built to the minimum density allowance rather than the maximum. Presumably this outcome is based on low demand for density within the USA and relative ease of development outside the USA where costs are often lower. Given the low density and limited demand, Hillsborough County currently has no market for transfer of development rights, as raised in some of the panel interviews. This should be revisited in the future as redevelopment within the USA and new nodal development proceed.

**Fiscal Implications**

Growth will come with a cost. To ensure Hillsborough County’s future economic prosperity and quality of life, the county must address fiscal impacts and funding in all its planning efforts. The panel’s recommended approaches are described below.

**Community Plans**

Over the course of the past several years, 23 community plans have been designed and adopted in Hillsborough County. They represent years of commitment, dialogue, and negotiation between the Planning Commission, Hillsborough County, and community members. These plans represent the vision each community has for its long-term population and job growth and the means for protecting each one’s unique heritage, community culture, and natural resources. The plans are the culmination of significant input and negotiation between the stakeholders. The designs are thoughtful and represent appropriate scale community-oriented development and expansion. Many include creation of main streets and “village center” nodes as well as additional residential and commercial development contextual to each community’s overall vision.

Yet the plans do not address fiscal impacts or funding mechanisms to achieve implementation because those were not required as part of the overall process. At present, the planning process in Hillsborough County does not require fiscal impact studies or financial analysis of design plans. Consequently, no way exists of assessing the cost of the plans, nor is a means identified to pay for them.

The panel perceives a lack of clarity on the part of the community about the role and authority of the Planning Commission that has led to misunderstanding about the practicalities around timing and funding of the adopted community plans and unrealistic expectations related to their implementation. Although the plans are adopted by the Board of County Commissioners and have binding authority, they do not include any economic feasibility analysis. Recently, the current county staff has increased outreach and education, and the panel applauds these efforts. Although they are doing their best in a challenging environment, community members continue to be frustrated and distrustful, leaving the current staff and administration in a difficult situation.

Because the negotiated community plans do not include any fiscal impact analysis, the county staff will need to evaluate the economic viability of each plan and make strong recommendations to the county commissioners. The panel notes that the neighborhood groups negotiated the community plans in good faith and expect county staff and the Board of County Commissioners to execute them accordingly. The panel recommends as the next step in the process for the representative community groups—in cooperation with the county staff—to review the community plans, prioritize projects, set timelines, and identify specific implementation and funding plans (see “Funding for the Future,” page 41).

The panel also recommends the Planning Commission incorporate a fiscal impacts evaluation or assessment into the review process. The panel further endorses the Board of County Commissioners’ inclusion of form-based zoning as part of the “Five Guiding Principles.”

**Robbing Peter to Pay Paul**

A backlog of unfunded and underfunded infrastructure needs is affecting the county’s ability to invest in its future.
The panel heard from a number of interviewees about the county’s prevalent practice of taking income from current development to pay for past obligations stemming from past development, thereby creating a mounting deficit to fund current infrastructure needs. This problem will be further exacerbated by the likely passage of the Homestead Exemption in 2018. Given the tight funding environment, the county will have to prioritize its projects while also exploring creative and nontraditional funding sources (see “Funding for the Future”). The panel applauds the county commissioners for taking steps to address these unfunded deficiencies through the passage of the 2016 Transportation Funding. The transfer of seven to eight cents of the ad valorem tax will shore up existing transportation needs.

However, long-term repercussions arise from playing catch-up by using current funds to cover existing services and unfunded obligations. This shortfall is not limited to roads or transit. Other public services and institutions are at risk of reduced viability, and the county’s ability to fund capital improvements to enhance quality-of-life issues is constrained. These fiscal pressures affect the development of new public services and infrastructure, thereby creating the need for new sources of revenue. How the county pays for its long-term services is critical to community health and vitality, property values, and economic prosperity. To say that this strategy is not viable long term is an understatement. The bill compounds with each shortfall, and when it comes due—as it inevitably will—the consequences could be damaging.

New Development Should Pay Its Own Way
Several interviewees the panel spoke with noted that new development is not fully covering the cost of services, in large part because of development outside the USA. In line with American Planning Association policy guidelines, impact fees should fully cover the additional costs of financing public facilities to the beneficiaries of those new facilities. Any time development leapsfroges existing service areas, the cost of services to the county is disproportionate to the revenue collected. As a practical matter, impact fees are capitalized into land values and capture the incremental value of the land attributable to the use made possible by the new public facilities. In short, it makes the new development more valuable. Without a clear correlation between impact fees and services, the county is effectively incentivizing sprawl and placing an additional burden on the balance of the community.

To be a great place and attract great jobs, those who benefit from improvements need to fund them. In addition, the public sector must come to the table to ensure quality of life and economic prosperity. The panel urges the county to ensure that all new development projects fully cover their impact. The panel recommends impact fees be adjusted so that new growth defrays the cost of growth’s “impact” on vital services such as schools, parks, libraries, roads, ambulance and fire service, and other infrastructure needs. This is far easier to do by focusing development within the existing USA and the targeted expansion areas. By requiring new development to pay its own way, existing resources are leveraged, costs are reduced, and capital is freed up to invest in other important initiatives.

Funding for the Future
As demographics, economic growth, and federal funding sources change, communities and property owners are accessing an increasingly sophisticated menu of financing tools that can be layered to revitalize a community and support growth.

Public/private partnerships are often the most effective means of deploying large-scale new investment and redevelopment in communities. Local tools such as tax increment financing and tax abatement programs and many newer community-based mechanisms have evolved. These kinds of partnerships share the financial risk between public and private entities and create alignment of interests for success. In addition to partnering on the funding mechanism, the public sector can facilitate investment and development through expedited approvals and streamlined coordination among departments.

The county has a wide variety of tools available to make this happen. The panel recommends the county explore a number of these tools, which are summarized below.
Community Benefit Districts (CBDs). As part of the efforts to implement the 23 community plans, CBDs could be used to seed activity in places like the Seffner-Mango and Thonotosassa areas. CBDs strive to improve the overall quality of life in targeted commercial districts and mixed-use neighborhoods through a partnership between the county and the local community. Once an area has voted to establish a CBD, local property owners are levied a special assessment to fund improvements to their neighborhood. The funds are administered by a nonprofit organization established by the neighborhood. The CBD empowers communities to solve their own problems based on their unique characteristics. For example, the panel heard from the residents in Seffner-Mango about their plans to improve the appearance of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. A CBD could be used to support these efforts.

Community Development Districts (CDDs). The formation of specific CDDs to catalyze infrastructure improvements within targeted expansion areas is a mechanism long used by Florida communities. A CDD is a local special-purpose government framework authorized by the Florida legislature. In the absence of municipal incorporation, it provides another mechanism to finance and manage infrastructure development and maintenance.

Authorized under Section 190.012 of Florida Statutes, CDDs can support a wide of variety of services and facilities, including water and sewage, transportation infrastructure, emergency management, and school facilities.

Sales Tax or Tourism Tax. Further consideration should be given to a sales or tourism tax to support infrastructure, transportation, and transit. The panel’s interviews suggest that Hillsborough County residents and politicians are open to revisiting a sales tax increase for transportation funding, either through a public vote or Council action. A disadvantage of sales taxes, however, is that they are regressive and thus disproportionately burden lower-income
residents. Conversely, tourism taxes are levied largely on nonresident users of county infrastructure, though they must be carefully crafted so as not to dampen demand.

**Tax Increment Financing (TIF).** Although Hillsborough County is a home-rule county, the panel recommends exploring TIF in partnership with city partners. TIF is already being used in the city of Tampa to support redevelopment in specific areas such as West Tampa and Downtown. TIF could be used for redevelopment and rehabilitation in specifically defined “blighted” areas.

**Transportation Improvement Bonds.** One example of use of these bonds is the Denver Eagle P3 Project (https://www.transportation.gov/policy-initiatives/build-america/eagle-p3-project-denver-co), part of the larger FasTracks program, a voter-approved, tax-backed transit plan expanding rail and bus service throughout metropolitan Denver. The project, being implemented by the Denver Regional Transportation District (RTD) is a 34-year term design-build-finance-operate-maintain concession contract. The RTD will make monthly payments to a private entity, Denver Transit Partners, based on the availability and performance of the facility. The RTD retains ownership of the assets throughout the concession period, sets fares and fare policies, and retains all project revenues. This comprehensive public/private partnership draws on a mix of federal loans and grants and private investments to support major capital transit projects within the region.

In November 2017, Denver voters approved a massive general obligation (GO) bond that extends an existing 8.433 mill levy an additional ten years to fund transportation developments. The GO Bond, as it was dubbed, includes $937 million of investment designed to protect, improve, and repair infrastructure, including a major emphasis on transportation and mobility, plus significant investment in parks and public spaces, arts and cultural institutions, and more. About half the value of the bond package funds new projects, with the remainder covering repairs and long-deferred maintenance. The bonds will be repaid by an extension of an existing property tax levy currently repaying bonds issued in 2007 ($89.9 million) and in 2016 ($123 million). The incremental debt service is being covered by virtue of a significant increase in property value from 2007 to date, as well as future anticipated property value increases as a result of the infrastructure and cultural improvements from the new investments.

Some interesting emerging funding mechanisms that are gaining traction in communities nationwide include civic crowdfunding and tactical urbanism:

**Civic Crowdfunding.** Crowdfunding, on its surface, simply means to collect monetary contributions from a large number of people or sources through an online platform to fund a project or venture. Civic crowdfunding focuses very specifically on community amenities. It is very flexible in the projects that can be funded, such as bike racks, community gardens, playgrounds, renovation projects, neighborhood markets, cultural facilities, parks and recreation facilities, social services, and conservation easement purchases. Although usually geared toward raising relatively small sums, crowdfunding platforms can help seed larger projects and can be used in conjunction with other funding mechanisms.

**Tactical Urbanism.** “Placemaking” or “pilot projects” are community-led demonstration projects that enable residents and stakeholders to participate in relatively inexpensive temporary transformations to test and experience changes. A growing number of creative and successful national examples include the conversion of street edges into enhanced bikeways, parking spaces into “parklets,” vacant
lots into community gardens, and off-street parking areas into small plazas or food-vendor courtyards. For example, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society’s annual pop-up garden in Philadelphia combines the transformation of a vacant lot into a seasonal oasis, with beer and great food.

These inexpensive and often temporary projects can have a significant impact. They help both the community and local officials envision a new future for a place, test out new ideas, and attract funding for permanent improvements.

Seffner-Mango is an example of a place where layered financing mechanisms such as TIF and CBDs, civic crowd funding, or tactical urbanism pilot projects could be used to support both minor and major infrastructure improvements.

It should be no surprise to anyone that any development must make financial sense. Traditional financial metrics, cash flows and returns, will drive most of the financial mechanisms.

Northampton, Massachusetts’s Complete Streets Demonstration Day in 2016 played with tactical urbanism as the city put in temporary road installations to gauge people’s reactions to interacting with streets that are people- and bicycle-focused. For more information: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AdyXbiadUFI.
Public Engagement and Regulatory Framework

OVER THE YEARS, HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY has successfully initiated and adopted various community plan areas, overlay districts, and special zoning districts, including the Comprehensive Plan for unincorporated Hillsborough County, which required many public outreach efforts. The county continues to innovate and improve the community engagement process and has taken measures for better communication and customized public outreach, including social media, conference calls, small group meetings, workshops, and surveys.

For any plan to be successful and to meet state and federal mandates, citizen involvement and engagement are understood to be key factors. However, the panel’s interviews revealed lack of communication and trust are broadly perceived as lingering between the county and at least some of the residents. The county’s outreach efforts will require further assessment on how to engage the community more effectively in a collaborative and consensus-driven participation process to avoid inconsistencies, confusion, and misperceptions.

Furthermore, some communication gaps appear to exist between various levels of county administration or departments. The panel recommends increasing operational efficiency by creating a community engagement policy adopted through a resolution by the Board of County Commissioners. The board should adopt written procedures to provide effective, early, and continuous public participation in the development and major amendment of plans from all geographic, ethnic, and economic areas of the county and implemented by all departments.

When adopted, the policy will apply to all departments, boards, committees, and commissions before a new study or plan or an amendment is initiated or implemented. The policy should address consistency in the planning process, policy implementation, transparency, and reliability.

The purpose of the community engagement or public participation plan is to define various methods to encourage and solicit public and stakeholder engagement for any plan or policy updates that require citizen input. It is designed to provide the community and stakeholders with diverse and meaningful opportunities for engagement that is easy and simple to understand.

To help create a regulatory environment where both the reality and the perception are ones of consistency, transparency, and reliability, the panel recommends taking the following actions:

■ Continue providing excellent internal and external customer service, and streamline the planning review process and responsiveness to customers.

■ Create protocol, guidelines, and procedures for the important roles of the board, committees, and commission—everything from how meetings are held to the process to initiate or amend a study—to help improve and establish clearer communication. The panel recommends this policy be implemented countywide and be adopted by all departments, boards, committees, and commissions. This ensures not only that everyone is following the same rules and protocols, but also that the public at large is aware of a uniform and consistent process.

■ Implement joint quarterly or bi-annual meetings of the Board of County Commissioners and the Planning Commission to ensure regular and consistent communication about upcoming plans, strategies, and initiatives.
■ Provide the Planning Commission and staff with adequate training, continuing education, and support in the planning field to help the community anticipate and plan for tomorrow.

■ Ensure and implement consistency, transparency, and reliability in the planning process.

■ Review variances and waivers as outlined in Land Development Code, and uphold land use consistent with the Comprehensive Plan (i.e., everyone is subject to the same rules).

■ Ensure accuracy and availability of applications and continue to provide timely reviews.

■ Create design guidelines and standards to ensure that consistent information around development and design requirements is clearly communicated.
Conclusion

GROWTH IN HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY is coming. Hillsborough County can ensure today that growth tomorrow leads to positive change and supports what makes the Tampa Bay area unique.

The panel’s major recommendation is to hold the line throughout the county and take a phased approach to accommodate this new growth with density. The existing USA has the capacity to accommodate somewhere between five and ten years’ worth of growth, depending on the actual pace of that growth. However, the boundary will need to be revisited and reevaluated on a regular basis to decide how it might need to move to accommodate future growth. But this revision must be done in a planned way, which is described in great detail throughout this report.

The other point that should not be underestimated is the amount of developable land currently available in Hillsborough County, including already developed land that is underused. Accordingly, a critical metric that must be developed is how much space can actually fit within the USA using not only greenfield development, but also adaptive use and total repurposing of sparsely developed parcels. Doing so will allow the county to adhere to a key precept of the panel’s strategic nodal economic development recommendation: stick to the boundary as it is drawn. The county will be under enormous pressure through 2040 to expand the boundary. Do not do it. The county needs to find a mechanism to preserve the land that makes the Tampa Bay region what it is, and based on the panel’s observation that substantial development can be accommodated within the existing USA boundary by allowing higher densities on vacant land and in adaptive use projects, expansion of the USA may not be necessary for many years.

In addition to the panel’s recommendations, a few other things will be critical to the county’s future success.

Update the comprehensive plan so that it embodies the county’s guiding principles. When done right, that is what comprehensive plans are. The current plan has a lot of unnecessary and confusing regulatory language that is better placed in other regulatory documents outside the comprehensive plan.

Doing nothing is a choice just as much as doing something is. The panel’s hope is that this Advisory Services panel and report can help the county make the right choice for its future planning and development vision. Change is going to happen. How you manage that change is what is important. The Tampa Bay region has been given a unique environment in terms of both its climate and the nature of its surroundings, which are beautiful. The panel encourages Hillsborough County to create a planning and development vision that preserves those things that make it special and not to squander them.
About the Panel

Alan Razak
Panel Chair
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Razak is a principal of AthenianRazak LLC, a Philadelphia-based real estate services company that consults on, creates, and manages real property. He has almost four decades of commercial real estate experience, encompassing development and project management, finance, architectural design, and consulting. His diverse real estate background includes managing the development process, both as owner and on a consulting basis as owner’s representative, and project types including residential, office and commercial, as well as specialized expertise in data centers and other highly technical facilities.

Before merging with Athenian Properties to form AthenianRazak, Razak founded and led Razak Company, which was responsible for the development of Main Line Jaguar Land Rover, Pembroke North Condominium, 5035 Ritter Road for the AOPC, the Curtis Institute of Music’s Lenfest Hall, and other projects. He also has led real estate consulting and development assignments for clients including Children’s Hospital of Pennsylvania, Walnut Street Theatre, Swarthmore College, Rock School of Dance, Natural Lands Trust, CSX, Conrail, Digital Realty, Berkadia, Vanguard Group of Mutual Funds, and many others. He currently leads the team developing a new practice facility for the Philadelphia 76ers.

Before forming Razak Company in 2003, Razak was a principal with a Philadelphia real estate consulting and investment advisory firm, where he consulted on a broad variety of assignments across the spectrum of real estate issues. Throughout the 1980s, as a partner at developer Rouse & Associates, he managed such high-profile projects as a 400,000-square-foot Washington, D.C., office building and the development of a 20-acre Penn’s Landing urban mixed-use project. He began his career as an architect, working on the design of multifamily residential, commercial, and health care projects in the Midwest and Pacific Northwest.

Razak has served on the Central Philadelphia Development Corporation’s board of directors, is chairman of the board of the Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre, and is a member of the Urban Land Institute, where he developed and currently teaches several workshops for real estate practitioners internationally. He holds a BS in arts and design from MIT, a master of architecture from the University of Washington, and an MBA with a concentration in real estate from Wharton.

Molly McCabe
Panel Vice Chair
Big Fork, Montana

McCabe founded HaydenTanner in 2004. She focuses on the triple-bottom-line evaluation of alternative development and reuse scenarios.

She has spent her career (including management experience with Bank of America, Wells Fargo, and her own commercial mortgage-backed securities firm) in cultivating practical solutions and strategies to accelerate the emergence of resilient buildings and vibrant, sustainable cities. She works with clients to channel investment capital to enhance resilience, community vibrancy, and livability while meeting economic objectives. She has developed a proprietary financial pro forma modeling tool that evaluates the triple bottom line of proposed projects, analyzing impacts on community renewal and social equity, health and productivity, job growth, energy/water efficiencies, risk and return. Her work is multifaceted, incorporating real estate,
economics, human behavior, policy, strategy, and finance. Projects span residential, suburban office, urban mixed use, and diverse land development.

McCabe is chair of the Urban Land Institute’s Responsible Property Investment Council and recently stepped down from its Center for Sustainability Advisory Board. She is on the 2018 faculty of the Rose Center for Public Leadership in Land Use. She is also the author of Practical Greening: The Bottom Line on Sustainable Property Development, Investment and Financing and “Driving Value: Responsible and Resilient Property Investing in the New Millennium” for Institutional Real Estate Investor. She was on the steering group and acted as a reviewer for ULI’s white papers “L’Accord de Paris: A Potential Game Changer for the Global Real Estate Industry” and “Returns on Resilience.”

She has an MBA in finance and management from the University of San Francisco and a BA in managerial economics from the University of California at Davis. She has taught at Boston Architectural College and has lectured at Pinchot University. She is a trained mediator, professional business coach, and LEED AP.

Jordan Block

Denver, Colorado

Block is an urban strategist and planner with WSP USA in its Denver, Colorado, office. His focus is in bridging large-scale community and regional planning with attention focused on the human experience within the public realm. He believes in designing for people and promoting active and shared transportation options as a catalyst for great places. He also believes that to solve large metropolitan-scaled problems, you need a team of thinkers that push beyond the traditional confines of planning and design.

He has worked on numerous urban planning and design projects with a wide variety of clients, ranging from developer-led urban infill and transit-oriented development projects to public and municipal comprehensive vision plans for major metropolitan areas. He has worked both domestically and internationally, with a large concentration of projects in his home state of Colorado as well as in the Middle East and other regions. Block has worked in many municipalities on the edge of core cities in an effort to provide them with a sense of pride and place as unique communities, as well as find strong and meaningful links—both physical and economic—to the downtown cores they depend on.

In all his projects, Block aims to transform stakeholder and community ideas into implementable plans. He is heavily involved in the Urban Land Institute, both locally and nationally, and is the chair of the Colorado chapter Transit-Oriented Development committee. He is also a mayoral appointee as part of Denver’s Mayor’s Bicycle Advisory Committee as well as an enthusiastic participant in many other industry and civic efforts. A graduate of the Master of Urban Design program at the University of Colorado Denver, Block received his master of city planning from the University of Pennsylvania.

Laura Bonich

Jackson, Wyoming

Bonich has worked for Nolte Vertical Five (NV5) since 1995 and has significant experience in the land development processes, regulations, and entitlement/permitting requirements and the preparation of master plans for large infill urban redevelopment and master planned community projects with an emphasis on the practical implementation of sustainable design practices for infrastructure. She combines a very strong technical background with project management, business development, financial analysis, public presentation, and negotiation skills. She also has significant experience in the US Green Building Council’s LEED certification process and worked directly on the development of the LEED for Neighborhood Development rating system.

As director of the sustainability practice for NV5, Bonich is responsible for incorporation of sustainability throughout the company. She works with NV5’s engineers to encourage the use of innovative best practices for infrastructure rather than a traditional code compliance design approach.
She is responsible for all internal technical training to facilitate the practical application of sustainability in the design of infrastructure and for all of the NV5 business practices to insure it is “walking the talk.”

She has extensive knowledge of the coordination of infrastructure master planning (transportation, water, wastewater, reclaimed water, and drainage), with an integrated approach to the optimization of project infrastructure to reduce construction cost. She has developed numerous infrastructure cost estimates and financing plans and negotiated development agreements, conditions of approval, and mitigation measures. Bonich has been involved with the feasibility and master planning of infrastructure for more than 100,000 lots in the western United States and millions of square feet of nonresidential development.

Bonich is a full member of the Urban Land Institute (Community Development Council, Silver Flight), past branch president of the American Society of Civil Engineers, member of the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure’s National Technical Committee for the Envision rating system, and a member of the Harvard Graduate School of Design Sustainable Infrastructure Advisory Board. She has a BS in civil engineering from the University of Washington and an MBA from National University.

**Dan Conway**  
*Denver, Colorado*

A real estate marketing and research authority specializing in residential, commercial/industrial, and golf course developments, Conway has had over 40 years’ experience as an urban land economist. He is a frequent guest speaker for economic associations and trade organizations and is a member and frequent speaker to the Urban Land Institute. He has been a real estate and urban land economic honorarium instructor at the University of Colorado and at the University of Denver. His many published articles include the *CCIM Magazine* piece “Market Analysis, the Road to Profit, Prosperity and Peace of Mind.”

Conway’s other professional and community activities have included membership on the board of directors of a federally chartered national bank and a member of the Mile-High Transplant Bank. He also participated on the Archbishop’s Inner-City Sun School Committee to assess the future needs of elementary education in the inner city of Denver.

For the last 25 years as president and director of economics and market research for THK Associates, he has conducted numerous residential, commercial, industrial, and golf course economic feasibility and market studies, socioeconomic impact assessments, and financial planning studies in all 50 of the United States, as well as a number of foreign countries.

Projects of particular interest include an international market center and industrial market analysis for the Dove Valley Business Air Park in Arapahoe County, a residential and related uses market analysis for several major developments in Douglas County including the 1,342-acre Parker City site, and numerous golf course feasibility studies throughout the country. Specific communities where Conway has completed a wide range of research and analysis include Las Vegas and Reno, Nevada; Oxnard, Palm Springs, and Carmel, California; Kansas City, Missouri; Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma; Austin, Texas; Albuquerque and Santa Fe, New Mexico; Seattle, Washington; and Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona.

Most recently, Conway has gained recognition as a sought-after speaker on the golf course development circuit. His numerous presentations at the Crittenden Golf Development Expos have been widely attended and universally applauded. His book *The Cost and Revenues of a Unique Golf Club* has furthered his reputation as one of the industry’s leading authorities. Under Conway’s guidance, THK Associates completes over 75 golf course feasibility studies and golf driving range market studies and appraisals each year.

**Kazi Haque**  
*Maricopa, Arizona*

Haque is the zoning administrator for the city of Maricopa, Arizona, and has worked for the city since October 2005. He is an integral part of the Development Services Depart-
ment and has been involved with numerous projects in the city, including the siting of the first ethanol plant, a $120 million project, in Arizona. He has over 17 years of public service and oversees all current and long-range planning activities, including land use, housing, hazard mitigation, air quality, water resources, and environmental planning.

During his tenure with the city of Maricopa, he has supported and established community-based outreach programs, mediation, and dissemination of information for projects to balance hypergrowth (4,000 percent) and sprawl as experienced by the city in the mid-2000s. He was also successful in bringing an American Planning Association (APA) Community Planning Assistance Team to visit Maricopa in 2011 and served as APA’s primary community liaison throughout the effort.

Before his employment with Maricopa, Haque spent five years as a planner and economic development specialist for the town of Queen Creek, Arizona. His planning career started in 1998 with the Center for Resource Planning and Management in Springfield, Missouri.

Throughout his career Haque has been an active social member and belongs to many groups, organizations, and associations nationwide, including the APA since 1998 and the Urban Land Institute. He has received his certification from the American Institute of Certified Planners. He is a graduate of Missouri State University, Springfield, with a bachelor’s degree in geography with an emphasis in urban and regional planning and holds a master’s degree in resource planning from the same institution.

Christine C. Richman
Salt Lake City, Utah

Richman is a principal at GSBS, a multidisciplinary architecture, design, and planning firm headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah, with offices in Fort Worth, Texas. GSBS specializes in sustainable design and planning by incorporating consideration of environmental, social, and economic viability into all projects. Richman has over 20 years’ experience in the field of planning, economic development, and real estate market analysis. She spent more than nine years in the public sector as the director of community and economic development for Midvale City, Utah, a community in the Salt Lake City Metropolitan Area that is home to two Superfund sites. During her tenure at Midvale, Richman led the effort to position the Superfund sites for redevelopment. As a result, the Bingham Junction area of Midvale City has experienced significant growth and investment—even in 2008 through 2010.

In 2005, Richman joined the private sector first as a project manager with Wikstrom Economic & Planning Consultants, then with her own firm, and now as the principal in charge of planning for GSBS. Her projects have included a redevelopment strategy for more than 300,000 acres of Superfund property in and around Anaconda, Montana, as well as small area plans for station areas in the Salt Lake valley.

In addition to her work with GSBS, Richman is an adjunct professor in the Planning Department of the College of Architecture + Planning at the University of Utah. She was the founding instructor for the college’s course on real estate market analysis, a graduate-level course required as part of the Masters in Real Estate Development program. Richman also serves on the advisory panel for the College’s Metropolitan Research Center, a premier research body focusing on planning issues and transportation.

Richman is the governance chair of the ULI Utah District Council and is a member of the Public Private Partnerships Blue product council. She also serves as the president of the board of directors for the Community Development Corporation of Utah, a nonprofit that focuses on housing and homeownership statewide.

Ross Tilghman
Seattle, Washington

Tilghman is a transportation planning consultant with his own practice, the Tilghman Group. Working nationally and internationally, he tailors transportation plans for a wide variety of land uses to fit their environmental,
historical, and cultural settings. He brings over 30 years of experience, including serving as executive director of a downtown business improvement district.

Tilghman creates circulation and parking solutions for downtowns, historic districts, recreation areas, and special event facilities. His approach emphasizes careful observation of how people use transportation, abiding respect for the setting, and clear understanding of the client’s objectives. Services include master plans, market studies, parking revenue projections, and development strategies for governmental, not-for-profit, and private sector clients facing land use challenges. Examples of significant projects include master plans for Albuquerque’s BioPark; Al Ain Wildlife Park and Resort, United Arab Emirates; Iowa’s State Capitol Complex; Evergreen State College; Gallisteo Basin Preserve, New Mexico; and downtown St. Louis.

A member of the Urban Land Institute, Tilghman regularly serves on advisory panels for communities across the country. He is currently chair of the Seattle Design Commission that reviews public projects for design excellence. Tilghman received his MA in geography from the University of Washington and his BA in history from Washington University in St. Louis.

Andrew Watkins
Laguna Beach, California

Watkins is an architect, planner, and urban designer with over 15 years of professional experience. As a principal at SWA in southern California, his work focuses on large-scale urban design projects that explore the confluence of ecology and urbanism. He has led the design of community plans, urban design, and new city planning projects in diverse locales, including the United States, China, Indonesia, India, South Africa, Botswana, Ethiopia, Germany, Italy, Armenia, and Mexico.

His community planning work focuses on placemaking and creating high-quality public realms. His project experience includes greenfield development and urban and suburban revitalization, with new community work totaling over 20,000 acres of development featuring more than 50,000 homes, retail, commercial, and light industrial districts. In addition, Watkins has worked on projects that tie together development and agriculture, whether integrating food production into residential communities in which we live or exploring how development can sensitively support rural agrarian economies.

Watkins has researched contemporary urban conditions as related to infrastructure and grassroots organization in both developed and developing nations. Past research projects include “Building for Resilience” on the Front Range of northern Colorado; “Social Entrepreneurship: Expanded Business Models in Developing Markets,” studying methodologies for social impact design at SWA; “Ecologies of Gold” in Johannesburg, South Africa; “Villages in Development” in China’s rapidly developing Pearl River Delta; “Opportunities of Contemporary Urban Transformations” in Eastern Germany; and “Tall Buildings in the City,” a research fellowship with Moshe Safdie that explored the potentials of connecting tall buildings. His research has been published in Places, 306090, Inmobiliare, and Architecture Plus.

He has served as a part-time lecturer at the University of Southern California and, for ULI, as both a cochair for the OC/IE Pro-Bono Technical Assistance Panel and a member of the Sustainable Communities Initiative Council. He holds a bachelor’s of architecture from Syracuse University and a master’s of architecture in urban design from the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University.