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Reside … Commute … Visit… Reintegrating Defined Communal Place Amongst Those Who Engage with Tampa’s Built Environment

Matthew D. Suarez
University of South Florida

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Reside…Commute…Visit…
Reintegrating Defined Communal Place Amongst Those Who Engage with Tampa’s Built Environment

by

Matthew D. Suarez

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Architecture
School of Architecture and Community Design
College of Visual and Performing Arts
University of South Florida

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Keywords: placemaking, integrated district center, transit, mixed-use, USF

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to my family
especially to those members who have passed
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The phenomenon of place has always been a key issue of inquiry throughout theoretical discourse in relation to architecture and urban planning. To comprehend such a phenomenon, one must begin to understand how to concretize the factors that can be used to create such a meaningful environment. With respect to such a topic, what becomes of interest are the four primary elements that come together to illustrate how the structure and spirit of place are defined. Space, character, orientation, and identification are the elements that begin to provide such a definition.

Ever since the end of the Second World War, American development patterns have been unaccommodating in an effort to cultivate place within our society. The trends in mainstream suburban retail and residential development along with unorganized zoning practices have all but ceased this phenomenon from occurring. Such behavior has taken the once genuine, collective, unifying concept of the main-street, and has splintered it into independent development patterns which are disorganized and disjointed.

In light of this plaguing issue, suburban communities in today’s society lack elements that foster identity and character, therefore stifling place from being created. This thesis will begin by exploring the place theory according to Christian Norberg-Schulz, providing an understanding of how the primary elements of place culminate to define its spirit and structure, and the study of the types of neighbor-
hoods that possess and lack a sense of place and the means by which they do so. These efforts will ultimately work to establish a framework on how a sense of place can be reintroduced within today’s society.

The findings of this thesis will ultimately culminate in a project which will bring together prominent, fragmented developments that currently sit in a disorganized and disoriented portion of Tampa. Such developments have been burdened by isolation rather than be welcomed through integration. The vehicle used to unify these fragments will be a communal and shared place of transition, also known as an integrated district center, designed to accommodate those who reside, commute, and visit. This center will also work to illustrate the area as a defined place.

It is only by means of coming in contact with methods that define and curtail place to seek the way in which it needs to be restored. In doing so, society shall grant a person pride to reside, reason to commute, and interest to visit.
introduction
As a sense of place is lacking within Tampa, this thesis is intended to establish a means of how a defined sense of place can be reintegrated amongst Tampa’s built environment and the people who engage with this environment.

This study will work to resolve this issue in the following way:
- understanding place through studying the theory of place.
- investigating how a sense of place once was defined and is now lacking in Tampa.
- understanding a location in Tampa that is in need of being defined as a place.
- generate a design solution to illustrate how a defined sense of place can be restored within Tampa.

This thesis is intended to establish a means of how a defined sense of place can be reintegrated amongst both Tampa’s built environment and those who engage with its built environment. To achieve such a task, the following goals of the study will be emphasized:
- to convey how a sense of place was a defining characteristic amongst Tampa’s historic neighborhoods.
- to convey how a sense of place has been a lacking characteristic amongst Tampa’s contemporary neighborhoods.
- To generate a design solution to illustrate how a sense of place can be re-established within Tampa.
understanding place

(Getty Images)
This chapter on understanding place will work to introduce Christian Norberg-Schulz’s theory of place, this will allow the reader a firm understanding of what certain components and elements work to generate a sense of place. The concepts outlined in this chapter will be of importance in understanding the chapters that are to follow in this thesis.

In this chapter, Norberg-Schulz’s theory works to describe place through two major concepts. These concepts are the structure of place and the spirit of place. The structure of place identifies itself with the built physical environment and the spirit of place relates more to how people act and interact within such environments.

These concepts are then further broken down to four distinct elements. Two of the elements work to convey the structure of place and are those of space and character. The other two elements that work to convey the spirit of place are those of identity and orientation.

It will be through these methods that one will be able to comprehend the essence of what works to generate the composition of place.
This case study will provide an answer to the question: What components unique to Christian Norberg-Schulz’s theory on place work to render an environment as a defined place?

This study will also justify the hypothesis: The elements of place defined by Norberg-Schulz’s place theory are evident in the composition and classification of environments as a defined places.

**Norberg-Schulz’s Theory of Place**

The phenomenon of place has always been a key issue of inquiry throughout theoretical discourse in relation to architecture and urban planning. To comprehend such a phenomenon, one must begin to understand how to concretize the factors that can be used to create such a meaningful environment. With respect to such a topic, what becomes of interest are the four primary elements that come together to illustrate how the structure and spirit of place are defined. The four elements that work to justify the concepts of the structure and spirit of place are defined through the place theory developed by architectural theorist Christian Norberg-Schulz. Space, character, orientation, and identification are these elements that begin to provide such a definition.

Before defining the primary elements of place, one must first understand the concepts of the structure of place and the spirit of place. Both concepts are centered on two key themes. The concept relating to the structure of place is centered on the physical implications of place, while the spirit
of place is centered on the psychological implications. These two concepts also pull together the four primary elements of place that have been identified in the previous paragraph. The concept of the structure of place is defined by the elements of space and character, while the concept of the spirit of place is defined by the two remaining primary elements, orientation and identification.

**Structure of Place**

The structure of place is characterized through physical and sensorial attributes that can be engaged and understood by people. With respect to such attributes, there are three main ideas that work to greater define such a structure. “One such idea in understanding this concept is beginning to see the distinction between both the natural and man-made environments” (Norberg-Schulz 418). “Another idea that is also apparent is the existential dimension of space through the understanding of certain spatial relationships such as that between earth and sky, as well as, the distinction between inside and outside” (418). “A final occurrence that is perceived in understanding the structure of place is its character” (418).

![Figure 3:](image)
A series of figure-ground plans that are used to convey the built and un-built space of a given place. (DoobyBrain Online)
“The character of the place is determined by how things occur within the space” (418). This concept deals with the attitude, mood, and feeling of place as experienced by man.

To better provide an understanding of how these main ideas relate to the structure of place, the primary elements of space and character must be further defined. “Space is a primary element of place that is defined by the organization of physical elements” (Norberg-Schulz 418). Once organized, these elements define the physical boundaries and properties of place.

The graphic methods used to express the boundaries and properties of a place are the plan and the section. As illustrated in Figure 3 through the use of the figure-ground plan type, a place conveyed through plan begins to describe its block structure, formal composition, built and unbuilt space, street hierarchy, and natural boundaries and edges. Though the figure-ground plan is not the only plan type, it is useful in conveying these conventions with respect to place.

Like the plan, the section supports the definition of a place’s spatial structure as well. The section conveys, through graphic representation, the scale of place in relation to the scale of a person. Sections can be used to represent both the width and height of a space or series of spaces. They also illustrate the relationship and character between both indoor and outdoor space.

Figure 4 showcases a section from architect Renzo Piano’s urban revitalization proposal for Manhattanville, an academic mixed-use district for Columbia University in New York City. This graphic illustrates how a section conveys the relationship between both indoor and outdoor space as well
as the scale of the spaces to the scale of people. An important quality of this particular section is how the bottom floors of both buildings relate to the streetscape. Through understanding the relationship between plan and section, one is able to understand how place is composed through the element of space.

Like space, character also provides support to a place’s structure. “Character begins to define the general atmosphere of the environment” (418). “It is also an element that is the most comprehensive property of a place” (418). “The character of a place is also forever changing” (Norberg-Schulz 420). “It changes based on the season of the year, the time of the day, how space is used, and the patterns of the weather” (420). These types of changes and occurrences justify the character of a place being both spontaneous and sequential in nature. It is also important to note that a place’s character can also change as people converge upon it and interact with it. People are an important component to the built environment and therefore the character and development of a particular place is highly dependent upon them.
All places, large or small, passive or hostile, local or abroad possess the element of character. As a means of exemplifying this element of place, the Spanish Steps in Rome was chosen. As justified in the previous paragraph, the character of a place changes as the day progresses and people interact within its context. Figure 5 allows one to observe the character of the Spanish Steps changing as time passes during the course of a day’s cycle. During the morning hours from 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM little activity is happening within the space. Without activity and people, the character of the space can be defined as desolate, calm, peaceful, new, fresh, and tranquil. As the day passes from 12:00 PM onward till the evening hour of 8:00 PM, the space begins to attract people and the character changes. The place has converted from having a character that was desolate and calm in the morn-

ing, to possessing a character that is boisterous, fast paced, diverse, and interactive as the day progressed.

It is important to note that this type of evolution can

Figure 5:
The character of the Spanish Steps in Rome changing as day progresses into night. (To European Cities Online)
be observed within any particular place. The particular place does not have to be one of notoriety. The same phenomenon can be observed within one’s dwelling to the largest public space within a city.

Through this view of a place’s character, one can see that this element of a place is forever evolving and changing as time progresses. One can also understand that the element of character is deeply rooted in the occurrences of both the built environment and the human realm.

Through both the graphic and observational concepts that have been explored, one can begin to understand how both space and character are crucial factors in the definition of a place’s structure.

**Spirit of Place**

Having discussed the structure of place, the spirit of place must now be defined and understood. “The spirit of place is characterized through the psychological relationship a person has with his or her own environment” (Norberg-Schulz 423). “This relationship then allows the person an understanding of the environment they are experiencing” (423). “This second defining concept of place was derived from the Roman term genius loci” (Norberg-Schulz 422). “This term, literally interpreted as ‘spirit place,’ has always been associated with the aspect of every ‘independent’ being having a guardian spirit” (422). “This spirit, which accompanies the being from birth to death, then gives life to people and the places in which they interact” (422).

Aside from understanding the significance of the term genius loci, and its relation to the spirit of place, one must also begin to fully relate how the final two remaining primary
elements define the concept of the spirit of place. The two remaining primary elements are both orientation and identification.

“Orientation relates to the spirit of place by justifying that the individual must know where he or she is in order to gain an existential foothold on the place he or she is currently experiencing” (Norberg-Schulz 423). “If the individual does not have a good feel for the orientation of the place they are experiencing, they then feel lost within the context they are in” (423). “Being well oriented within a place also aids in giving the individual a good sense of emotional security” (423). One can observe how this concept of orientation applies to the theory of place by considering how elements within New York City orient those who encounter this city as a place.

Within the city of New York, and therefore any place, there are many defining and non-defining nodes, landmarks, edges, paths, districts, and locales that allow visitors, commuters, and residents alike to build a sense of orientation and understanding within the city as a particular place. Even-

Figure 6: Times Square is known to visitors and residents alike, but a local Asian bistro may only be known by residents. (Student Mgmt. Online)
though these three types of people are exposed to all the defining and non-defining qualities that make up this particular city, their interaction with these qualities is dependant upon their level of understanding of the city or given place. Presented in Figure 6 are two locations within New York City, one is Times Square the other is a local Asian bistro. While the visitor, commuter, and resident are all able to comprehend Times Square as a major defining node amongst the urban fabric of New York City, the local Asian bistro found in Greenwich Village may only be know by the residents that reside within this particular district found in the city. The bistro is therefore a non-defining locale of the place, and in relation to orientation is understood by those who have a very specific understanding of New York City’s composition as a place.

Through understanding the element of orientation one can begin to see how people comprehend a given environment. In comprehending any environment, there are different levels of understanding, which ultimately justifies a person’s comfort level in the place they come in contact with. It is through this particular element that one begins to see how the spirit of place relates to them personally.

With the understanding of how orientation relates to the spirit of place, the final primary element of place, identity, must now be taken into consideration. “Identity is related to the spirit of place through the understanding of the relationship a person has with a particular place” (Norberg-Schulz 425). “The person has to know how he or she exists in a certain place; otherwise stating the person needs to know how he or she personally connects and adds value to the set-
“Whether it is the action they are performing in a particular place, their personality, the cultural background of the individual, or the religious values the person may embrace, all of these things are characteristics unique to individuals and are vehicles that allow them to identify with the contexts in which they may belong” (Norberg-Schulz 425). Therefore, it is through the expression and actions of people that another dimension is added to what defines the essence of place.

In Figures 7, 8, and 9 the identity of place is exemplified. These figures depict people in various environments to provide justification to how people work to generate identity within a given place.

Figure 7 portrays two Orthodox Jews praying at the Wailing Wall located in the Old City of Jerusalem. Identity

Figure 7:
Two Orthodox Jews praying at the Wailing Wall in the Old City of Jerusalem work to express the identity of it as a place. (Getty Images)

Figure 8:
Two girls expressing their heritage at a Danish-German cultural festival. (Getty Images)
of the place is expressed through the serious tone and demeanor of the two men as they find themselves in a moment of contemplation, prayer, and reflection. Their conservative dress also reinforces the tone of the place. This type of behavior expressed by these two individuals begins to express the identity of Jerusalem’s Wailing Wall as a place.

Figure 8 depicts two girls expressing the identity of place at a Danish-German cultural festival at a church in Copenhagen, Denmark. Through the way their faces are painted one can come to conclude that the girl on the left is of Danish decent and the girl on the right is of German decent. In having their faces painted in such a way, they illustrate the pride they have in identifying and expressing their individual cultural heritage. As was the case with the two men in the previous figure, the girls in Figure 8 also express the identity of the festival through their tone and demeanor as one that is jovial, carefree, and filled with energy.

The final image, Figure 9, shows a man expressing the identity of place from the stoop of his residence in Havana, Cuba. Playing his guitar, the man adds life to his neighborhood street through the music he creates and in turn provides a comfortable environment for those passing by. His tone and demeanor can be understood as being of pride, happiness,
and humility. Though his neighborhood is old and worn, he showcases its identity as being a place of welcome, warmth, and compassion.

Through these particular personal accounts one can see that people capture and express the identity that is unique to place. With the element of identity understood, one may begin to comprehend their personal connection to defining the spirit of place.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, there are two major components that render an environment as a defined place. As justified within this study, the two components are the structure of place and the spirit of place. The study also justified the fact that the structure of place is related to the physical environment, and the spirit of place is related to human interaction within the physical environment.

These components can further be broken down into four elements that define place. These four elements are space, character, orientation, and identity. The first two elements, space and character, are related to the structure of place, and the other two, orientation and identity, are related to the spirit of place.

Place therefore can be classified as the harmony between both what is built and what is human. It can also be said that both what is built and what is human possess an interdependent relationship in the act of generating place.
place defined

(Burgert Brothers Collection)
Prior to 1945 a sense of place and definition was once apparent amongst Tampa’s neighborhoods. Factors that contributed to a sense of place being created amongst these neighborhoods were development that catered to the pedestrian, multi-use zoning, and the incorporation of defined communal districts that created definition within the neighborhood. Such neighborhoods in Tampa which possessed a defined sense of place were Ybor City, West Tampa, Hyde Park, and Tampa Heights amongst others. These neighborhoods, which made up Tampa then, still work to compose Tampa today.

This case study will show how one Tampa neighborhood, Ybor City, possessed a vibrant sense of place prior to 1945. It will illustrate how place was generated within this neighborhood by using Christian Norberg-Schulz’s four elements that define the structure and spirit of place as a method for investigation. The elements of the theory that will provide such a method will be space, character, identity, and orientation. This study will see if they are present in the definition of this distinguished Tampa neighborhood.

Figure 11: This image illustrates the diversity and dynamic of 7th Avenue, Ybor City’s common space. (Burgert Brothers Collection)
This case study will provide an answer to the question: What elements unique to Ybor City worked to justify its defined sense of place prior to 1945?

This study will also justify the hypothesis: The elements of place defined by Norberg-Schulz’s place theory were evident in the composition of Ybor City as a defined place prior to 1945.

Prior to 1945, a sense of place was clearly apparent in the structure and spirit of Tampa’s distinctive neighborhoods. This was made possible due to such neighborhoods possessing well developed physical space, defined character, strong identity, and well developed orientation. One such major neighborhood that illustrated these principles and possessed a true sense of place was Ybor City.

**Space**

One factor that led to the definition of Ybor City’s sense of place was its well developed physical space. As noted in Chapter 2, the element of space relates to defining the structure of a place in both the qualities of plan and section.

“Ybor’s spatial development was to the credit of Ga-vino Gutierrez, a Columbia educated civil engineer from New York” (Lastra 6). “Commissioned by the founders of Ybor City, Vicente Martinez Ybor and Ignacio Haya, Gutierrez worked to develop a master plan on 40 acres of undeveloped swampland” (Mormino 66). A crucial element of Gutierrez’s
master plan was a defined grid pattern that generated good definition and organization. As justified through the diagram in Figure 12, the grid pattern is clearly distinguished due to its figure-ground relationship. Due to this method of planning, Ybor was a cohesive whole due to the porosity of the grid network, and was conducive to the pedestrian due to the close proximity amongst the street blocks. A typical Ybor City street block is shown in Figure 13. About 3/4\textsuperscript{th}s of Ybor City’s grid network is composed of blocks that measure 216’ in depth by 345’ in length. To justify that this block size is ideal for pedestrians, a connectivity rate of 300-400 feet per block receives a Platinum rating from the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED Standards for Neighborhood Development. As one can conclude, a street network composed of blocks of this scale enables Ybor to provide the pedestrian

Figure 12:
Figure-ground diagram illustrating the organized grid pattern Gutierrez used in developing Ybor City to clearly define space.

Figure 13:
The approximate size of a standard Ybor City block. About 3/4\textsuperscript{th}s of Ybor is composed of this block size.
with an environment that is highly walkable.

As space was an important component in the development of Ybor in plan, it was also equally important in the development of Ybor with respect to its sectional qualities. As was evident in relation to the element of space in plan, Ybor is conscious of human scale due to the proximity amongst the blocks that make up the grid as conveyed in a sectional drawing as well. Also evident in this type of drawing, is the relationship between the heights of the structures that make up Ybor’s built environment and the size of its streets. Christopher Alexander, an architect that has written about human habitation of the built environment, states “it is important that the width of a street not exceed the height of the buildings that surround it” (Alexander 490). In section this type of relationship can be observed.

To convey some of the aspects noted in the previous paragraph, Figure 14 provides a section through Ybor City’s main-street, 7th Avenue. With respect to relating the build-

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Figure 14: Street section illustrating the quality of Ybor City’s communal roadway, 7th Avenue.
ings and street conditions to human scale, the floor to ceiling heights of each building level are an average of fifteen feet, and the street width of 7th Avenue is sixty-seven feet. Service alleys, which are also noted on the graphic, have a given width of twenty feet. With a pedestrian averaging a height of six feet this creates an environment where pedestrians do not feel out of place.

Another important result of Ybor’s well defined spatial development as a place is the built density that can be observed per block. The study presented in Figure 15 illustrates the density per acre along a portion of 7th Avenue. Shown in the graphic is the area between 6th Avenue, 8th Avenue, 16th Street, and 18th Street. Within this area there are eight acres in all and each acre averages a total of approximately 53,518.25 square feet of built interior space. In total, all
eight acres within this area yield an approximate summation of 428,144 square feet. A dense condition such as this creates a situation where the land that has been developed in an efficient manner and there is an abundant variety of locales that cater to various audiences, resulting in increased activity on the street.

Understanding the physical composition of place is important to see how a place begins to define itself. Through understanding Ybor via plan, section, and spatial development, one can see how the element of space was a crucial method to consider in the definition of Ybor’s structure as a place.

**Character**

Another factor that worked to define Ybor’s sense of place was the character it was able to generate. An important component in developing such character was the way physical space was used in Ybor. During its prime, Ybor’s physical space was composed of a communal core containing a thriving collection of mixed-use structures along with industrial structures dispersed amongst its various residential barrios. This type of development pattern is noted by the graphic in Figure 16.

Of these major development gestures that defined

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Figure 16: Neighborhood-use diagram illustrating 7th Avenue, the communal district of Ybor City, with the surrounding context of the area circa 1930.
Ybor City, there was one gesture in particular that was important in defining Ybor’s character as a place, and that particular gesture was 7th Avenue, Ybor City’s communal core.

7th Avenue was a component of the neighborhood’s composition that illustrated the element of character quite well. “On the street level, 7th Avenue was comprised of a mixture of mercantile businesses, consisting of furniture, specialty clothing, grocery, and department stores as well as banks, cafes, restaurants, theaters, and the Centro Espanol, one of the five ethnic social clubs unique to Ybor could be found on 7th” (Lastra 64). “Above the street level, apartments, medical space, and office space could be found” (Lastra 65). The listed businesses were interrelated amongst one another in this district to generate a character related to a street filled with spontaneous communal exchange, high lev-
els of energy due to various levels of transportation traveling up and down 7th, and the interaction between various ethnic groups of Ybor City’s distinct barrios. Depicted in Figures 17, 18, and 19 one can begin to see how the synergy amongst these attributes was once apparent along 7th Avenue in Ybor City. These types of attributes also contributed to allowing the general atmosphere of the environment along 7th Avenue to be one that was vibrant, loud, raucous, and constantly changing.

“Aside from pedestrians interacting and converging on the street level, balconies along 7th Avenue provided people with an alternative method of engaging with and perceiving the streetscape” (Lastra 64). This type of space provided apartment dwellers and office tenants the chance to engage with the communal district from a semi-private realm. This type of condition along with traditional pedestrian synergy on the streetscape below, were defining factors that enhanced the “lived space” of the district. They were also crucial elements in providing for the structure of Ybor as a place through defining its character.

Figure 17 illustrates the semi-private realm and the other various realms of spatial character that worked to generate the type of “lived space” that was found along 7th Avenue. Along with the semi-private realm there were three other realms that worked to generate 7th Avenue’s “lived space” as a whole. Such realms were those of the public, semi-public, and private types.

The four realms related to 7th Avenue in the following manner:

- The public realm encompassed the street and was re-
served for activity related to both public and personal means of transportation. To be specific, such methods of transportation found on 7th Avenue were the trollys that connected Ybor City to the rest of Tampa, and automobiles.

- The semi-public realm encompassed the sidewalk and transition from exterior space to interior space. This realm is at the direct disposal of the pedestrian. It fostered the circulation of pedestrians up and down the street, and provided them with a space for small gathering as well as loitering.

- The semi-private realm was comprised of the various balconies and windows that overlooked 7th Avenue. As mentioned earlier, this realm provided people with an indirect method of engaging with and perceiving the streetscape. As opposed to its counterpart, the semi-public realm, the semi-private realm could only be accessed by people who were within the private realm.

- The private realm was composed of the interior built space along 7th Avenue. This realm provided people with an option of complete removal from engaging the public realm, a characteristic not found amongst the other three realms listed. This realm provided for various forms of gathering in

Figure 20: Diagram illustrating the four realms that composed the “lived space” condition found along 7th Avenue.
It is appropriate to note that these four realms also apply to any other place that may contain the “lived space” condition that is found along 7th Avenue, and is not just unique to this particular environment. Though the “lived space” is a condition found amongst other places, one can understand that this condition was crucial in generating the character of 7th Avenue as a place.

Through understanding the physical composition of Ybor City’s built environment and the way that the “lived space” was inhabited, one can comprehend the rich character that can be associated with Ybor City as a place.

**Identity**

As discussed in chapter 2, along side the elements that generate the structure of a place are the elements that define a place’s spirit. Ybor City not only had a sense of place that was defined well physically, but its sense of place was also well defined by the people who called it home and identified with it as a community. In relation to generating place, identity relates to how a person connects to a particular environment. Many people strongly identified with this community, and in doing so generated Ybor’s richness as a place.

Composed of many people with very diverse ethnic backgrounds and heritages, Ybor City was a true melting pot of culture. Home to Cubans, with both African and Caucasian backgrounds, Italians, and Spanish, Ybor City was a community where its people were very proud of their origins, and illustrated great mutual respect for one another. “Though other ethnicities converged on Ybor to work or spend leisure time, they came from other areas of Tampa, therefore
the Cubans, Italians, and Spanish defined the true identity of Ybor” (Lastra 87). Such people retained and expressed their cultural identity within the “barrios” in which they resided. Ways in which these groups were able to express such identity within their respective barrios were through language, cuisine, music, and crafted works.

Most residents of Ybor City worked in the cigar factories that were found within their “barrio”. These factories not only provided a means of employment amongst Ybor’s residents, but also usually funded the dwellings in which their laborers lived. The cigar industry, which employed a majority of Ybor’s residents, also did something socially. It provided a common bond and interest amongst the people within the community.

Another factor that fostered a common bond and
strengthened the identity amongst the various ethnic groups of Ybor were the social clubs. These clubs provided both human and recreational services to the different ethnic groups living in Ybor. With so much diversity, Ybor City had many ways and methods by which its people could connect with the community in which they lived, worked, and played.

As these ethnic groups settled upon the different barrios which made up the residential fabric of Ybor, boundaries of identity were defined amongst these residential areas within the city. “Being an element in generating a place’s spirit, identity, as noted in chapter 2, defines this spirit through people understanding how they personally connect and add value to the setting in which they find themselves” (Norberg-Schulz 423). Whether it is through the action they are performing in a particular place, their personality, their cultural background, or the religious values the person may embrace, the element of identity can be understood as providing individuals that have shared characteristics a motive to identify themselves with the micro or macro environments to which they belong.

As illustrated in Figure 23 the immediate residential areas that surrounded 7th Avenue consisted of people of Cuban, Spanish, and Italian decent. Also illustrated is the communal nature of 7th Avenue.
unique quality of 7th Avenue, an area of Ybor City that was shared amongst all ethnic groups living within the area. Being a shared amenity due to its communal nature, 7th Avenue fostered much social exchange amongst the various peoples who converged on this area by day and by night. Houses from the barrios within close proximity to the district provided for much of this pedestrian activity and exchange.

As noted earlier in the chapter, “having various businesses and services consolidated into one defined area also aided in 7th Avenue being a true communal district by allowing the people of each particular barrio to interact amongst one another within a common environment they all shared” (Lastra 65). “From each barrio, Cubans, Italians, and Spanish came to converge on this communal place. This interaction on the streetscape of 7th Avenue provided for a diverse ‘quilt of origins’ to be ‘knit’ together amongst those who resided in Ybor City during that time” (Lastra 65).

Understanding the personal composition of place is an important step in seeing how a place justifies its identity and ultimately its spirit. From defined ethnicities to a common industry that was shared by all, there were many characteristics that shaped Ybor City’s identity as a place.

**Orientation**

In addition to identity, the ethnic residential areas of Ybor along with the communal district of 7th Avenue also worked to enhance the spirit of Ybor as a place through implying a strong sense of orientation. Like identity, orientation is an element that justifies the concept of the spirit of place. As was mentioned in chapter 2, “orientation is generated when an individual understands where he or she is in order to
gain an existential foothold on the place he or she is currently experiencing” (Norberg-Schulz 423). With this being understood, one could clearly orient themselves within Ybor due to the function, ethnicity, or scale of a particular place within the neighborhood.

The circulation structure of Ybor was a major means in justifying a sense of orientation within the neighborhood. 7th Avenue was the primary circulation corridor and communal center of Ybor. As acknowledged previously it was traversed by all who lived in Ybor and those who commuted and visited this area of Tampa during this period. In being the primary point of circulation, it was also the primary point of orientation for all those who interacted with this area. Secondary and tertiary corridors of circulation also existed within Ybor as well. These were paths best understood by those who lived within Ybor, and experienced it as a part of everyday life.

Figure 24 justifies this explanation of orientation through illustrating these various levels of circulation. For the resident of the area, orientation is understood with the greatest amount of detail. Whether it was being familiar with the neighbors on the street one lived on or knowing where to get the freshest produce on 7th, there was an intimate level

Figure 24:
The primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of circulation amongst the street network of Ybor City.
of understanding Ybor by the residents of the neighborhood. As this level of knowledge was apparent amongst those who lived in Ybor, those who visited or commuted had more of a generic understanding of only knowing a particular store to shop at or which theater would be best to see a movie.

Comprehending how a person understands place is an important step in seeing how a place justifies its sense of orientation and ultimately its spirit as a place. From understanding the community as a visitor to permanently residing within it, there were many personal levels of understanding that justified Ybor City’s sense of place via the element of orientation.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, Ybor City, as it existed prior to 1945, rendered itself as an environment which defined itself as a true place. As justified within this study, the elements of place defined by Norberg-Schulz’s place theory were evident in the composition of Ybor City via its organization of space, defining character, strong identity, and clear orientation.

It can also be said that Ybor City is a model example in illustrating what concepts need to be apparent to generate a place that is well defined. Such concepts are connectivity, common features that foster identification, and the presence of the “lived space” to identify a few.

Through these means, Ybor can therefore can be classified as defined place of Tampa’s past. It can also be understood that future Tampa neighborhoods that are modeled after some of the concepts defined by Ybor City would increase their chances of being truly defined places.
place lacking
From 1945 to the present day, the sense of place and definition that was once apparent amongst Tampa’s communities has declined. Factors that have been contributing to this issue have been development based on the car, single-use zoning, monotonous building, and the lack of modern communal districts that generate a sense of place and give definition to current neighborhoods within the city. Neighborhoods in Tampa which are suffering from such problems are Carrollwood, New Tampa, Northdale, and “the University area” amongst others, which presently compose Tampa.

This contemporary study will show how one Tampa neighborhood, New Tampa, lacks a true sense of place. It will illustrate how New Tampa, a neighborhood developed after 1945, lacks a defined communal district, does not provide for social interaction amongst people within the community, and did not incorporate the use of good planning practices in its development as a neighborhood. Along with these reasons, the sense of place New Tampa lacks will also be reinforced through understanding how space, character, identity, and orientation, Christian Norberg-Schulz’s 4 elements that define the structure and spirit of a place, are not present in this newer Tampa community.

**Figure 26:**
The big-box and brand identity, two defining elements which have curtailed the creation of place. (Tech Puddle Online)
This case study will provide an answer to the question: What contemporary elements and methods have allowed New Tampa to lack a sense of place?

This study will also justify the hypothesis: The elements of place defined by Norberg-Schulz’s place theory are evident, but do not work to strengthen New Tampa as a defined place.

After 1945, the vibrant sense of place unique to Tampa neighborhoods has been on the decline. As development and people have sprawled outward the sense of place that was once strong amongst Tampa’s distinctive neighborhoods has eroded over time.

Such erosion of place in these new and developing neighborhoods has been due to the neglect of developing quality physical space, a lack of defined character, a standardized identity, and disorganized method of orientation. One major contemporary neighborhood of Tampa that illustrates these traits and currently lacks a true sense of place is New Tampa.

Space

One factor that has led to New Tampa lacking a sense of place has been its neglect for developing quality physical space. As has been seen in the last two chapters, space works to define place through both the methods of plan and section. Figure 27 provides a figure-ground conveying the current development pattern in New Tampa. As one can observe in plan, this development pattern begins to conceive and define
space in a haphazard and disconnected way.

Also conveyed through the figure-ground of New Tampa is a relationship that can be made to the Ybor City figure-ground in Chapter 2. This relationship is conveyed through the process in which the space that composes these two built environments has been developed. As was seen in the previous chapter, when Ybor City was planned it was designed to accommodate the pedestrian. In contrast, the method of defining space in sprawling neighborhoods, such as New Tampa, is only to design based on the automobile. According to James Kunstler, author of the book The Geography of Nowhere, “the two elements of the suburban pattern that cause the greatest problems are the extreme separation of uses and the vast distances between things” (Kunstler 117). These types of attributes mentioned by Kunstler can be argued as being a direct result of the automobile being ahead of the pedestrian when contemporary neighborhoods like New Tampa are being planned and developed.

The element of space is also lacking in the sectional composition of the streetscape. One major streetscape found in New Tampa that conveys this notion is its main commercial corridor, Bruce B. Downs Boulevard. Figure 28, illus-
trates the fact that Bruce B. Downs Boulevard and the commercial buildings that front it are not proportional amongst each other. This type of disparity is due to deep setbacks and oversized right-of-ways that accommodate the movement of vehicular traffic. In turn this type of sectional quality allows the pedestrian to want to disassociate themselves with the street, and provides cars with the freedom to travel at higher speeds. These types of reasons make the sectional qualities of New Tampa unsuccessful.

Another troubling result of New Tampa’s poorly defined spatial development is the lack of density that can be observed in the area. The study presented in Figure 29 illustrates the density per acre along a portion of Bruce B. Downs Boulevard. Shown in this graphic is the area between Dona Michelle Drive and N. Palms Village Place. Within this area there are eight acres in all and each acre averages a total of approximately 2,775.87 square feet of built interior space. In total, all eight acres within this area yield an approximate summation of 22,207 square feet. A sparse condition such as this creates a situation where the land that has been developed

Figure 28:
Street section illustrating the quality of New Tampa’s commercial corridor, Bruce B. Downs Boulevard.
has not been developed to its full potential. A gesture such as this begins to distance the functions along the street to the point where walking becomes unmanageable for the pedestrian. This happening also results in a situation where automobiles provide the only interaction along the street. This result also works to add value to Kunsler’s argument that was cited earlier within this section.

Through understanding New Tampa via plan, section, and spatial development, one can see how the element of space works to cater to the automobile rather than the pedestrian.

**Character**

Character is also an element of place that seems to be lacking within New Tampa. A reason why New Tampa lacks this element of place is due to the absence of the public

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**Figure 29:**
The density per acre along a portion of Bruce B. Downs, the commercial corridor of New Tampa, circa 2008.
it is evident that the realms of the semi-public and semi-private are not a part of the composition of Bruce B. Down’s streetscape.

As was discussed in the previous chapter, the semi-public and semi-public realms are ones that should always be incorporated amongst the streetscape. These are the realms where people interact, loiter, and mingle, therefore they are environments that are crucial in generating a defined sense of character along the streetscape. Kunsler comments on the absence of such realms by stating, “that businesses do not provided the patron with the opportunity to linger” (Kunstler 117). He also continues to imply that semi-public spaces only exist in stores, such as supermarkets, stating that “these are the only places where people can be in public and engage in some purposeful activity...or have the chance of running
into someone they may know” (Kunstler 119).

Another aspect that works to stifle the creation of character within New Tampa is the scale at which things are built. As can be noticed through the buildings, signs, and other street elements that define New Tampa, the built environment of this neighborhood is not at the scale of the pedestrian, but rather at that of the car. This type of relationship affects the character of New Tampa because it does not allow the neighborhood to connect with people at the level of human scale. Kunstler also writes about the public realm being at the scale of the automobile. He states “all the public realm has been left with are roads, and the only way to interact with that public realm is to be in a car” (Kunstler 117). This comment is another testimony that works towards justifying how the automobile worked to prevent New Tampa from possessing a defined sense of character.

**Identity**

New Tampa lacks an identity as a place because it is standardized and monotonous. It does not have its own distinct flavor and mood as was the case when Ybor City was analyzed in the previous chapter. Figure 31 conveys this issue. As shown in the images a Best Buy, is a Best Buy, is a Best Buy. The same notion is becoming apparent with homes. If you have seen one Lenar Home you have seen

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**Figure 31:**
The rubber stamping of brand identity across New Tampa and all of suburbia. (Tech Puddle Online) (Arthur Rutenberg Homes)
them all. These examples bring up the common element that is preventing identity from being conveyed in New Tampa, corporate branding. Due to the aspect of preserving corporate brand identity, the aspect of developing places that possess their own distinct identity is starting to become rare. This is the case in New Tampa where “cookie cutter” strip malls and homes look like they could be found anywhere else, therefore a sense of generating place is lost.

**Orientation**

A final element of place that New Tampa lacks is that of clear orientation. Figure 32 illustrates the street composition of the gated-community of Hunter’s Green. According to Kunstler, the reason developments, such as Hunter’s Green, possess curvilinear roadways is for “the creation of a focal points to break up the journey for people driving”
(Kunstler 128). He also goes on to state that with curvilinear street patterns “cars can still move at speed with no problem” (Kunstler 128).

Though there is a sense of hierarchy amongst some of the streets within the development, the streets lack transparent connectivity. Such a lack of transparency allows for more people than just home invaders to get lost in such a development. Much of the lack of connectivity within these types of developments is to provide privacy for the residents. This attribute is a defining reason in why people move to suburban neighborhoods like New Tampa. It must be acknowledged that too much privacy and isolation can affect a person’s understanding of the place in which they reside, and therefore can work to affect their sense of orientation.

In conclusion, New Tampa, as it currently exists, renders itself as an environment which lacks a true sense of place. As justified within this study, the elements of place defined by Norberg-Schulz’s place theory were lacking in the composition of New Tampa via its neglect for developing quality physical space, lack of defined character, standardized identity, and disorganized method of orientation.

It can also be said that New Tampa illustrates how the customizing of society to cater to the automobile is a model example in illustrating why place is lacking in suburban neighborhoods, such as New Tampa. The solution is therefore very easy and obvious, society should still consider the use of the car, but focus its design attention on people.
needing place

(Google Maps)
As discussed in the previous case studies, neighborhoods within Tampa were once places that fostered great social interaction and communal exchange and have now strayed away from such characteristics. To restore these characteristics into the city’s fabric, places that are generated through being conscious of space, character, identity, and orientation have proven themselves as being successful.

Today, Tampa is a city that is in need of restoring such places into its fabric. These places in turn will work to reintroduce communal exchange and social interaction into its structure. In an attempt to illustrate such a concept, a site defined by diverse edges of activity was selected to illustrate how such edges can interact with one another to generate a communal place of exchange, interaction, and transition. The diverse edges that surround the site include the University of South Florida, Busch Gardens-Africa, Adventure Island, the Museum of Science and Industry, and the neighborhoods of University Square and Terrace Park.

Based on these diverse edges, the site will provide for the creation of an integrated district center to define its structure as a place. This center will incorporate programmatic elements which cater to the given edges of the site and public transportation functions which connect the site at the micro and macro levels. The spirit of the place will then be created by those who interact and relate to the environment. As with past community’s of Tampa, people will generate this spirit by identifying with and belonging to the site, whether they connect with it through living, working, or playing.
Through the general analysis of the site, both the relationship of the site to its context on the macro and micro levels will be conveyed. This study will provide an understanding of how the site, on the macro level, can connect with the greater Tampa Bay area and the potential the site has to integrate functions that surround it on the micro level.

**Macro Level**

On the macro level, the selected site for this thesis is located in Tampa, Florida. Tampa, acknowledged in Figure 34, is the third largest city in the state of Florida and is the largest city on Florida’s west coast. It is an incorporated municipality within Hillsborough County, one of sixty-seven counties that coexist within the state. As suggested Figure 35, along with the city of Tampa, Hillsborough County also contains two other incorporated municipalities, Temple Ter-
The selected site is located five to eleven miles from most of the unincorporated regions that surround it, nine miles from the Downtown Tampa’s Central Business District, and eleven miles from Tampa International Airport. Given these distances, the site is highly accessible from the different neighborhoods within Tampa’s city limits, and the unincorporated regions which compose the remainder of Hillsborough County.

In addition to being within good proximity to major regions within Hillsborough County, being close to two major interstate corridors also adds value to the selected site. Interstate 275 is two miles west of the site, while Interstate 75 is three miles east of the site. Given these factors, the site selected for this thesis possesses many positive macro condi-

Figure 35:  
The selected site and its relation to regions within Hillsborough County.  
(Google Maps)
tions that aid its connectivity to the rest of Tampa.

**Micro Level**

On the micro level, the selected site possesses a context that provides much opportunity. Presented in Figure 36 is the selected site and its context at the micro level. As determined in the figure, the site is adjacent to four distinct edges. These edges are those of the University of South Florida, Busch Gardens-Africa and Adventure Island, the Terrace Park neighborhood, and the University Square neighborhood.

To the north of the site exists the University of South Florida. This university is one of eleven public universities in the state of Florida. The campus has approximately 39,000 students enrolled and encompasses 1,700 acres. On the campus there are many academic learning facilities, residence halls, athletic fields, and research facilities amongst other functions unique to a university campus.

South of the site can be found Busch Gardens-Africa and Adventure Island, two of the most popular tourist desti-
nations on the west coast of Florida. Attracting more than 5 million guests per year, Busch Gardens-Africa and Adventure Island are two of ten Worlds of Discovery theme parks operated by Busch Entertainment Corporation within the United States. Both parks are internationally recognized as leaders in their industry, and add great value to Tampa’s image. Along with this aspect, they contribute greatly to the local economy through tax revenues and employment opportunities.

To the east and west of the site are two Tampa neighborhoods, Terrace Park and University Square. The Terrace Park neighborhood to the east, is an unincorporated neighborhood within the city limits of Tampa. According to the 2000 United States Census, Terrace Park has a population of 7,579 people. Likewise, the University Square neighborhood to the
west, is another neighborhood that happens to be unincorporated. Also existing within the city limits of Tampa, this neighborhood is composed of 7,456 people according to the same census results from the year 2000.

As featured in Figure 38, the site is bordered by Fowler Avenue to the north, Bougainvillea Avenue to the south, 46th Street to the east, and 30th Street to the west. Another major right of way, McKinley Drive, runs from north to south through the middle of the site. Given these factors, the site selected for this thesis possesses many positive micro conditions that will provide for many design opportunities.

In analyzing the site with respect to transportation infrastructure three major modes seem to currently exist. These three modes are those of industrial rail, local and county-wide bus service, and roadways for the flow of personal vehicular traffic. This study will also discuss how two of these modes seem to be under utilized, and another is an overpowering force which is preventing multi-modal connectivity within the area. This study will also provide an outlook.
to the potential that exists amongst the current transportation functions, and what other modes could be added to strengthen connectivity within the area.

**Rail**

Rail has been tied to the selected site ever since it was zoned as an industrial park in 1955. The rail lines and easements that currently exist on the site were part of the industrial park’s initial infrastructure plan and are currently controlled by the CSX Corporation. The lines were used to transport manufactured products away from some of the industrial facilities that have existed and still currently exist on the site. They were also used to supply these facilities with the raw materials that were used to manufacture their respective products.

For example, when Anheuser-Busch had its brewery within the industrial park before its closure in 1995, the initial grain products used in the brewing process, including hops and barley, were brought to the facility via the rail lines. In turn, the brewery also used the line to transport its finished beer products away from the facility. Currently the remaining brewery, operated by the Yuengling Beer Company of Tampa,
is the only remaining facility in the industrial park that uses the existing rail lines for this same purpose.

It is also important to note that the rail lines that run onto the site are all terminus lines. They were installed as an addition to a main CSX rail line that is west of the site and runs north to south through the county. This aspect is also justified through Figure 39.

Though the rail easements have very little use currently, having these unobstructed corridors is an advantage in providing much possibility for the selected site and its context in the future. The Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority otherwise known as TBARTA is currently in the planning stages of defining a multi-modal transit system that is set to begin its initial phasing in the coming years. TBARTA expects this system to be at a full level of completion by the year 2050. The current version of the concept as show in Figure 40 focuses on the need to connect the area on the

Figure 40:
A transit study showing the proposed routes for the three major rail services. (Renaissance Planning Group Online)
levels of region, county, and city. In addition to other modes of transportation to connect these various levels, the plan will possess a heavy focus on rail.

Rail connectivity throughout the area will be available via regional, commuter, and light rail service. While the commuter rail service will have an impact on the site’s context, the selected site will only be impacted by service from the light rail mode.

Figure 41 shows a more detailed view of how the light rail plan would interface with the site and its context. An existing easement that currently runs north to south and is found west of the selected site will be used to bring the light rail service from the southern portions of Tampa to the north. From this easement, the light rail is proposed to travel through the existing rail easement that runs east and passes through the site. While running through the site, the rail will possess two stopping points.

After running along this easement and passing the stopping points within the site, it will have a final stop at the Museum of Science and Industry before turning north and passing through the University of South Florida. Once com-

![Figure 41: A diagram depicting the proposed light rail route as it would interface with the selected site and its surrounding context.](image-url)
Completion of this portion of the route, it will then turn onto Fletcher Ave. and head west. The rail will then make one final turn onto Bruce B. Downs and travel northeast to the New Tampa area. Given this route, the light rail will have approximately eleven stops while passing through the area illustrated in Figure 41.

**Bus**

Illustrated in Figure 42 are roadways that are serviced by buses operated by Hillsborough Area Regional Transit also known as HART. The roadways that accommodate bus traffic have been referenced not by their route, but rather by the importance of the roadway.

HART buses interface with both primary and secondary roadways in the area. Given these designations, the primary roadways are those that run along major commercial corridors in the area. While this is true for the primary roadways, the secondary roadways run throughout the neighborhoods of the area and within the University of South Florida campus.

Of the primary roadways, bus service interacts with

![Figure 42: A diagram illustrating the primary and secondary roadways that carry bus traffic through and around the selected site and its context.](image-url)
Fletcher Avenue, 30th Street/Bruce B. Downs Boulevard, McKinley Drive, Busch Boulevard and Fowler Avenue. Some of the secondary roadways that interface with the bus routes are those of 22nd Street, 15th Street, 131st Avenue, within the residential areas, and Holly Dr, and Leroy Collins Boulevard, within the University of South Florida.

**Vehicular**

Figure 43 shows some of the roadways that allow vehicles to interact with the selected site and its context. The provided roadways have been grouped into three categories consisting of primary, secondary, and tertiary roads. The primary roads for vehicular flow are Fletcher Avenue, Fowler Avenue, and Busch Boulevard. These three roadways transport vehicles through the area in both the east and west directions. Flowing north to south in the area, are the secondary roads, 30th Street/Bruce B. Downs Boulevard and McKinley Drive. The tertiary roads in the area are Bougainvillea Avenue and 109th Avenue, which both allow vehicles to flow in the east and west directions. Also classified as a tertiary road is 46th Street, which provides vehicular flow in both the north and south direction.

**Figure 43:** A diagram illustrating the primary, secondary, and tertiary roadways that interact with the selected site and its context.
The land use that exists around the selected site was seen as an opportunity to take advantage of in the development and design of this thesis. However, the immediate industrial uses currently existing on the selected site were seen as hindering the potential for the development of this project and were dismissed.

**Land Use - Context**

Figure 44 has a diagram illustrating the uses that surround the selected site for this thesis project. One can observe through the diagram that there are four major areas of concentration that each possess a defining use. Two of these four areas are defined by the use of single family residential dwellings. As was identified in the previous section, these two areas which are both composed of this particular type of use can be identified as both the University Square and Terrace Park neighborhoods. Of the remaining two areas of concentration one is identified as an institutional-based use.
and the other is of an entertainment-based use. The area of institutional use is comprised of the University of South Florida and the Museum of Science and Industry. The area composed of the land dedicated to entertainment-based use can be identified as being comprised of the theme parks of Busch Gardens and Adventure Island.

Also existing around the site are three commercial corridors. The primary corridor, Fowler Ave, has the most influence on the area out of the three, and is also the most traveled. This street is one comprised mostly of strip malls and free-standing restaurants. Along this corridor also exists University Square Mall, one of Tampa’s major shopping malls.

It is important to note that the areas of use that surround the selected site are presently isolated from each other. It can also be said that besides the use of roadways and some light bus service, there are presently not any real urban gestures that begin to connect these four major areas of use amongst each other. The possible interrelation of these uses could be an opportunity in working to generate this given area of Tampa as a defined place.

**Land Use - Site**

The current tract of land that composes the selected site for this thesis is currently zoned for industrial-based uses. Figure 45 presents the location of both major, minor, and new developments as they currently exist on the site.

Major current developments that exist on the site consist of a bottling company operated by PepsiCo, a brewery which is currently under the management of Yuengling Beer Company of Tampa, a soccer practice field operated by a lo-
Tampa Industrial Park’s Existing Development

1. bottleing facility 5. industrial facility 9. research facility 13. government facility
2. brewery 6. soccer practice field 10. industrial facility 14. industrial facility
3. office park 7. offices & warehouse 11. hotel 15. industrial facility
4. hotel 8. apartment complex 12. office park 16. industrial facility

Retain
Demolish
Site

Figure 45:
A diagram of the selected site illustrating the existing facilities and their functions. It also conveys buildings that will be retained & demolished. A cal amateur soccer club, many large-scale industrial facilities operated by technology-based firms, a government facility operated by the Florida Highway Patrol and the Florida Department of Transportation, and an abandoned emissions testing facility that is owned by the State of Florida. Other minor facilities existing on the site are a few office parks, hotels, and a warehouse and offices servicing Busch Gardens and Adventure Island. The site also has some recently developed property, which consists of both an apartment complex called the Lodge at Lake Crest and a soon to be completed research facility that will be occupied by the H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center. Three other areas of the selected site are also currently under development, but a specific use for these areas could not be determined through observation.

The image in Figure 45 also conveys which facili-
ties are proposed to be retained and which are to be demolished. As to suggest a new direction for the selected site and not hinder the process of illustrating the full potential of the site at the master plan level, the industrial uses have been proposed to be eliminated. The site is also proposed to be re-zoned to accommodate primarily mixed-use development along with both single family and multi-family residential use development, as well as recreational and hospitality based development.

Figure 45 also illustrates the developments that are proposed to be retained. These developments consists of both the Lodge at Lake Crest luxury apartment complex and the research facility that will be occupied by the H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center. The decision to retain these two developments was due to the fact that they both are streamline with the proposed development plan for the area.

Figure 46: Images illustrating some of the existing facilities and conditions found around the selected site as they relate to Figure 45.
During the course of its history, the site selected for this thesis project has functioned as a hunting preserve, an airfield used by the United States military, a civilian airport, and an industrial park.

**Hunting Preserve**

During the early 1900’s the site functioned as a hunting preserve, as it was part of 6,000 acres of land owned by Bertha Palmer, wife of Chicago real estate developer Potter Palmer. The total property owned by Palmer was known as the “Riverhills Ranch,” and it not only encompassed the selected site, but also the land that presently makes up the University of South Florida, Busch Gardens-Africa, Adventure Island, the Terrace Park neighborhood, and the city of Temple Terrace.

**Airfield/Airport**

After Palmer’s death in 1918, the land was sold to local interests and subdivided. Following this occurrence, the land was annexed, and incorporated into the City of Tampa in 1925. This decision was only to be overturned by the courts in 1926.

In the 1930’s the Great Depression brought much strife to the local interests who had purchased the land and it was eventually acquired by the State of Florida in December of 1939 due to outstanding taxes. The State then auctioned the land in 1940 to the only bidder, Hillsborough County, for a price of $2,000.

Once in control of the land, Hillsborough County partnered with the Works Progress Administration and the
Civil Aeronautics Administration to build an airfield on the
land just north of what is now Busch Gardens and south of
what currently exists as the University of South Florida.
The field was named Henderson Hillsborough International
Airport after T.N. Henderson, a respected local official, and
the county it was found in. It was to serve as the second
commercial airport built in Tampa and eventually become the
main airport for the area.

This plan took a dramatic change during World
War II, as the airport was overtaken by the Army Air Corps
in 1942 and used as a fighter plane training base to aid in the
war effort. At the conclusion of the war, the Hillsborough
County Aviation Authority finally settled on Drew Field, an-
other local airfield used during the war found in the western
portion of the county, to develop Tampa’s main airport. This
site is where Tampa International Airport (TIA) can be pres-
tenly found. This shift in development left the site of Hen-
derson Hillsborough International Airport to be abandoned
and used as a place to pasture cattle until the early 1950’s.

**Tampa Industrial Park**

By 1953, the City of Tampa had annexed the land
on which the Henderson Hillsborough International Airport
existed, and in 1955 the City in conjunction with the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce worked to re-zone the land to be used as an industrial park. Over the years, the park has attracted many large national corporations to construct production facilities for their businesses, which in turn aided the Tampa economy via job creation and tax revenues. Some of the companies who chose this park as a location for the production of their products were Anheuser-Busch, the Schlitz

Anheuser-Busch purchased more land within the industrial park to expand its theme park, Busch Gardens, which was growing in popularity. Another major addition came to the park in 1977 when Pepsi constructed a bottling facility for its products. In the early 1980’s, Anheuser-Busch expanded its property size yet again when the company purchased more land for the development of their water park Adventure Island. During the late 1980’s and the 1990’s, more development came in the form of office parks, government facilities, and hotels.

Today this area is still known as the Tampa Industrial Park, and still contains businesses that function in an industrial manner. As was initiated in the 1980’s and 1990’s, other uses are still being integrated into the area including the newest uses, a luxury apartment complex and a research facility.

Figure 48: Looking north on the Tampa Industrial Park as it existed circa 1960. (Burgert Brothers Collection)
Historical Development of the Site and Context

Figure 49 provides historical photos from the Hillsborough County Department of Planning and Growth Management aerial photo archive. The photos depict the selected site and its context as they have evolved from 1966 to the present. It is worthy to note that even to this day the runways from the Henderson Hillsborough International Airport can still be recognized. This has been a result of some areas of the site never being developed since the industrial park was first opened over 50 years ago.

![Historical Photos](image1.png)

**Figure 49:**
The selected site and its context as they have evolved from the mid-1960’s to the present. (Hillsborough County Planning and Growth Mgmt.)
**SWOT Analysis**

**Strengths**

**Circulation**
- Existing railroad easement for implementation of a light-rail system
- Bull Runner can be used as a possible immediate circulator

**Economic**
- University of South Florida (USF) - 36,000 students and 12,000 faculty and staff members
- Busch Gardens and Adventure Island - 5.1 million guests annually and 4,500 staff members
- University Square - approximately 7,500 residents
- Terrace Park - approximately 7,500 residents
- Unemployment in the area could be a positive factor in making a case to bring new jobs into the area

**Weaknesses**

**Circulation**
- Roadways do not accommodate for pedestrian habitation
- Lack of connectivity within the site
- Lack of defining signage and thresholds to provide the area with cohesiveness and definition

**Economic**
- Superblocks do not provide a catalyst for pedestrian activity
- Light rail service traveling next to single family residential dwellings could be viewed as a negative by the public

**Architecture & Streetscape**
- Inconsistency of appearance
- Lack of consistent landscaping
- Lack of consistent signage
- Need of core items to build from - public spaces, green spaces, fountains
- Deep setbacks do not allow the buildings to engage the sidewalks and the street

**Linkages**
- USF edge on Fowler Avenue is currently too hard - needs to bleed more into the context
- Lack of a walkable environment
- Existing businesses are not in close proximity of each other therefore pedestrian activity can not be sustained

**Economic**
- Lack of loft and urban-type housing options
- Not taking advantage of the residents, students, and tourists that interact with the area
- Most of the site is dead after 5:00 PM on the weekdays and mostly dead on the weekends
- 2nd most economically depressed area in the state of Florida

**Future Development**
- Lack of a variety of shops, restaurants, and bars for day and
night activity
- Lack of small public/civic spaces - courtyards and niches
- Lack of a variety of housing types
- Lack of large public/civic spaces - parks and squares

**Opportunities**

**Circulation**
- The expansive nature of Fowler Avenue and other right of ways provide space for future development

**Economic**
- Need for a mixture of businesses - site is one dimensional with only mostly industrial-based functions
- Accent the talent of the graduated students from the University by providing for career opportunities
- Retain college educated graduates to grow the local economy in Tampa

**Architecture & Streetscape**
- District guidelines have not been developed for the area

**Image and Identity**
- Will work to create an environment that establishes a sense of place upon the site
- The site possesses distinct edge conditions along its perimeter that can lead to generating cohesiveness amongst the elements that surround it and an opportunity to generate a shared public space where people from all the edges can interact

-Enough space can be found on the site that the edges will also allow for the creation of districts that let them transition into a shared urban space

**Threats**

**Circulation**
- Working to accomodate the demands of the Florida Department of Transportation when providing design proposals for right of ways

**Architecture & Streetscape**
- New development constructed on the site not having to conform to district guidelines
- Various architectural styles being used, impacting the ability to generate identity and character throughout the site

**Image and Identity**
- People and businesses within the area having a resistance to change

**Economic**
- High crime rates and security concerns could have an impact on the desire to develop and build
- Competition with existing businesses along Fowler Avenue

**Future Development**
- More development on and around the site without the creation of a master plan could eventualy limit the opportunity the site provides
As discussed in the previous chapter, the selected site for this thesis is in need of gestures to connect it and give it definition as a place. The proposed development for the site to provide such connection and definition is the University Common.

The Common will allow the chosen site to distinguish itself as a defined place within the greater Tampa Bay area through the creation of four distinct districts. These districts will be known as the University Square District, the Busch District, the Terrace Park District, and the Bulls District. Each district will relate itself to the site’s distinctive edges and will work to capture the structure and spirit of each edge.

These edges, as were described in the previous chapter, are the residential edges of University Square and Terrace Park, the academic edge comprised of the University of South Florida and the Museum of Science and Industry, and the entertainment edge defined by Busch Gardens-Africa and Adventure Island. At the core of the University Common will be a shared civic space, which will work to integrate each of the development’s four proposed districts.

Along with producing districts that capture the structure and spirit of each edge, the programatic components incorporated into each district will work to generate cross interaction amongst those individuals who interact with the Common on the levels of residing, commuting and visiting. In this chapter, the University Common and its districts will be described.
The University Common has been designed as an integrated district center to bring together the isolated developments that currently surround the site selected for this thesis. The ultimate goals of the Common are to convey the site as a defined place, allow the site connectivity at the macro and micro levels, and provide a function base for those who interact with the site at the levels of residing, commuting, and visiting. The following sections will further define the University Common and its goals, while also providing an explanation of its design on the levels of its master plan, districts, and district connectors.

**Master Plan**

On the next page, Figure 51 provides an image of the master plan for the University Common. Conveyed on the plan is the Common and its surrounding context. The graphic also works to convey the various districts, green spaces, and other urban design gestures associated with the Common’s design.

In keeping with Norberg-Schulz’s theory of place, both the concepts of the structure of place and the spirit of place were considered during the design process of the master plan. This level of thinking is evident in how the University Common defines the element of space through using a structured street grid. It also manages to define character on the master plan level through major urban gestures like the large public park at its center and the distinct uses that will compose the Common’s four districts. The Common also suggests orientation through the varying levels of importance
Figure 51:
The proposed master plan for the University Common. Also shown in the image is how the Common relates to its surrounding context.
of its street network, and conveys identity through providing each edge with a district to allow for the transition of the edge’s meaning into the Common.

As the figure also illustrates, the districts of the University Common are all shaded in different colors. The extent of the Bulls District is shaded yellow, the University Square district is in brown, the Busch District is in red, and the Terrace Park District is shaded green. Also provided in the figure, is the surrounding context to illustrate how the Common interfaces with the distinct edge conditions that surround it.

It is also important to note the site’s name. Being re-named from the Tampa Industrial Park to the University Common, the new name of the site works to signify the proposed development strategy as a means of connecting the area and allowing it to identify with one of the site’s major edge conditions. The name of the site is also shared with one of its defining features, which is a large public park at the heart of the development. For these reasons the new name for the area begins to suggest its identity as a place. These are the aspects on which the master plan for the University Common is effective.

**Districts**

As was discussed in the previous section, which described the master plan for the University Common, there are four major districts that create the Common as an integrated whole. Such districts are those of the Bulls District, the University Square District, the Busch District, and the Terrace Park District. Within this section, each district will be described in an effort to illustrate their individual character.
and identity. This type of description will begin to justify how these districts will work to define their sense of place.

The Bulls District

The Bulls District is an area of the site that will work to allow the University of South Florida to transition itself into the University Common. In turn, this type of gesture will also allow the campus of the University to finally become integrated amongst its context.

This district has been planned as a mixed-use academic district with a heavy focus on research, office, and academic space along with commercial space and student housing. Also incorporated into the district will be galleries, cafes, self service restaurants and a performance auditorium. Outdoor spaces, including pocket parks, courtyards, and raised gardens will be incorporated within the district as well.

The Bulls District will occupy 153 of the 474 acres of land that make up the University Common as a whole. This size makes the Bull District the largest of the four districts that compose the Common.

With respect to architecture, the Bulls District will work allow the campus to become “visible” within the context it is transitioning into. To create this sense of visibility,
the buildings will contain many transparent surfaces. Solid surfaces that are used amongst the building designs will be colored green and white, two of the institution's three colors. These types of design choices will allow the district to express itself as a place through the elements of character and identity.

**The University Square District**

A second major district that composes the University Common is the University Square District. This district is planned to be 114 acres in size, and will focus on the creation of mixed-use residential developments. This development style will work to transition the single family residential-based University Square neighborhood into the Common through a denser method of building. These developments will provide the district with multi-family housing along with office and commercial spaces that serve the everyday needs of those who reside in the district. Along with these functions, the University Square District will also possess full service and self service restaurants, cafes, and a variety of small outdoor spaces.

As suggested in Figure 53, the architecture of this district will work to emphasize the geometric implication of the
district’s name. Due to the use of the word “square” in the district’s title, the buildings of this district will be designed through the use of rectilinear forms. This type of formal quality will work to establish a sense of character within the district through the use of its architecture, therefore adding to its definition of expressing itself as a distinct place.

**The Busch District**

The Busch District will work to transition the entertainment edge composed of Busch Gardens-Africa and Adventure Island into the University Common. This district, which is 91 acres in size, will be a mixed-use entertainment district made up of new entrances for both theme parks, an entertainment complex, commercial and office space along with resort-style hotels.

eco.WALK, the district’s center piece and entertainment complex, will work to become the new gateway for entering both parks. This complex will be composed of two joined multi-level courts. One court, titled the Garden Court as depicted in Figure 54, will be the prelude for the entrance to Busch Gardens. The other court, titled the Island Court will prelude the entry to Adventure Island. Both these courts will provide those who visit the parks and others who interact

![Figure 54: The entry for the Garden Court portion of eco.WALK, the entertainment complex unique to the Busch District.](image-url)
with the University Common specialty dining options, unique boutiques for shopping, night club destinations, and a fifteen screen Cineplex.

The architecture of eco.WALK and the other portions of the Busch District will work to reflect the harmony of the built and natural environments. In order to evoke and celebrate Busch Entertainment’s focus on conservation and the environment, the buildings in this district will be infused with terraced outdoor courtyards and street level green spaces that weave in and out of walls made of concrete, cladded with sandstone, and formed from rammed earth. These types of design choices will work to represent and reflect the natural environment shared by all. Sustainable systems to provide for solar collection along with wind and water harvesting will also be infused amongst the architecture and urban design decisions of the district to expose and educate the public on sustainability. Through these design strategies, the character of the Busch District as a place will work to educate the public on the natural environment shared by all.

**Terrace Park District**

Like the University Square District, the Terrace Park District will be 114 acres in size and focus on the creation of mixed-use residential developments. Like with the case of the University Square neighborhood, the Terrace Park neighborhood is also composed of single family residences and will use this development style to transition these residences into the Common through a denser method of building.

The mixed-use residential developments found within the Terrace Park District will provide it with multi-family housing along with office and commercial spaces that serve
the everyday needs of those who reside in the district and its adjacent neighborhood. Along with these functions, the Terrace Park District will also possess full service and self-service restaurants, cafes, and a variety of small outdoor spaces.

As implied through Figure 55, the architecture of this district will work to emphasize the architecture of old Temple Terrace in a contemporary way. Stucco facades, tiled roofs, and different shades of tan, cream, and peach will allow Terrace Park to express the heritage of its neighboring community in a contemporary manner.

Through the previous explanations, one can begin to get a sense of the different forms of character the four districts of the University Common will work to create. It will be through such character that these districts will be able to define the University Common as an integrated district center, which possesses a distinct sense of place.

**District Connectors**

Additions and improvements to the district connectors that interact with the University Common and its context were also made as a result of the proposed master plan. These improvements were made on the levels of adding light rail, rerouting bus lines, implementing a district circulator,
adding bike paths and pedestrian ways, realigning roadways, and integrating green spaces into the development of the master plan.

Presented in Figure 56 is a diagram illustrating how the rail easement discussed in the previous chapter would be used as a method of serving as a macro level connector. The light rail corridor would be concentrated within the Bulls District portion of the University Common, and make three stops within the district. Though the rail does not reach south of this district, the rest of the Common can be accessed via the Common Shuttle, a local bus circulator implemented with the intention of rapidly moving residents, commuters, and visitors around the area.

The route of the Common Shuttle is illustrated in Figure 57. In moving people around the area, the shuttle has contact with all four of the districts that compose the University Common. This type of service would provide those who arrive at the Common via the light rail service a reasonable option in traversing the area as a whole. For example, the

Figure 56:
A diagram illustrating the light rail routes and stops found within and around the University Common.
shuttle would aid a visiting family coming from Tampa International Airport. To get to their hotel in the Busch District, the family would be able to take the Common Shuttle without having to walk to their hotel from the light rail stop they arrived at.

As the last two adjustments have been major, the adjustments made to the bus service routes provided to the Common by Hillsborough Area Regional Transit (HART)
were minor. The adjustments that were made to the HART routes are illustrated in Figure 58.

As the site analysis on bus service conveyed in the previous chapter, HART already has routes in place that service the area quite well. The only modifications made were adding more stops along Fowler Avenue and altering the route that went up McKinley Drive to allow it to travel along Leroy Collins Parkway, a newly configured roadway that flows in the north and south directions.

With respect to vehicular district connectors, some major improvements were made to make roadways that interact with the Common more effective in moving both vehicles and people. As shown in Figure 59, Fowler Avenue, the primary roadway found between the Common and the University of South Florida, was modified to act as a transit oriented corridor. Being used in this manner, Fowler Avenue will be able to service vehicular, bus, and pedestrian traffic. More elaboration on the conditions of this corridor will come in the next chapter.

Figure 59:
A diagram illustrating some of the primary, secondary, and tertiary roadways used for vehicular circulation within and around the University Common.
Another major adjustment was aligning McKinley Drive with Leroy Collins Drive. Due to this alignment the newly formed roadway will be called the Leroy Collins Parkway. This Parkway, which has its origins around Ybor City, will now have its northern terminus as the University. This will allow a person driving along this Parkway to have a feeling of destination once they go through the Common and arrive at the entrance to the University of South Florida.

In an effort to integrate the University’s campus with the master plan, two of its campus roadways were extended to interact with the Common. Both the roadways of Magnolia Drive and Maple Drive were utilized to make this effort happen. In providing this type of gesture more interaction will be able to be made amongst the Common and the University.

Another major district connector, as shown in Figure 60, is the continuation of the University’s “green swath” within the University Common. This gesture provides the common with a recreational green corridor that provides resi-
A final district connector to be implemented as part of the master plan are the bike paths. As justified in Figure 61, the bike paths that run through the area interface mostly with the green corridor that was explained in the previous paragraph. This type of design choice is a good addition to the Common’s master plan due to its interaction with the University. As bicycles are a popular mode of transportation amongst students on university campuses, bike paths will allow students to frequently interact with the University Common. Due to the paths interfacing with the green corridor, they also act as a recreational feature for people interacting with the Common as well.

Through these suggested district connectors, the University Common will be able to foster connectivity within itself as a development and through out its context and region.
illustrating place
This final chapter will work to develop one of the districts previewed in the previous chapter. The district that has been selected for this process is the Bulls District. Through the design exploration found throughout this chapter, the Bulls District will be conveyed from the both the macro and micro levels.

From the macro level, a designed district overview will be shown. This overview will justify how the district interfaces with the University Common and the University of South Florida, and will be illustrated through the use of a developed master plan. Through this level, one will be able to understand how the district works to convey itself as a place through the element of space.

Opposite this type of illustration, will be the district conveyed on the micro level. This level will focus on a detail of the district and three specific conditions. The district detail will work to illustrate the transition of the University into the the Common. It is through three designed conditions that this relationship will be able to be understood. Also conveyed in this portion of the chapter will be how the Bulls District works to convey itself as a place through the elements of character, identity, and orientation.

In the end, the Bulls District will serve as a model for the other three districts that compose the University Common. It will work to also convey the essence of this thesis project, which is the notion of how defined communal place can once again be introduced into Tampa’s built environment.
The Bulls District has been designed as an academic mixed-use district to integrate the currently isolated development of the University of South Florida into the proposed University Common. The ultimate goals of this district are to convey itself as a defined place, allow the district to be well connected to its context on the macro and micro levels, and provide a function base for those who interact with the district at the levels of residing, commuting, and visiting. The following sections will further define the Bulls District and its goals, while also providing an explanation of its design on the levels of a district overview and detail, as well as an examination of three different conditions unique to the district’s composition.

**District Overview**

On the next page, Figure 63 provides an image of the site plan for the Bulls District. Conveyed on the plan is the district and its surrounding context. The graphic also works to convey the four major sections of the district, its green spaces, and other urban design gestures associated with the district’s design.

In keeping with Norberg-Schulz’s theory of place, both the concepts of the structure of place and the spirit of place were considered during the design process of the district overview. As was the case with the University Common, the Bulls District also justifies this level of thinking as it defines the element of space. Through the use of both a structured street grid and sectional relationships that have
Figure 63: The proposed master plan for the University Common. Also shown in the image is how the Common relates to its surrounding context.
been made with the southern edge of the University of South Florida, the consideration of this element is well defined and evident through the district’s design.

The Bulls District also manages to define a the element of character through major urban gestures such as the two green corridors that pass through it and the composition of the physical qualities expressed by the built portions of the district that these green corridors alternate with. The district also suggests a sense of orientation through the varying levels of importance of its street network, and conveys identity through providing a place where those who belong to the University campus and the Common can together have a place of shared belonging.

As the figure also illustrates, the Bulls District is composed of four sections. These sections are those of the West End, Bulls Junction, the East End, and the University Common. The sections of the district were planned in way that they can relate to existing and forecasted development that currently exists or will eventually exist along the southern edge of the University of South Florida. This type of relationship is seen in the way the West End interfaces with development on the west side of the University’s research park. It is also conveyed through how the Bulls Junction has been proposed across from the main entrance to the University’s campus, and how the East End works in relation to the Patel Center for Global Solutions and the Museum of Science and Industry. Figure 63 also includes the context that surrounds the Bulls District, so one can visualize and justify these types of relationships. Along with the graphic depicting the site plan for the Bulls District some other figures must be
understood to comprehend the full intention of the project.

Figure 64 is an aerial of the district. With this image one can begin to understand the density the project will provide the area. As was discussed in Chapter 4, a problem with development trends in New Tampa and other areas of Hillsborough County is the underutilization of the land. In contrast, the design of the Bulls District works to use the land to its full potential. Also with respect to density, one can observe three sections of the district in which its density increases. These three sections directly relate to the district’s West End, Bulls Junction, and East End. The Bulls Junction is the most dense of the three. This design decision was
made to convey the junction as an area of importance for the district. These types of considerations with respect to density work to define the structure of the Bulls District as a place.

Also conveyed through the use of Figure 64, are the existing conditions in contrast with those conditions that are being proposed. Through using this graphic implication, one can understand how the Bulls District begins to transition the University across Fowler Avenue.

Another aspect of the district’s composition that must be considered are its functions. The functional qualities of the district will work to define the character of the physical space found in the Bulls District. This will strengthen the district’s ability to define itself as a place.

As was described in the previous chapter, the Bulls
District was designed to act as an academic mixed-use district. This type of function base is illustrated in Figure 65. As the figure conveys, the district has a heavy focus on the use of multi-family residential. This use will work to provide dense housing types for students and others that choose to reside in the district. The uses of both commercial and office are also integrated into the district as to provide those who engage with the district places to work and shop. Hotels are another commercial based function the district will provide to allow those who are visiting the district a place to stay. A final function type of importance found amongst the built space within the district is that of the institutional use. Portions of the district having this designation will contain built space used for research and classroom based spaces. Through these intentions, the functions of the Bulls District work to justify the district as a place through the element of character.

Through mentioning aspects related to the composition of space, density, and function, one can begin to understand the level on which the District Overview provides an effective explanation of the composition of the Bulls District as a place on the macro scale.

**District Detail**

As design solutions were conveyed through the last section on the macro level, the solutions conveyed in this section, District Detail, will be on the micro level. This section will provide analysis on a portion of the Bulls District that has been completely developed. This portion of the district was specifically chosen for development due to its ability to clearly reinforce the underlying aspect of the University tran-
sitioning into the University Common.

With respect to this aspect, the district detail is broken into three different conditions to justify the transition. These conditions have been titled the Fowler Condition, the Transit Condition, and the Common Condition. Though one can observe these three conditions in Figure 66, they will not be elaborated upon until the next section.

Not only do the conditions of the district detail convey the transition of the University into the Common, but the architecture found within this developed portion of the district also works towards reinforcing this idea as well. A sampling of the architecture found within the district detail is conveyed through Figure 67.

This figure works to illustrate how the buildings possess a solid/void relationship through the alternating use...
of louvered screens and solid walls along with transparent glazed surfaces. This type of relationship works to suggest movement coming from the campus and dispersing into the community via the University Common. Another architectural design gesture that reinforces this concept is the use of glazed surfaces. Through the use of this type of surface, the actions of the public functioning interior spaces of the buildings are able to become visible and exposed to both the district and the Common, establishing a relationship amongst the inside and the outside. Solid surfaces that are used amongst the buildings will be colored green and white, a gesture which evokes two of the institutions three colors. Attributes such as these will also work to further justify the character of this district as a defined place.

A final aspect to mention with respect to the district
In keeping with the typology of being academic mixed-use buildings, the figure illustrates the base of almost each building shall be lined with commercial functioning spaces. This will work to provide for activity on the street level. Above a majority of the commercial spaces will exist space for multi-family residential use. Also above the commercial space will exist space for office and institutional functions. At the southern portion of the district detail will be a large institutional based space that shall be used as an auditorium. This type of function will allow for classes by day for students of the University and performances by night for those who reside in the Bulls District and the other districts of the University Common.
In elaborating upon the architecture and functions illustrated through the district detail, one can begin to understand how the design qualities of the district work to justify the character of the Bulls District as a place and illustrate how the University’s campus transitions into the communal realm of the University Common.

**District Conditions**

A final method in illustrating the composition and intention of the Bulls District as a place is understanding the three major conditions that work to allow the campus’ transition into the Common possible. These three conditions are the Fowler Condition, the Transit Condition and the Common Condition. As they were briefly noted in the last section, they will be described and illustrated within this section.

The first condition to note is the Fowler Condition. One of the major design challenges this condition worked to overcome was the treatment of Fowler Avenue. Currently Fowler Avenue exists as an eight lane arterial roadway that works to transport vehicles in the east and west directions. It is a roadway that buildings are distantly setback from and provides very little to foster any pedestrian activity. For these reasons, Fowler Avenue currently creates a negative environment for achieving the Bulls Districts intention of allowing the campus to transition into the Common and working to define its sense of place.

As shown in Figure 70, in an effort to remedy this situation, the Fowler Condition works to reintroduce Fowler Avenue as a transit oriented corridor. With Fowler Avenue being an excessively large right-of-way an opportunity is presented to create such a corridor due to the amount of land
that exists around it. Once modified, Fowler will have two lanes designated for the consistent flow of vehicles and two one-way lanes designated to allow vehicles to access the roadway’s on street parking. These lanes will also act as a corridor for bus traffic to run through. Fowler will also possess heavily landscaped medians. This gesture will work to break up the roadway, so it is not too imposing on the pedestrian. It will also work as a traffic calming measure, creating closure along the roadway in an effort to reduce the speed of traffic, a concept that was mentioned in Chapter 4.

In acting as a transit oriented corridor, Fowler Avenue will also work to accommodate pedestrian traffic in an effort to generate an environment that will be more compatible with transitioning the University into the Bulls District. Pedestrians will be accommodated along this corridor by the use of

Figure 69: A sign along the Leroy Collins Parkway denoting entry into the Bulls District amongst those who pass by.
crosswalks composed of tan pavers, landscaping that is at the scale of a pedestrian, and bollards that will be used to illuminate the crossings at night. These types of attributes will work to alert vehicular traffic traveling on Fowler Avenue of pedestrian designated realms. Such design considerations will impose great character on the street and further the Bulls District’s ability to define itself as a place.

As was noted in Chapter 3, the sidewalk is an important semi-public space that works to generate a sense of place through the element of character. Both sides of Fowler Avenue will also be composed of 20’ sidewalks. This type of condition is illustrated in Figure 71, which depicts the sidewalk condition on the south side of Fowler. As one can see, this sidewalk size will allow for businesses to expose their wares onto the streetscape and allow the sidewalk to be

Figure 70:
A ground plan of the Fowler Condition. This graphic begins to illustrate how the street level of the buildings begin to interface with the streetscape.
augmented with street furniture. Street furniture is an important element of the streetscape as it is used to allow pedestrians to loiter and relax along the street. The sidewalks will also be landscaped to provide pedestrians a buffer from the street, and will be composed of concrete and accented with tan pavers. Other elements that will work to add value to the pedestrian realm along the Fowler Condition will be various outdoor patios and dining spaces, large store-front windows, broad shade trees, cable-stay awnings, street lighting, and signage. Such elements and spaces are captured in Figures 71 and 72.

As Fowler Avenue is currently a street limited to only the use of vehicular traffic, illustrated through the Fowler Condition is hope and possibility for this roadway to provide...
itself as a place of connection rather than division.

The second condition to comprehend is the Transit Condition. As illustrated in Figure 73, this condition conveys the character of the streetscape along Bulls Avenue. Bulls Avenue will be an important street within the Bulls District because it will act as the district’s “main street.” This street will also interface with the planned light rail route that will service the University Common as a whole.

In relation to Bulls Avenue acting as the district’s main street, many commercial functions will be found along this corridor. Such destinations will vary in scale and function, so a variety can be maintained along the streetscape. Along the section of Bulls Avenue illustrated through the Transit Condition, a Publix Green-Wise Market, Jim Leavitt’s Bar and Grill, flower shop, bookstore, cafe, and an

Figure 73:
A ground plan of the Transit Condition. This graphic begins to illustrate how the street level of the buildings begin to interface with the streetscape.
art gallery can be found. The Publix Green-Wise Market acts as an anchor for this portion of the “main street.” Having an anchor function such as this store, allows for other smaller commercial functions along street to feed off the patrons a store of this scale attracts to the area. Some of these business conditions that have just been described are illustrated in Figures 74 and 75.

Bulls Avenue will also possess a very defining street character. Incorporated into the street’s composition will be public art, landscaping - including palms, shade trees, and pampas grass, street lighting, seating, canvas banners, and other amenities. The public art along the streetscape will be designed uniquely for the Bulls District. One form of this art will consist of iron bulls that can be customized by colleges,

Figure 74:
A view of the Publix Green-Wise Market. This grocery-based function serves as the anchor retailer for this portion of the Bulls District.

Figure 75:
Jim Leavitt’s Bar and Grill. This is one of the many shops, restaurants, and businesses that are only unique to the Bulls District.
fraternities, sororities, and student organizations of the University. Having the iron bulls and various types of landscape grasses dispersed along the sidewalk, will present the pedestrian with a feeling they are walking through a pasture filled with bulls. The public art gesture suggested through the bulls will not only add character to the street, but it will also express the identity of both the Bulls District and the University as a place.

The other major function of Bulls Avenue is its interaction with the light rail route that services the area. The light rail interacting with the streetscape is represented in Figure 76. The light rail stop can be seen in plan view in Figure 73. As conveyed in Figure 77, this stop provides pedestrians who are waiting for the train a shaded structure to
protect them from the elements. This shaded structure also provides definition to the stop and allows the pedestrian to develop a sense of orientation with the district in being able to understand the streetscape.

Found in various locations along the sidewalk that possesses the stop can be found information columns that contain the train’s schedule and route information, ticketing machines, a newsstand, and other small commercial vendors. The dispersal of these types of functions allows the rail stop to be lively and all portions of the sidewalk to be active. This gesture adds to the Bulls District’s ability to convey its sense of place by generating a street character that augments the semi-public realm. Through describing the Transit Condition, one can understand how patrons of the rail will be welcomed by the Bulls District through its ability to convey
itself as a place through the elements of character, identity, and orientation.

The final condition to address is the Common Condition. This condition occurs as the Bulls District transitions into the University Common. As the district approaches the Common it begins to shift from built space to landscaped space. This is conveyed in Figure 78 as the sidewalk widens to become a large promenade landscaped with large shade trees and palms. The promenade also contains various water features, lighting elements, and seating. It also works to serve as a grand entrance to the Common as the district fades into it. These gestures work to justify the sense of place unique to the University Common as one that provides more of a focus on nature.

The programmatic functions that compose the Common Condition are the 500 seat Genshaft Auditorium, an upscale restaurant called Rocky’s Chop House, and a four level building that can accommodate research and office space. Of these functions, the auditorium serves as the main function for this developed block.

The Genshaft Auditorium, shown in Figure 79, is a function that can be shared by all who engage with Bulls
District and the University Common. Whether it be a student that resides in the district using it to attend a class, a commuter attracted to it in order to see a performance, or a visiting lecturer giving a presentation this is a space with a function that can accommodate all who converge upon the district.

Besides the promenade that was described in a previous paragraph, the Common Condition also possesses a small public courtyard that works to connect the programmatic uses found on this developed block. It was designed with the intention of allowing people to gather in anticipation of an event at the Genshaft Auditorium or before eating dinner at Rocky’s Chop House. The character of this space is illustrated in Figure 80. Through describing the Common Condition one can understand how its functions and urban gestures work to transition the Bulls District into the Common, and define the district’s unique sense of place.

As a result of understanding the Bulls District through the levels of the district overview, the district detail, and the district conditions one can understand the sense of place the district is trying to convey. The design intentions exercised through the development of this district work to illustrate how place can be reintegrated into Tampa’s urban fabric.

Figure 80: Small public courtyard functions as an anticipation space for the three major functions that are around its perimeter.
The underlying goal of this thesis is to reintegrate a sense of place back into Tampa’s urban fabric. To support this goal, the main objective of this project is to provide an understanding of the elements that justify place in order to use them as a method from which to design. To achieve this goal the University Common and the Bulls District have been proposed.

In being a realist, these projects are both theoretical in nature and will probably never be conceived, therefore the observation can be made that there is no real way in knowing how successful these two developments would be. In contrast to this notion, they both possess qualities that can provide an understanding of what elements work to generate a defined sense of place, and illustrate what potential could be brought to the Tampa Industrial Park and its unique edge conditions if a project like this could ever be initiated.

The project also managed to present challenges as well. One of the largest challenges was working with a variety of different scales and having to understand the relationships to be made on the macro and the micro levels. A limitation the project possessed also related to its scale as well. Due to the size of the University Common, it is not feasible for one person to be able to develop the project in a way that allows for the pleasure of really understanding the synergy that the project intended to generate amongst the four districts that compose the University Common as an integrated district center.

With this said, one very important realization was made with respect to what has eroded a sense of place in Tampa. All roads lead to the car. The car has been a detri-
mental force in curtailing the creation of place. With respect to Norberg-Schulz’s theory on place, half of the theory is dependant upon people interacting with a built environment. As long as buildings and roads are built and planned with a heavy focus on the car, the creation of place will still be a struggle due to a lack of engaging people with all realms of the built environment.

With respect to this thought, the design exercise undertaken to create the district detail of the Bulls District can be viewed as one that provided itself as being successful in working to generate a sense of place. Through out all the major design decisions made in developing the district detail the pedestrian interacting with the built environment was always the highest priority. It can then be argued that the detail of the Bulls District does define itself as being successful in having reintegrated place within Tampa on a theoretical level.

Figure 82: An aerial of the district detail looking from the University Common north towards the University of South Florida campus.
REFERENCES

PUBLICATIONS


IMAGES


PUBLICATIONS


