



CITY OF SANFORD COMMUNITY VISION AND STRATEGIC PLAN

SUMMARY OF IMAGINE SANFORD COMMUNITY WORKSHOP November 15, 2012

I. OVERVIEW

The City of Sanford hosted a community workshop for the Imagine Sanford vision and strategic planning project on the evening of November 15, 2012 in the Sanford Civic Center. The meeting objectives were to introduce the community to the project and the visioning process, identify and affirm community values as a foundation for the vision, and identify potential target areas and their issues and opportunities. The workshop will guide subsequent analytical efforts in each target area. About 65 people attended, as well as staff from the City and the consultant team.



The workshop was advertised through a number of different media, including local newspapers, the City web site and Imagine Sanford web site, flyers, signs and an email network of interested citizens and groups.

This initial forum was the first of three meetings scheduled over the course of the project to solicit public participation and facilitate input and review of the priorities, design concepts and policies emerging for the community vision.



After introductions and a brief presentation by the consultant team, workshop attendees were asked to participate in two activities: a community values survey and a small group mapping exercise.

The key values, issues, and opportunities identified by the community during these exercises are summarized below. Detailed data for each exercise follow the summary.

II. SUMMARY

Community Values survey

The foundation of a community is based in shared values. Although visions of the future may be different, a cohesive community shares a set of common values and goals.

Workshop participants were asked to articulate key values – whether ideas, actions, or places – they care about the most regarding their city, as well as areas where the community could improve. The elements identified during this exercise will help guide the visioning process when defining and evaluating alternative scenarios for the future of Sanford.

Frequently identified values:

- Diversity
- Accessibility/connectivity
- Uniqueness
- Sense of Place
- History/preservation of character
- Authenticity
- Friendliness

Frequently identified assets and resources:

- Downtown
- Waterfront/lake
- Parks/environmental areas
- Zoo
- Transportation systems – airport, railroad, and highway
- Seminole Towne Center
- Seminole State College

Frequently identified areas for improvements:

- Community relations
- Marketing – promoting Sanford both locally and regionally



- Urban infill, especially downtown
- Connecting the waterfront and downtown
- Gateways and signage – community identity
- Homeless persons
- Housing options – more choices, including affordable housing/workforce housing
- Infrastructure
- Beautification/clean-up

Community Issues/Target Areas Mapping Exercise

A key to a successful vision is when citizens know that the community has the power to make changes that will lead to desired outcomes. Workshop participants were asked to



mark up maps of the city as they considered overall community issues facing Sanford (noting both areas that should be preserved and areas where change should be considered) and identify potential target areas for actions for redevelopment or new development activity. After the exercise, a representative from each group reported key elements of their discussion and map to the larger group. Key elements from this reporting included:

Frequently identified community issues:

- Create synergy between lakefront with downtown; create a walkable destination where both are well-connected
- Connect both SunRail and airport to downtown – use existing or former rail lines as an extension of SunRail and employ shuttles/trolleys and shared use paths to make better connections
- Extend the trail network – tie into existing systems and create new shared use paths with connections both locally and regionally
- Redevelop Marina Island to create a destination – expand the docks to provide more room for transient boats, add a hotel and restaurants



- Establish community identity – unified signage; create City gateways and neighborhood gateways
- Provide economic incentives to create new business opportunities and jobs; streamline the review and approval processes
- Develop more mixed uses downtown - increase development densities, provide more housing, attract a grocery store, use the old post office and City Hall locations as possible redevelopment areas

Potential target areas:

- Downtown
- Riverwalk/lakefront
- SunRail station area
- Orlando Sanford International Airport
- Goldsboro and Georgetown neighborhoods
- SR 46 corridor
- US 17-92 corridor
- Seminole Towne Center area



III. DATA - Community Values Survey

Participants returned 29 surveys during the workshop, answering the questions listed below. Responses given multiple times on the same question are denoted with an (*).

1: What makes Sanford a good place to live or work?

- **Location is amazing/convenient location***
- **We have it all**
- **Beauty – of homes, waterfront, and buildings**
- **Waterfront/Lake Monroe***
- **Historic value***
- **Diversity***
- **Friendly people/good people***
- **Only opportunity in Seminole County to have a “town life”**
- **Authentic “real town” – Sanford is not a made up “colonial town”**
- **Walkable/bikeable***
- **Brick streets**
- **Not too big – big enough**
- **Access to Orlando and beach – not too far away***
- **Transportation – easy access to I-4, SR 417, and US 17-92***
- **Schools are good***
- **Affordable**
- **Safe place to live**
- **Small town feel and character***
- **Neighborhoods**
- **History plus hipness factor of arts, culture, and restaurants**
- **Progressive/hip vibe**
- **Potential for growth***
- **Sense of community/sense of place***
- **Nice mixture of small town meets city***
- **Downtown where everyone knows you**
- **Shopping and service possibilities (without having to go to Orlando via I-4)***
- **Progressive arts scene**
- **Family-friendly**
- **Traditional catholic church**

2: From your perspective, what do you most value about your neighborhood and community?

- **Location***
- **Low crime***
- **Convenience***
- **Quiet**



- **Diversity**
 - **Safety***
 - **Small town feel but with assets***
 - **Riverfront/waterfront***
 - **People are great/friendly***
 - **People look out for each other***
 - **Eclectic community**
 - **History of city/historic district***
 - **Stability of neighborhoods**
 - **Architectural and cultural scale – there’s a great diversity, but it all fits within the consistent scale of historic buildings, sidewalks, tree-lined streets, etc...**
 - **The scale – it’s walkable and easy to get to restaurants, shops, etc...***
 - **Modern connection to history and environment – Lake Monroe, old buildings, friendly people**
 - **Neighborhood feel where people get to know their neighbors/neighborly***
 - **Endless possibilities**
 - **Sense of community**
 - **Close to I-4, SR 417, US 17-92**
 - **Arts connection – two theaters, many galleries, welcome center arts**
 - **Progressive ideas**
 - **Traditional catholic school**
 - **Church we attend**
 - **Parks**
 - **Front porches**
 - **Access to services**
- 3: What makes Sanford unique or distinctive among other communities in the region?
- **Diversity**
 - **Location***
 - **Only downtown (“real downtown”) in Seminole County***
 - **Real downtown – not a fake downtown Disney simulation of a town**
 - **Residents**
 - **Unique demographics – artists, businesses, young people**
 - **History***
 - **Historic districts/historic preservation***
 - **Quaint historic downtown area/historic homes***
 - **Lake Monroe/lakefront***
 - **Airport***
 - **Transportation hub***
 - **It came to be because of the existence of the St. Johns River**



- **Cultural heritage***
- **Strong community ties/sense of community***
- **Walkable**
- **Sprawl is located away from the center of town, leading to a sense of community and place**
- **Slow pace**
- **Charm**
- **Arts organizations in town**
- **Museums**
- **Amtrak auto train**
- **No high rises (with one exception)**
- **Entertainment destination**

4: What are Sanford's greatest assets or resources?

- **Diversity***
- **Location***
- **Historic downtown***
- **Potential for live-work-play**
- **Waterfront/marina***
- **Airport***
- **Zoo***
- **Railroad – Amtrak and Sunrail***
- **Transportation system***
- **Mall***
- **US 17-92**
- **Arts community**
- **Harvest Time International**
- **Hospital**
- **Seminole State College***
- **History***
- **City street layout/connectivity***
- **Accessibility**
- **Good and intelligent people/friendly people***
- **Brick streets**
- **Local businesses and unique experiences**
- **Parks**
- **It isn't cookie-cutter**
- **Nature/environment**
- **Churches**
- **Small town atmosphere***
- **Sense of place**



- 5: What improvements are most needed in the community?
- **Tighter community relations/Sanford seems divided***
 - **Embrace our diversity**
 - **More community involvement**
 - **More events downtown to draw people***
 - **Goldsboro area**
 - **Roads need improvement**
 - **Sidewalks and curbing***
 - **Communication**
 - **Diversity**
 - **Marketing – promote ourselves better***
 - **Widespread wi-fi throughout city**
 - **Police force needs to be reevaluated**
 - **Work towards “complete streets”**
 - **Not image building but building to create an image**
 - **Sanford police department needs to develop better community policing strategies that build support within the community**
 - **Draw more attention to the historic waterfront – we are one of few towns in central Florida with such a resource.**
 - **Pro-active attempt to occupy all downtown structures – entice potential businesses to buy or lease there**
 - **Connections to other places**
 - **Green technology industries**
 - **Reoccupy historic buildings downtown as businesses or residences – vacant buildings and storefronts would make terrific loft housing**
 - **Don’t rely on growth as an economic engine. The recession gives a chance to rethink – growth should be sustainable and smart, not solely based on economics and the need for jobs.**
 - **Revitalizing black communities – 13th Street, Georgetown, and the housing projects**
 - **More unique shops and restaurants – more of a College Park or Thornton Park feel**
 - **US 17-92 needs to look better – a lot of abandoned buildings***
 - **Lee P. Moore Park**
 - **Less homeless***
 - **Rebranding**
 - **Too many vacant buildings and slumlords – need to fill buildings***
 - **Reasonable landlords***
 - **Realist rents – will attract more business**
 - **Too many “dead zones”***
 - **Better lighting***
 - **Code enforcement**



- **Integration of racial neighborhoods**
- **Priorities where money is spent**
- **Transformation center for homeless**
- **Safety/less crime***
- **Affordable housing/more housing options***
- **More economic development**
- **Connectivity between Orlando and Daytona**
- **Repurpose old post office to an arts and theater complex for Celery Soup**
- **Eco-friendly/green**
- **Care with planning in “poorer” neighborhoods**
- **Downtown as a destination**
- **Rails to trails, bike trails**
- **Beautification/appearance***
- **Get rid of two hour parking**
- **More security - police need to patrol alleys**
- **Infrastructure***
- **Poverty**
- **Respond to plans and follow through on plans**
- **Grocery store**
- **Get rid of “The Friendly City” motto. Imagine Sanford is better**
- **Improve walkability – big sidewalks, slow traffic**
- **Bring city hall into this century – get new energy and perspective.**
- **Finish riverwalk out to zoo***
- **Underutilized waterfront**
- **Tie downtown to waterfront***
- **Gateways***
- **Need a quality hotel**
- **Greater bus and neighborhood pickup throughout the City**
- **Capitalize on historic ballpark**
- **Downtown revitalization that maintains historic character**

The following statements are rated from 1-5, where 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree. People generally responded favorably to the statement that Sanford is a diverse and welcoming City that is open to people of all backgrounds. Along these lines, respondents to the survey also feel that Sanford is a good community for people who want to become involved or start a business. However, the City gets somewhat lower marks for being a well-connected community with accessible destinations. This indicates there are many opportunities but the City is not taking advantage of them as well as it could.



- Sanford is a diverse city that is welcoming and open to people of all backgrounds.

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	3.45 average
(1)	(4)	(9)	(11)	(4)	29 responses
3%	14%	31%	38%	14%	

- There are opportunities in Sanford to start a business, become involved as a citizen, or make positive changes happen in a neighborhood or the community.

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	3.48 average
(1)	(2)	(13)	(8)	(5)	29 responses
3%	7%	45%	28%	17%	

- Sanford is a well-connected community with neighborhoods and destinations that are accessible.

- Regionally

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	3.10 average
(4)	(5)	(6)	(12)	(2)	29 responses
14%	17%	21%	41%	7%	

- Within the City

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	2.97 average
(3)	(6)	(10)	(9)	(1)	29 responses
10%	22%	34%	31%	3%	

Comments/Questions?

- Sanford is its own worst enemy.**
- Create a landlord association – education and a funding mechanism to encourage compliance with good practices. Reward with recognition.**
- All City decisions must be clearly linked to City goals in a way that can be understood and tracked by citizens.**
- Build on the things that we have; don't start from scratch to invent something.**
- Actively encourage native landscaping/non-use of fertilizer to preserve springs/water supply.**
- For true citizen input, communication is the key. Didn't see anything about this evening's workshop at City Hall, where it should be advertised.**
- Orlando/Sanford Airport has no signs directing visitors to Sanford downtown.**
- Would like to see more urban infill (see plan developed by Andreas Duany).**
- We want accessibility on foot – not for cars.**



IV. Data - Community Issues/Target Areas Map Exercise

Eight sets of maps were marked up during the small group exercise. The following information was noted on the maps:

Map 1

Potential Target Areas

- Riverwalk
- SunRail station area
- Amtrak station/second SunRail station area

Community Issues and Notes

- Infill downtown
- Add recreation center adjacent to historic baseball field
- Add second SunRail station near Pebble Junction and use as multimodal station - extend rail connection to airport and run trolley loop to downtown
- Restore and redevelop neighborhood area west of proposed station
- Complete trail all the way around Lake Monroe
- Move City Hall adjacent to marina entrance; add street level retail, boutique hotel, and parking garage
- Restore the sailing regatta
- Develop marina island as family entertainment area
- Complete the riverwalk out to the zoo
- Connect trails

Map 2

Potential Target Areas

- Seminole State College area
- Orlando Sanford International Airport
- Amtrak and SunRail areas
- Goldsboro neighborhood
- Seminole Towne Center area

Community Issues and Notes

- Pedestrian connections from zoo to downtown
- Connection from SunRail to airport
- Utilize heritage tourism
- Develop marina island

Map 3

Potential Target Areas



- CO 46A (25th Street) corridor from SR 417 to airport
- US 17-92 from Seminole State College to downtown SunRail station area

Community Issues and Notes

- Add hotel adjacent to airport
- Consider free trade zone designation at airport
- Lee P. Moore Park - needs lights and clean-up; tennis and racquetball courts are unplayable
- Need retail along riverwalk
- Better utilize riverwalk
- Improve US 17-92 appearance
- Black and white signs across City are very hard to read - hire a graphic designer for better signs next time
- Need gateway signage/identification at three City exits off I-4 (CR 46A, SR 46, and US 17-92), as well as along US 17-92
- Economic development in industrial areas between mall and SunRail
- Develop TOD adjacent to SunRail station
- Complete trails - tie into Seminole County systems
- Neighborhood improvements
- Boat dock
- Promote Sanford - create gateways; have literature at our airport, other airports, welcome centers, and Tallahassee

Map 4

Potential Target Areas

- Goldsboro neighborhood
- Housing projects
- Orlando Sanford International Airport

Community Issues and Notes

- Need more tourism; bring in writer from tourist magazine such as Southern Living to do an article
- Make town appealing to tourists
- Encourage events, especially multi-cultural
- Permanent fairground location; would be good event location
- Information kiosks
- Hostels and B&Bs
- Build a Publix where the Shop and Bag is now; residents need a grocery store downtown
- Park and Ride and/or parking garages at I-4; run shuttles to SunRail station



- Need informational web site to advertise meetings and events to get more people involved
- Educational programs such as "how to start a business" and "how to get grants"
- Housing project redevelopment
- Convention Center along lake
- Free shuttle around downtown and historic area; connect to SunRail and Amtrak
- Water taxi to DeLand; have bars and restaurants as destinations at dock areas
- Water airplane to connect to Mount Dora/Tavares area
- Sunland - make like College Park
- Improvements (such as sidewalks and streets) in Goldsboro
- Get tourists from airport to downtown
- Buy out Midway area
- Bring back air shows
- Porch parties
- Provide informational packets to new businesses so they know what to expect
- Better maps for shopping/businesses
- Green/clean business
- More efficient bus system; students need evening bus from college
- More waterfront businesses
- Provide more information downtown about downtown - walking tours, shopping, historic area
- Provide more kid-friendly activities

Map 5

Potential Target Areas

- Waterfront
- Historic downtown/Sanford Avenue corridor - preserve the architectural scale; increase connectivity
- Orlando Sanford International Airport - provide jobs; connect with downtown
- SR 46 corridor - SunRail development/revitalization; provide jobs; transportation core

Community Issues and Notes

- Provide something for the people who live here 365 days a year
- Intangibles - scale, sense of place, connectivity
- Historical perspectives - eco-tourism, cultural tourism
- Bring jobs; quality not quantity; clean/green jobs
- Hip factor - art, market, restaurants, night life, ball park
- Improve marina island
- SunRail station area is a blank slate; TOD
- Extend riverwalk to zoo; provide natural areas; provide fishing areas



- connect airport to downtown
- Sanford Avenue
- Historic area
- Inclusive of all groups - the best the City has to offer
- Historic ball park

Map 6

Potential Target Areas

- US 17-92 corridor - provide streetscape, trees, and pavers; create pedestrian-oriented atmosphere
- SunRail station - connect to both riverwalk and downtown; provide walkable streets; gridded streets with big sidewalks; slow traffic; redevelop buildings along street
- Downtown and lakefront – mesh the two areas into one destination; provide more mixed uses

Community Issues and Notes

- Move buildings forward along US 17-92 to create a pedestrian-oriented environment; provide adequate pedestrian separation for safety
- Engineering Building (Park and 1st) should remove the reflective glass on the first floor - this is a perfect opportunity to promote the City; should have plans and visions and programs displayed for citizens to see
- Rail connection from airport to downtown
- Extend street lights and sidewalks to the south from downtown
- Palmetto and 1st - develop building along main corridor
- Improve gateways
- Provide boating and water activities
- Need urban infill downtown - all buildings need to be rented out
- Marina Island is an eyesore - need to redevelop; get a good hotel
- Between 1st and riverfront area, improve walkability and develop vacant parcels and parking lots with buildings/urban infill, including high density residential
- Extend riverwalk to zoo and beyond
- Form-based code implementation in select areas
- Seminole Boulevard at US 17-92 - get rid of ugly signs on both sides of road; make a better gateway
- Provide bulb-outs to increase pedestrian safety
- Streetcar from SunRail to downtown

Map 7

Potential Target Areas



- US 17-92 corridor - needs a face lift; beautification/overhaul; improve appearance of businesses
- SunRail - connect to downtown, mall, hospital, and airport; provide shuttles for employees to downtown
- Empty CVS at key intersection to downtown
- Citywide - Higher paying jobs; diversified job opportunities
- Historic area - no support from City...too many hoops to jump through
- I-4 at US 17-92 eastbound needs own loop
- Citywide - signage and gateways
- Citywide - public infrastructure, especially in Goldsboro and Georgetown

Community Issues and Notes

- Need bike trail along Rinehart Road
- Connect trails to Seminole County systems; make sure riverwalk is connected
- Provide vocational training
- City Commission needs to be better educated on community betterment
- Encourage more apartments and condominiums in downtown
- Work on homeless issues - provide central locations for job and social development

Map 8

Potential Target Areas

- Seminole Towne Center area
- SunRail station area
- Downtown
- Historic district
- Goldsboro neighborhood
- Orlando Sanford International Airport
- US 17-92 corridor
- SR 46 corridor

Community Issues and Notes

- Waterfront is a great asset but also fragile ecosystem
- Increase livability
- Need wayfinding in all areas, especially at I-4 and SR 46
- Industrial area between mall and SunRail
- Infill housing - family style; legacy incentives
- Deal with blight
- Airport is a good anchor/destination, but is not being utilized
- Need streetscape along US 17-92 south of SR 417
- Define gateways into City from all directions



- As goes downtown, so goes the City
- Regional weekend destination
- Workforce housing; diverse infill housing in downtown
- Downtown - provide intensity, but with specific standards
- Neighborhoods need to have a "main street"
- Neighborhoods need individual gateways/signage, but be tied into overall program for unity
- Strengthen neighborhoods
- Redevelop with charm and character
- Empty CVS site
- Streamline process for development
- Higher paying jobs; job diversity
- Encourage condominiums downtown
- Improve Goldsboro/Midway/Georgetown
- Commuter rail to airport and Amtrak
- Redevelopment opportunities on sites with condemned housing
- Trolley to and around downtown
- Move City Hall - use for higher tax purpose
- Connect riverwalk to downtown
- Industry around rail and airport hubs
- SunRail - TOD; Savannah riverfront
- Connect SunRail with downtown and airport
- Infill on 1st Street to Sanford Avenue
- US 17-92 and SR 46 corridors - form-based code overlays
- 1st Street to riverwalk - high density residential (3 and 4 floors)
- Kiosks as part of wayfinding
- Green businesses
- Water taxi
- Marina expansion
- Increase downtown density - mixed use residential/retail
- Business at waterfront
- East to west connectivity - Georgetown to SunRail
- Heritage tourism