Finding of Necessity for the Kass Circle Neighborhood Revitalization Area

Prepared by:

Hernando County Florida

USF UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA
COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Executive Summary

Hernando County has identified an area, herein referred to as "Kass Circle," that may benefit from creation of a Community Redevelopment Area. In accordance with the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969, Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes, a local government must generate a "finding of necessity" as an initial step in evaluating whether an area may be designated as a Community Redevelopment Area. The Finding of Necessity uses data and analysis to formally identify whether the study area contains conditions of blight, as defined by Florida Statutes.

Per Section 163.340(8), Florida Statutes, in order for an area to be considered a Community Redevelopment Area, it must contain "a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures; in which conditions, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies, endanger life or property or are leading to economic distress, and, in which two or more of the following blight factors present" in the area. The following table illustrates the results of analysis of each factor in the Kass Circle study area. Ten of the fifteen factors listed in the statute met the criteria for blight, and five factors were inconclusive. This Finding of Necessity for the Kass Circle area determines that the required conditions for creating a Community Redevelopment Area exist.

Statute	Blight Factor Required by Statute	Meets Criteria
163.340(8)(a)	Defective/inadequate transportation facilities	✓
163.340(8)(b)	No appreciable increase in assessed property values	✓
163.340(8)(c)	Faulty lot layout	✓
163.340(8)(d)	Unsanitary/unsafe conditions	✓
163.340(8)(e)	Site deterioration	✓
163.340(8)(f)	Building density patterns	✓
163.340(8)(g)	Falling lease rates	✓
163.340(8)(h)	Tax or special assessment delinquency	● ● ●
163.340(8)(i)	Vacancy rates	● ● ●
163.340(8)(j)	Crime incidents	✓
163.340(8)(k)	Fire/emergency medical service calls	✓
163.340(8)(l)	Florida Building Code violations	● ● ●
163.340(8)(m)	Diversity of ownership or defective or unusual conditions of title	● ● ●
163.340(8)(n)	Governmentally-owned properties with adverse environmental conditions	● ● ●
163.340(8)(o)	Substantial number or percentage of properties damaged by sinkhole activity which have not been adequately repaired or stabilized.	✓

Acknowledgments

The following staff members from Hernando County contributed to the data provision and administration of this report.

Ronald Pianta, AICP, Assistant County Administrator
Patricia McNeese, AICP, Planner
David Miles, Planner
James Johnson, BSM, CCF, GIS Coordinator

The following students from the University of South Florida Spring 2015 Land Use class contributed to the field work, analysis, and preparation of this report, under the guidance of Professor Evangeline Linkous, PhD, AICP.

Mariann Abrahamsen
Robert Boyd
Tia Claridge
Thomas Danaher
Patrick Dougherty
Matrell Everett
Steven Fernandez
Mara Latorre
Monica Martin
James McDevitt
Kimberly Middleton
Molly Murphy
Leilani Paxton
Camilo Soto
Wenonah Venter
Bryan Winter

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FINDING OF NECESSITY FOR THE KASS CIRCLE NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION AREA

Introduction

The "Kass Circle" area of Spring Hill, Hernando County, Florida is a mixed residential multifamily neighborhood surrounding a central shopping district. As this neighborhood ages, changes have been noted in the form of deteriorating structures, aging infrastructure, increased traffic, outdated circulation layouts, declining property values and transitioning land uses. In December 2013, Hernando County documented existing conditions in the area in the Kass Circle Neighborhood Revitalization Project Final Data Summary. A community process was initiated in January 2014 by the University of South Florida (USF) Florida Center for Community Design & Research in conjunction with Hernando County, to design a revitalization plan for the area. Two public workshops were held to gain community input on a vision for the area. The final document, "Kass Circle Revitalization Project: A Vision for Community Growth & Development," identifies a trend towards dis-investment in the commercial area and a complete lack of public realm improvements including neighborhood connectivity for this "defacto neighborhood center." Recommendations for revitalizing the area include establishment of a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) designation and tax increment financing (TIF) to help with funding of needed redevelopment, infrastructure and enhancements for the area.

This study, the *Finding of Necessity for the Kass Circle Neighborhood Revitalization Area*, was prepared to fulfill a "finding of necessity" in accordance with the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969, Chapter 163 Part III, Florida Statutes that is required prior to designation of a CRA. It was developed through a continuing partnership between the Hernando County Planning Department and USF. The USF graduate-level Land Use Planning course for Spring 2015 conducted all research and analysis and prepared the study in consultation with the County. Hernando County provided project administration, data, and technical assistance. The study builds on the two previous planning efforts for the Kass Circle area.

Community Redevelopment Act of 1969

The Community Redevelopment Act of 1969 ("Act"), Chapter 163 Part III, Florida Statutes, authorizes local governments to establish community redevelopment agencies to prevent or improve blighted conditions within their jurisdictions. The Act sets forth the legal process by which local governments may establish community redevelopment agencies and provide financing and regulatory processes to undertake the complex task of overcoming the conditions that contribute to the decline of a community.

Statutory Test for CRA Establishment

The following paragraph provides the definition of "blighted areas" identified in Section 163.340(8) of the Florida Statutes, which are the basis for a Finding of Necessity:

"…an area in which there are a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures; in which conditions, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies, endanger life or property or are leading to economic distress; and in which two or more of the following factors are present:

(a) Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, bridges, or public transportation facilities.

(b) Aggregate assessed values of real property in the area for ad valorem tax purposes have failed to show any appreciable increase over the 5 years prior to the finding of such conditions.

(c) Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness.

(d) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions.

(e) Deterioration of site or other improvements.

(f) Inadequate and outdated building density patterns.

(g) Falling lease rates per square foot of office, commercial, or industrial space compared to the remainder of the county or municipality.

(h) Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land.

(i) Residential and commercial vacancy rates higher in the area than in the remainder of the county or municipality.

(j) Incidence of crime in the area higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality.

(k) Fire and emergency medical service calls to the area proportionately higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality.

(l) A greater number of violations of the Florida Building Code in the area than the number of violations recorded in the remainder of the county or municipality.

(m) Diversity of ownership or defective or unusual conditions of title which prevent the free alienability of land within the deteriorated or hazardous area.

(n) Governmentally owned property with adverse environmental conditions caused by a public or private entity.

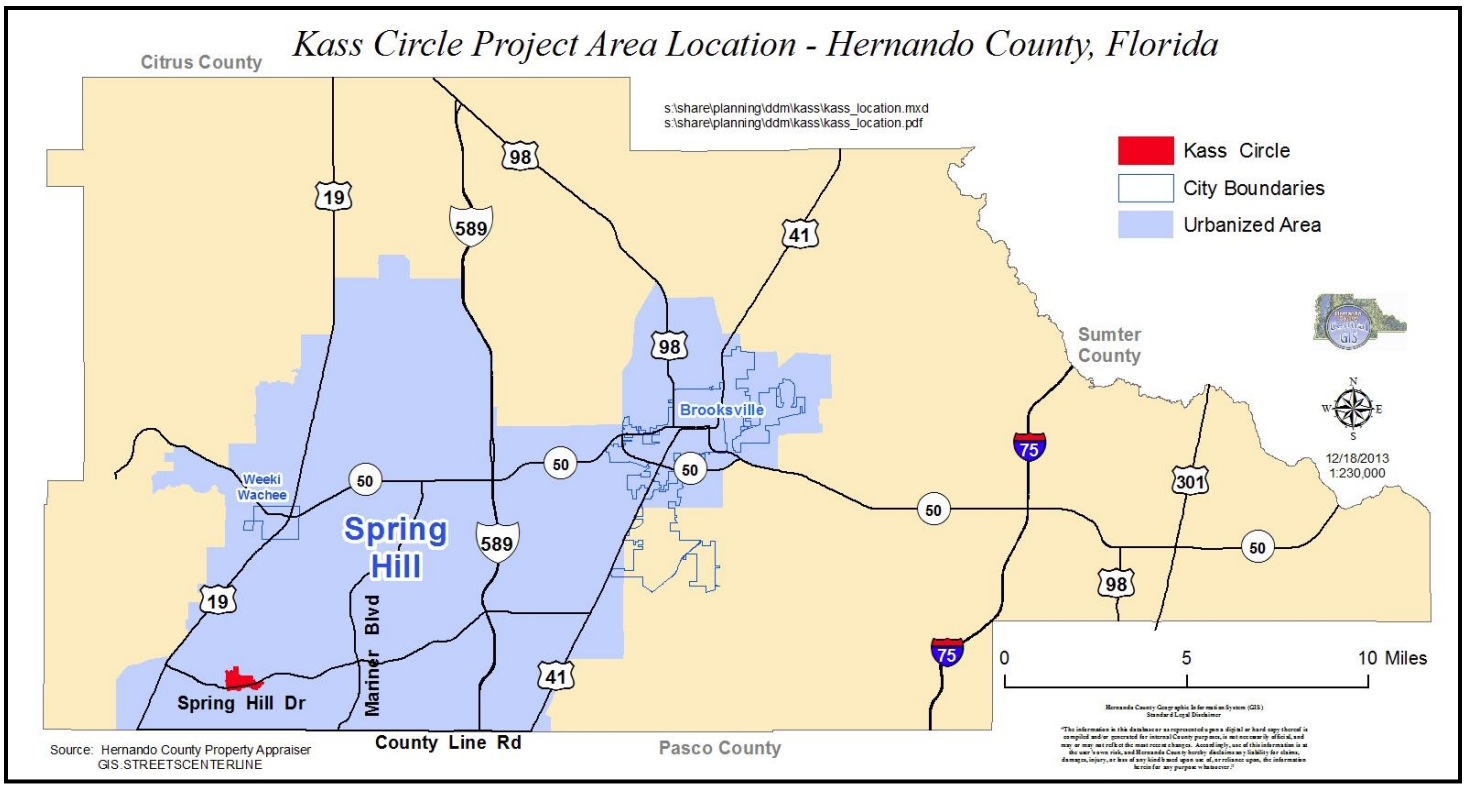
(o) A substantial number or percentage of properties damaged by sinkhole activity which have not been adequately repaired or stabilized."

Study Area

The Kass Circle area is located in Spring Hill, an unincorporated urbanized area in Hernando County, as shown in Figure 1. The study area centers around the community's first shopping center, the Spring Hill Shopping Plaza, located along Spring Hill Drive. The study area also includes adjacent residential neighborhoods. The boundary largely coincides with the original Spring Hill Master Plan delineation of the multi-family housing area, but also includes some single family. It also includes important local street intersections and agriculturally-zoned land in four outparcels, located to the north and bordered on two sides by the multi-family neighborhood. The boundary excludes the Timber Pines Community, a gated and walled community adjacent to and north of—but not physically connected to—the Kass Circle area. The

total project area is approximately 239 acres. For a detailed description of study area, including demographics and character, see the *Kass Circle Neighborhood Revitalization Project Final Data Summary.*

Figure 1: Kass Circle Project Area Location – Hernando County, Florida



Hernando County identified three areas of land use character within the project study area in the *Kass Circle Neighborhood Revitalization Project Final Data Summary.* These are described below and shown in Figure 2:

The **Commercial Center** is the main business district central to the neighborhood.

The **Transitioning Area** is located along Spring Hill Drive directly across from the Commercial Center. It was originally platted as residential but now contains a mix of residential and low-intensity commercial (mostly office) uses.

The **Neighborhood** surrounds the Commercial Center. The Neighborhood includes all of the multi-family housing and lots original to the Spring Hill Master Plan. It also includes important local street intersections and agriculturally-zoned land in four outparcels.

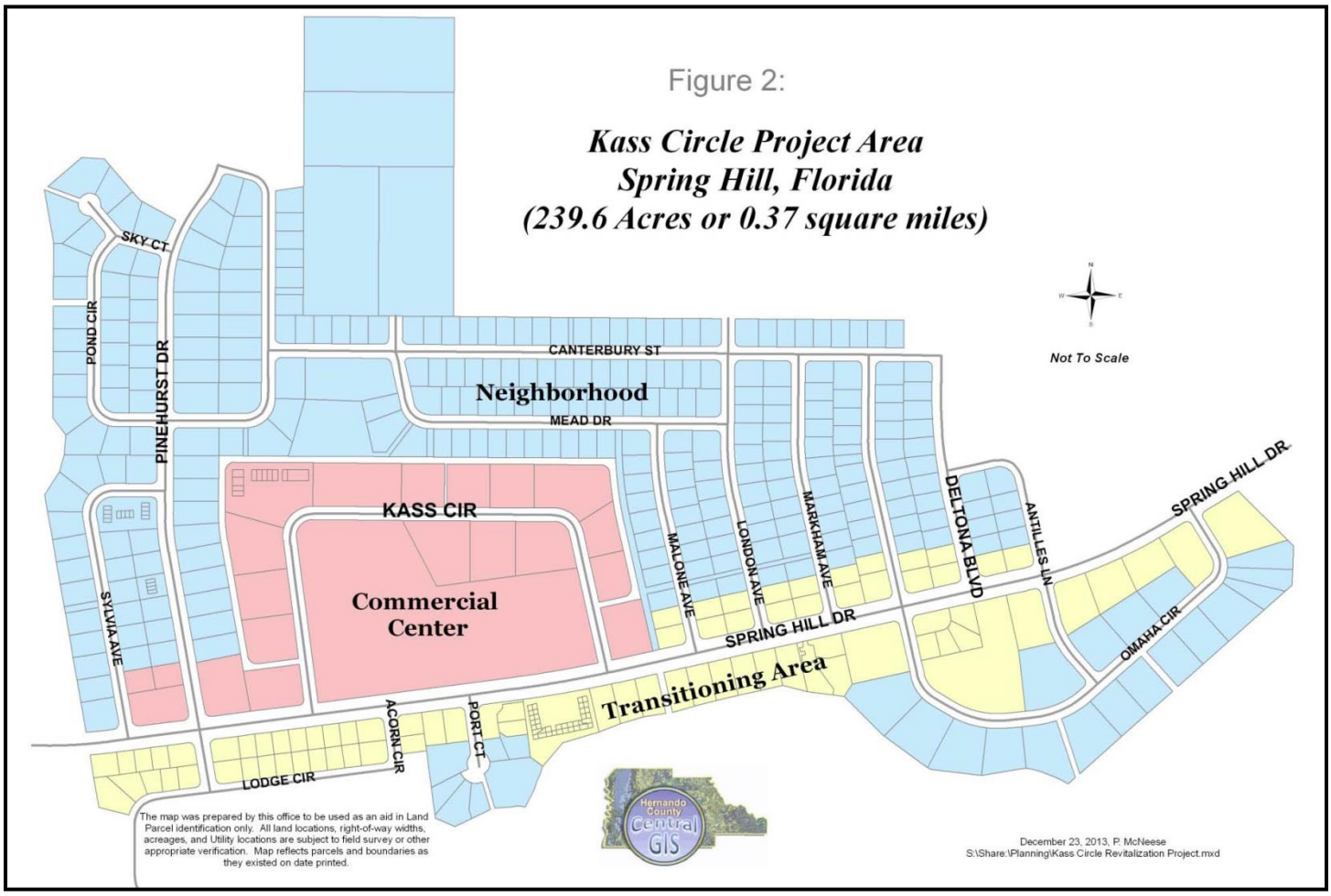
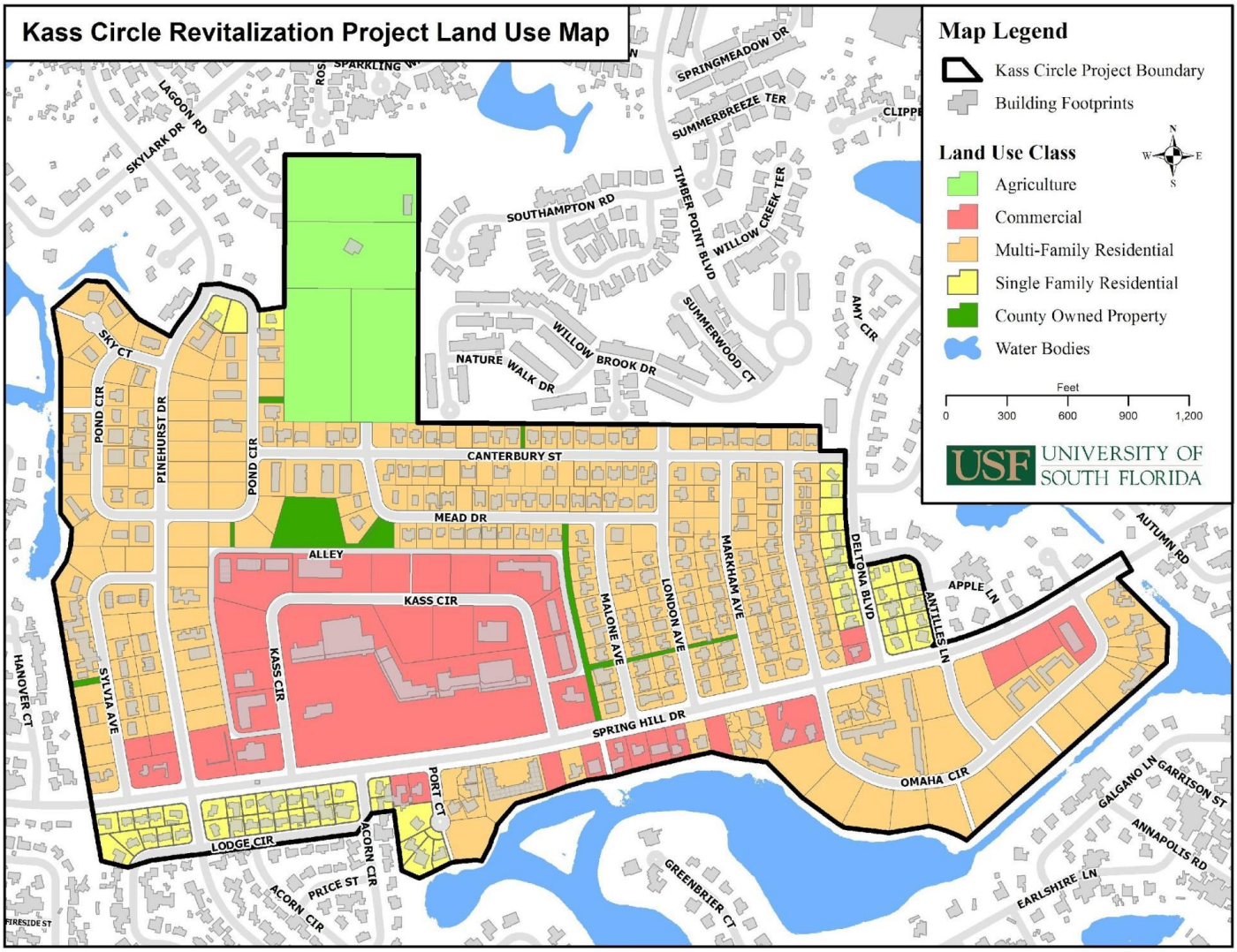


Figure 2: Kass Circle Project Area

Land use in the project area is depicted in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Kass Circle Land Use Map



Project Methodology

Each of the blight factors were evaluated using data obtained from County Departments and other sources identified below. A site visit was conducted on February 27, 2015 with the Hernando County Planning Department and USF graduate planning students to visually document and photograph conditions. In addition, students conducted follow-up site visits to assess specific conditions at different times and days. The following table summarizes the factors and data sources used in evaluating the need for redevelopment in the study area.

Table 1: F.S. 163.340(8) Criteria and Data Sources

Statute	Factor Description	Data Sources
163.840(8)	Substantial number of deteriorating structures	Site visits; Hernando County Geographical Information System (GIS) data, Hernando County Building Department, Hernando County Property Appraiser
163.340(8)(a)	Defective/inadequate transportation facilities	Site visits; Hernando County GIS data; *Kass Circle Neighborhood Revitalization Data Summary Report*; Hernando County Pavement Condition Index data, Citrus-Hernando Metropolitan Planning Organization traffic count data
163.340(8)(b)	No appreciable increase in assessed property values	Hernando County Property Appraiser
163.340(8)(c)	Faulty lot layout	Site visits; *Kass Circle Neighborhood Revitalization Data Summary Report*; Hernando County GIS data
163.340(8)(d)	Unsanitary/unsafe conditions	Site visits; Federal Emergency Management Agency data; Hernando County GIS data
163.340(8)(e)	Site deterioration	Site visits, Withlacoochee River Electric Cooperative; Hernando County Utilities Department; Hernando County Public Works Department
163.340(8)(f)	Building density patterns	Hernando County GIS data
163.340(8)(g)	Falling lease rates	Bruce Strumpf, Inc.; LoopNet commercial real estate web site

Table 1. (continued)		
Statute	**Factor Description**	**Data Sources**
163.340(8)(h)	Tax or special assessment delinquency	Hernando County GIS data
163.340(8)(i)	Vacancy rates	*Kass Circle Neighborhood Revitalization Data Summary Report*; Bruce Strumpf, Inc.
163.340(8)(j)	Crime incidents	Hernando County crime incident, fire, and EMS call data; U.S. Census
163.340(8)(k)	Fire/emergency medical service calls	Hernando County crime incident, fire, and EMS call data; U.S. Census
163.340(8)(l)	Florida Building Code violations	Data Not Available
163.340(8)(m)	Diversity of ownership or defective or unusual conditions of title	Data Not Available
163.340(8)(n)	Governmentally-owned properties with adverse environmental conditions	Site visits; Hernando County Property Appraiser; Southwest Florida Water Management District; Florida Department of Environmental Protection; federal Superfund Sites List
163.340(8)(o)	Substantial number or percentage of properties damaged by sinkhole activity which have not been adequately repaired or stabilized.	Hernando County GIS data; Hernando County Development Department; Hernando County Property Appraiser

Analysis of Blight Factors

163.340(8), F.S., Substantial Number of Deteriorating Structures

A high percentage of the structures in the area are older than 30 years, substantially depreciated and in need of upgrades. Evidence of structural deterioration is also seen on site.

Age and Depreciation of Structures

The Kass Circle neighborhood is the oldest in Spring Hill. In the Commercial Center, 63% of the built properties exceed 20 years in age and only 2 are under 10 years old. The largest commercial property, Spring Hill Plaza is approaching the age of 50 (built in 1967). Of the remaining 307 built properties outside the commercial area, 40% exceed 30 years in age. Forty-nine (13%) of the 367 built properties are rated by the Hernando County Property Appraiser as having only a fair or poor structural quality rating as of 2014. Of the 216 built residential properties over 30 years of age, the Property Appraiser rated depreciated actual cost value at 35% or less for 66% of those structures in 2014. Evidence of deteriorating structural conditions was found during site visits to the study area as shown by the examples in Figure 4.

Property Appraiser's data also show a substantial number of built properties with engineer-confirmed evidence of sinkhole activity. Only 16% of these properties have been repaired, leaving about 84% of the remaining compromised structures at risk of further deterioration.

Figure 4. Examples of Residential and Commercial Structural Deterioration in the Kass Circle Area.

Deteriorated/unsafe structure with significant roof damage.

Signs of structural deterioration visible on doors and supports.

Figure 4. (continued)

Deteriorated commercial structure with abandoned and aging utility infrastructure.

Deteriorated commercial structure with compromised external surface and aging utilities.

Figure 4. (continued)

Deteriorated commercial structure with mold-laden drainage and aging climate control system.

Deteriorated commercial structure with significant structural settling.

Figure 4. (continued)

Deteriorated commercial structure with significant deterioration visible on doors and windows, and, aging climate control system on roof.

Large deteriorated and aging commercial sign structure with significant foundational compromise.

One abandoned property in the study area was condemned after being brought to the attention of County staff during the Kass Circle community meetings in Spring 2014. (Figure 5). That structure was demolished at County expense in April 2015. In general, many residential and commercial properties throughout the area show signs of aging and lack major upgrades.

Figure 5: Abandoned Property

163.340(8)(a), F.S., Defective/Inadequate Transportation Facilities ✓

Poor or inadequate roadway access, pavement conditions, parking areas, and alternative transportation facilities and services are evident in the study area. Even basic pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure (such as sidewalks) are virtually absent from the study area. Overall, transportation conditions create an environment that lacks connectivity and presents several safety issues.

Roadway Access & Operation

A major transportation issue for the Kass Circle area is Spring Hill Drive, a high-traffic, four-lane arterial, the current design and operation of which divides the area, rather than integrating places and allowing access for a variety of users in the community. Spring Hill Drive stretches from U.S. 19 to U.S. 41 and is used as a major route through

Spring Hill. The posted speed limit is 40 miles per hour. Total width of paved lanes and median is about 65 feet.

A major access issue in the area is the lack of intersections, crosswalks, and traffic signaling along Spring Hill Drive. Traffic control signals are used to regulate traffic flow along streets, alleviate traffic congestion during peak hours, and allow users to cross roadways. In the Kass Circle area, there are just two traffic lights located over one-half mile apart on Spring Hill Drive: one at Pinehurst Drive (east) and one at Deltona Boulevard. There are two additional signalized intersections just beyond the study area on Spring Hill Drive: at Pinehurst Drive (west) and Waterfall Drive. This does not effectively manage traffic for an area that should function as a town center. Traffic is allowed to move too quickly and there are insufficient opportunities to cross Spring Hill Drive to access Spring Hill Plaza. The high traffic volumes on Spring Hill Drive, combined with very limited crossing opportunities, make the area inhospitable for pedestrians and bicyclists, including transit riders. In addition, a proliferation of turning movements added over the years adds to the dangerous conditions for anyone attempting to cross the roadway between signalized intersections. CRA funds could be utilized to calm traffic, eliminate and consolidate unnecessary turning movements, implement and enhance crosswalks, and enhance traffic signalization.

There are several older single-family homes with driveway access to Spring Hill Drive. These homes are relatively less attractive due to the increase in traffic volume over the past 40 years. The driveways also present access management issues.

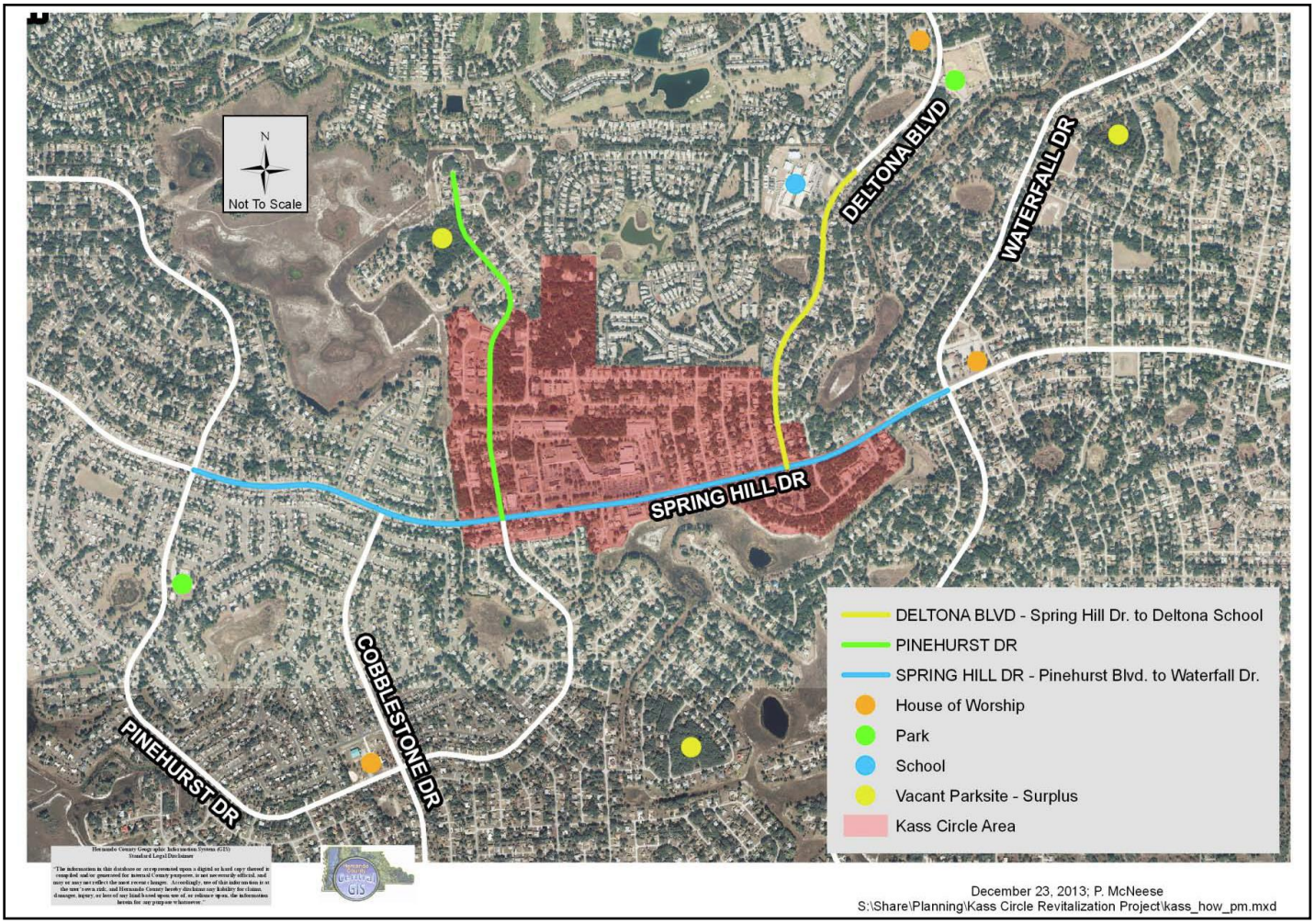
Deltona Boulevard is a major two-lane collector with its southern terminus at Spring Hill Drive. Traffic volume is greatest in the southernmost segment from Spring Hill Drive to Abeline Road. The posted speed limit is 40 miles per hour.

The adopted level of service (LOS) standard for Hernando County roadways in this area is LOS D. Hernando County uses the vehicle-to-capacity ratio (V/C) to measure the level of service. A V/C ratio of more than 1.00 indicates that the adopted level of service has been exceeded. Recent traffic counts (2012-2013) indicate V/C ratios of 0.55

and 0.65 for Spring Hill Drive and Deltona Boulevard, respectively, in the segments serving the project area. While this indicates that LOS is achieved, it also may allow cars to move through the area at high speeds, a phenomenon that has been observed during numerous site visits.

Future traffic impacts from this area are not expected to be significant since the area is largely built out but Spring Hill Drive serves as an arterial through-way from Highway 19 to beyond the Suncoast Parkway, so this segment is highly impacted by new trips generated beyond its borders.

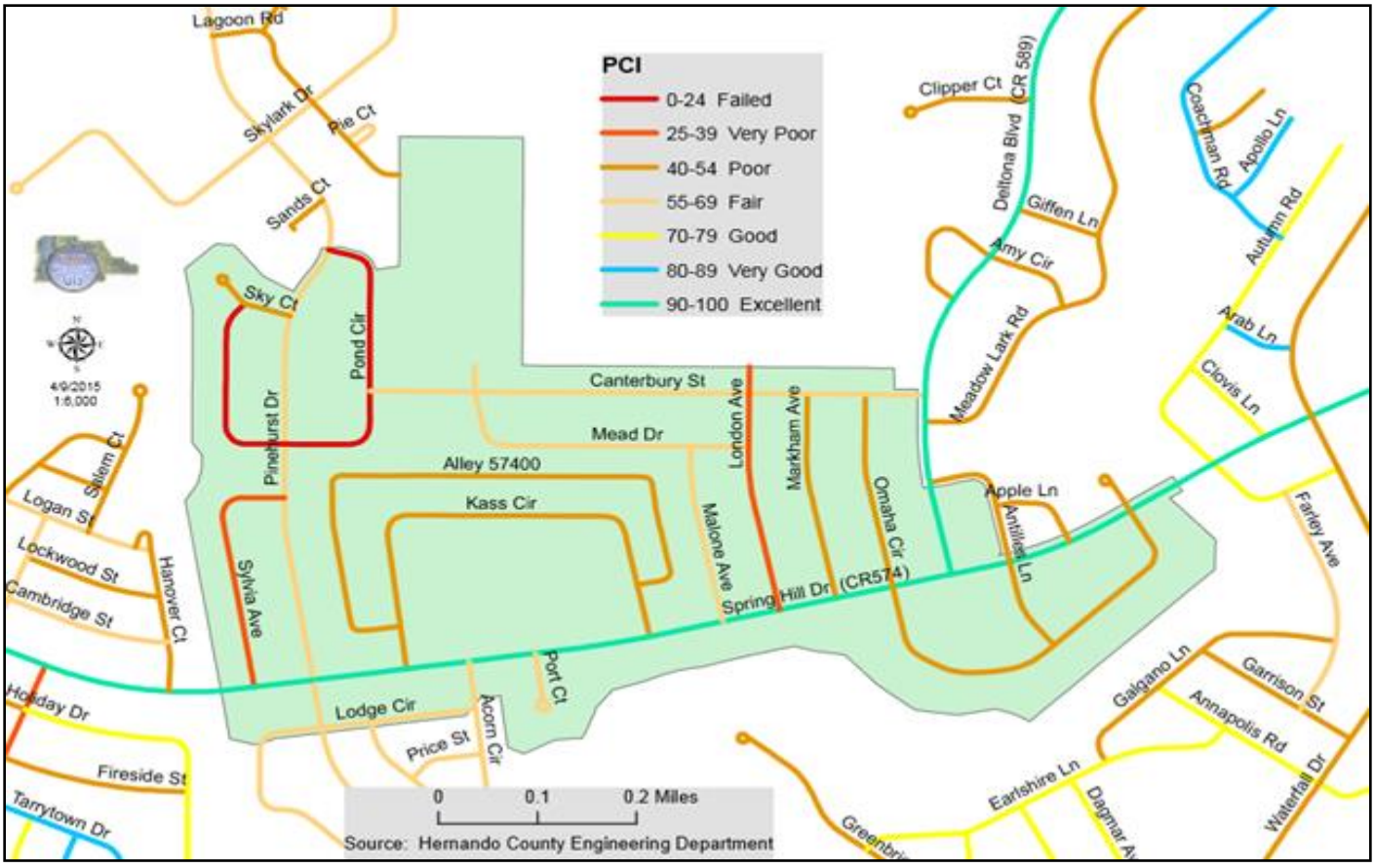
Figure 6: Major Streets and Points of Interest in the Kass Circle Project Area



Pavement Condition

Hernando County maintains pavement condition data for County maintained roadways. The pavement conditions index assesses the physical quality of paved areas and ranks them on a seven-tiered scale system ranging from "failed" to "excellent". Based on this ranking system, Spring Hill Drive and Deltona Boulevard are the only roads in the study area that are in excellent condition. They only comprise 16% (0.97 miles) of the six total public roadway miles within the Kass Circle Area. Nearly 3.4 miles (56%) of public roadway miles are in poor or failed condition at this time. The only roads in "good" or better condition are at the perimeter of the study area. The road system in the direct vicinity of Spring Hill Plaza, the functional center of the community, are in "fair" condition at best, with several roads classified as "poor," "very poor," and "failed."

Figure 7: Pavement Condition Index (PCI), Kass Circle Area



Parking Facilities

A defining feature of the Kass Circle area is the abundance of asphalt parking facilities in front of Spring Hill Plaza. Although this plaza contains important shopping and services for area residents, it feels more like a parking lot than a town center. In general, parking areas are in poor condition, overabundant, inefficient in design, and disrupt connectivity for the community.

Aging Parking Facilities

While a few newer businesses have good or excellent parking facilities, they stand in stark contrast to the aging parking of the commercial center and other businesses along Kass Circle and Spring Hill Drive. The aging parking facilities are in need of resurfacing. However, patchwork repairs are evident in some parking lots, which lend a discontinuous character to the parking facilities along Spring Hill Drive and Kass Circle, as shown in Figure 8. Overall, much of the parking areas are in disrepair and show a general lack of investment. Further details about the condition of parking and drives can be found under Site Deterioration on page 55.

Figure 8: Fragmented Pavement Repairs

Source: Google Maps

Overabundant Asphalt and Inefficient Parking Facilities

The Kass Circle commercial zone is predominantly characterized by detached commercial units, each either fronted by or surrounded with parking facilities. Spring Hill Plaza, the large central strip mall of the commercial zone, is also fronted by a sea of parking that runs up to the north face of Spring Hill Drive. The continuous parking greets passersby traveling down Spring Hill Drive before the storefronts themselves. This gives Spring Hill Drive a generally unwelcoming or uninviting quality. The parking becomes the predominant and unifying theme that ties together the commercial units along Spring Hill Drive.

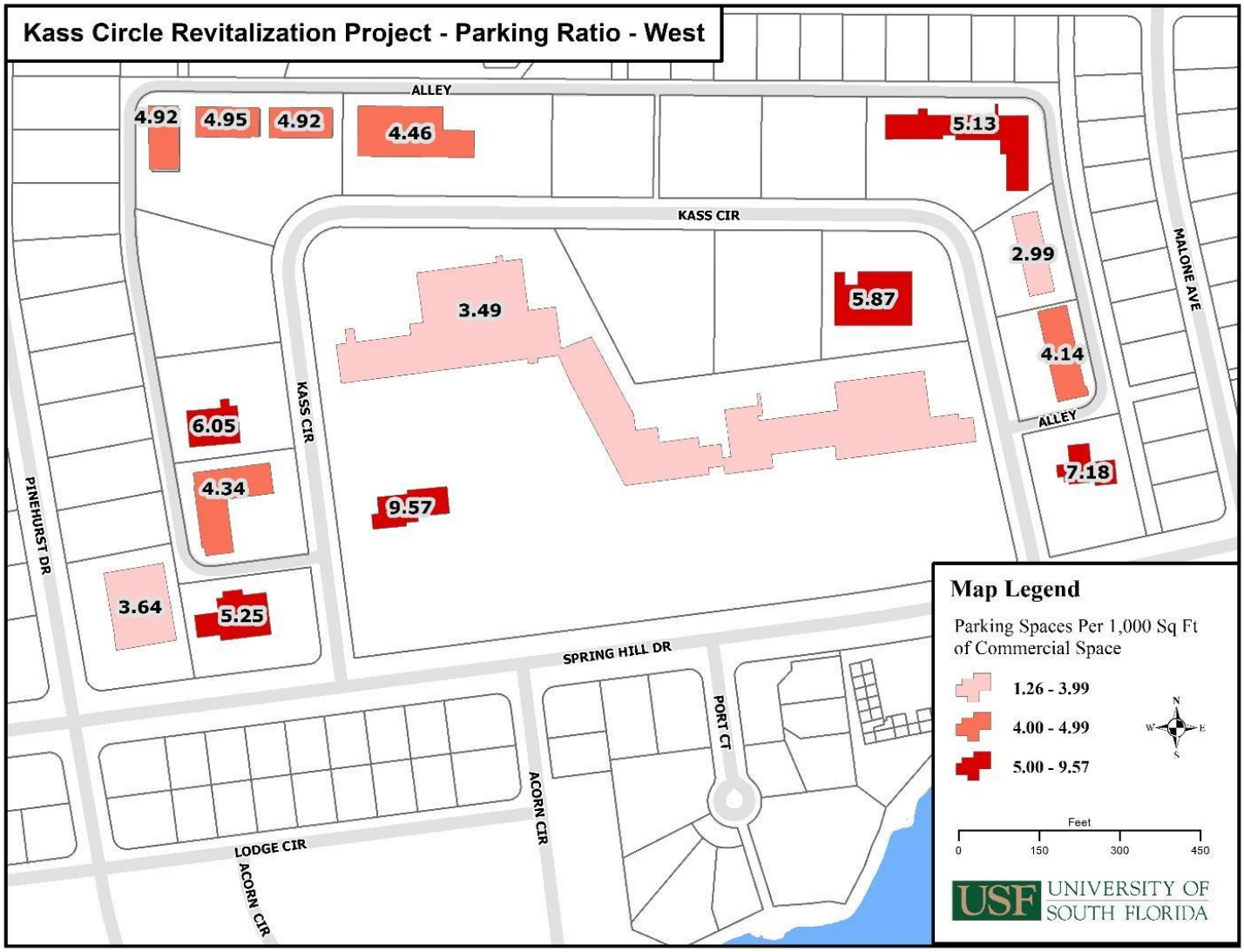
Figure 9: Sea of Underutilized Parking at Spring Hill Plaza

Source: Google Maps

The parking lot layout along Spring Hill Drive and Kass Circle is not efficient. While some parking lots are efficiently utilized throughout the day, other parking lots are severely underutilized during normal business hours.

Recommended parking ratios for neighborhood centers range between 3.5 and 5.0 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross building area, with the optimum level being approximately 4.0 or 4.5 cars per 1,000 square feet of gross building area (Gibbs, 2012). Figure 10 shows parking ratios for commercial properties in the Kass Circle area, which range from 2.99 to 9.57. The Spring Hill Plaza has a parking ratio of 3.49. Although this falls within the recommended range, the parking area of the commercial center is underutilized throughout the day. This suggests an opportunity for shared parking or other solutions to increase the efficiency of parking areas. This opportunity is also emphasized by the current heavy pedestrian and bicycle traffic in this area. Current wide expanses of unbroken asphalt encourage dangerous "cross-country" type movement especially by bicycles wishing to utilize a paved surface in the absence of sidewalks. The addition of bicycle lanes, bicycle parking and sidewalks complimented by parking space reduction and reconfiguration could greatly increase the level of safety in this area.

Figure 10: Parking Ratios for Commercial Properties in Kass Circle



Parking Design Limits Connectivity and Access

The vast expanses of parking lot along Spring Hill Drive and Kass Circle create a barrier, especially for people using non-vehicular transportation. Pedestrians and cyclists must traverse an expanse of parking lot as they enter commercial parcels and are forced to share road space with automobiles. The lack of connectivity between parking lots poses another obstacle to pedestrians and cyclists who wish to move from

one business to the next. They are often required to forge their own path across dirt or grass since there are few pedestrian connections between businesses along the commercial corridor. Pedestrians (including the elderly) have been observed scaling high landscape island curbing to reach safe pedestrian refuge as they approach Spring Hill Plaza. The establishment of curbed sidewalks and/or well-marked pavement paths would greatly increase safety non-vehicular travel.

Transit

Figure 11: Bus Stops Lack Amenities & Crosswalks

The Kass Circle area is currently served by The Hernando Express Bus (THE Bus) on its Red Line route. This route circulates through the larger commercial centers within Spring Hill and also extends south on U.S. 19 to the Pasco Hernando Community College. There are five bus stop locations within the project area, four on Spring Hill Drive and one on Deltona Boulevard. There are two more stops within a quarter-mile of the project area and three more within a half-mile. THE Bus makes three separate stops along Spring Hill Drive at the Kass Circle Commercial Center area, one west-bound at the Suntrust Bank, one across from the east entrance to Spring Hill Plaza (this is an eastbound stop only), and one west-bound at the Edmond Medical Office adjacent to Kass Circle. The Spring Hill Plaza stop is served every 1 hour and 15 minutes from 7:22 am until 6:37 pm on weekdays only. There is no service on weekends or holidays. These hours of service limit access by public transportation to the area, especially on evenings and weekends.

As shown in Figure 11, there are no crosswalks present for safe access across Spring Hill Drive, or to/from the Kass Circle business district from the bus stops. There are no amenities such as shelters or seating at any of the bus stops. This may ultimately influence bus ridership during the summer months as temperatures rise and rainfall increases. CRA funds could be used to implement sheltered bus stops and visible crosswalks.

Bicycle Facilities

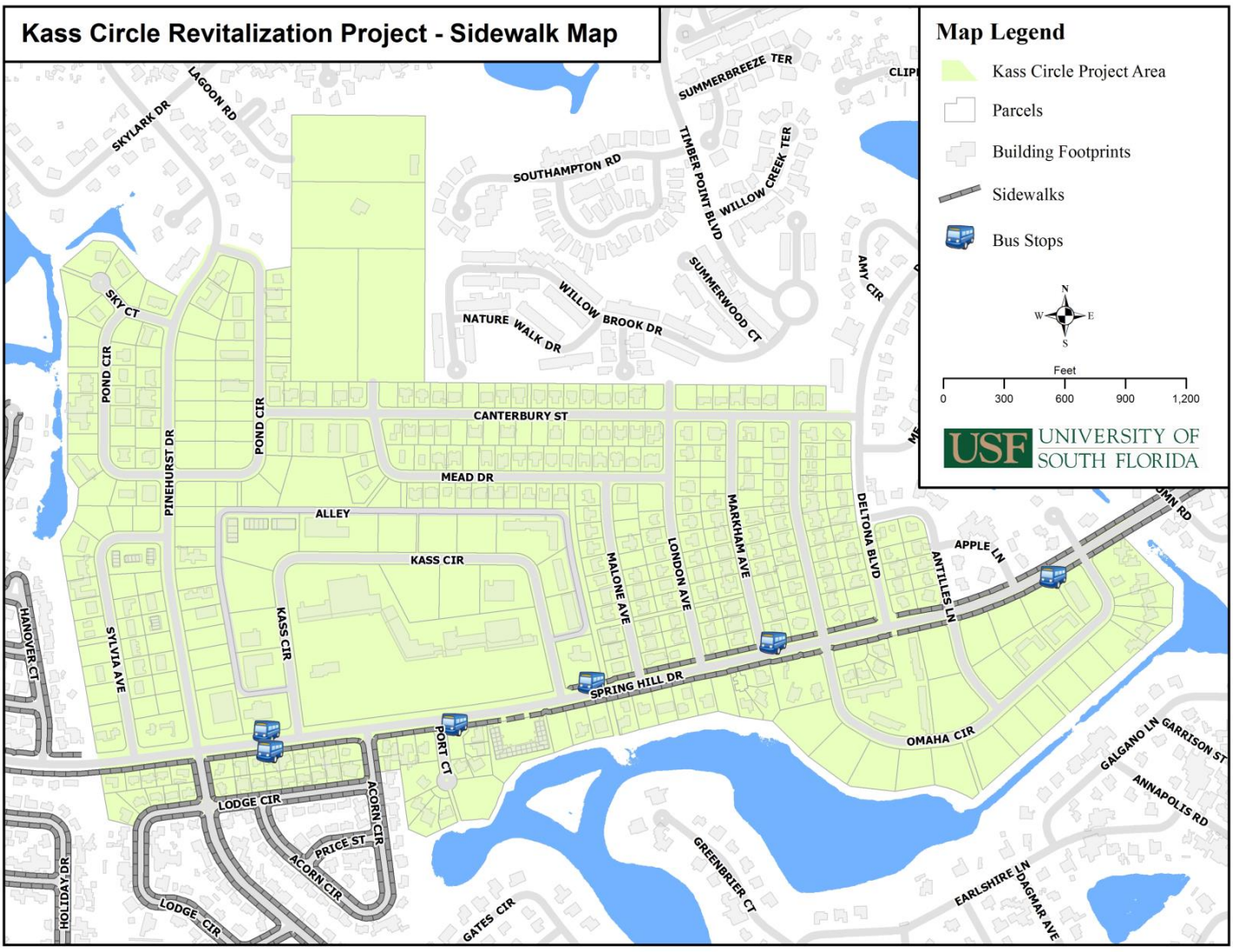
There are no dedicated bike lanes present within the study corridor. The lack of bicycle infrastructure is not conducive to a multimodal transportation corridor. A bicycle shop is located within Spring Hill Plaza, which represents a demand for bicycle infrastructure. There is one bike rack present within Spring Hill Plaza. However, its location is removed from the busiest plaza uses and is obscured by a fence, as shown in Figure 12.

Figure 12: The Spring Hill Plaza Bike Rack is Obscured by Fence and Poorly Located

Sidewalks & Walkability

The assessment of the Kass Circle project area revealed that there are insufficient sidewalks in the study area. The sidewalks are mapped in Figure 13.

Figure 13: Sidewalks in Kass Circle



Only 11.8% of roadways in the Kass Circle area have sidewalks. Existing sidewalks do not connect to the main destinations, and force pedestrians onto streets and shopping center driveways to access the business district resulting in a lack of safe connectivity for pedestrians. Although there are sidewalks on the south side of Spring Hill Drive

across from the plaza, these sidewalks do not meet current minimum width standards and do not provide pedestrian access to other streets or most businesses in the vicinity, as shown in Figure 14.

Figure 14: Few Sidewalks & Limited Sidewalk Connectivity

There are no sidewalks in Kass Circle's multi-family neighborhood and no dedicated pedestrian connections from there to the Commercial Center. There are also poor sidewalk linkages between different parts of the Commercial Center. As a result of this lack of connectivity, plaza patrons have created informal paths through wooded areas and vacant private properties to access the businesses in the plaza (Figure 15).

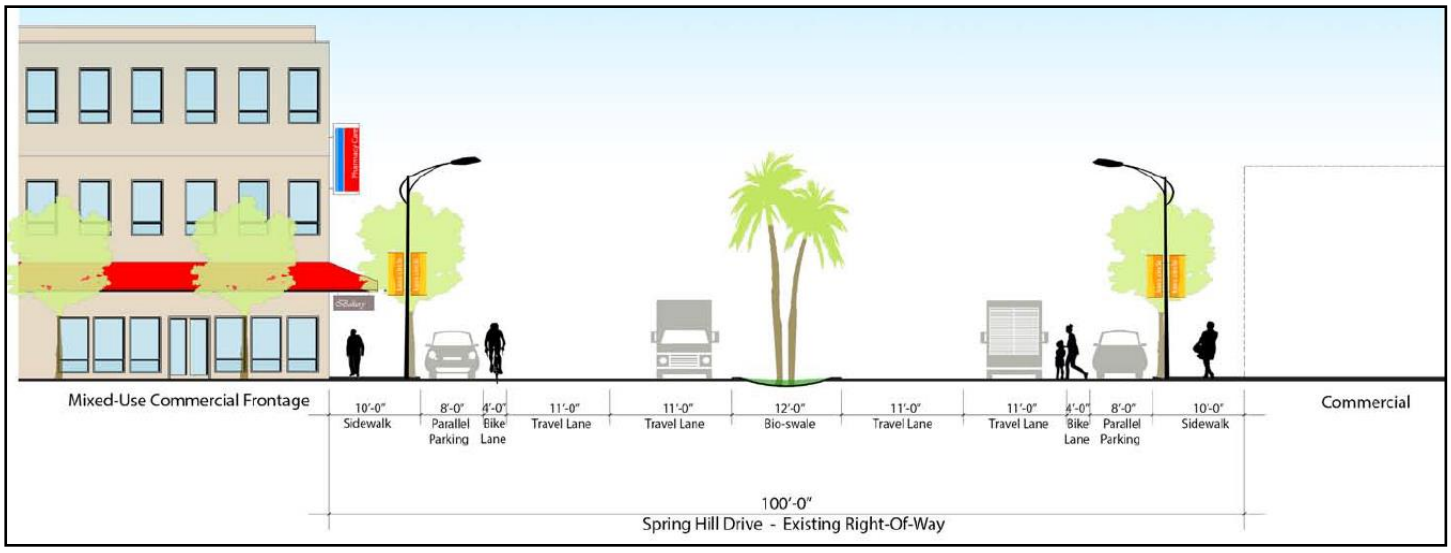
Figure 15: Informal Pathways in Study Area

The sidewalks that are present on Spring Hill Drive have no pedestrian markings over driveways or intersections to indicate to motorists that a pedestrian may cross. This lack of cohesiveness creates a potential conflict between pedestrians and motorists entering or exiting a driveway, as well as crossing at a driveway or an intersection.

Street Profile Analysis

Drawing lessons from concepts including New Urbanism and Complete Streets, many contemporary plans call for bringing commercial storefronts closer to the street to create a more appealing, pedestrian-friendly environment. This idea is included in the *Kass Circle Revitalization Project*, from which Figure 16 was reproduced. Figure 16 shows a cross section of Spring Hill Drive as it would look with the vision plan in place, including commercial areas closer to the streets. The *Kass Circle Revitalization Project* figure establishes a 35:50 (1:1.43) ratio of building height to the midpoint of the travel corridor. However, unlike this diagram, the commercial buildings that exist today in the Kass Circle area have large parking lots between them, creating a very low street profile ratio.

Figure 16: Kass Circle Revitalization Plan: Cross Section of Spring Hill Drive



Source: *Kass Circle Revitalization Project*

The street profile ratios for existing conditions in the Kass Circle area were analyzed using aerial LiDAR data. LiDAR data is collected by transmitting a laser from an airplane to the ground. Data points of the Earth's surface are recorded with accuracies for horizontal and vertical in the 10-centimeter range and with a point density of about four points per square foot. All of the data was collected by the Southwest Florida Water Management District in 2007.

Table 2 presents seven street profile ratios for cross sections in the Kass Circle Redevelopment study area. LiDAR Street Profile images from which this data are derived are provided in Appendix A. The street profile ratios shown are ratios of the heights of the buildings to the midpoint of distance between each building. So if you have a building that is 20 feet tall and is 200 feet from the building across the street, then the travel corridor distance used for the ratio will be 100 and the ratio would be 20:100. For the purpose of this analysis, if there are buildings of different heights, the taller of the buildings is used in the ratio. The table also includes two profiles from downtown Brooksville for a comparison to a walkable community. The data demonstrates that the existing conditions provide for poor walkability, with an average ratio of 7.24 among the seven profiles examined. This is far in excess of the *Kass Circle Revitalization Project: A Vision for Community Growth & Development* recommended 1:1.43 or those in downtown Brooksville.

Table 2: Ratios of Building Height to Midpoint of Travel Corridor

Map Name	Exact Ratio	Reduced Ratio
LiDAR Street Profile Map 1 – Spring Hill Dr.	12 : 187.5	1 : 15.63
LiDAR Street Profile Map 2 – Kass Circle	18 : 122.5	1 : 6.80
LiDAR Street Profile Map 3 – Kass Circle	17 : 107.0	1 : 6.30
LiDAR Street Profile Map 4 – Spring Hill Dr.	26 : 186.0	1 : 7.15
LiDAR Street Profile Map 5 – Spring Hill Dr.	17 : 147.0	1 : 8.65

LiDAR Street Profile Map 6 – Residential Street	19 : 55.0	1 : 2.90
LiDAR Street Profile Map 7 – Residential Street	16 : 52.0	1 : 3.25
LiDAR Street Profile Map 8 – Downtown Brooksville	40 : 31	1 : 0.78
LiDAR Street Profile Map 9 – Downtown Brooksville	44 : 30	1 : 0.68

163.340(8)(b), F.S., Aggregate Assessed Property Values Show No Appreciable Increase

Aggregate assessed values of real property in the area for ad valorem tax purposes demonstrate a significant decrease overall for the last five years (2010 through 2014), primarily due to steadily declining values in residential properties; Commercial values, after a significant drop from 2010 to 2011 are showing steady improvement from 2011 to 2014. Residential values declined throughout the period until the fifth year when a very slight recovery was evident. The same was true for the aggregate value of commercial and residential properties combine. No appreciable increase has been seen in any year for the combined properties.

This factor required collecting and analyzing aggregate assessed real property values from the previous five years for the Kass Circle project area, which includes 477 properties. The assessment utilized assessed values provided by the Hernando County Property Appraiser.

The trends in commercial property values were analyzed by compiling assessed values for the 23 commercial properties in the Kass Circle Commercial Center from 2010 through 2014. Figure 17 displays the aggregate assessed values of the commercial properties in the form of a linear graph, and Table 3 displays this information in a table. After a significant decrease from 2010 to 2011, commercial property values recovered back to their 2010 level over the ensuing four years.

Figure 17: Aggregate Assessed Value, Kass Circle Commercial Properties

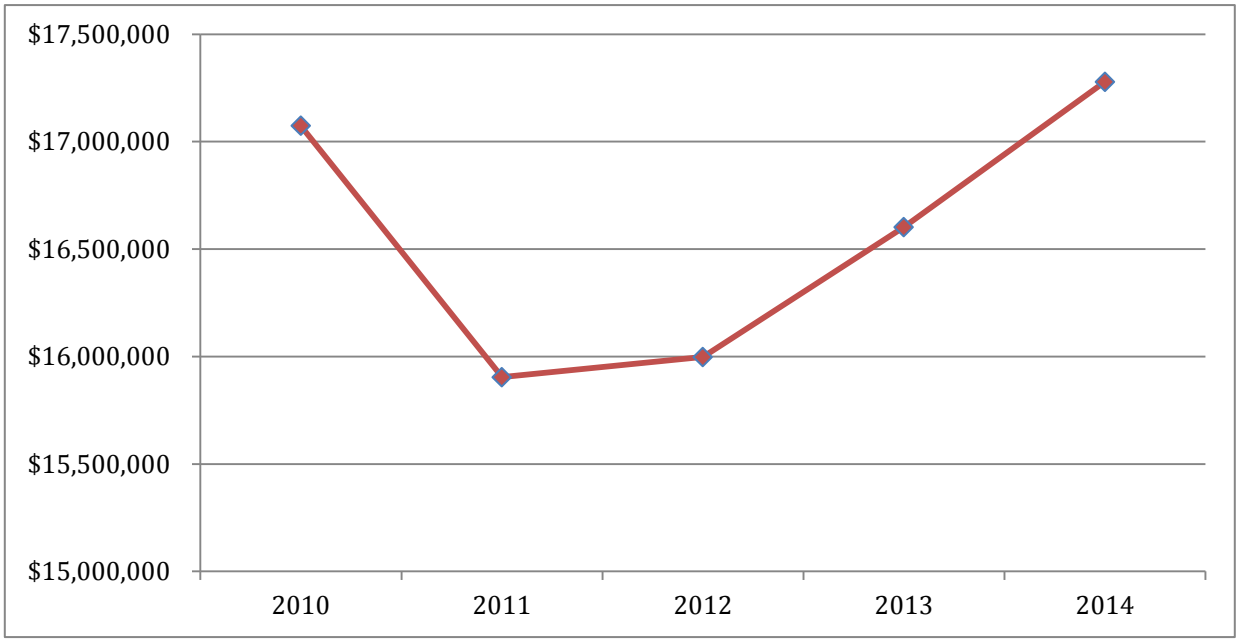


Table 3: Aggregate Assessed Value, Kass Circle Commercial Properties

Year	*Assessed Value*	*% Change*
2010	$17,074,202	
2011	$15,903,834	-6.85%
2012	$15,997,796	0.60%
2013	$16,602,810	3.78%
2014	$17,278,694	4.07%

A similar assessment of actual values for residential properties shows a continuing decline over the 5-year timeframe, leveling out in 2014 (see Figure 18 and Table 4).

When combined, the aggregate values for commercial and residential properties show a continuing decline through the 5-year period. While commercial property values are increasing, the decline of the more dominant residential land use coverage in this area continues to bring the aggregate value of the area down. These findings are shown in Figure 19 and Table 5 below. Values leveled off in 2014.

Figure 18: Aggregate Assessed Value, Kass Circle Residential Properties

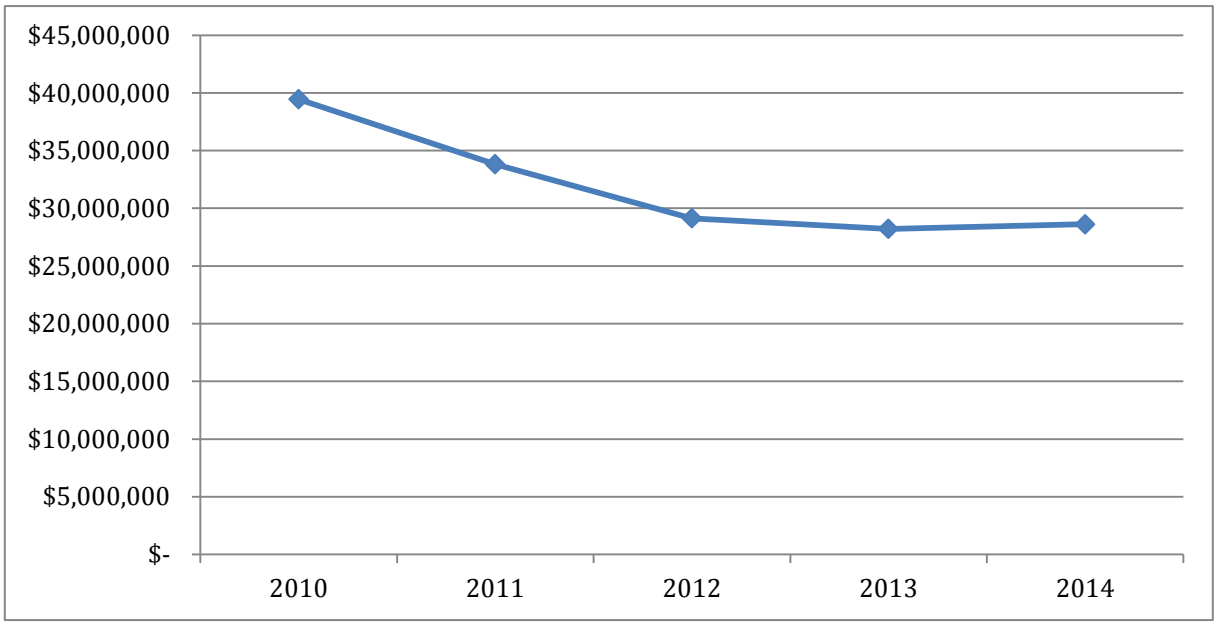


Table 4: Aggregate Assessed Value, Kass Circle Residential Properties

Year	*Assessed Value*	*% Change*
2010	$39,454,974	
2011	$33,820,564	-14.28%
2012	$29,139,011	-13.84%
2013	$28,213,505	-3.18%
2014	$28,619,785	1.44%

Figure 19: Aggregate Assessed Values, All Kass Circle Properties

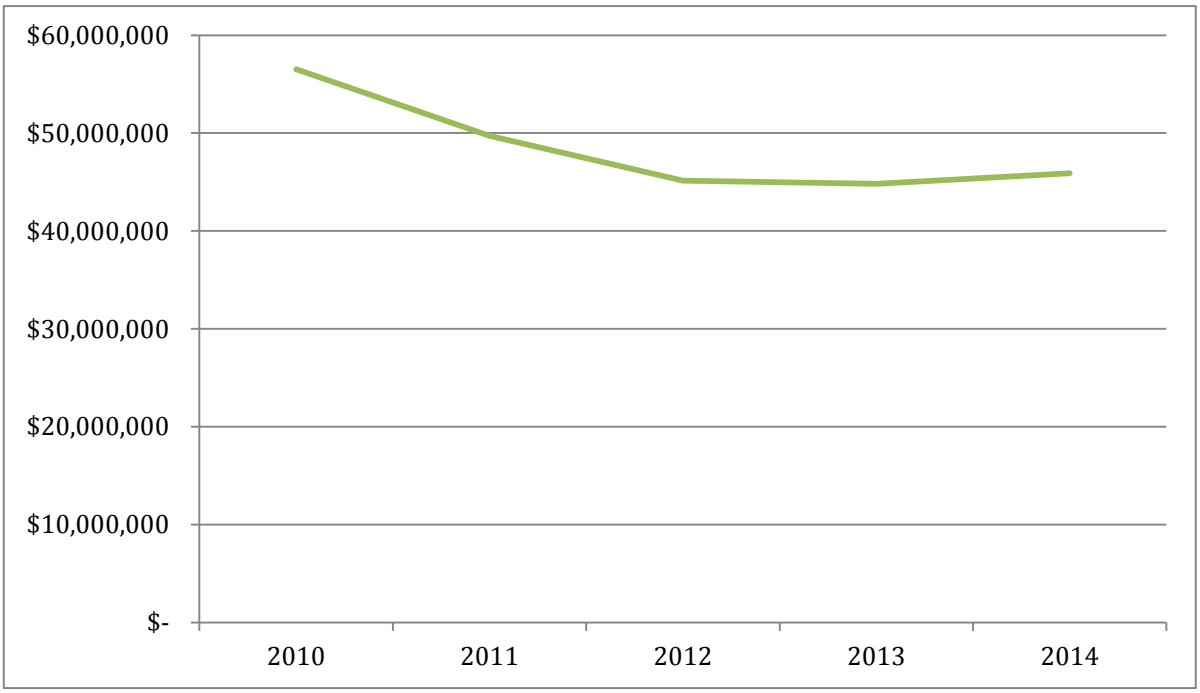


Table 5: Aggregate Assessed Values, All Kass Circle Properties

Year	*Assessed Value*	*% Change*
2010	$56,529,176	
2011	$49,724,398	-12.04%
2012	$45,136,807	-9.23%
2013	$44,816,315	-0.71%
2014	$45,898,479	2.41%

This evaluation covers a time period immediately following what is generically termed The Great Recession. Although definitions from Wikipedia.org and Investopedia.com, for example define this period as lasting from December 2007 to June 2009, its effects have lingered over the ensuing years. In order to put our results in the proper context, property values in this area from January 2007 through January 2009 were examined. Commercial properties displayed a 10% increase from 2007 to 2008 when they were worth an aggregate value of $17,095,527. This was followed by another 9% increase in

2009. A decrease in the 2010 assessed values brought commercial properties back down to the 2008 level. They fell further still in 2011, experiencing a 7% decrease. Despite the weak but positive trend in commercial property values since then (Figure 17, Table 3), the Kass Circle commercial area reflects a fragile real estate market that is slow to recover from the recession. The 2014 assessment only just returns these properties to their 2008 level value.

A look at residential values over the recession period shows that they have not been able to withstand the economic downturn as well as commercial properties did. In 2007, aggregate assessed value for residential properties in the Kass Circle area totaled $48,447,932. After a 5% increase to 2008, residential values have been declining annually, reaching a 2014 value that is 41% lower than the 2008 level and still 27% lower than the 2010 level.

163.340(8)(c), F.S., Faulty Lot Layout

Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness is evident in this area.

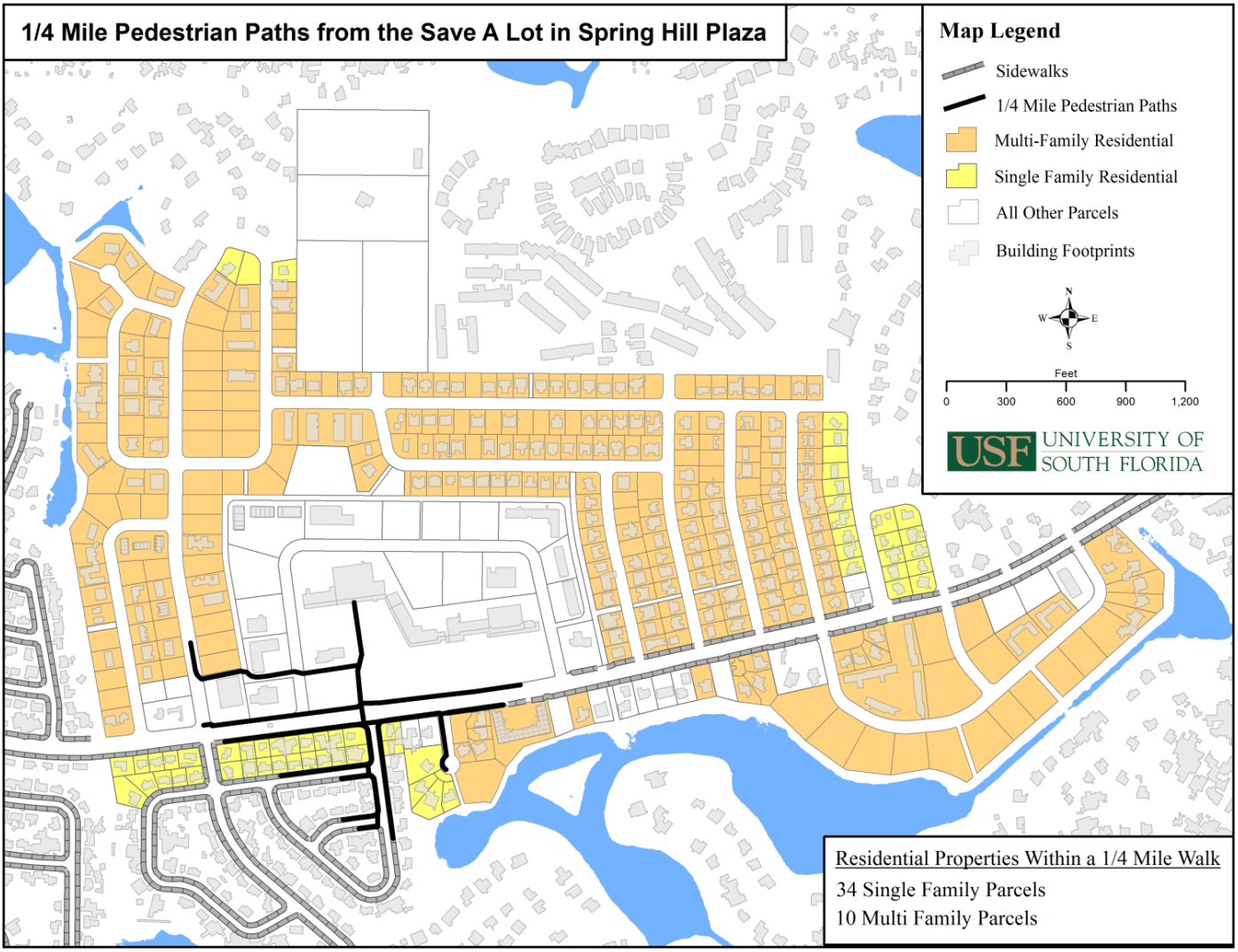
Block Configuration and Accessibility

There are numerous issues with block configuration and accessibility in the Kass Circle project area. Spring Hill Drive is an arterial with high volumes of fast-moving traffic. There are no automobile, bicycle, or pedestrian connections between residential areas and Spring Hill Plaza. Blocks are laid out in long "pod" configurations. As a result, a number of informal paths have emerged in the woodsy areas where a block distance would normally make sense. These paths are clearly formed for access to Spring Hill Plaza from nearby residences, as shown in Figure 15. On the south side of Spring Hill Drive, there are a number of driveways that provide access to single family homes or offices, presenting access management issues.

The suburban form of development in the study area—including long residential blocks, large surface parking lots, and a high-speed arterial—emphasizes movement of vehicles through the area rather than accessibility and connectivity within the community. This lack of accessibility is depicted in Figure 20, which shows the very limited opportunities for connection within a quarter mile radius of the Save-A-Lot grocery store in Spring Hill Plaza. This is the primary destination in the plaza, and the quarter mile radius represents a walking distance the average person is comfortable with. As shown, very few residences in the study area can access shopping opportunities conveniently without getting into a vehicle and driving on Spring Hill Drive.

In contemporary planning practice, there is a focus on retrofitting these suburban development patterns to create a more walkable environment and enhance quality of life. A primary tool in this approach is re-implementation of grid patterns that allow for greater connectivity and shorter walking distances. The *Kass Circle Revitalization Project* includes several provisions that address the retrofitting of poor block configuration and accessibility patterns in the Kass Circle area.

Figure 20: Quarter Mile Pedestrian Paths from Save-A-Lot



Outdated Development Patterns

Although the Commercial Center is the heart of the community, it demonstrates several signs of decline including several vacancies, uneven maintenance, and poor aesthetic conditions. Kass Circle was developed beginning in the 1960s. Most of the buildings and infrastructure have not been significantly updated. The minimal level of maintenance, fragmented ownership, and low commercial occupancy contribute to an overall feel of disinvestment and a lack of cohesion.

As the community's town center, the Kass Circle area should borrow from contemporary town center designs, which emphasize walkability, aesthetic cohesion, and a strong public realm. The Shops at Wiregrass in Wesley Chapel, shown in Figure 21, provide an example of a contemporary town center shopping area.

Figure 21: The Shops at Wiregrass

Source: Forest City Enterprises, Cleveland, Ohio

Various areas across the United States have proven that it is possible to redevelop and transform older, struggling strip mall commercial areas into vibrant community centers. For example, a strip mall by the name of La Grande Orange (Figure 22) in Phoenix, Arizona was once considered desolate and dying. It is now a thriving city center with a mix of uses that adequately accommodate the community. It is considered a top tourist destination and an economic driver for the area.

Figure 22: La Grande Orange

Source: Hayes Inc., Architecture, Interiors, Phoenix, Arizona

163.340(8)(d), F.S., Unsanitary/Unsafe Conditions

Unsanitary or unsafe conditions are evident in the study area due to inadequate sidewalk connections, deficient street lighting and outdated stormwater issues. Vacant wooded properties are used as homeless encampments, dumping grounds, and for informal pathways.

Sidewalks

Sidewalks provide increased safety and mobility to residents. When sidewalks are not present, pedestrians are forced to use the roadway shoulder, private property, or the roadway itself to reach their destination, which creates an unsafe environment.
Only 11.8% of the roadways in the Kass Circle area have sidewalks. To get to Spring Hill Plaza, pedestrians are forced to use the roadway shoulder along Kass Circle and other local roads, or to traverse large parking lot expanses. There are many informal

pathways through the wooded area behind Spring Hill Plaza that residents use to access Spring Hill Plaza and Spring Hill Drive. These paths are especially unsafe because they contain homeless encampments, extensive litter and debris, and no lighting. The lack of sidewalk facilities is shown in Figures 23 and 24.

Figure 23: Sidewalks in Kass Circle Area

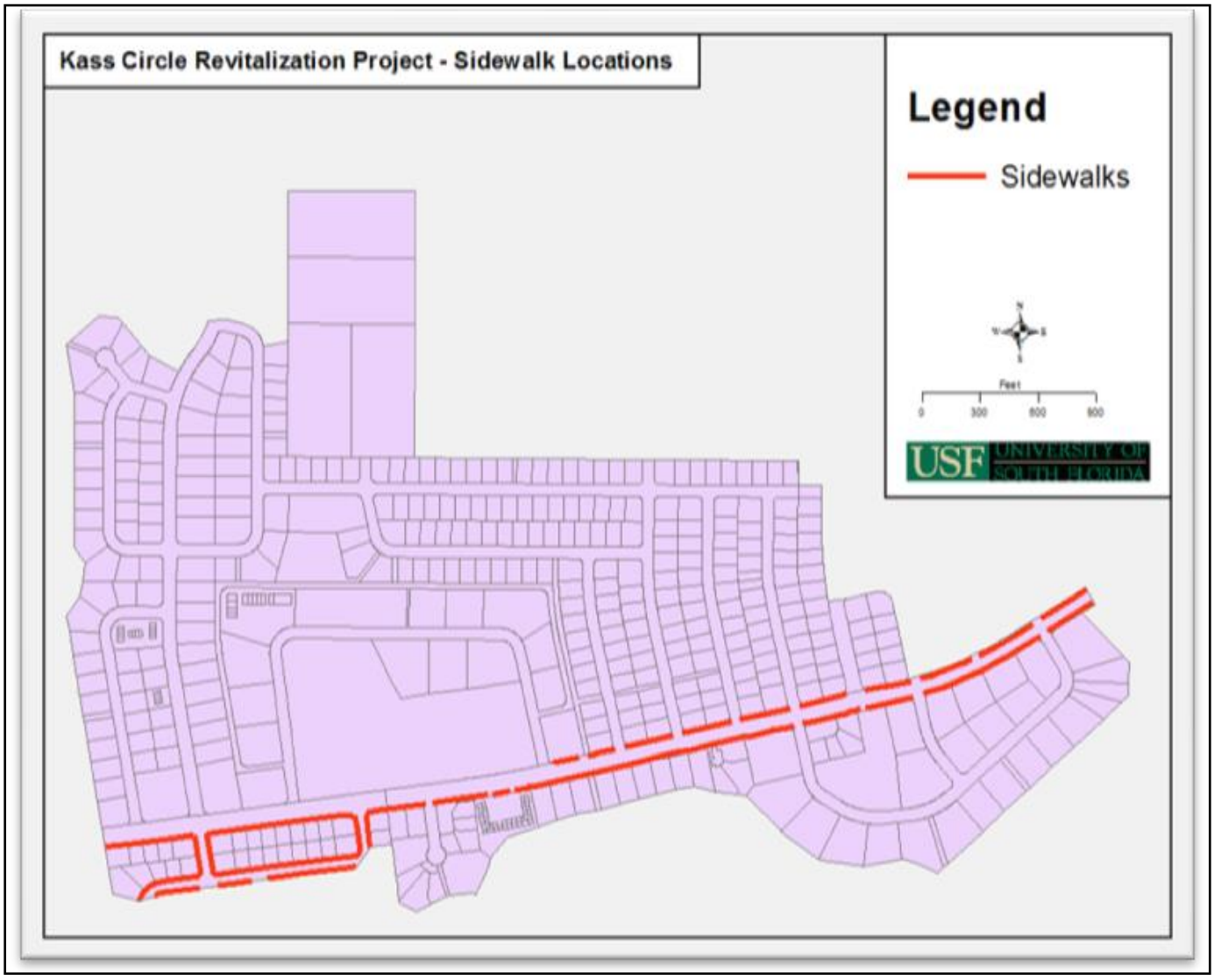
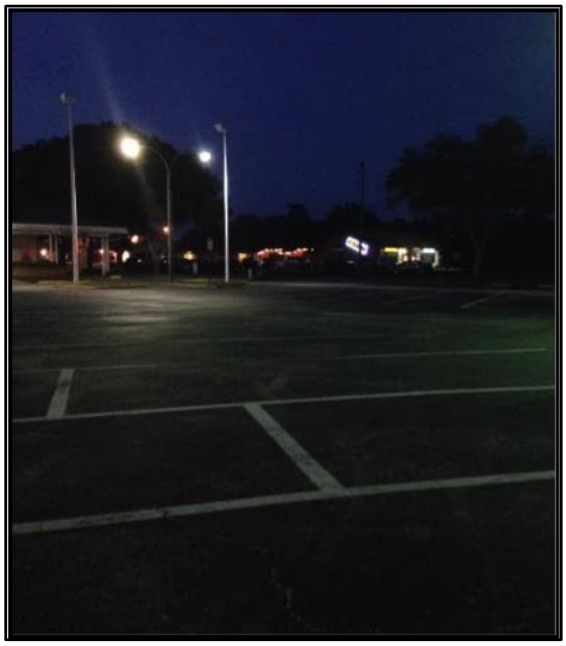


Figure 24: No Sidewalk Access to at Spring Hill Plaza

Streetlights

The Spring Hill Plaza parking lot and surrounding area, including entrances along Pinehurst Drive and Spring Hill Drive, is particularly dangerous to pedestrians and bicyclists at night. The light that is utilized by the parking lot is from store-front marquees, as shown in Figure 25. The parking lot and off-street entrances are poorly lit, making it difficult for drivers to see individuals trying to cross the street or access the stores within Kass Circle.

Figure 25: Inadequate Lighting



Flooding and Stormwater

Kass Circle is not located within a high-risk flood zone. According to data from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the chance of a flood occurring within 100 years is minimal. However, there are potentially hazardous conditions in the area related to inadequate stormwater facilities. The images in Figures 26 and 27 illustrate the location and condition of the current storm water drainage systems. The existing storm drains and run-off areas are blocked by debris and not properly maintained. The area may be at risk from flooding during heavy rain due to inadequate stormwater handling capacity. This is evident in blocked culverts and erosion patterns where water has been diverted. Storm drains and culverts are designed differently throughout the study area, and many are under construction, not property secured, or not properly marked, presenting unsafe walking conditions for pedestrians.

Figure 26: Drainage Retention Areas (DRAs) in Front of Spring Hill Drive and Behind Spring Hill Plaza

Figure 27: Unsafe and Inadequate Drainage Facilities

Trash, Debris and Homeless Encampments

Anecdotal observations of the deposition of trash and debris have focused primarily on the vacant commercial and multi-family properties around Kass Circle and Omaha Circle. The Kass Circle community has held two Saturday morning cleanup events in the spring of 2014 and 2015. Over a ton of trash and debris was collected at each event from these two areas as well as along Spring Hill Drive. A review of Hernando County code enforcement citations over the calendar years of 2012, 2013 and 2014 shows that citations for the illegal deposition of trash and debris constituted 24% of the total case load, and 48% of citations for unsanitary/unsafe conditions (Figure 28). Although Hernando County regularly collects illegally dumped material from public rights-of-way, significant amounts of material are dumped on vacant property, especially wooded properties with little visibility from the street. During site visits conducted during the spring of 2014, thirty-eight properties were found to have substantial levels of debris (Figure 29).

Figure 28: Code Enforcement Citations for Unsanitary or Unsafe Conditions at Kass Circle from January 2012 through December 2014

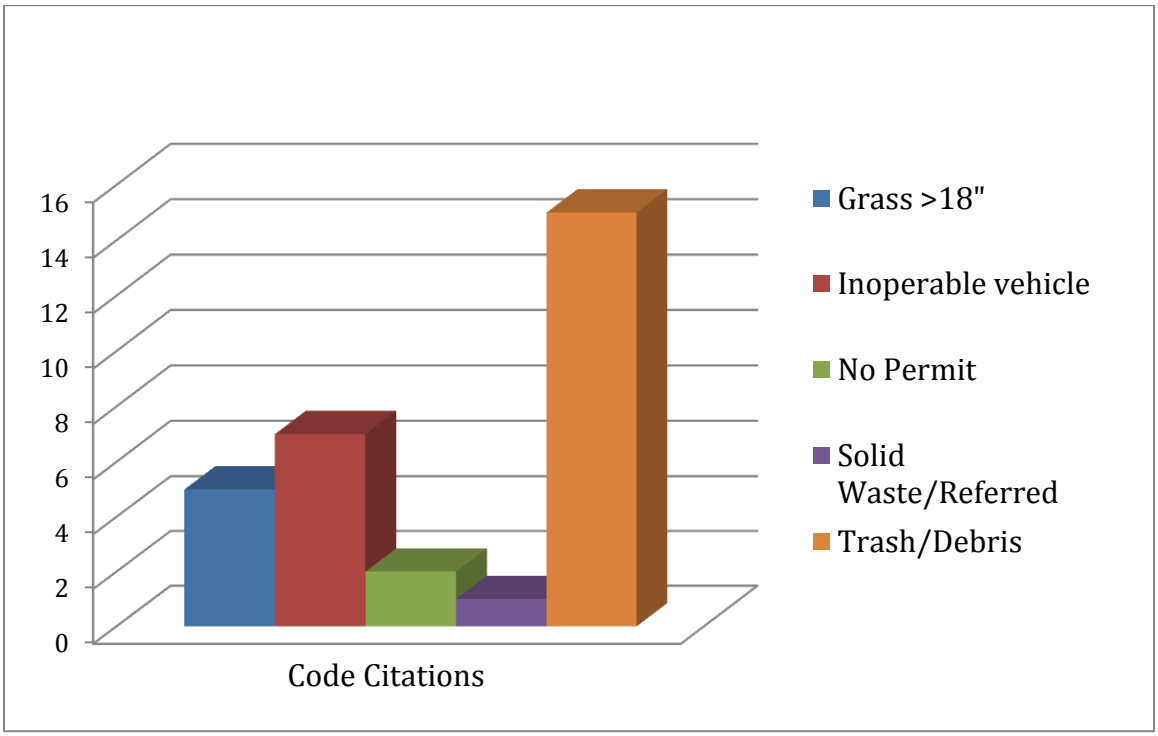
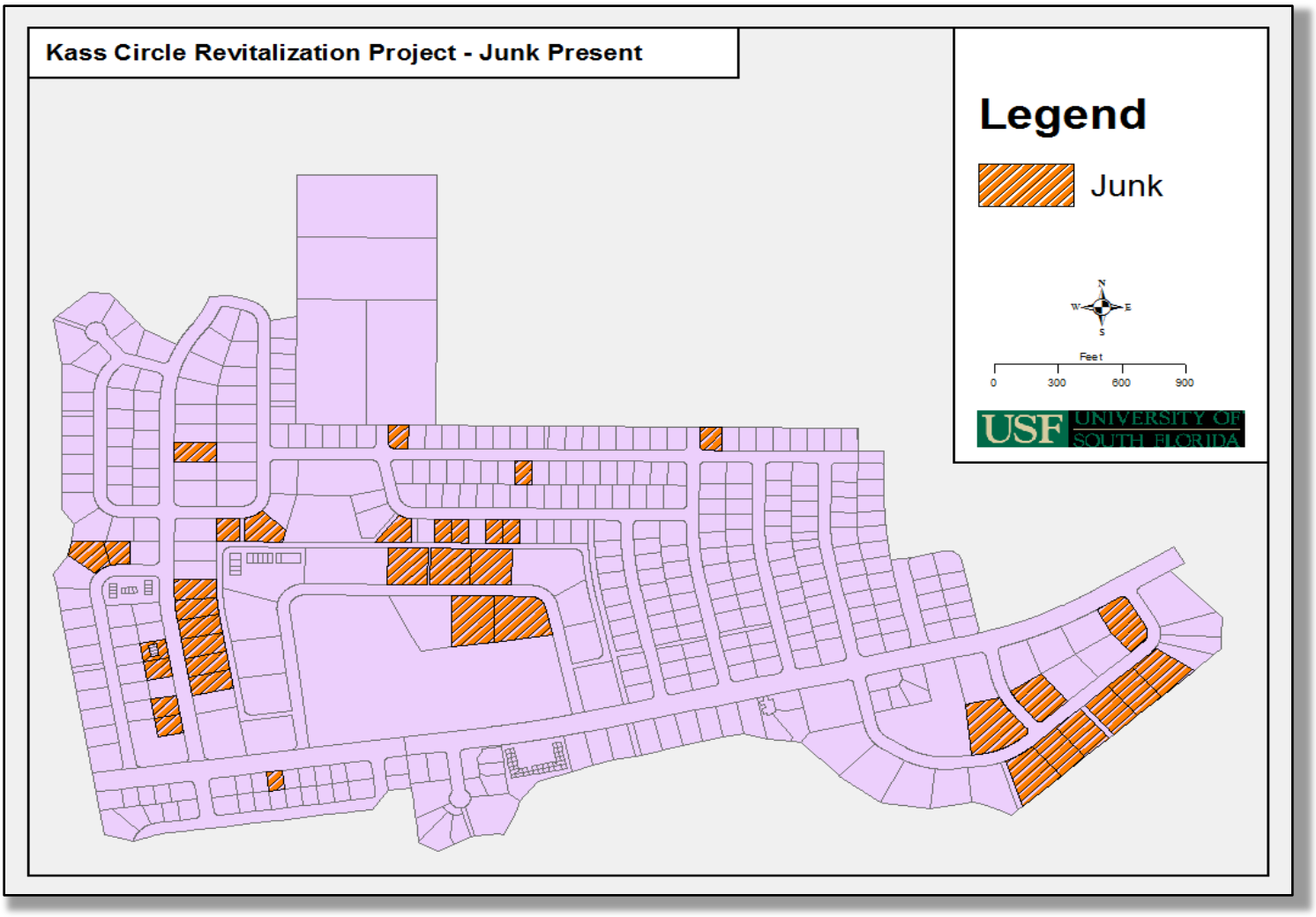


Figure 29: Map of Trash and Debris in Study Area



The wooded areas create extremely unsafe conditions for several reasons. There is an abundance of debris including large items such as couches and televisions (Figure 30). Several informal pathways traverse these areas between the plaza and neighborhoods, but no lighting or demarcated paths are available. Some of the vacant properties have been used as encampments by the homeless (Figure 31). Although the Sheriff's office regularly assists homeless residents in locating appropriate services, this has been a chronic problem over the years. The area is highly unsafe and unsanitary, and seriously impacts the economic viability and livability of the area.

Figure 30: Illegal Dumping and Informal Pathways in Wooded Area

Figure 31. Past Homeless Encampment at Kass Circle (not currently active)

163.340(8)(e), F.S., Site Deterioration

The presence of deteriorating structures and significant presence of trash and debris have been documented elsewhere in this report. Deterioration of site improvements is evident based on the condition of infrastructure, fencing, landscaping, parking, and general appearance of the study area.

Infrastructure

The Kass Circle area, being the first portion of the original Spring Hill plat to be developed has the distinction of housing an aging network of infrastructure. Early advertisements touted the central water distribution and wastewater collection systems, wide streets and underground electric that were commendable features of this early planned development. However, many of these systems are approaching a 50-year age. The deterioration of the pavement conditions on public roadways and of the

original stormwater collection system have been described under the Transportation Facilities section and the Unsanitary/Unsafe Conditions section, respectively, and need not be further discussed here.

Electric Infrastructure

Portions of the electrical distribution system at Kass Circle were placed under the ground, including the system serving the Spring Hill Plaza. The Withlacoochee River Electric Cooperation (WREC) currently operates this system. The current radial configuration of the lines is outdated and must be upgraded to a loop system that can be manipulated to respond better to restoration of service during outages. Also, it has been found that conduit protecting the original infrastructure may not be in place or may otherwise be experiencing deterioration in some places. WREC plans to replace this infrastructure in the near future.

Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

Hernando County Utilities Department currently operates the central water and sewer systems, having acquired these built systems from the original plat. The water distribution system consists primarily of polyvinyl chloride (PVC) lines, having an approximate life of 100+ years. There are no plans for water distribution system replacement or upgrade. According to Hernando County Utilities staff, the wastewater collection system consists of the "old style clay pipe, which is no longer used" (L. Cooper, pers. comm.). This material is subject to tree root intrusion, cracking and separation. Utilities staff is regularly called to make repairs in this area.

Fencing

The condition of existing fencing can help determine the degree of blight and site deterioration in an area. If unmaintained, it can create an unsafe as well as unappealing environment. On residential properties in the study area, there was a large amount of both wood and chain-link fences which detracted from any aesthetic cohesion. Many fences were in disrepair.

Figure 32: Map of Poor Fencing

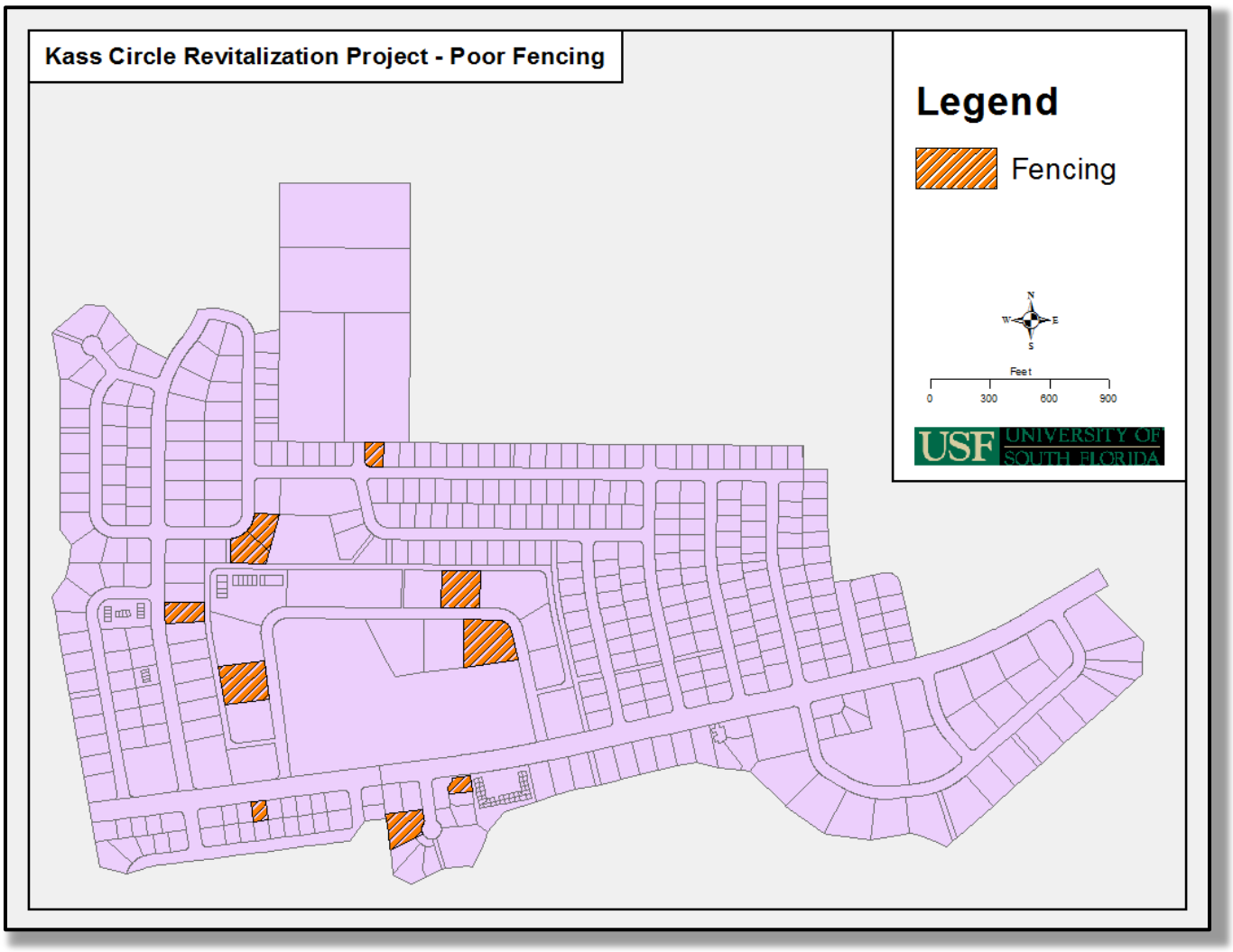


Figure 33: Fencing with Poor Maintenance or Appearance

Landscaping

The lack of landscaping also contributes to the deteriorated aspects of the Kass Circle project as a whole. Roadways are especially devoid of any landscape design. Drainage ditches are very visible adjacent to numerous intersections.

Figure 34: Inadequate Landscaping

Roadways devoid of any landscaping (Spring Hill Drive).

Without landscaping, drainage areas became the dominant feature at residential street corners.

Parking, Drives and Curbs and Sidewalks

Aging parking facilities are briefly discussed under Transportation Facilities in this report. They also present a significant element of site deterioration, creating unsafe conditions. Inadequate maintenance of pavement markings make pedestian pathways and disabled parking/access virtually invisible (Figure 35). Broken curbs, crumbling pavement and potholes are evident throughout several of the properties and on some public streets and sidewalks (see pavement condition index discussion under Transportation Facilities and Figure 36).

Figure 35. Deteriorating speed humps, pedestrian crossings and disabled parking.

Figure 36. Deteriorating curbs and pavement conditions

163.340(8)(f),F.S., Building Density Patterns

Evidence of inadequate and outdated building density patterns is apparent within the study area of Kass Circle.

The Kass Circle study area is affected by ineffective street patterns, small parcel sizes, and fragmented development and landownership patterns that make navigating the area difficult and hinder development.

Inefficient parcel utilization is a major characteristic of the study area. Many buildings are outdated and do not utilize space efficiently. Current best practices in development call for buildings located at the front of lots, with parking in the rear and multiple uses. Funding from a CRA can assist in the development of modern development standards and redevelopment of existing properties with more efficient patterns of development.

Building intensity is a measurement of how much a building site can be utilized by structures. Intensity is determined by calculating the floor area ratio (FAR). FAR is the

relationship between the total floor area of a structure and the gross area of the building site. Nearly 75% of the commercial properties in the study area utilize less than 25% of their lots, as shown in Table 6. This demonstrates poor building intensity patterns that could be improved through redevelopment.

Table 6: Floor Area Ratios (FAR) for Commercial Properties in Kass Circle Area

Site Coverage	FAR Ranges	# of Commercial Lots
0-25%	0-0.25	17
25-50%	0.25-0.50	5
50-75%	0.50-0.75	0
75-100%	0.75-1.00	1

163.340(8)(g),F.S., Falling Lease Rates

Lease rates per square foot of commercial space were compared using the Spring Hill Plaza. It is the largest plaza and constitutes nearly 50% of the total commercial floor area in the Commercial Center. Based on a trend of falling rates within the plaza and compared to other plazas, there is evidence of underperformance for commercial properties. Lease rates at Kass Circle appear to be trending down.

The study team was unable to obtain complete data for all office, commercial, and industrial properties, but was able to obtain a set of data related to Spring Hill Plaza. Spring Hill Plaza is the largest commercial property in Kass Circle. It comprises approximately 50% of the commercial floor area in the Commercial Center. It is also the most visible property and the primary draw to the area, making it a good barometer for evaluating lease rate trends. The leasing agent for the plaza, John Stoner, CCIM of real estate brokerage firm Bruce Strumpf, Inc., indicates that lease rates have been falling for the past few years. Bruce Strumpf, Inc., lowered Spring Hill

Plaza rents to $9.00 per square foot in November 2013 (plus $2.85 pass through). Since Spring Hill Plaza is still underperforming, Mr. Stoner believes that the lease rate may have to be decreased once again, to make the plaza more competitively priced.

The weak performance of the plaza was also evidenced by a proprietary LoopNet (online real estate service) report provided by Mr. Stoner. The report indicated that Spring Hill Plaza received just 2% interest inquiries from Hernando County individuals looking for commercial rentable units. In addition, the Bruce Strumpf, Inc. web page for Spring Hill Plaza (http://www.brucestrumpf.com/index.php/spring-hill-plaza) provides evidence of weak demand for the plaza. Of the plaza's 110,917 square feet of rentable/usable space, 28,403 square feet, or approximately 26%, are currently vacant.

Mr. Stoner also provided a market study prepared for Bruce Strumpf, Inc. comparing Spring Hill Plaza to its competition in Hernando County. This study included ten comparable sites and shows an average lease rate of $15.61, when factoring both the lease cost per square foot and the pass through. Spring Hill Plaza's $11.85 is well below its competitors. This information is shown in Table 7.

This study data was corroborated through an independent search on LoopNet conducted on March 31, 2015 of available commercial space in Hernando County shopping centers. Table 8 shows prevailing lease rates (without pass-through) for advertised centers, most of which are located in the Spring Hill urbanized area. These rates (overall average of $12.43 per square foot) are generally above and in some cases well above, the Spring Hill Plaza's rate of $9.00.

However, when taking into account the existing evidence, it appears that the lease rates at Spring Hill Plaza are lower than the remainder of the county and could possibly fall even lower. As the primary property that serves as the core of the business and residential community, it serves as an indicator that Kass Circle lease rates appear to be trending down.

Table 7: Market Study of Plazas in Spring Hill, Florida

Shopping Plaza and Address	Lease Rate/sq. ft.	Pass Through
Timber Hills Plaza – 2260 Commercial Way	$8.00 - $12.00	$3.50
Spring Hill Plaza – 7325 Spring Hill Dr.	$9.00	$2.85
Hernando West – 1338 Pinehurst Dr.	$10.00 - $12.00	$3.49
Shoppes of Spring Hill – 2400 Commercial Way	$10.00	$4.00
Mariner's Crossing – 4185 Mariners Blvd.	$10.00	$5.00
Mariner Commons – 4142 Mariner Blvd (100% leased)	Unknown	Unknown
Weeki Wachee Village – 6288 Commercial Way	$13.00	$4.36
Mariner's Village – 11060 Spring Hill Dr.	$14.00	$3.95
Nature Coast Commons – 1399 Wendy Ct.	$20.00 in line/$15.00 5k SF+	$4.18
Seven Hills Plaza – 1146 Spring Hill Dr.	$15.00	$5.14
Average	$11.56	$4.05

Source: *Bruce Strumpf, Inc., Market Study*

Table 8: Shopping Centers with Advertised Lease Rates in Hernando County, Florida as of March 31, 2015

Name	Building Size (square feet)	Lowest Annual Rental Rate (per square foot)
Silverthorn Square (Spring Hill)	28,820	$16.00
Timber Pines Centre (Spring Hill)	19,562	$16.00
Shoppes of Spring Hill (Spring Hill)	67,951	$12.00
Shoppes at Glen Lakes (Spring Hill)	66,600	$13.00
Forest Oaks Plaza (Spring Hill)	38,432	$11.00
Sunrise Plaza (east Hernando near I-75)	86,815	$10.00
Spring Hill Plaza (Spring Hill)	116,917	$9.00

Source: *LoopNet.com (online real estate service)*

163.340(8)(h),F.S., Tax/Special Delinquency

Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land could not be verified with available data.

At the time of analyzing, the Hernando County's Central GIS Delinquent Taxes/Home interactive map, there were approximately 10 parcels within the study area owing $1,000 or more. One parcel had over $20,000 in owed taxes. Without a more detailed analysis, it would be premature to make a formal determination if tax or special delinquency exceeds the fair value of land for these properties. Therefore, the data is deemed inconclusive.

163.340(8)(i),F.S., Vacancy Rates

Residential and commercial vacancy rates higher than in the remainder of the county could not be verified with available data.

Vacancy rate information for all office, commercial, and industrial spaces in the study area was not available. Therefore, this data factor was deemed inconclusive. However, there is evidence of problematic levels of vacancy in the commercial center. The *Kass Circle Neighborhood Revitalization Data Summary Report* states out of the 92 shopping center type units in the area, 23 are vacant. The vacant number of retail stores equates to a 25% vacancy rate. Bruce Strumpf, Inc., the real estate broker for Spring Hill Plaza, lists vacancies for the plaza on their website. Of the total rentable/usable square footage of Spring Hill Plaza, which is 110,917 square feet, 28,403 square feet or approximately 26% is currently vacant.

It should also be noted that of the 18 properties in the Commercial Center, all of which have been zoned for commercial purposes since soon after the filing of the original

plat (probably zoned in approximately the mid-1970s), six of them have never been developed. At least three of those six are posted with real estate signs advertising them for sale. We believe that low visibility from Spring Hill Drive and poor connection to the multi-family neighborhood (see earlier discussion under Faulty Lot Layout) are two factors that combine to reduce the marketability of fully one-third of the center's commercial properties, therefore maintaining a high commercial vacancy rate.

163.340(8)(j),F.S., Incidence of Crime

Incidence of crime in the area higher is than in the remainder of the county.

The percentage of crime in an area can be a strong indicator of deteriorating conditions. Deteriorating conditions that are left unaddressed can contribute to escalating incidences of crime, and therefore discourage growth and development in the area. To analyze this blight factor, data from Hernando County and the U.S. Census were used to compare per capita crime incident calls for the Kass Circle area and Hernando County. The study team also identified several images of signage that suggest that the community is on guard against crime, as shown in Figure 37. Based on this analysis, it was observed that this blight factor was present within the Kass Circle study area.

Figure 37: Crime Related Signage in the Study Area

Per capita crime calls were calculated using the following data. Hernando County provided a population estimate for the Kass Circle area of 1,438 people, which was based on parcels in the study area and 2010 Census data. To maintain consistency for population comparisons, Hernando County's 2010 census population estimate of 172,778 people was used. Hernando County GIS data on police and crime incident calls for 2012 were used (this was the latest readily available data for crime, fire, and EMS calls). The incident calls are not classified by type, so a wide array of activity is included. A total of 322 incidents were reported and logged in Kass Circle. Locations of calls are shown in Figure 38. A few nodes where calls are concentrated are also identified.

Figure 38: Map of 2012 Crime Incidents, Kass Circle Area

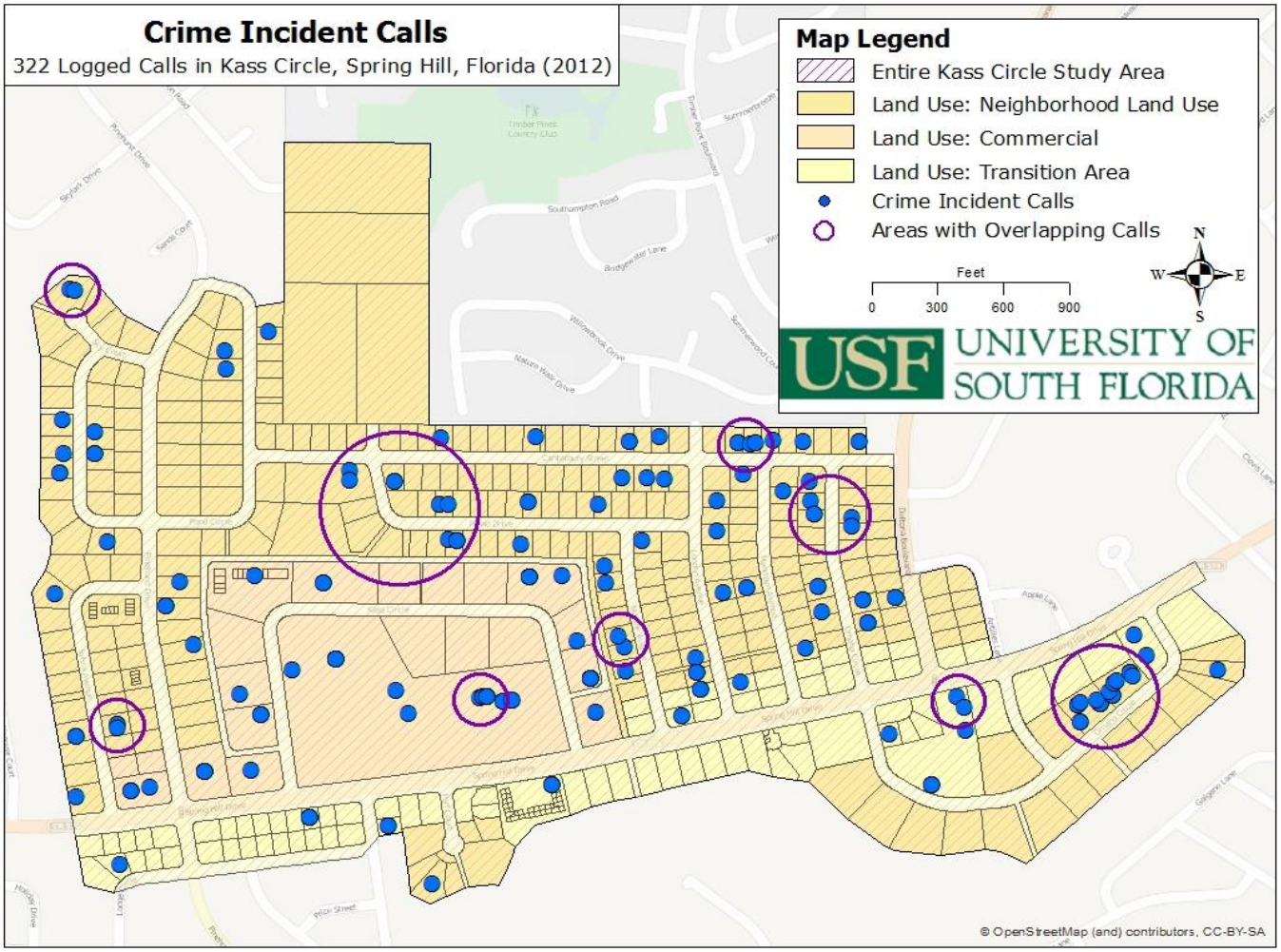


Table 9 shows the per capita comparison for the Kass Circle area compared to Hernando County. Kass Circle far surpasses the County, with 0.225 crime calls per capita.

Table 9: Kass Circle vs. Hernando County Calls Per Capita Comparisons

Study Area	Number of Logged Calls (2012)	Total Population (2010)	Calls Per Capita
Kass Circle	322	1,438	0.225
Hernando Co.	12,148	172,778	0.070

163.340(8)(k),F.S., Fire & EMS Calls

Fire and emergency medical service calls to the study area are higher than in the remainder of the county.

The observance of a proportionately higher number of fire-rescue and emergency medical service (EMS) calls within a specific area, in relation to those found in the remainder of the county, strongly indicates the presence of blight within an area. Specifically, it serves as a signifier of greater fire and emergency needs within an area. A calls-per-capita comparison between Kass Circle and Hernando County indicated the presence of this blight factor in the Kass Circle area.

As was done for crime calls, this analysis used 2010 population data and 2012 call data. 316 fire rescue and emergency medical service calls were reported and logged in the Kass Circle area. Figure 39 maps the calls and identifies nodes with higher activity.

Figure 39: Map of 2012 Fire & EMS Calls, Kass Circle Area

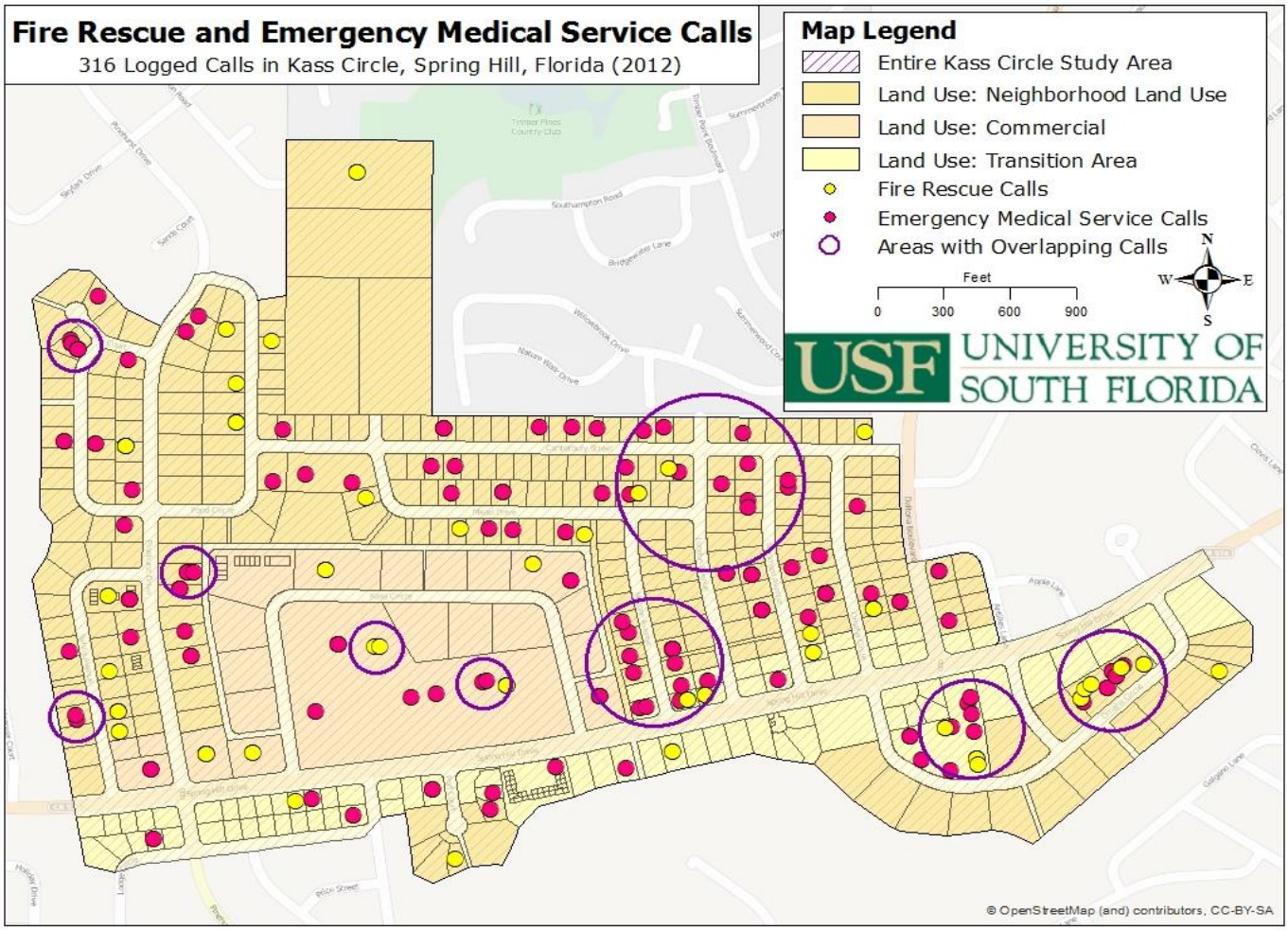


Table 10 shows the per capita comparison for the Kass Circle area compared to Hernando County. Kass Circle surpasses the County, with 0.220 calls per capita.

Table 10: Kass Circle vs. Hernando County Calls Per Capita Comparisons

Study Area	Number of Logged Calls (2012)	Total Population (2010)	Calls Per Capita
Kass Circle	316	1,438	0.220
Hernando Co.	25,093	172,778	0.145

163.340(8)(l),F.S., Building Code Violations

A greater number of violations of the Florida Building Code in the area than the number of violations recorded in the remainder of the county or municipality could not be verified.

Data was not available at the time of this report to analyze the number of violations in either the Kass Circle study area or Hernando County as a whole. In a code violation sweep performed by Hernando County last year, only one property in the Kass Circle area was found to be structurally unsafe/abandoned. Earlier this year, that structure was demolished. Since no further information relating to Florida Building Code violations was present, this factor could not be analyzed and is inconclusive.

163.340(8)(m),F.S., Unusual Conditions of Title

Diversity of ownership or defective or unusual conditions of title which prevent the free alienability of land within the deteriorated or hazardous area could not be verified.

Analysis of the Property Appraiser's ownership data indicated a diversity of ownership. Full title searches were not conducted due to time restrictions and unavailable resources. Therefore, the analysis is inconclusive.

163.340(8)(n),F.S., Governmentally-Owned Property with Adverse Environmental Conditions

There are no formal designations of environmental issues, such as brownfields or petroleum leaks in the Kass Circle area. Significant portions of the study area are owned by Hernando County, including drainageways and one large property with a sinkhole on it. While some of these areas are deteriorated, none represents environmental conditions that rise to the significantly "adverse" level. There is always a

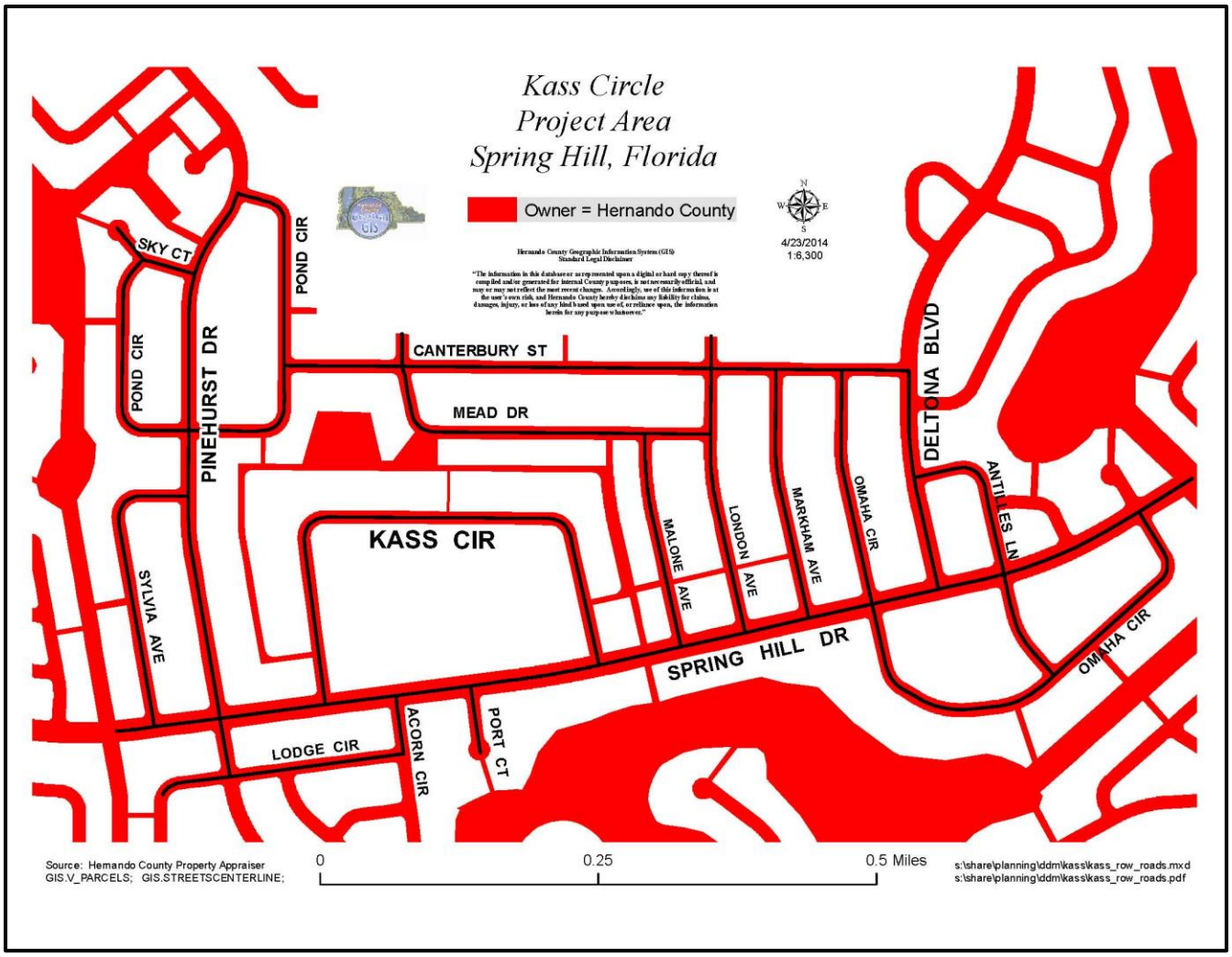
potential for environmental impacts to the community via illegal dumping on both public and private properties.

Publicly-owned properties were identified using Hernando County Property Appraiser data. There are several roadways, drainageways and lakes within and in the vicinty of the Kass Circle study area, all belonging to Hernando County, as shown on Figure 40. All parcels are undeveloped, and generally contain grass and wooded areas. For the most part, the parcels relate to water and drainage functions, including the presence of a sinkhole on property north of Kass Circle that borders the Alley.

All of the government-owned properties were cross-referenced against databases for formal designations of adverse environmental conditions, including those maintained by the Hernando County Property Appraiser, the Southwest Florida Water Management District, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and the federal Superfund Sites List. There were no findings of formally-designated adverse environmental conditions.

The sinkhole serves as a direct entry to the groundwater system and is designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under Hernando County's Groundwater Protection Ordinance, limiting the types of land uses and activities that can occur in its vicinity. The current practice of illegal dumping on or near this property or other County properties can result in adverse public health impacts for the community.

Figure 40: Hernando County Government-owned Properties in the Kass Circle Study Area including Road Rights-of-Way

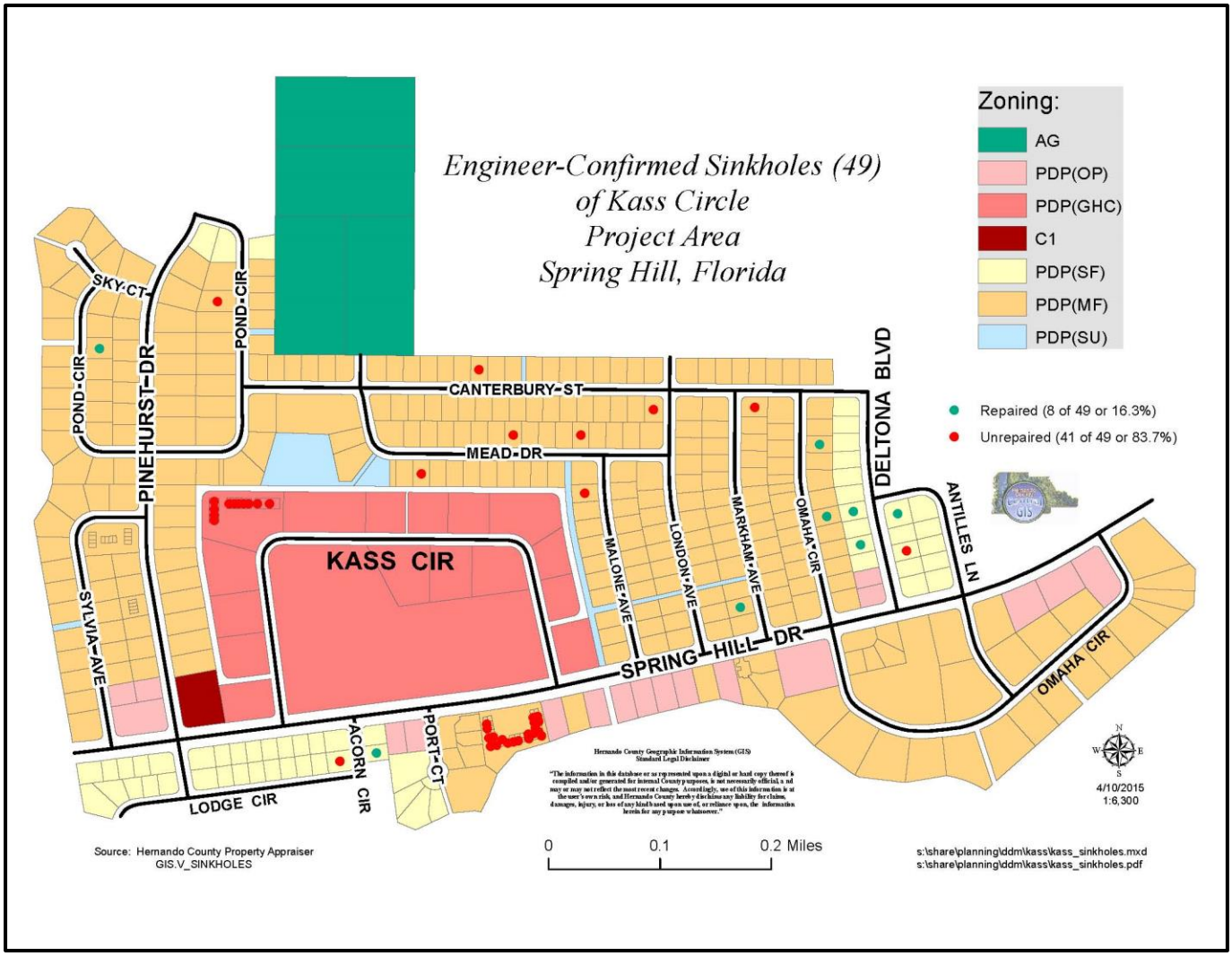


163.340(8)(o), F.S., Unrepaired Sinkhole Property Damage

Sinkhole activity has been reported within the Kass Circle study area. The overwhelming majority of engineer-confirmed sinkhole activity affecting existing structures in the study area have not been repaired.

The Kass Circle area currently has 49 engineer-confirmed sinkhole reports filed on properties with existing structures. Figure 41 shows the locations of repaired and unrepaired sinkhole damage. Eight of these have been repaired leaving nearly 84% (41) unrepaired sinkhole incidents. Even accounting for multi-family properties, sinkholes on only 7 of 20 properties (counting condominium buildings as one property) have been repaired, still leaving 65% of the properties unrepaired.

Figure 41. Engineer-Confirmed Sinkholes in Kass Circle Study Area showing Repaired (green dot) and Unrepaired (red dot) Damage



Conclusion

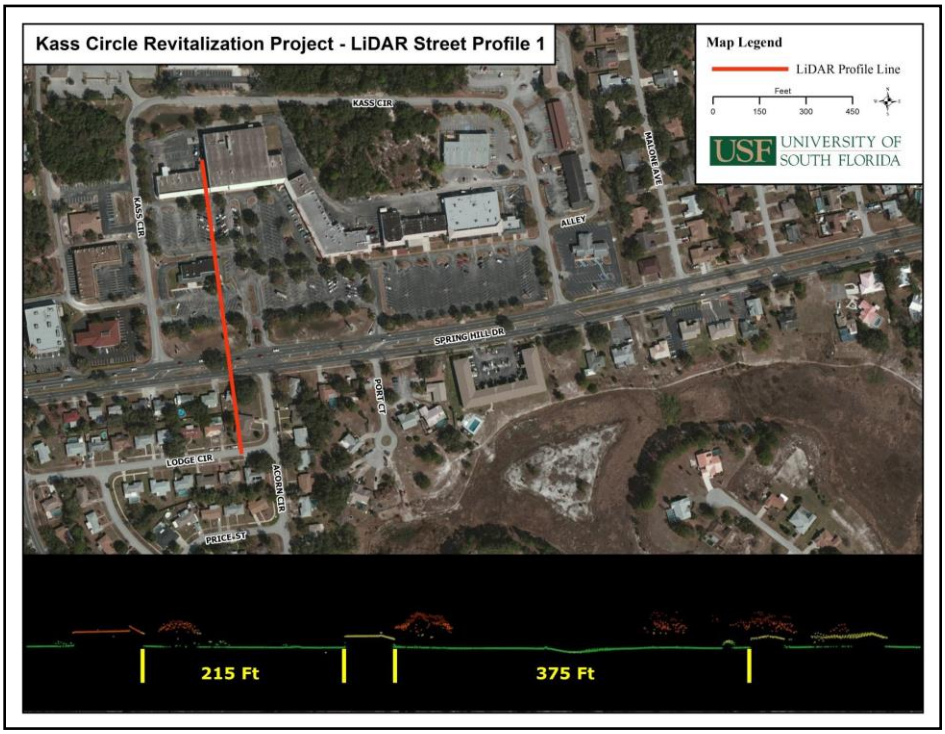
This Finding of Necessity for the Kass Circle area determines that the required conditions for creating a Community Redevelopment Area exist.

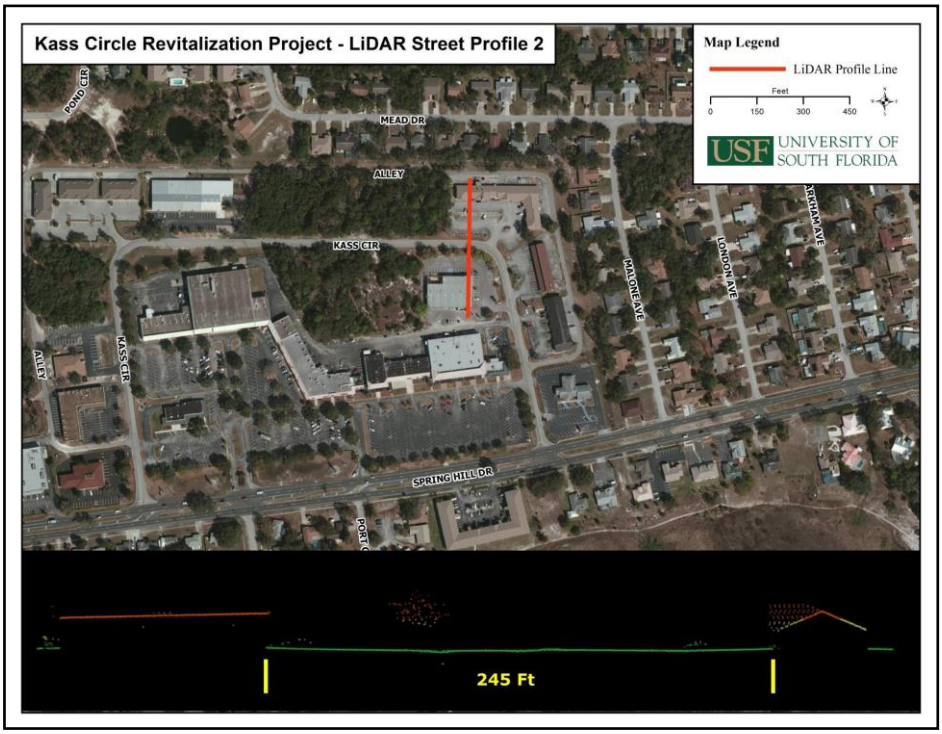
References Cited

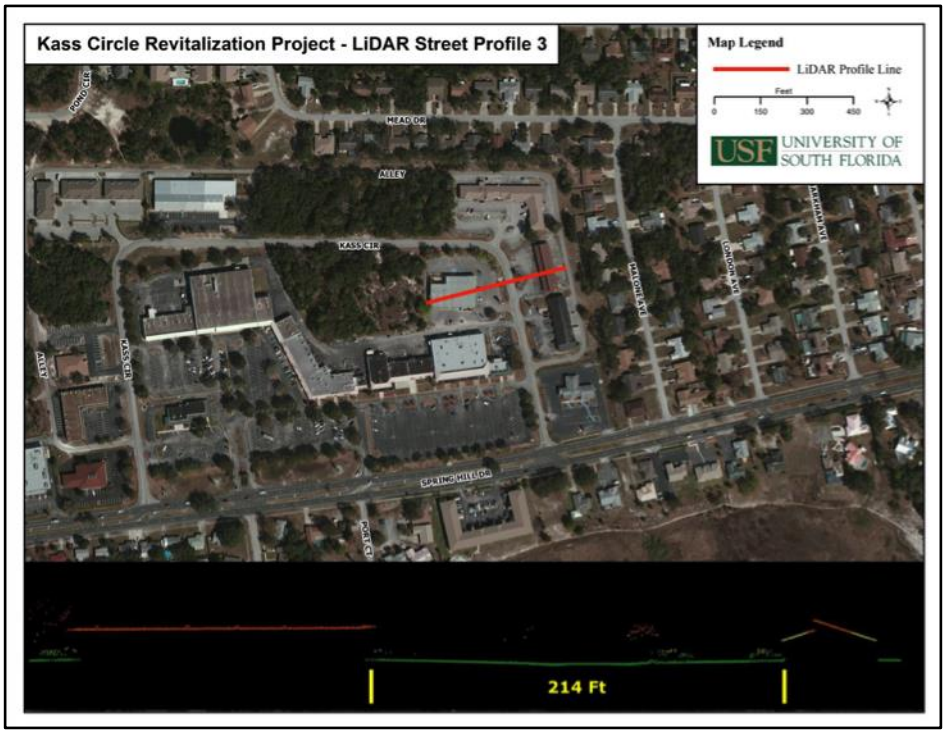
Gibbs, Robert J. 2012. Principles of Urban Retail Planning and Development. John Wiley & Sons.

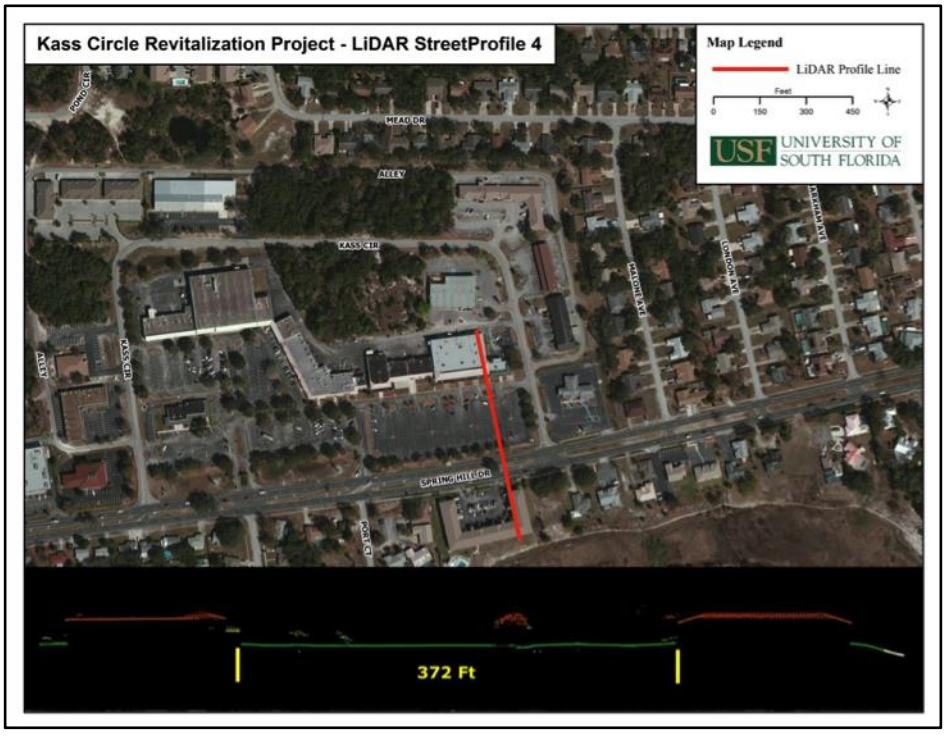
Appendix

Appendix A: Lidar Street Profiles






Kass Circle Revitalization Project - LiDAR Street Profile 3
Map Legend
LiDAR Profile Line
Feet
0 150 300 450
USF UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA
POND CIR
MEAD DR
ALLEY
KASS CIR
MALCOLM AVE
LONDON AVE
ALABAMA AVE
SPRING HILL DR
214 Ft


Kass Circle Revitalization Project - LiDAR StreetProfile 4
Map Legend
LiDAR Profile Line
Feet
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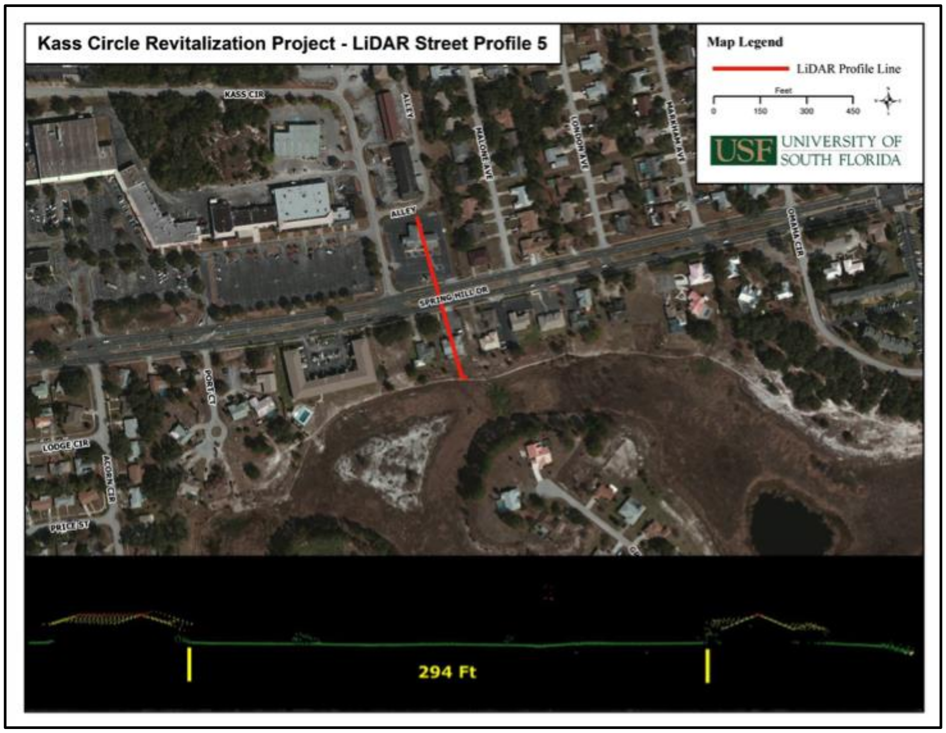
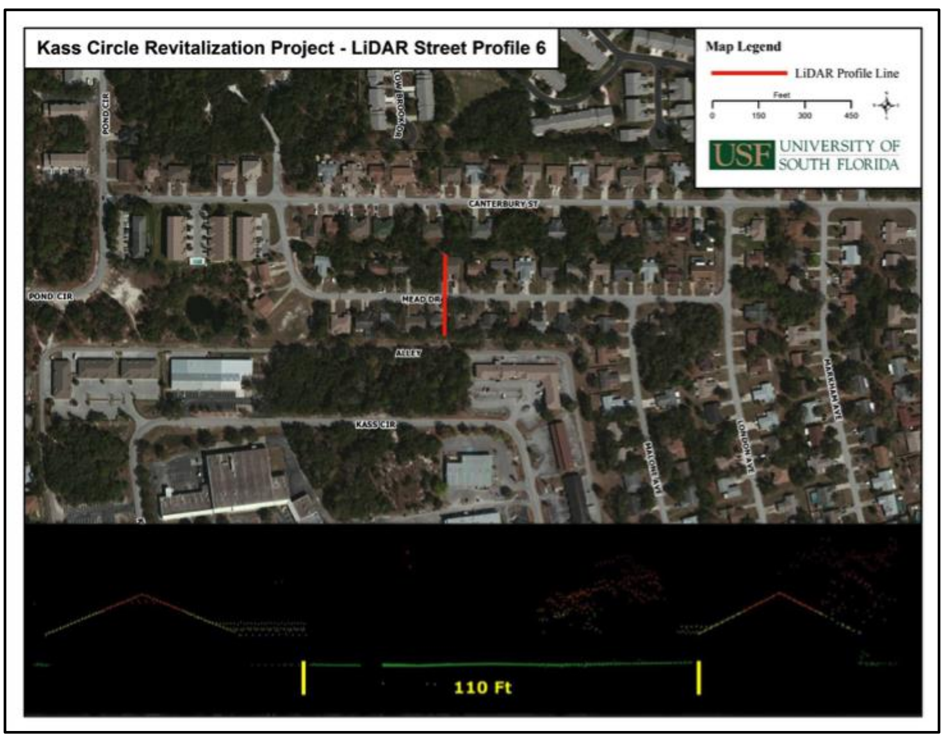
USF UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA
POND CIR
MEAD DR
ALLEY
KASS CIR
MALCOLM AVE
LONDON AVE
ALABAMA AVE
SPRING HILL DR
372 Ft


Kass Circle Revitalization Project - LiDAR Street Profile 5
Map Legend
LiDAR Profile Line
Feet
0
150
300
450
USF UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA
KASS CIR
ALLEY
SPRING HILL DR
294 Ft


Kass Circle Revitalization Project - LiDAR Street Profile 6
Map Legend
LiDAR Profile Line
Feet
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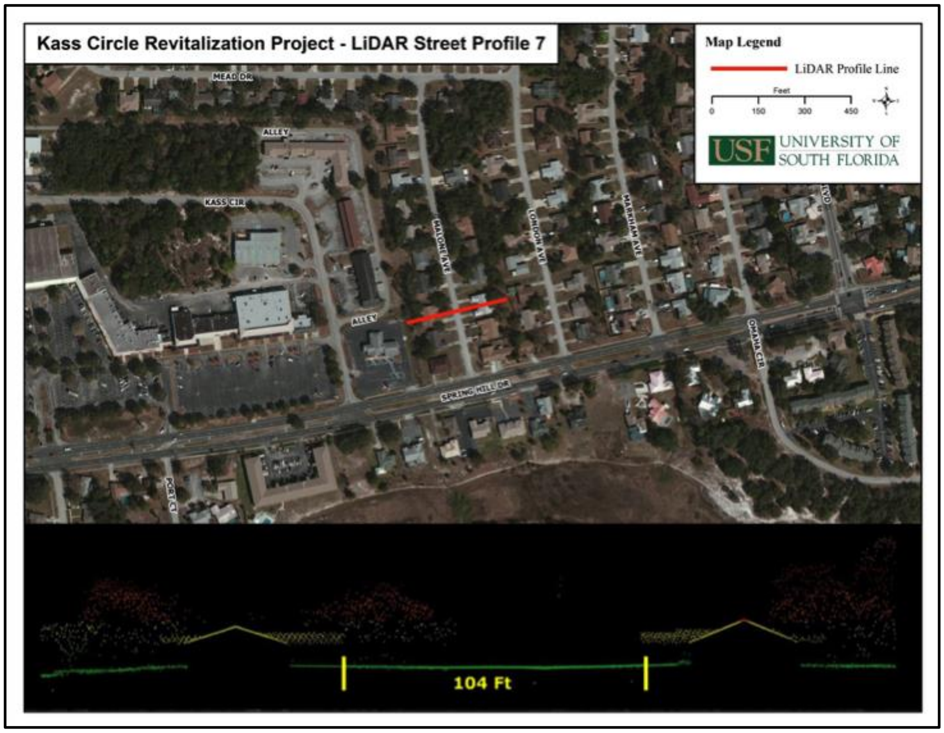
150
300
450
USF UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA
CANTERBURY ST
MEAD DR
ALLEY
KASS CIR
POND CIR
110 Ft


Kass Circle Revitalization Project - LiDAR Street Profile 7
Map Legend
LiDAR Profile Line
Feet
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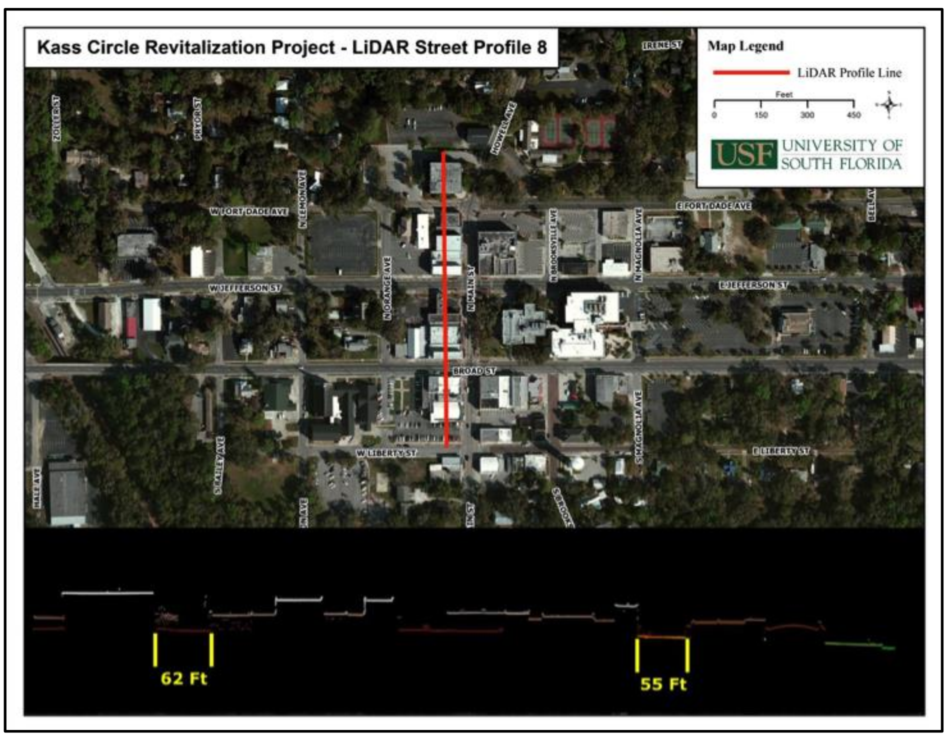
USF UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA
KASS CIR
ALLEY
SPRING HILL DR
104 Ft


Kass Circle Revitalization Project - LiDAR Street Profile 8
Map Legend
LiDAR Profile Line
Feet
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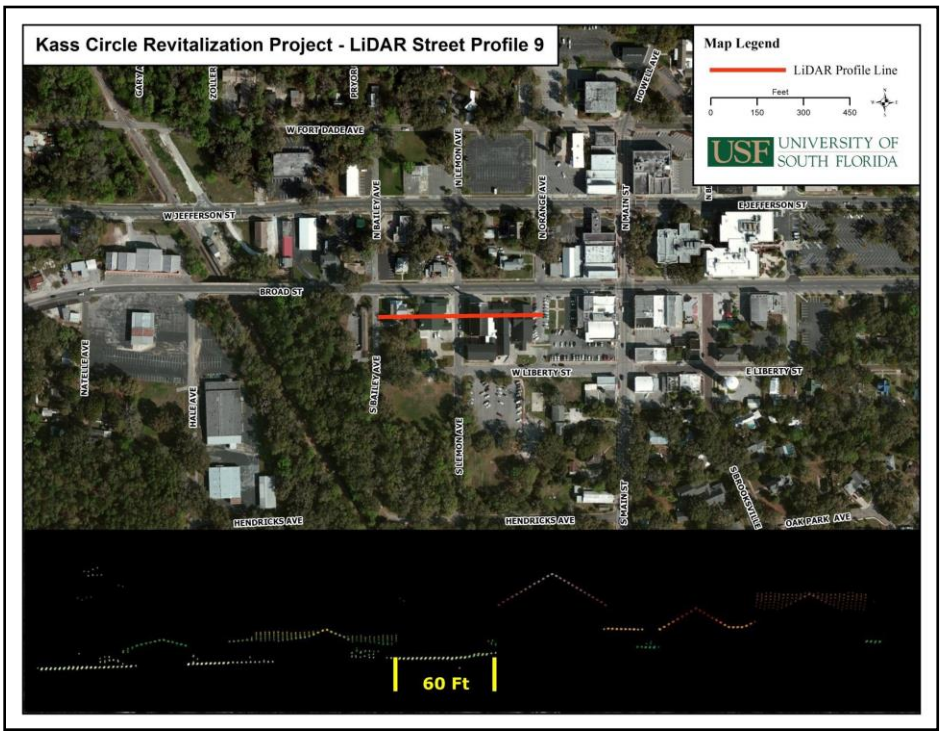
USF UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA
W FORT DADE AVE
W JEFFERSON ST
BROAD ST
W LIBERTY ST
E FORT DADE AVE
E JEFFERSON ST
E LIBERTY ST
62 Ft
55 Ft


Kass Circle Revitalization Project - LiDAR Street Profile 9
Map Legend
LiDAR Profile Line
Feet
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150
300
450
USF UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA
W FORT DADE AVE
W JEFFERSON ST
E JEFFERSON ST
BROAD ST
W LIBERTY ST
E LIBERTY ST
HENDRICKS AVE
OAK PARK AVE
N LEMON AVE
N ORANGE AVE
N MAIN ST
S MAIN ST
60 Ft