

# A Community for a Lifetime



*Caring*

*Trust*

*Dignity*

*Respect*

Plant City, Florida





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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In response to the Communities for a Lifetime Initiative, which was authorized by a resolution of the Florida House of Representatives encouraging all Florida communities to support former Governor Jeb Bush's endeavor to retain current seniors and attract more retirees to Florida, the City Commission passed a resolution and notified the Department of Elder Affairs of our willingness to participate in this program. This initiative offers an opportunity for local elected officials, community leaders and residents to work together to plan the most effective use of existing funding to achieve community goals and gain the benefits associated with being a community that is responsive to the needs of all of its residents between birth and death. Upon deciding to become a community for a lifetime, local communities commit to the following:

- create an inventory of services and opportunities that encourages independence and quality of life for older adults in the community;
- initiate partnerships with a wide variety of sectors in the community (government, business, not-for-profit, and education) in order to promote the development of senior friendly community amenities; and
- perform an assessment of the need for improvement in areas such as housing, transportation, healthcare, recreation, education, and accessibility.

As part of the process for creating a Community for a Lifetime, committees were formed to inventory and assess elements important for senior independence and care. Team members representing a broad spectrum of area residents were recruited to provide support for inventorying existing services, identify elements needed to create a "livable community", and prepare a community action plan addressing priority issues of the local residents. Stakeholders and partners were divided into five committees who performed an assessment of the need for improvement in areas such as housing, transportation, healthcare, recreation, education, and accessibility. Upon completion of the self-assessment, the committee identified areas in need of attention and incorporated them into a community action plan with a timeline for completion.

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Plant City is a city in Hillsborough County, Florida, located between Tampa and Lakeland along Interstate 4. Incorporated on January 10, 1885, the City of Plant City is a municipality that is administered by a Commission/Manager form of government. The population recorded in the 2000 U. S. Census was 29,915 of which 4,824 were 60 years and older. As of 2006, the estimated population was 33,910 of which approximately 5,550 were persons 60 years and older. According to the United States Census Bureau the city, which is urban in character, has a total area of 22.8 square miles (58.9 km<sup>2</sup>); 22.6 square miles (58.6 km<sup>2</sup>) is land and 0.1 square miles (0.3 km<sup>2</sup>) is water.

Plant City's original name was Ichipucksassa (also known as Idasukshed) after the Indian village that once occupied the territory. Because of the difficulty in pronouncing the Indian names and the subsequent confusion that it caused, the city was renamed Cork after the postmaster's Irish hometown. Later the town was given the name Plant City. Many people believe it was named for the flora (especially vegetables and fruits, as well as tropical houseplants) grown at plant nurseries in its tropical Gulf Coast climate. However, it was named after Henry B. Plant in commemoration of his development of the railroad in the area, which significantly boosted the commerce in this primarily agricultural community by linking it with the South Florida Railroad.

Plant City has a vibrant history, a diverse culture and a rich local economy. Originally, Plant City was a large cotton center, but after changing its primary crop to strawberries, the city gained recognition as the winter strawberry capital of the world. The community hosts the annual Florida Strawberry Festival in the late winter (usually in February or early March); this event is attended by people from all over the United States, as well as many visitors from distant places around the world.

The basis for a significant portion of the area's revenue is manufacturing, mining, agriculture and aquaculture. Because of the community's outstanding location, Plant City is also a major distribution center for food products and paper. It is a short distance from Tampa's deep water port and is readily accessible to two major interstates (I-4 and I-75) as well as the CSX railroad. More than 60 trucking firms serve the local industries.

(Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census; Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission; and: Wikipedia, "Plant City, Florida")

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

As part of the development process, a community should periodically perform a self examination to determine how effectively it is responding to the needs and preferences of its residents. This report looks at and describes available resources in state, county and local governmental entities, non-profit agencies, and private businesses; it also addresses the concerns of the community, primarily focused on the needs of the elderly.

During their twilight years, the needs and desires of older adults revolve around issues such as healthcare, transportation, housing, companionship and affordability. Many elderly residents experience health problems, loss of companions, and reduction in income which can negatively affect their lifestyles. Some of the things that seniors do to remain viable within the community are to continue working either at their current employer or seek new careers, become volunteers for worthy community causes, and take advantage of programs and services geared toward mature residents.

## PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Programs and services that respond to the needs of seniors are available at the following:

***Alzheimer's Association*** provides a variety of support services, educational programs, and resources to primarily assist the caregivers of people who have been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Support services include a helpline, consultations, support groups, CareSource, respite, and caregiver's day out. Educational services include publications, newsletter, education programs, professional training and multilingual information. Resources available are Medic Alert® + Safe Return®, resources & referrals, Memory Mobile, and clinical trials. Over 187,000 gulf coast area residents of Charlotte, Citrus, Collier, DeSoto, Glades, Hardy, Hendry, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Lee, Manatee, Polk, Pasco, Pinellas, Sarasota and Sumter counties are served by the Florida Gulf Coast Chapter. The Hillsborough County branch is located at 309 N. Parsons Avenue, Brandon, Florida 33510.

Contact Number: 813-684-1296 or 800-772-8672

Website: <http://www.alz.org/flgulfcoast/index.asp>

***Community Care Elderly*** (CCE) Program provides support services in the home to frail, functionally impaired residents age 60 and older, enabling them to remain in the community and "age in place" rather than face nursing home placement.

Services provided Include:

Case Management - A case manager is assigned to every client to assess the problems that the individual is experiencing and determine what services can best resolve those problems. Short-term case management and crisis intervention are available, as needed, for referrals from the Abuse Registry, APS, law enforcement and Gatekeeper organizations.

Support Services – Includes assistance with bathing, respite for the caregiver, housekeeping, disposable medical supplies for incontinent clients and emergency alert response monitoring. The case manager also links clients with other community services such as Medicaid, food stamps, SSI, Community Health and Human Services, Senior Companions, housing repair, energy assistance and emergency food.

Contact Number: 813-272-5250

Website: [www.hillsboroughcounty.org/aging/programsservices/community.cfm](http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/aging/programsservices/community.cfm)

**Elder Justice Center** was established to remove barriers and enhance the linkages between seniors and the court system, as well as social and legal services. Goals of the center are to: provide a designated facility to respond to the needs of the elderly; provide public education for the elderly and those who work with them; coordinate access to existing agencies that presently provide services to the elderly; provide case management services to victims; and provide case management services on guardianship cases. The center is located in the George E. Edgecomb Courthouse, 800 E. Twiggs Street, Room 481, Tampa, Florida 33602.

Contact Number: 813-276-2726

Website: <http://www.fljud13.org/ejc.htm>

**Elder Link Consortium** links Hillsborough County seniors, 60 years of age or older who meet income guidelines, to non-medical services to help them maintain an independent lifestyle. Services include check writing and bill paying assistance, food bank, friendly visitors, geriatric case coordination, home modifications for the disabled, referrals for home repair and rehabilitation, information and local resource guide, major yard cleanup, personal care, respite for caregivers, self-care training for the visually impaired, telephone reassurance calls, and volunteer relief for caregivers.

Contact Number: 813-571-1684

**Elder Net**, a service of the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay, Inc., utilizes staff and volunteers to provide services that help homebound, elderly or persons with disabilities maintain their quality of life and independence with a sense of security by providing daily telephone reassurance calls. It is an opportunity for daily interaction with another person, friendship, and the knowledge that someone

cares. For those who live alone or have no available support system to assist them, a daily call helps reduce isolation and loneliness. Additionally, **ElderNet** links people with appropriate services before their needs become critical.

Contact Number – 813-964-1577

Website: <http://www.crisiscenter.com>

**Hillsborough County Department of Aging Services** operates the Plant City Senior Center located at 1205 South Waller Street. The facility serves as a neighborhood community center for persons age 60 and older and offers opportunities for attendees to participate in a variety of activities, field trips, educational activities and congregate noon meals. The Senior Adult Day Care Program, collocated at the center, offers comprehensive health, social, supportive and therapeutic services for seniors and functionally impaired adults in a community-based setting. These services provide a safe and supportive environment, a respite for the caregiver, and can delay premature nursing home placement and home care. Licensed by the State of Florida Agency of Health Care Administration, the program has been serving residents of Hillsborough County since October 1, 1976. Through an interdisciplinary team approach, Adult Day Care participants receive a variety of services including social work counseling; information and referral; assistance with medication administration; health monitoring and counseling by nurses and other essential services by professional staff; meals, snacks and nutrition counseling; and therapeutic activities. Adult Day Care participants enjoy a broad range of educational, social, health, and recreational activities each day depending on each individual's need and functioning level. Activities include guest speakers, exercise, arts and crafts, games, poetry reading/writing, current events, intergenerational activities, music, dancing, and birthday and holiday parties. Small group therapies offer reminiscence, reality orientation, validation therapy and other ability/level-specific games, crafts and activities for those with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

Telephone: 813-757-3824

**Lutheran Services Florida** (LSF) is a statewide, non-profit, human services agency dedicated to helping all people in need regardless of religious affiliation, age, or national origin. Headquartered in Tampa, the Agency has more than 60 programs located throughout Florida. LSF services include: the Child Care Food Program, P.E.P.P.I. Head Start Child Development Center, Guardianship Program, Youth Shelters and Family Crisis Counseling Programs, Housing, Employment, Refugee and Immigration Programs, and Disaster Response Programs for victims of tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, and other natural disasters.

Contact Number: 813-875-1408 or 800-651-1853

Website: <http://www.lsfnet.org/>

**Plant City Neighborhood Service Center** provides financial and medical assistance to eligible persons in an effort to stabilize a crisis situation and remove barriers to gain and maintain self-sufficiency. Goals and objectives are attained through various programs and partnerships to provide opportunities for financial growth. Payments are made on behalf of qualified low income residents in an attempt to prevent an eviction and/or utility shutoff. Additionally, the agency renders medical assistance for indigent health care. The local center is located at 307 North Michigan Avenue. Contact Number: 813-757-3871

Programs offered at the Neighbor Service Center include:

**Community Education** provides instruction to participants to increase knowledge of how to access available services during a disaster and tips on preparing a disaster plan.

**Emergency Home Energy Assistance Program (EHEAP)** is a federally funded statewide program that provides financial assistance to low-income persons who are 60 years of age or older and live in households with incomes at or below 150% of the poverty guideline to respond to immediate needs for continuation of home energy service created by past due or final notices received for utility bills.

**Employment Opportunity Program** is designed to enable unemployed and underemployed Hillsborough County residents gain and maintain employment.

**Financial Literacy Program** provides information to participants to help develop a better understanding of how people get into debt, build relationships with financial institutions, prepare a personal budget, recognize the importance of saving money, and become familiar with obtaining financing for home ownership.

**Hillsborough County Health Care Program** is a comprehensive managed care program for Hillsborough County residents who have limited income and assets and no other health care coverage, including Medicare and Medicaid benefits.

**Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)** is a federally funded statewide program that offers financial support to low-income persons, regardless of age, who live in households with incomes at or below 150% of the poverty guideline to assist with payment of current, past due, or final notices received for home energy utility bills.

**Project Opportunity Scholarship** enables income qualified Hillsborough County residents complete an approved program of study and obtain a certificate or diploma, including a 2 year college degree program.

**Prosperity Campaign** is an outreach and public awareness program designed to increase the number of families who know about and claim EITC, CTC and other federal income tax credits. Under this program, participants are provided free quality tax preparation and e-file to lessen the financial burden of tax preparation and refund loan fees related to commercial filing along with programs that help families with financial education, savings, and options for investing the tax refund.

**Youth Development** program's goal is to empower youth through various activities, whereby they gain the ability and authority to make positive decisions and ensure that students increase their proficiency in meeting the state's academic achievement standards. Activities may include, but not limited to Derrick Brooks Charities SOS/AM, Derrick Brooks Charities Rites of Passage/Teen Summit, Youth Community Law Fair, Neighborhood Accountability, Tools for Schools, and Black Male College Explorer.

**Seniors In Services of Tampa Bay, Inc.** is a nonprofit organization that operates five distinct programs, each enrolling volunteers to assist elders in need or children at-risk. The office is located at 1306 W. Sligh Avenue, Tampa, Florida 33604. Contact Number: 813-932-5228  
Website: <http://www.seniorsinservice.org/>

Programs include:

**Foster Grandparents** serve as surrogate grandparents who establish a bond between a child and a caring older adult. The ideal grandparent takes time to listen, offers support and friendship, and shares knowledge gained through a lifetime of experience. A **Foster Grandparent** does all these things and much more for very special children.

**Senior Companions** are volunteers who support homebound elderly who are experiencing loneliness or isolation, unable to get to the store for groceries or medications, or struggle with meal preparation and housework.

The **Volunteer Caregivers Program** matches relatively healthy adults to frail, homebound elderly or disabled adults. The purpose of the program is to help clients live more contentedly and avoid a sense of isolation, depression and loneliness.

The **Bill Payer Program** provides assistance to elderly or disabled adults who have ailments, such as severe arthritis or visual impairments that prevent them from keeping up with their financial affairs. Volunteers help clients pay bills, balance checkbooks, and handle other paperwork.

**Spic & Span for Seniors** is designed to help elders maintain a clean, healthy environment in their own homes.

**Veterans Affairs** is a federal governmental agency whose mission is to provide programs and services that address the needs of veterans, spouses, dependent children, and survivors of veterans. Services offered include health care, disability compensation, pensions, educational benefits, vocational rehabilitation, loan guarantees for housing, insurance, and burial assistance. Veteran counseling and guidance is available at Vet Center, 8900 North Armenia Avenue, Suite 312, Tampa, Florida 33604.

Contact Number: 813-228-2868

Website: <http://www.va.gov/>

**West Central Florida Area Agency on Aging, Inc.** (WCFAAA) is a not-for-profit corporation, dedicated to helping people age at home with dignity. Staff and volunteers work closely with seniors, their families, and caregivers to help identify and locate services needed by people who are 60 or older and live in a five county area encompassing Hillsborough, Polk, Manatee, Highlands and Hardee Counties. Assistance is offered to explain the varied options and guide seniors through the maze of available programs and services so that they can plan for the future and make informed decisions for themselves or someone they care for. Services include providing information on health care, Medicare/Medicaid, and in-home care; helping to locate providers; working with the legislature on senior issues; providing information and referrals for caregiver assistance programs; acting as an advocate with government programs; and conducting educational and outreach programs.

Contact Number: 800-963-5337

Website: <http://www.agingflorida.com/home.odb?res=1024>

## **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

Employment opportunities available for older adults who need or choose to work include:

**AARP Foundation's Senior Community Employment Program** helps financially eligible individuals 55 and over gain the skills necessary to re-enter or remain in the workforce by providing job seekers with temporary training and income, while facilitating their transition into employment in the community and helping employers address their workforce shortages by becoming a resource for trained, qualified, mature workers. The AARP Foundation has more than 35 years of experience in helping employers by matching workforce needs with the skills of mature job seekers to create win/win opportunities for both.

Contact Number: 813 – 930-7680

Website: [http://www.aarp.org/about\\_aarp/aarp\\_foundation/programs\\_services/](http://www.aarp.org/about_aarp/aarp_foundation/programs_services/)

**The Centre for Women**, a non-profit organization, administers the Success Strategies Employment Program which provides seniors with employment preparation and placement, counseling, personal growth and financial management seminars, and referrals for clothing for interviews.

Contact Number: 813-251-8437

Website: [www.centreforwomen.org](http://www.centreforwomen.org).

**Experience Works, Inc.** is a charitable, community based, non-profit organization that offers job training and job placement services to help seniors and mature workers over 55 get the training they need to find good jobs in their local communities. Supported by individual donations, foundations and governmental grants, this national organization is focused on meeting the training and employment needs of low-income seniors, many with multiple barriers to employment. Senior workforce solutions are offered at the Hillsborough Workforce Center located at 9215 Florida Avenue, Suite 105, Tampa, Florida.

Contact Number: Phone – 813-930-7435; FAX – 813-930-8957

**Florida Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation**, provides vocational guidance, training, prosthetics, and placement services to help persons with disabilities achieve employment and independence. Programs offered by the agency include: **GENERAL VR PROGRAM**, an employment program that assists individuals with disabilities, including Floridians with the most severe disabilities, to pursue meaningful careers commensurate with their abilities and capabilities; **FLORIDA ALLIANCE FOR ASSISTIVE SERVICES TECHNOLOGY (FAAST)**, a program that envisions a seamless supportive partnership between Florida business and government to provide assistive technology products and services which will enable persons with disabilities to participate in independent living, education, work and recreation from birth to death; **INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM** which provides services through a statewide network of private non-profit, non-residential, locally based and consumer controlled Centers for Independent Living; **MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARMWORKER PROGRAM** whose purpose program is to fund projects that demonstrate and provide vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities who are migrant or seasonal farm workers, and to the family members who are residing with such individuals, including maintenance and transportation of such individuals and members of their families; **BUREAU OF REHABILITATION AND REEMPLOYMENT SERVICES FOR INJURED WORKERS** which provides appropriate and necessary reemployment services to assist injured employees in their return to suitable gainful employment; and **ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES GRANT PROGRAM** whose goal is to provide school districts and community colleges funding that enables adults with disabilities and senior citizens the opportunity for enhancement of skills that is consistent with their abilities and needs.

Contact Number: 813-707-7505

Website: <http://www.rehabworks.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Main.Main>

**Goodwill Industries**, an international nonprofit organization which was founded in Boston, Massachusetts in 1902, is North America's leading nonprofit provider of education, training, and career services for people with disadvantages, such as welfare dependency, homelessness, and lack of education or work experience, as well as those with physical, mental and emotional disabilities. Goodwill operates over 2,200 retail stores and an Internet auction site, [www.shopgoodwill.com](http://www.shopgoodwill.com), which generate revenues to fund job training and other services to prepare people for job success. Goodwill also generates income helping businesses fill gaps caused by labor shortages, time constraints and limited space or equipment. Contract workers are trained and employed to fill outsourced needs for document management, assembly, mailing, custodial work, groundskeeping and more.

Contact Number: 888-279-1988

Website: <http://www.goodwill.org/page/guest/about>

**Tampa Bay WorkForce Alliance** (TBWA) is the leading workforce development organization in the Tampa Bay region. TBWA offers a wide range of services to businesses to help connect top employers to the most motivated job candidates and other value-added workforce development services. Services include recruitment and interviewing of entry to executive level candidates; job matching from database of more than 100,000 applicants seeking employment; skills assessment and evaluation, including administration of tests; compilation of comprehensive local, state and national targeted labor market statistics such as employment and wage, labor force, economic indicators and demographic information; identification of valuable tax credits; operation of a turnkey business center with teleconferencing, faxing, copying and wireless capabilities, targeted career fairs and mobile career center equipped with multiple computers online, and onsite recruitment; and conducting business workshops and seminars on current topics, including retention strategies, changing regulation and compliance and other topics to help businesses better understand the "needs" and "wants" of their employees.

Contact Number: 813 -930-7881

Website: <http://www.workforcetampa.com/>

**The Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program** is an employment program for people with disabilities who are interested in going to work. The goal of the Ticket Program is to increase opportunities and choices for Social Security disability beneficiaries to obtain employment, vocational rehabilitation (VR), and other support services from public and private providers, employers, and other organizations. Under the Ticket Program, the Social Security Administration provides disability beneficiaries with a Ticket they may use to obtain the services and jobs they need from a new universe of organizations called Employment Networks (ENs).

## **OPPORTUNITIES TO VOLUNTEER**

Volunteers are a special breed of people who make the world around them a better place to live. Many seniors find that volunteering for a worthy cause not only improves the health of the community but brings a number of benefits and rewards to the volunteer such as gaining a renewed zest for life, developing a greater sense of purpose, receiving appreciation for shared talents and service, and forging friendships with others who share similar values. Opportunities for meaningful volunteer contributions are available through the following community-based organizations that seek and utilize interested, motivated and reliable people who are willing to give of their time and resources to serve others without the need for recognition, fame, or fortune.

**Big Brothers Big Sisters** is the oldest, largest and most effective youth mentoring organization in the United States. The mission of this nonprofit organization is to help children reach their potential through professionally supported, one-to-one relationships with mentors to develop positive bonds that have a direct and lasting impact on the lives of young people. Recognized as the leader in one-to-one youth service for more than a century, Big Brothers Big Sisters volunteers mentor children, ages 6 through 18, in communities across the country. Once matched, Big Brothers and Big Sisters develop friendships with their Little Brothers and Little Sisters. Whether playing a computer game or simply hanging out, volunteers bring magic into the life of a child. School-based matches meet in schools for just one hour each week during the day. They do projects together, read in the library, eat lunch, shoot hoops and more. Community-based matches are flexible to fit the schedule of the mentor. Bigs and Littles hang out in the community and go to museums, sports events, movies, and more.

Contact Number: 813-287-2210

Website: [www.bbbsa.org/](http://www.bbbsa.org/)

**Boys and Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay**, The Positive Place for Kids, offer opportunities for volunteers to work with young boys and girls in a variety of situations that promote and enhance development of young people by instilling a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging and influence. Volunteer opportunities can range from a one-hour visit to a Boys & Girls Club to speak to a small group about a subject of interest to regular involvement with a program, sport or activity. Volunteers may serve as coach, teacher, tutor, reader, listener, chaperone, mentor, or project volunteer. Adults and high school students, who can earn community service hours, are welcome. The Boys and Girls Club operate two facilities in Plant City:

**Plant City Boys & Girls Club**, 1601 E. Dr. Martin Luther King Boulevard

Contact Number: 813-757-9195

**West Plant City Boys & Girls Club**, 901 S. Waller Street

Contact Number: 813-875-5771

Website: <http://www.bgctampafll.org/>

**Greater Plant City Chamber of Commerce** has several opportunities for

volunteerism through its committee structure and at special events. More than 20 active committees are responsible for planning events as well as developing a long-range vision for the Chamber. Events such as the monthly Plant City Bike Fest which is held the first Saturday of each month, the Strawberry Classic Car Show which is held the third Saturday of the month, and Pig Jam, a professional BBQ competition which is held in November, need volunteers to assist with setting up and dismantling equipment and facilities, coordinating activities, and providing directions to visitors. Similar assistance is needed for the annual New Teacher Coffee, Community Expo, and booth at the Strawberry Festival.

Contact Number: 813 -754-3707

Website: <http://www.plantcity.org/>

***The Tourist Information Center*** and ***the Union Station Welcome Center and Railroad Museum*** provide opportunities for volunteers to greet visitors and share information about Plant City. Activities at these facilities are coordinated and scheduled through the Chamber of Commerce. The TIC is open 364 days a year and Union Station is open Thursday through Saturday.

TIC Contact Number: 813-754-7045

Union Station Contact Numbers: 813-719-6989 and 813 -754-3707

***Hillsborough County Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)***

provides opportunities for people 55 and over to make a difference in their community through volunteer service. RSVP volunteers contribute anywhere from a few to over forty hours a week, serving at schools, day care centers, police departments, hospitals and other nonprofit and public organizations to help meet critical community needs. RSVP offers maximum flexibility and choice to its volunteers. RSVP matches the personal interests and skills of older Americans with opportunities to help solve community problems. Volunteers are offered supplemental insurance while on duty as well as on-the-job training from the agency or organization where volunteers are placed.

Contact Number: 813-272-5031

Website: <https://www.volunteermatch.org/search/org73817.jsp>

***Meals on Wheels*** programs are operated in numerous communities across the United States. Each program is locally organized, operated and financed. Meals on Wheels of Plant City served its first meals in January 1990. The Plant City organization is a nonprofit corporation that is operated by volunteers including drivers for 7 routes, office staff and the executive board. The area served is bounded by Knights-Griffin Road on the north, County Line Road on the east, Highway 60 on the south and Forbes Road on the west. Most drivers typically serve one route one day a week between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. Office staff also works one day a week from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The primary function of the program is the delivery of a hot nutritious meal at lunch time, five days a week, 52 weeks a year, including holidays, to home bound people who are unable to provide such a meal for themselves. The meal consists of a meat, two vegetables, bread, dessert or fresh fruit for diabetics, and a drink. Most

recipients are elderly but age is not a factor to qualify for this service. Frequently, the volunteers are the only outside contact these consumers may have during any given day. Residents who need the delivery of a hot nutritious meal or who would like to be a volunteer for Meals on Wheels may call 813-754-9932 for additional information.

**Plant City Family YMCA** is a volunteer-driven nonprofit organization. Volunteers are the heart of every YMCA as they provide valuable resources to help staff better serve the community. Volunteers assist in strategic planning, fundraising, facility maintenance, special events, membership/administrative opportunities, youth activity coaches, tutoring, and many other roles critical to the YMCA's success. Through the *Do Something Good* service projects, volunteers can participate in special projects outside the walls of the YMCA. Adults and teens interested in becoming a volunteer may contact 813-757-6677 to complete an application highlighting specific interests and talents.

Website: [www.tampaymca.org](http://www.tampaymca.org)

**South Florida Baptist Hospital** has a variety of opportunities for volunteer service. These include delivering menus, flowers, and mail to patients; transporting/escorting patients and visitors; operating the gift shop and merchandise cart which entails assisting customers with gift selection, restocking merchandise, and running the register and credit card machine; assisting visitors and staff in the information center, diagnostic center, and emergency center; and manning the library cart and shuttle service. In addition to the options for adult volunteers, SFBH has a teenage volunteer program that is specially designed for teens between the ages of 14 and 18. Teen volunteers receive valuable on-the-job training, work experience and an inside look at health care careers. Interested adults and teens may call Volunteer Resources at 813-757-1230 to sign-up or receive additional information.

**United Food Bank of Plant City** is primarily a volunteer driven organization with several opportunities to volunteer ranging from one day a month to five days a week. These include front area services where volunteers interview and screen clients, enter client data into a client database and/or answer the telephone. Volunteers may also work in the stock room stocking shelves and filling client orders. As most of the volunteers are senior citizens who might be living on a tight, fixed income, they are provided one bag of groceries that they select from the stock room at the end of each shift. Thorough training is given to all volunteers so they feel comfortable in their roles. Operating hours for United Food Bank are Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm and Tuesday and Thursday from 1:30 pm to 5:30 pm. Prospective volunteers or people needing assistance may call 813-764-0625.

**Volunteer Tampa Bay** is a service of United Way of Tampa Bay and offers a

variety of ways for volunteers to connect to the community. It links volunteers with available volunteer opportunities; builds partnerships with local schools, agencies and neighborhoods; develops structured volunteer projects; coordinates large-scale community volunteer events; customizes volunteer experiences for groups and companies; and provides training and consulting for volunteer managers and groups. Volunteer opportunities range from a few hours on a one-time, short-term project to an ongoing or long-term commitment. Volunteer Tampa Bay schedules and coordinate *Hands on Tampa Bay* managed projects and the need for volunteers of other United Way partner agencies. Examples of volunteer opportunities are assisting with disaster relief; conserving natural resources and the environment; responding to the needs of seniors and persons with disabilities; rescuing and caring for animals; serving as a mentor, tutor, or crisis counselor; or teaching an adult or child to read.

Contact Number: 813-274-0999

Website: <http://www.volunteertampabay.com/>

## NEEDS OF CAREGIVERS

In addition to requirements of the Family Medical Leave Act, most area employers offer benefits to respond to the needs of employees who are caregivers. These include flexible work schedules and opportunities to work from home.

## EMERGENCY ALERT RESPONSE SYSTEM

Agencies that distribute emergency alert response systems and their costs for installation and maintenance are as follows:

Company	Installation	Monthly Fee	Phone	Senior Discount
Medical Alerts		from \$13.95	888-633-4253	
ADT	\$99	\$35.99 +home monitoring fee	800-914-0764	AARP
Lifeline		\$32.00 and up	800-233-6208	Yes

## DELIVERY SERVICES

For the convenience of people with busy lifestyles or mobility issues, there are a few options for having merchandise delivered to their door. A few area and web-based businesses will assemble and deliver the desired products for a nominal fee. These include:

***AULSuperStore.com*** is an online grocery shopping store offering a variety of

grocery and consumer products. Consumers can find everything from groceries, household cleaning products, health and beauty items, baby products, pet food and much more. After completing an online shopping order, products are shipped directly to the consumer by UPS within 1 to 5 business days.

**WestFetch.com** is a unique concierge, personal and delivery service located in Tampa designed to cater to those who would like a little extra time back for themselves. Various services are offered to assist seniors, handicapped or others who need assistance in completing everyday duties. Services range from grocery shopping and delivery to wholesale club shopping, pet sitting, dog boarding, eBay trading assistance, mobile public notary and other services.

In addition to the online services, local supermarkets and pharmacies that offer delivery services include:

<b>Grocery Stores</b>	<b>Grocery Stores</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
The Corner Store LLC	121 East. Reynolds Street Plant City	813-754-0900
IGA Economizer	14720 Dr. M. L. King Blvd Dover	813-659-0602
<b>Pharmacies</b>		
Fast & Friendly Pharmacy	404 North Alexander Street Plant City	813-719-3278
Sweetbay Supermarket Pharmacy	597 South Wheeler Street Plant City	813-752-9163

## **SAFETY**

Smoke detectors can be obtained from Plant City Fire Rescue. This agency also conducts safety seminars and annual inspections of all commercial buildings, educational facilities, and structures for public assembly as well as new residential buildings to ensure compliance with the fire safety codes of the City of Plant City. Seminars that are offered by the department include: Life Safety in the Home, Smoke Detectors, and Avoiding Hazards in the home. Services may be requested by calling Plant City Fire Rescue at 813-757-9131.

## **CRIME AND FRAUD**

**Adult Protective Services** is dedicated to protecting vulnerable adults from further abuse, neglect, or exploitation and enabling disabled adults to remain in the community. Services provided by the Florida Adult Services Program, a division of the Florida Department of Children and Families, include:

**Protective Investigations:** The investigation of reports of abuse, neglect,

or exploitation through observation, evidence gathering, and collateral contacts.

**Protective Supervision:** The primary source of service delivery for those vulnerable adults who were determined through a protective investigation to be in danger of continued abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Services to protect the victim from further abuse, neglect, or exploitation may be provided or arranged by the protective supervision program.

Contact Number: 813-375-3900

Website: <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/as/>

**Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Crimes Against The Elderly Unit** conducts an information and referral service to direct elderly clients to appropriate social services, including governmental and non-profit agencies that can assist in the special needs of the elderly. The Unit participates in the Seniors and Law Enforcement Together Council (S.A.L.T.) which is a coalition of law enforcement, service providers and seniors; one of the functions of the Council is the distribution of File of Life Emergency pockets to seniors. The Unit also provides 911 cell phones to elderly victims of domestic violence. Training offered for seniors and associated groups include: Personal Safety Awareness, Cons and Frauds, Home Security and Identity Theft. Another duty of the Unit is the investigation of complaints of abuse and/or neglect in nursing homes and assisted living facilities in Hillsborough County. Also offered are referrals, programs and training on Alzheimer's disease and the Alzheimer's Association Project Safe Return. Requests for training, referrals and services or to report abuse or neglect can be made by calling 813-247-0548.

## **VICTIM AND FRAUD AVOIDANCE SERVICES**

Some of the opportunities that older adults have to learn how to avoid being victim of fraud and other crimes include the following:

**Bay Area Legal Service** provides victim and fraud services for health related affairs to eligible residents with limited income and financial assets by means of legal advice, brief legal services, extended representation and community education. Health related services include preparation of powers of attorney and advance health care directives. The preservation of independence and self-determination of clients is a program priority as is the protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation of vulnerable populations. Bay Area staff provides ongoing community education regarding fraud prevention, elder abuse and domestic violence by participating in area health fairs and special community events. Contact Number: 813-752-1335

**Triad** is a commitment among the Chiefs of Police, The Sheriff, senior leaders and affiliated organizations. Together they reduce elder victimization and increase law enforcement services to older persons. Triad focuses on reducing fear of crime by identifying misconceptions, educating seniors and bringing awareness of potential criminal activity to the forefront. Also, Triad will create programs to reduce crimes against the elderly, promote education via information exchange among law enforcement, appropriate community agencies and older persons, and continue to advocate and be a voice for the elder population.

Local Law Enforcement Agencies:

Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office	813-247-8200
Plant City Police Department	813-757-9200
Tampa Police Department	813-231-6130
Temple Terrace Police Department	813-989-7110

## **SENIOR DISCOUNTS AND ASSISTANCE**

Businesses that offer discounts to seniors include department chains, spas, and restaurants. At many of the venues certain days are earmarked for discounts for older customers. Ages for receiving the discounts vary; typical minimum ages are 55, 60, 62, or 65. Discounts range from a flat amount to a percentage off the cost of the products or services; most common is 10% off the total cost of the products or services purchased. Several companies also extend discounts to AARP members whose minimum age is 50 years.

Assistance with utilities is available through:

**City of Plant City** currently provides a discount to seniors on the monthly rate for garbage collection services. To qualify for this discount, the customer must be 65 years of age or older and certify that the premises is normally occupied by not more than two persons, including the customer. Applications and certificates required for this discount can be completed at the City's Utilities Billing Office on the date on which the applicant reaches 65 years of age or thereafter.

Contact Number: 813-659-4222

Website: <http://www.plantcitygov.com/> or <http://fl-plantcity.civicplus.com/>

**Tampa Electric Company** offers several social services programs to assist its electric utility customers. Some of these programs were designed specifically for seniors, such as the SHARE and Weather Care; however, all programs are 'senior friendly'.

**Hospicare:** This program can help eliminate worries about paying the electric bill during a hospital stay. Hospicare delays electric bill payments

until the customer leaves the hospital. After leaving the hospital after an extended period, a payment schedule is arranged with the customer. Call TECO Customer Service at 813-223-0800 for more information.

**Medical Watch:** Medical Watch is a notification program that identifies Tampa Electric customers who have been certified by their Florida-licensed physician as dependent upon electricity-powered life support equipment. Tampa Electric representatives will notify these customers when disconnection of electric service is required for non-payment of an electric bill; or when planned service interruptions must occur for power line equipment maintenance. For more information, contact Tampa Electric at **813-225-5051** (Hillsborough County), **863-298-6051** (Polk County), or **1-888-223-0800** (all other counties and out-of-state).

**Neighborhood Radio Watch:** Specially trained TECO employees are equipped with two-way radio vehicles to alert local law enforcement agencies of crimes, fires, accidents and other emergencies or potential neighborhood problems.

**SHARE:** SHARE helps senior customers who are low-income and/or medically disabled pay their energy-related bills. Tampa Electric customers may make a voluntary, tax deductible contribution with their monthly electric bill payment. Participants can request an online form to make a monthly SHARE donation that will be included with a [business electric bill](#) or [residential electric bill](#). To make a one-time contribution, donors can enclose a check or money order for any amount payable to Salvation Army Share, c/o Tampa Electric, PO Box 111, Tampa Florida 33601. Donations are collected by Tampa Electric and forwarded to the Salvation Army to help eligible senior clients. To determine if you qualify to receive assistance as a SHARE recipient, call **813-226-0055**.

**TTY for the hearing-impaired:** The Customer Care Department is equipped with a TTY device (special text telephone equipment for customers with hearing and/or speech disabilities). Customers requesting this service can call (TTY only) **813-228-4613**.

**Weather Care:** Customers over 60, who own their home within Tampa Electric's service area and do not have the resources to weatherize the home, may qualify for free home improvements available through Weather Care. This program, a joint service offered by Tampa Electric and The Centre for Women, is available exclusively to senior citizens on low, fixed incomes whose homes are in need of energy-related improvements.

<b>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT</b>
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<b>NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS</b>		
<b>GOAL: TO DEVELOP AND/OR ENHANCE AVAILABLE RESOURCES TO RESPOND TO THE NEEDS AND PREFERENCES OF THE RESIDENTS AS THEY LIVE AND MATURE IN THE COMMUNITY.</b>		
<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED LEAD RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>COOPERATIVE LINKAGES</b>
<b>SHORT-TERM</b>		
Advocate for change in policies of housing authorities who immediately increase rent payments when seniors secure non-subsidized employment	Experience Works	Community Services Elected Officials
Develop a marketing strategy that highlights the availability and accessibility of programs to improve the quality of life for residents of eastern Hillsborough County.	Neighborhood Service Center	Chamber of Commerce
<b>INTERMEDIATE TERM</b>		
Encourage supermarkets, pharmacies, and discount stores to provide assistance to patrons who, because of age or disability, have difficulty in reaching items on high shelving	Chamber of Commerce	
Encourage supermarkets, pharmacies, and discount stores to provide seating for patrons who become tired while shopping or are waiting while companion shops	Chamber of Commerce	
<b>LONG TERM</b>		
Establish an online referral system.	Neighborhood Service Center	

## **CULTURAL AND SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Facilities that satisfy the cultural and social needs of the residents are important factors in community building. Creating the right mix of facilities, arts and cultural opportunities that appeal to all of the age groups in the community is essential in the development of a “livable community”. A goal of 21<sup>st</sup> century cities should be to create aesthetically pleasing places where people want to live, work, and play. People, by nature, are social beings and want to be in places where there are other people. Fulfilling the cultural and social needs of adolescents, young professional, and older adults requires a diverse mix of facilities that range from parks, recreation centers, sports venues, museums, computer cafes, libraries to theaters.

### **PUBLIC RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

Public recreational facilities provide a variety of opportunities for residents of the community to meet, interact and engage in activities that improve their physical and mental health. The Plant City Recreation and Parks Department operates several city-owned parks, recreation centers, baseball and softball fields, tennis and handball courts, and a skateboard center that offer staff-coordinated activities for all ages and interests. Activities such as after school and summer programs, team sports, youth dances, cheerleading, field trips, fishing derbies, and Easter egg hunts are targeted toward elementary, middle and high school students. The department offers organized sports programs in basketball, softball, soccer, flag football, golf, and tennis. Similarly, adults are attracted to team sports, line and belly dancing, ceramics, scrapbooking, sewing/quilting, card games, self defense, senior field trips, and exercise and fitness programs.

Plant City Tennis Center at Ellis Methvin Park is a state-of-the-art facility that features four new soft clay courts and four hard surface courts. A full tennis program is offered that features league play along with group and individual lessons.

The Planteen Recreation Center, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Recreation Center, and the Winter Visitor Center have facilities for indoor activities. Featured programs include ceramics, sewing, bridge, fitness programs, baton, table games, youth and teen activities, after school programs, shuffleboard, square and round dancing, and aerobics, to name just a few.

For more information, call the Recreation and Parks Department at 659-4255 or visit the Department’s website at [www.plantcitygov.com/rec](http://www.plantcitygov.com/rec).

The following tables list the recreation centers, athletic facilities and parks owned and operated by the city. These facilities not only served the needs of the community, but are also accessible to residents of the adjacent areas of unincorporated Hillsborough County.

<b>Recreation Centers &amp; Athletic Facilities</b>	<b>Amenities</b>	<b>Size</b>
Planteen Recreation Center	large meeting room, smaller meeting/craft room, game room, ceramics room, kitchen, restrooms, 2 offices, playground, picnic pavilion, 4 picnic tables	.6 acres
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Recreation Center	large meeting room, arts & crafts room, game room, restrooms, 3 offices, playground, picnic shelter with 8 picnic tables; 2 lighted youth baseball fields, 1 full size lighted baseball field, concession stand, restrooms, open practice field, 2 lighted basketball courts	18.6 acres
Winter Visitor Center	large meeting room, restrooms, kitchen, 9 shuffle board courts	2.5 acres
Plant City Stadium & Randy L. Larson Softball Complex	6700 seat lighted softball stadium, four additional 310' lighted softball fields, covered batting cage, restrooms	74.7 acres
Mike Sansone Park	4 200' lighted youth baseball fields, 2 200' lighted youth softball fields, 3 312'-388' lighted youth baseball fields, 3 concession buildings, 3 lighted basketball courts, two lighted sand volleyball courts, 8500 sq ft modular skate park, 4 picnic shelters with picnic benches, 3 restroom buildings, 2 playgrounds, .38 mile paved walking trail	77.3 acres
Otis M. Andrews Sports Complex	4 full size 60x120 lighted soccer/football fields, 4 lighted smaller flag football /soccer fields, tackle football practice area, 2 picnic shelters with picnic benches, 2 concession/restroom buildings, 2 playgrounds	39 acres
Snowden Park	2 lighted youth baseball fields, lighted basketball court, 2 grass volleyball courts, restrooms, picnic shelter and picnic tables, playground	7.0 acres
Dort Street Courts & Rowena Mays Park	2 lighted tennis courts, 2 basketball courts, restrooms, 4 picnic tables	2.7 acres
Plant City Tennis Center and Ellis-Methvin Park	Tennis Center: 4 lighted soft surface hard courts, 4 lighted clay courts, and restrooms. Rest of park is under construction: Eight 70x120 soccer fields, Four 200' baseball/softball fields, 2 concession/restroom buildings, pond, 34 picnic tables, 3 shelters, 20 benches, ¾ mile walking trail	46.1 acres

<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>	<b>Amenities</b>	<b>Size</b>
Burchwood Park	lake, playground, picnic shelter with 6 picnic tables	4.8 acres
Cherry Street Park	stormwater pond, unpaved walking trail, no amenities	4.7 acres
Courier Field Park	Playground equipment, restrooms, and veterans monument	2.1 acres
Gilchrist Park	2 picnic shelters with 5 picnic tables each, 2 playgrounds (one is ADA compliant), restrooms, 4 picnic tables under the trees	3.0 acres
Marie B. Ellis Park	basketball court, volleyball court, gazebo with three benches, restrooms, picnic shelter with 4 picnic tables, 2 shuffleboard courts, playground, open space	2.0 acres
McCall Park	linear park downtown with 10 benches, gazebo, paved walking paths, adjacent to Union Station historic building	.751 acres
Roseland Park	no amenities, lots of trees	1.3 acres
Samuel W. Cooper Park	stormwater pond with 3 fountains, .6 mile lighted walking trail, two benches	10 acres
Sunrise Park	no amenities	.13 acres
Washington Park	playground equipment	.35 acres
<b>Undeveloped Park Land</b>	<b>Amenities</b>	<b>Size</b>
Urban Forest	Rustic wooded acreage – about half is wetland protected. Future passive use - picnic shelters, restrooms, playground, walking trails	63.9 acres
McIntosh Property	100 acres is wetland restoration site, remaining 263 acres of wooded and open upland for future passive recreation use	363 acres

## **PRIVATE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

**Family Bowl** is a 16 lane bumper bowling facility located at 2250 Highway 92 East. Both open and league bowling are available. Featured leagues include the minor leagues for youth 18 years or younger and the major leagues for adults. For more information, call 752-7721.

**Plant City Family YMCA**, located at 1507 YMCA Place, is a membership based facility operated by a nonprofit organization to provide opportunities for individuals of all ages to grow in spirit, mind, and body. The facility offers a gymnasium, racquetball courts, exercise studio, fitness area, outdoor playground, nursery and play zone for kids, chapel, and family fun swimming pool. Membership includes access to the entire facility, free youth sports, free land and water aerobics classes, free wellness orientations and personal exercise programs, and free babysitting while at the YMCA. Membership is open to all. For more information, call 757-6677 or log onto [www.tampaymca.org](http://www.tampaymca.org).

**Walden Lake Golf and Country Club** offers two challenging 18 hole courses that cut through the natural beauty of the Walden Lake community. The 36 holes of championship golf can accommodate up to 288 golfers for golf tournaments. Amenities include a fully-stocked golf shop, banquet hall with seating for 300, restaurant that is open to the public, comprehensive practice facility featuring a driving range and practice greens, spacious 27,000 square foot clubhouse, and tennis, swim, and fitness facilities. In addition to daily golf packages, golf, tennis, swim or social memberships are available.

Contact Number: 813-754-8575

Website: [www.waldenlakegolf.com](http://www.waldenlakegolf.com)

## LOCAL LIBRARY

The Bruton Memorial Library provides residents of eastern Hillsborough County with a variety of cultural programs and events throughout the year for people of all ages. The programs include a monthly book discussion for adults, author readings and signings, magicians and storytellers for children, art displays in cases and on two art walls and much more. The Library is open seven days a week. For more information call 813-757-9215.

Examples of programs offered at the Library:

- The Bruton Memorial Library is host to many Chautauqua style presentations sponsored by the Friends of the Library and the Florida Humanities Council (FHC). Thomas Jefferson, Mark Twain, James Weldon Johnson, Henry Plant and others have visited and made presentations at the Library. Plant City was a host town for the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary FHC Chautauqua Tour in 2003.
- Through grants from those same sources, the Library has sponsored several program series on topics such as *Bud Lee: Facets of an Artist* and *Right Before Our Eyes: Florida's Changing Landscape in Fact, Fiction and Song*.
- The Library presents 12 art shows a year and several of them are group shows. This gives local artists, and the people that view the shows, great opportunities for exposure and experience.
- Every summer, a program series is offered for children ages three and up. Local children experience professional puppet shows, musical presentations, magic acts, dance instruction, craft workshops and much more.
- The Friends of the Library present three diverse programs a year. Recent events include a Celtic band, author Randy Wayne White, and a local oral history program.
- The Library collection offers patron access to materials and information on all aspects of US and world cultures; both contemporary and historical. Information is available through books, film and/or online.

## MUSEUMS AND EXHIBITS

***The 1914 Plant City High School Community Center*** is a destination for anyone interested in historic preservation, architecture and adaptive reuse of an old school building. Built in 1914 with a \$40,000 bond issue, the modified Georgia Revival building is a three story, red brick structure with decorative blond brick accent trim. The building is located on an entire block in one of Plant City's oldest residential neighborhoods. Serving continuously as a public school for 58 years, the Hillsborough County School Board deeded the building to the City in 1975. In 1977, the East Hillsborough Historical Society began an administrative partnership with the City to develop the 1914 Plant City High School as a community center. Since 1981, the building has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It serves the community as a tangible expression of civic achievement and as a reminder of the emphasis placed on educational excellence.

The East Hillsborough Historical Society, formed in 1974, is a nonprofit, 501(C)3 organization dedicated to the preservation of the historical and cultural heritage of Plant City and eastern Hillsborough County. EHHS offices, pioneer heritage museums, agricultural, photography and railroad memorabilia exhibits, banquet and auditorium facilities and the Quintilla Geer Bruton Archives Center are located in the 1914 Plant City High School Community Center (PCHSCC). The Quintilla Geer Bruton Archives Center is a genealogy and family history library and contains more than 4,000 books, family, historical, genealogical and photographic files, periodicals, newspapers and records on microforms and digital format. The Pioneer Heritage Museums display items of Plant City government's development, school memorabilia, vintage clothing, antique furniture and household items, agricultural equipment, antique cameras and old photographs, historic medical items, and railroad memorabilia. The Society sponsors various events to support its historic preservation efforts, including an annual Pioneer Day and a strawberry shortcake booth at the Florida Strawberry Festival.

Publications include: *Plant City: Its Origin and History*, *Images of America Plant City*, *Plant City in Vintage Postcards* and *More Than Just Cowboys*.

For hours of operation or membership information, please contact  
EHHS, 605 North Collins Street, Plant City FL 33563-3321. 813-757-9226.  
email [qcenter@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:qcenter@tampabay.rr.com)  
Website <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~flqgbac/>

***The Bing Rooming House*** has a unique history in that it served as the hub of business activity for the African American community. When African Americans were not allowed access on Main Street, they were welcomed on Laura Street. Originally serving as a boarding house from 1920 to 1970, the Bing Rooming

House was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in September 2002. The two-story structure is being restored to its original glory and enhanced with historic artifacts from families, signage, photos, menus, newspapers, books and little known historical facts involving local African Americans.

Features of the museum include:

- Artifacts of era including photographs, clothing, tools, and household furnishings
- Showcase of pioneer African American families in the Plant City community (displays)
- Repository for books and letters written in or about era
- Oral history library consisting of video recordings of residents reflecting on the history and traditions of the community

The Bing Rooming House is owned by the Improvement League of Plant City, Inc., which was formed in 1982 as a nonprofit grass-roots organization committed to improve and develop substandard and underserved communities of Plant City. The Improvement League is committed to identifying gaps in services in the East Hillsborough County area, assisting with finding funding, and securing the means to address identified community needs. The areas of Lincoln Park in the southeastern quadrant and Madison Park in the southwestern quadrant have been targeted for the implementation of programs and services by the members. Contact Number: 813-757-6760

**Website:** [www.plantcitybinghouse.com](http://www.plantcitybinghouse.com)

***Plant City Photo Archives, Inc.*** is non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of the community's history and heritage through the collection and preservation of historic photographs along with the stories that wrap around these photos. The organization operates a museum of historic photographs and has collected and digitized over 40,000 photos which may be viewed on the organization's computers. Prints and posters are available, as is the Photo Archives' recently published book "Remembering Plant City: Tales from the Winter Strawberry Capital of the World". For its work, the organization has won the following awards: Plant City Historic Preservation Award for Educational Programs and Projects, Historic Resources Board of the City of Plant City, 2003; and Business of the Year for Community Contribution, Plant City Economic Development Council and the Greater Plant City Chamber of Commerce, November 2006

The Exhibit Gallery, located at 119 North Collins Street in historic Downtown Plant City, is open to the public Thursday, Friday, and Saturday from 10 AM to 4 PM, and Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday by appointment. For additional information about the museum's exhibits and services, call (813) 754-1578 or log on the website [www.plantcityphotoarchives.org](http://www.plantcityphotoarchives.org).

**Union Station Welcome Center and Railroad Museum** (the “Depot”) is located at 102 North Palmer Street in Historic Downtown Plant City. Constructed in 1909, the rail station was used by passengers along with mail transport and Western Union telegraph services until the mid-1970s. Displays at the museum include windows, doors, ticket counters, and flooring as it was in 1909; railroad memorabilia; and a model replica of downtown Plant City as it was in the mid-1960s. The Welcome Center is open to the public Thursday, Friday, and Saturday from 10 AM to 4 PM.

Contact Numbers: 813-719-6989 and 813 -754-3707

## **THEATERS AND OTHER PRIVATE FACILITIES**

***Plant City Entertainment, Inc.*** is a community-based nonprofit theatrical group that stages theater productions throughout the year. The actors, directors, producers, and staff are all members of the local community. The first production, a variety show called “Let’s Hear It for Me“, was staged in August, 1980, outdoors in the paved area at the old Union Station Depot in downtown Plant City. Shows are currently held at the Plant City Cornerstone Center, a historical building located at 315 North Collins Street in the downtown historic district.

Contact Numbers: (813)752-0728 and 813)752-5156

Website: <http://pce-inc.com>

***Premiere Cinema 8*** is an eight-screen movie theater located at 205 West Alexander Street in Lake Walden Square shopping center. The theater serves as a venue for residents to view the latest movies. The seating capacity, including stadium seating and plush high-back rocking recliner love seats, is 1,310. The theater is open seven days per week. The box office opens at 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday, and at 11:00 am on Saturday and Sunday.

Contact Number 813-719-7600

Website: <http://www.pccmovies.com/theater.php?rtsID=23901>

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERGENERATION CONNECTIONS**

AARP defines intergenerational connections as the “purposeful bringing together of different generations in ongoing and mutually beneficial planned activities designed to achieve specified goals. Through intergenerational programs, young and old share their talents and resources, supporting each other in relationships that benefit both the individuals and the community.”

Activities at festivals, recreation and park facilities, museums and exhibits, and specially designated parent/child events provide opportunities where youth, young adults, middle-age adults, and seniors can freely mingle and thereby gain a better understanding of members of the other age groups. Intergenerational

activities such as shuffleboard at Marie B. Ellis Park, fitness training at the YMCA and recreation centers, and reading programs at Bruton Memorial Library promote mutual care, transmit cultural values, and enrich the lives of everyone involved.

Like many communities in Florida, Plant City has a significant number of elders who are guardians and surrogate parents for their adolescent grandchildren. According to the 2000 Census, 688 grandparents are living in the same household with grandchildren under 18 years of age; 370 or 53.8 percent are responsible for the welfare of those grandchildren. Throughout Florida, 258,952 children under the age of 18 are living in grandparent-headed households, an increase of 33 percent increase from 1990.

<b>CULTURAL AND SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS</b>		
<b>GOAL: TO IMPROVE THE AVAILABILITY AND UTILIZATION OF PUBLIC CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES.</b>		
<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED LEAD RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>COOPERATIVE LINKAGES</b>
<b>SHORT-TERM</b>		
Through ongoing promotional campaigns, seek to educate the public about health benefits of participating in indoor and outdoor recreational activities	Recreation and Parks	Chamber of Commerce SFBH Health Department
Expand classes and program activities such as child development, arts/crafts, cultural programs and alternative exercise classes offered at library, recreation centers, and cultural facilities	Recreation and Parks	Library Private Providers
Enhance promotion of museums, exhibits, parks, and other recreational and cultural facilities in the community	Chamber of Commerce	Recreation and Parks Photo Archives Historical Society Improvement League
Provide drop in activities for teens, as well as for seniors, in a structured supervised setting to keep them engaged and active	Recreation and Parks	Boys & Girls Clubs Library YMCA
<b>INTERMEDIATE TERM</b>		
Develop long range park and recreation development plan listing proposed improvements that address identified community needs.	Recreation and Parks	Elected Officials
Secure funding to support proposed park and recreation improvements	Recreation and Parks	Elected Officials
<b>LONG TERM</b>		
Develop community center /gymnasium in a neighborhood area for programming after-school and summer classes and activities for youth and active seniors.	Recreation and Parks	Elected Officials
Expand facilities for cultural and social opportunities at library	Library	Elected Officials

# **EDUCATION**

Education is one of the most important components of a region's economic and social vitality. Economically speaking, a region which offers strong and diverse educational opportunities is more likely to offer a strong and diverse workforce, making the region attractive in the national and global marketplace. Education also has a social dimension. The availability of a quality education plays a critical role in helping all citizens achieve their full potential. Furthermore, a well-educated population can attract better and higher paying jobs, thereby improving the quality of life not only for individuals and families, but for neighborhoods and communities as well.

The Plant City Community offers free public education to our citizens ranging from pre-kindergarten to adult. Presently, thirteen elementary schools, three middle schools, two senior high schools, and one career center serve the educational needs of students in the Plant City area. Three private schools offer additional educational choices for youth in the community. Also, an adult center and the local branch campus of a community college provide opportunities for adults to enhance their knowledge and further their education.

Our community offers three high school completion options: traditional K-12 high school diploma, adult high school diploma, and the GED. All three options provide students the opportunity to go straight to work, enter the military, attend a vocational school, or enroll in college or a university.

## **PRIMARY EDUCATION**

Although research has demonstrated that pre-kindergarten education can substantially increase a child's school readiness, pre-kindergarten education is not mandatory in the State of Florida. The Hillsborough County School District, however, supports a voluntary pre-kindergarten program through the elementary schools and licensed child care centers. There are two stand-alone Head Start Programs currently operating in the Plant City/East Hillsborough County area in addition to ten other programs which are housed at area elementary schools. Approximately 18,000 children were served in the regular, early childhood and Head Start pre-kindergarten programs during the 2007/2008 school year in Plant City area schools.

The following chart denotes the number of students enrolled and the capacity of the elementary educational facilities.

FACILITY	ENROLLMENT 2007/2008	CAPACITY 2007/2008
<b>PUBLIC SCHOOLS</b>		
Bryan Elementary	826	807
Burney Elementary	436	412
Cork Elementary	909	941
Dover Elementary	930	943
Jackson Elementary	543	450
Knights Elementary	824	925
Lincoln Elementary	417	414
Pinecrest Elementary	656	820
J.S. Robinson Elementary	722	710
Springhead Elementary	889	524
Trapnell Elementary	559	874
Walden Lake Elementary	824	983
Wilson Elementary	382	379
<b>Total Public Elementary Schools</b>	<b>8,917</b>	<b>9,182</b>
<b>PRIVATE</b>		
Hope Christian Academy	75	50
Palnez Academy	68	55
Shiloh Baptist Charter School	188	188
<b>Total Private Schools</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>293</b>

Source: Hillsborough County School District, 2007-2008 pupil enrollment and school capacity, April 2008.

### **CHILD CARE FACILITIES**

There are over twenty licensed child care centers in the Plant City area. Most have a formal educational pre-kindergarten program; some also offer a kindergarten curriculum to further prepare students for elementary school. Current capacity for children that can be served at the child care centers during the 2007/2008 school year is over 2,000.

Name	Address	Phone	Pre-K Program	Capacity	Enrolled
A+ Learning Center	221 W. Alexander St Plant City, FL 33563	764-0121	No	88	76
Autumn Leaf Academy	3007 S. Daniels Road Plant City, FL 33566	752-4561	Yes	100	90
Bright Beginnings	2103 Mud Lake Road Plant City, FL 33566	707-1135	Yes	138	135
Children's Nest	1311 Mendonsa Road Plant City, FL 33563	759-0605	Yes	165	126
First Baptist of Plant City	503 N. Palmer Street Plant City, FL 33563	754-1773	No	120	120
First Presbyterian Learning Center	404 W. Reynolds St Plant City, FL 33563	752-6874	No	150	100
Fountain of Life Early Learning Ctr	3202 W. Baker Street Plant City, FL 33566	754-3086	Yes	16	6
Fun Factory	410 S. Collins Street Plant City, FL 33563	752-7599	Yes	18	15
Golden Rule Child Care Center	104 Golden Rule Lane Plant City, FL 33563	754-1830	Yes	160	158
Kids Club Early Learning Center	1108 Goldfinch Drive Plant City, FL 33566	752-6446	Yes	135	125
Kimberly's Infant Care Center	605 S. Drane Street Plant City, FL 33563	757-0546 765-4309	No	36	26
Kindercare Learning Centers	1701 W. Timberlane Plant City, FL 33566	754-5264	Yes	135	110
Linda's Little People	1406 N. Wheeler St Plant City, FL 33563	752-3775	Yes	91	91
Little Munchins Learning Academy	702 S. Evers Street Plant City, FL 33563	752-5437	Yes	94	75
Ms. Jean's Learning Academy	651 E. Alexander Street Plant City, FL 33563	752-6481	Yes	167	90
Palnez Academy	3507 Gallagher Road Plant City, FL 33565	986-4900	Yes	68	55
Plant City Migrant Headstart	1402 Knights Griffin Plant City, FL 33565	707-7011	Yes	60	49
Smart Kids Academy	3512 W. Baker Street Plant City, FL 33566	754-4880	Yes	95	17
Strawberry Patch Academy	2805 W. Reynolds St Plant City, FL 33566	752-5479	Yes	18	11
Tots Active Learning Center	121 W. Prosser Drive Plant City, FL 33563	759-0333	Yes	60	55
Walden Lake Early Learning Center	2730 Turkey Creek Rd Plant City, FL 33566	752-7008	Yes	80	45
Westside Village Child Care Center	3102 Sammonds Road Plant City, FL 33566	707-7014	Yes	20	12
		<b>Total Capacity</b>		<b>2,014</b>	<b>1,587</b>

## SECONDARY EDUCATION

A major concern of secondary schools is the risk of students dropping out. Individuals with low educational attainment are at risk of unemployment and delinquent or criminal behavior. Individuals without a high school diploma can expect to make incomes below, at/or near the poverty level. Adolescents with mental or emotional problems and pregnant teens are at high risk of dropping out of school.

In terms of special needs students, the public school system offers several different types of programs. These programs include Speech, Language and Hearing, emotionally handicapped, specific learning disability, gifted, educable mentally handicapped, trainable mentally handicapped, physically handicapped, occupational therapy, and physical therapy.

FACILITY	ENROLLMENT 2007/2008	CAPACITY 2007/2008
PUBLIC SCHOOLS		
Marshall Middle School	959	858
Tomlin Middle School	1495	1376
Turkey Creek Middle School	1160	1408
Durant High School	2494	2736
Plant City High School	2637	2471
<b>Total Public Secondary Schools</b>	<b>8,745</b>	<b>8,849</b>

Source: Hillsborough County School District, 2007-2008 pupil enrollment and school capacity, April 2008

## ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

There are several facilities in and within close proximity to Plant City that provide post secondary education and opportunities for lifelong learning. They include Plant City Adult & Community School, Hillsborough Community College, University of Florida Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences, and the University of South Florida.

***Plant City Adult & Community School***, located at Plant City High School, offers adults many class offerings, both free and fee based. Schedules for classes run continuously throughout the year. Most classes are offered at Plant City High School with a few classes offered at satellite locations in the immediate area. Plant City Adult provides high school completion for adults in the form of an adult high school diploma and the GED. Day and night high school students are

given the opportunity to take classes at night to go towards their standard or adult high school diploma. These classes are taught in traditional classroom and computer based models. Vocational classes are currently offered in the areas of cosmetology with preparation for state license, certified nursing assistant (CNA) with preparation for state license, and advanced auto mechanics with preparation and testing for ASE certification (day students only). Other classes for job preparation include computer classes and conversational Spanish. Plant City Adult also offers free English classes (ESOL) to speakers of other languages. Other services offered include TABE testing (Test of Adult Basic Education) for GED placement, CASAS testing for ESOL placement, and the Official GED Examination. Other classes may be offered based on sufficient enrollment.

**Hillsborough Community College** is a public, comprehensive community college serving over 42,000 students; it ranks fifth in student population among the state's 28 community colleges. HCC serves students of all ages and ethnic backgrounds. Plant City Campus, located on Park Road, south of Interstate 4 at exit 22, is one of five branch campuses and serves over 3,000 students per semester. The Plant City campus offers Associate of Arts degrees in several transfer programs. Additionally, career programs leading to the Associate of Science degree are offered in Environmental Science Technology, Computer Science, Landscape and Horticulture Technology, Nursing, and Veterinary Technology as well as many courses required in programs offered at other campuses. Also offered at the campus are Emergency Medical Services certificates, the Advanced Wastewater Treatment certificate, and many other credit certificates in Environmental, Horticulture, and other specialty areas. Non-credit and training courses are also offered. Many state and national conferences are scheduled in the Trinkle Center, seating as many as 2,400 participants. Financial aid is available. Persons interested in attending HCC should call (813) 757-2102 or log onto the website <http://www.hccfl.edu/>.

### **University of Florida (Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences – IFAS)**

University of Florida/IFAS offers bachelor degrees in Agriculture Education, Environmental Horticulture, Geomatics (land surveying), and Natural Resource Conservation at the Plant City Campus of Hillsborough Community College. Students may complete the entire bachelor's degree program without ever attending the main Campus in Gainesville by completing the Associate Degree in Arts at Hillsborough Community College and the junior and senior years for the bachelor's degree at UF/IFAS. You can be a Gator without ever leaving Plant City. UF also offers select Master degree programs in agriculture related areas at the Plant City Campus. To contact a UF/IFAS representative, call (813) 757-2280 or email [mwortman@ufl.edu](mailto:mwortman@ufl.edu).

**University of South Florida** is an accredited multidisciplinary institution that offers bachelor, master and doctorate degrees in a variety of programs. The main campus is located approximately 20 miles from the city. The university encourages lifelong learning by offering over two hundred classes and programs targeted to respond to the needs and desires of senior learners. Liberal arts courses, computer training, free lectures and, occasionally, free workshops on subjects of interest to mature students are offered to seniors throughout the year under the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI), a part of USF's Continuing Education. While most people, regardless of age, find that familiar patterns of thinking and routines are comforting, recent brain research indicates that the best thing we can do for our brains is to alter patterns, challenge our thinking, learn and do new things. To highlight the fallacy of the persistent ageist myth that older adults are fixed in their ways of being and thinking, OLLI established the Renaissance Certificate program. The certificate program challenges participants to get out of their comfort zone as they gain a well rounded knowledge of the world in which they live. To qualify for the certificate, aspirants must complete 12 study groups -- two in each of the six certificate fields of study: Political Science (Geopolitics), Literature & Writing, Arts & Humanities; Science and Mathematics, History, and Electives.

Contact Number: 813-974-2403

Website: <http://www.outreach.usf.edu/conted/seniors/>

## **NON-PROFIT AGENCIES**

**Hispanic Services Council** was formed, primarily, to respond to the needs of a growing population of limited English-speaking Hispanic individuals. English as a Second Language, Parenting, and U. S. Citizenship classes are offered on a regular basis free of charge to HSC clients. An important aspect of the classes is the cultural orientation component. This component makes the acculturation process more effective, successful and productive. Also, workplace Spanish classes are offered to professionals and businesses in the community having an interest in enhancing the quality of services provided to the Hispanic Community. Cultural Competency Training, which is designed to create an understanding of Latino cultural styles and the importance of providing culturally competent services that do not rely on stereotypes, is tailored to the special needs of agencies or employers. The workplace Spanish classes and Cultural Competency Training is offered at a charge. HSC is located at 606 South Collins Street. For more information, call 813-659-8566.

**Plant City Neighborhood Service Center**, along with partner agencies, offers classes free of charge to eligible low income individuals. These include the Black Male College Explorer Program, budgeting and life skills classes, and parenting classes along with individual, marital and group counseling. For more information, call 813-757-3871. Program descriptions are as follows:

**Black Male College Explorer Program** is for low-income males who are in the 7th to 11th grade and are at risk of dropping out of school due to grade point average or disciplinary problems. The program is specifically designed to prevent black males from dropping out of school, facilitate their admissions to college, and increase their chances for earning a college degree. Additional requirements for participation are that the student will enroll in the College of Education at Florida A & M University (FAMU) and attend 5 weeks of highly concentrated instruction during the summer to learn more about the following subject matters: reading, mathematics, general science, art, African American studies, computer science, and personal development workshops.

**Financial Literacy Program** is held twice per month to assist customers in managing their monies. Budgeting plans are developed and incentives are given to establish bank accounts. Additionally, guidance and tools for starting up a business is provided.

**Life Skills Program** is held twice per month and is designed to help low-income persons who lack training, education and marketable job skills necessary to obtain employment or promotion within their present job become or maintain self-sufficiency. The program is designed to assist participants with increasing skills in marketing for employment, how to dress for success, self esteem issues, budgeting resources, and anger and stress management.

***Redlands Christian Migrant Association*** (RCMA) provides quality child care and early education for children of migrant farm workers and rural, low-income families throughout Florida. RCMA was founded October 1, 1965, by Mennonite Church volunteers in the Redlands farming area of southern Miami-Dade County to provide a safe, nurturing environment for children while their parents worked in the fields. There are five RCMA centers in the Plant City area that provide services to 375 children from November until May. RCMA provides or coordinates dental, vision, hearing, developmental and nutritional screenings so that children may receive diagnoses and treatment as early as possible. Contact Number: 813-707-7006

## **LOCAL LIBRARY**

### **Bruton Memorial Library**

The public library that serves eastern Hillsborough County has a book and audio visual material collection of over 110,000 items. The collection includes materials for babies who are just learning to focus on an image, beginning readers for school age children, books to support the curriculums of local schools, materials for adults who desire to continue their formal or informal education, materials for adult new readers and those learning another language, and much more.

The library has 45 computers for public use. Most can be used to access information on the Internet and all can be used for educational purposes for people of all ages. The computers are also used to research and type school assignments, create and type resumes and cover letters, search for and apply for jobs, and download and/or fill out many governmental forms and applications.

In addition, educational programs are offered for people of all ages including:

1. Early literacy programs and activities – story times each week on three age levels, birth to 14 months, toddlers, and preschoolers.
2. Stories, tutorials and tours for school groups.
3. Informative programs and workshops on science, literature, history and the arts for school age children.
4. Special literacy events such as *El día de los niños, el día de los libros* - Children's Book Day and ongoing programs such as the Imagination Library early literacy initiative.
5. Programs for teens on college selection, term paper preparation, and computer graphics.
6. Programs and workshops for adults on resume preparation, gardening, literature, investing, health and many other topics.
7. One on one adult literacy tutors and students meet at the Library.
8. Hands on computer classes for adults on computer related topics, including mouse and keyboard skills, Windows, word processing, the Internet, email and much more.
9. In the fall of 2008, the Library will host a National Endowment for Humanities (NEH) grant program geared at improving family literacy in bilingual families. The series is called Prime Time Family Reading Time and will provide educational enrichment for 20 families.

In 2007, 88 programs were held for adults with 3,089 attending and 148 programs were held for children with 6,425 people attending for a total of 236 programs for 9,514 people. For more information call 813-757-9215.

## **NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

Educational attainment is one indicator of an area's general well being and is closely tied to economic status. If illiteracy or substandard educational levels are prevalent, there is often an increased need for human service assistance. Greater levels of educational achievement will be necessary to meet the needs of an increasingly complex economy and society. These needs will place an even greater burden on school authorities in their responsibility for providing adequate school facilities for the growing population in the Plant City area.

Overall, the educational level for adults in East Hillsborough is equivalent to that of the rest of the county. It does not indicate a structural weakness that could impede further education and job training. The most obvious inequalities are

found in the higher percentage of residents who did not finish high school and the lower percentage who earned bachelors or advanced degrees. Greater emphasis on college attendance and graduation would add significantly to earning power of the Plant City and East Hillsborough labor force. The following chart illustrates the educational levels of the residents in Plant City.

	<b>PLANT CITY</b>	<b>TOTAL COUNTY</b>
Persons 25 Years and Older	18,596	53,841
Associates Degree	1,101 (5.9%)	50,240 (7.7%)
Bachelor's Degree	2,070 (11.1%)	109,058 (16.7%)
Graduate or Professional Degree	1,016 (5.5%)	55,051 (8.4%)
Percent High School Graduate or Higher	71.3%	80.8%
Percent Bachelors Degree or Higher	16.6%	25.1%

Source: 2000 Census

Education facilities must comply with the standards of the Florida State Department of Education in terms of facility design, location, and site criteria. However, the issues identified by the residents and stakeholders have little to do with the facilities and more to do with the instructions and training. Concerns include:

- The percentage of individuals with less than a high school education is higher in Plant City than in Hillsborough County as a whole.
- Enrollment in 4-year colleges and the number of residents with bachelor and master degrees is substantially lower than County and State averages.
- In the 2006-07 school year, the graduation rate for Plant City High School (PCHS) was lower than the rates of the County and Durant High School (DHS) but higher than the State.
- In the 2006-07 school year, the median national percentile rank for math on the Florida Comprehensive Test (FCAT) was higher at PCHS than both the County and State averages but lower than DHS; the rank for reading was lower than the County and DHS but higher than the State average.
- Incidents of crime and violence in schools have a negative impact upon the learning experience; incidents of acts against persons, fighting and harassments are lower at PCHS and DHS than County and State averages.

<b>2006-07 District-Level Data from the Florida School Indicators Report</b>				
<b>School District of Hillsborough County</b>				
<b>High Schools</b>				
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Durant</b>	<b>Plant City</b>
Dropout Rate	3.3	1.6	1.2	2.4
Graduation Rate	72.4	79.1	86.2	76.7
% English Language Learner	5.2	5.5	2.7	5.8
NRT Math Gr. 10 - #Tested	178,349	12,110	687	502
NRT Math Gr. 10 - Median NPR	67	72	76	73
NRT Read Gr. 10 - # Tested	178,598	12,131	688	602
NRT Read Gr. 10 - Median NPR	60	66	69	63
Incidents of Crime and Violence				
Acts Against Persons	3,009	207	3	7
Alcohol, Tobacco, Other Drugs	9,253	568	71	30
Property	3,435	198	16	8
Fighting and Harassment	15,390	853	34	57
Weapons Possession	1,184	73	3	0
Other	3,645	145	2	7
Total	35,916	2,044	129	109
Stability Rate	91.8	93.3	94.5	92.9
Student Membership	769,989	50,949	2,793	2,734
Staff				
% Administrative	3.1	4.7	4.3	4.7
% Instructional	69.9	63.5	65.6	64.1
% Support	27.0	31.8	30.1	31.3
Total	67,471	3,621	186	128
% Suspensions				
In School	16.2	26.8	28.6	10.4
Out of School	12.0	8.5	12.7	15.9

## **TARGETS**

- Strive to provide quality education for children, teens and adults.
- Improve the 10<sup>th</sup> grade test scores by improving grade school performance.
- Enhance early childhood education to prepare children for the future. During the early years, children are like sponges and absorb everything that is taught.
- Work to support and expand the Child Care Assistance and After School Care programs.
- Work to ensure migrant children are school ready.
- Encourage teenagers to stay in and perform well in school.
- Incorporate voc-tech training into the school curriculum to help prepare students who are not college bound for employment opportunities in the workplace.

<b>EDUCATION NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS</b>		
<b>GOAL: TO ENSURE THAT ALL CHILDREN ARE PREPARED FOR THE WORK PLACE WHETHER THROUGH COLLEGE, VOC-TECH, OR SPECIALIZED TRAINING.</b>		
<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED LEAD RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>COOPERATIVE LINKAGES</b>
<b>CHILDREN</b> Focus on early education (Pre-K--2) to prepare children for the future through the early intervention reading and social skills program.	School District	Children's Board Schools/Teachers Parents Hillsborough Public Library Cooperative Volunteers Chamber
Support and help expand the Child Care Assistance and After School Care Program.	YMCA Boys & Girls Club	Children's Board United Way N'hood Service Center Recreation & Parks Churches Volunteers
Expand the Migrant Head Start Program to ensure children are school ready.	Redlands Christian Migrant Association School District	San Jose Mission Hispanic Services Council Catholic Charities
<b>TEENS</b> Participate in the innovative programs and PSAs to encourage children to stay in school through recognition within school (programs and awards), competition between schools (brain bowls), and in-school speakers (motivational speakers).	Parent Student Associations (PSAs)	School District HCC USF Parents Volunteers
Incorporate vocational training and technical prep programs within the high schools or offer specialized training in conjunction with HCC.	School District HCC	N'hood Service Center PSA
Evaluate and expand the School to Work Program.	Regional Workforce Development Board	School District Volunteers
<b>QUALITY</b> Strive to meet state education goals.	Schools	Teachers Parents
Improve the 10 <sup>th</sup> grade test scores through personal attention, tutorial, innovative classroom instruction, and a positive learning environment.	Schools	Chamber/Private Sector Parents

**EDUCATION  
NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS**

**GOAL: TO ENSURE THAT FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS ARE AVAILABE TO ADDRESS EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF ADULTS IN THE COMMUNITY.**

<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED LEAD RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>COOPERATIVE LINKAGES</b>
<p><b>ADULTS</b> Continue to offer literacy program and GED programs for adults.</p>	Plant City Adult & Community School	Hillsborough Literacy Council School District N'hood Service Center Volunteers Library
Offer English classes for migrant workers and families.	Hispanic Services Council	School District N'hood Service Center Redlands Christian Migrant Association
Expand information to public about adult education at Plant City High School, HCC and USF.	Plant City Adult & Community School HCC USF	N'hood Service Center Library Churches Work Sites
Expand adult literacy opportunities.	Plant City Adult & Community School	Hillsborough Literacy Council N'hood Service Center Library Churches Work Sites
Expand opportunities for adults, especially seniors, to receive instruction in a variety of subjects that will help prepare them for issues of concern to older adults.	Plant City Adult & Community School	HCC USF
Offer Social Services Center for Migrant workers and families including education, day care, counseling, and parent education.	Hispanic Services Council	St. Joseph Parish Nurse Program Neighborhood Service Center

# HEALTH CARE

Accessible and affordable health care is important to all residents of Plant City. The major health issue in Plant City, especially for the elderly, is long-term health care and preventive care.

## HEALTH CARE SERVICES

South Florida Baptist Hospital is a progressive, 147-bed acute-care facility, offering a full range of diagnostic, therapeutic, surgical and rehabilitative services. In addition, the Emergency Center has a modern-equipped 36 bed unit with a First Care area located within the center. The facility, located at 301 North Alexander Street, serves residents of Plant City and the adjacent areas of East Hillsborough County. SFBH has more than 600 employees and offers a full range of health care service to the local populace such as community health and wellness as well as a parish nurse program.

SFBH has over 170 physicians on staff offering services from A-Z. Specialties include: allergies, cardiology, family practice, general & thoracic surgery, gastroenterology, infectious disease, neurology, neurosurgeon, obstetrics/gynecology, orthopedics, oncology, plastic and reconstructive surgery, pediatrics, podiatry, pulmonary, radiology, and urology.

CT scans including a new 64 CT Scanner, MRI, PET/CT, a SPECT nuclear camera, sonography, mammography, cardiac stress testing, and transesophageal echocardiography assist physicians and surgeons with their healing work. Faster healing and recovery times are the result of laser and laproscopic techniques available at the hospital.



[South Florida Baptist Hospital](#) also offers a Bone & Joint Reconstructive Center, a Heartburn Treatment Center, Hyperbaric Chamber/Wound Care Center, and a new Rehabilitation Services Outpatient Center located at the Walden Lake Medical Arts Center.

From pediatric care to intensive care and progressive care units, the hospital can provide for any medical need or emergency. The hospital has a Family Center for Childbirth, a state-of-the-art Surgery Center, an expanded and modernized Emergency Department, and St. Joseph's Children's at South Florida Baptist Hospital Pediatric Unit.

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

In addition to SFBH, Hillsborough County provides services to senior citizens through the ***County's Aging Services Department***, including support services through Community Care for the Elderly, Homemaker Services, RSVP, Senior Adult Day Care/Senior Centers, Senior Nutrition & Activity Program and Working Seniors. The County also offers public health services through various decentralized Health Department clinics.

Specialized services are offered through the ***County's Health and Social Services Department*** including Coordinated Transportation for Medicaid; Sunshine Line for low-income, elderly and eligible disabled citizens; and a local Neighborhood Service Center to aid low-income families with emergency food and basic necessities, essential home repairs, case management, supportive casework services, referrals, and emergency relief assistance. In addition to help with shelter and food, eligible clients are assisted with services such as clothing, outpatient/in-patient care, dental services, boarding home service, employment programs for refugees, and catastrophic medical assistance.

Indigent health care is provided to residents whose income is at or below the 100% poverty guidelines and who do not have any other medical resources. This initiative is funded through the County's half cents sales tax. The goal is to create a healthier community. Eligibility requirements are United States citizenship, resident of Hillsborough County, low-income and limited assets. Seniors normally have other medical funding; therefore, HSS will refer those with medical coverage to the following for healthcare assistance: United Food Bank (one time only and limited amount of funding); Judeo Christian Coalition for undocumented; and Suncoast Clinics that treat clients on a sliding scale fee.

Social Security Administration administers Part D Drug Program for the disabled and active Medicare clients. Since Hillsborough County Health and Social Services is payer of last resort, assistance is not normally provided for prescriptions for this population. However, HSS can get involved with assistance for medicinal needs when no other resource is available.

**Suncoast Clinics**, with locations in Plant City, Dover, and Ruskin, provide primary medical care to low income county residents. Those clients who do not have medical coverage are medically treated on a sliding scale fee.

**LifePath Hospice** offers support to anyone determined to be in the last 12 months of their life. Services are provided wherever the patient resides, regardless of their ability to pay. Complete medical services are offered to give care and comfort to assisted clients by a medical team that includes physicians, nurses, home health aides, specialists and volunteers. Psychosocial staff provides mental health counseling and links to community resources. Volunteers extend companionship and emotional support to the families.

## **INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL COUNSELING SERVICES**

There are a variety of community-based services that are available to assist older adults with healthcare and related non-medical needs. Some of the services are as follows:

**Consumer Credit Counseling**, a nonprofit community-service agency dedicated to helping families achieve financial stability, provides confidential budget counseling, money management education, debt management programs, bankruptcy counseling and education, and comprehensive housing counseling. The organization was founded to educate consumers about money management, promote the wise use of credit as a tool for financial planning and assist people in overcoming financial difficulties.

Contact Number: 800.984-0977

Website, <http://www.cccsfl.org/>

**Florida Department of Financial Services, Division of Consumer Services** provide an assortment of assistance to Florida residents to help make sound financial decisions and learn how to avoid becoming a victim of insurance or financial fraud. These include regulation of banks, thrifts and credit unions chartered by the state, in addition to insurance companies, for-profit cemeteries, and providers of pre-need funeral and cemetery services.

Staff is also available to extend community education programs throughout the State of Florida, informative consumer guides and online consumer assistance. Consumer protection topics include Insurance Scams and Financial Fraud; Illegal Insurance Practices; Hurricane and Disaster Preparedness; Health, HMO's Long-Term Care and Medicare Supplement Insurance; Financial Literacy; information on how to safeguard our communities against identity theft; and verification of insurance companies and financial institutions.

Consumer Helpline: 1-877-693-5236

Website: <http://www.myfloridacfo.com>

**SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders)** and **Sunshine for Seniors** are programs funded by grants from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the State of Florida legislature offered through the State of Florida Department of Elder Affairs at no cost to seniors who request assistance. Specially trained volunteers assist with Medicare, Medicaid, prescription drug and health insurance questions by providing information, comparing policies and helping with claims and appeals.

Contact Number: 800-336-2226, extension 2101

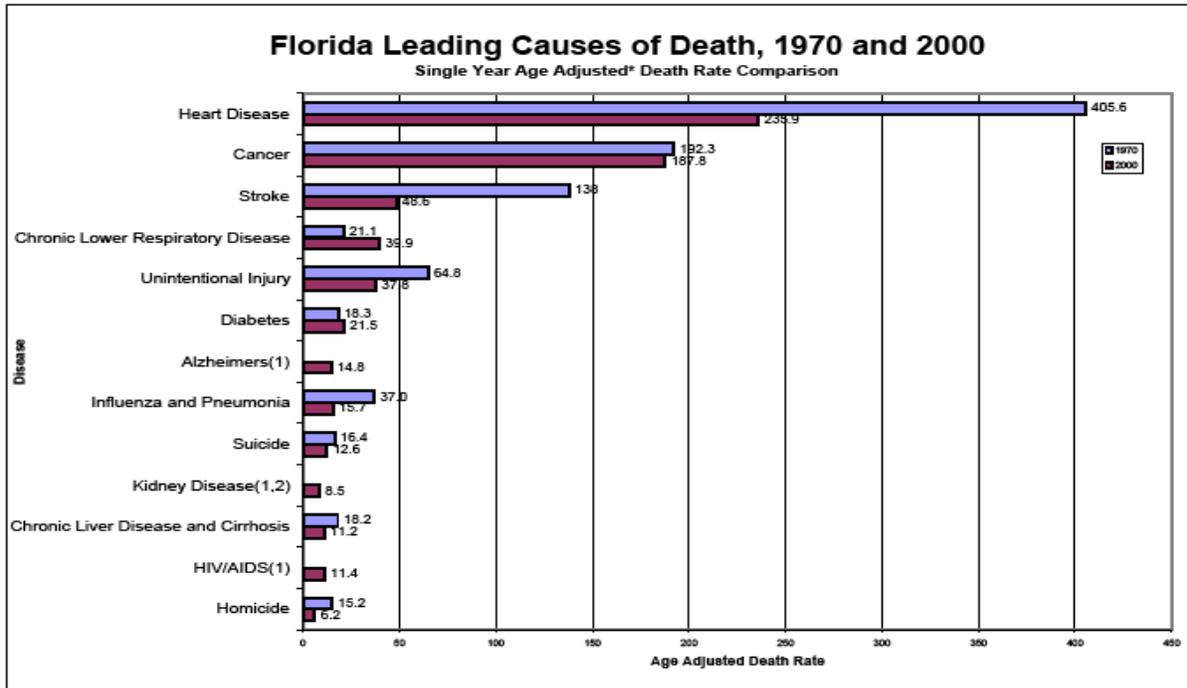
Website: <http://www.agingflorida.com/home.odb?res=1024>

## HEALTH CONCERNS

For Floridians 50 years and older, healthcare is one of their major concerns. A significant percentage of the disposable income for this age group is expended for medical services and drug therapy to treat a number of age related ailments. In 2006, five chronic diseases -- heart disease, cancer, cerebrovascular disease (stroke), chronic lower respiratory disease, and diabetes – were the top five diagnosed health problems and causes of death among this group. The following tables list the leading causes of death in Florida in 1970 and 2000 and the major causes of death in Hillsborough County in 2006.

<b>Major Causes of Death For 2006 Hillsborough County</b>				
<b>Cause of Death</b>	<b>Deaths</b>	<b>Percent of Total Deaths</b>	<b>Crude Rate Per 100,000</b>	<b>Age-Adjusted Death Rate Per 100,000</b>
ALL CAUSES	9,142	100	780.3	785.8
HEART DISEASE	2,339	25.6	199.6	201.1
CANCER	2,123	23.2	181.2	183.2
UNINTENTIONAL INJURIES	559	6.1	47.7	47.7
CHRONIC OBSTR PULMONARY DISEASE	526	5.8	44.9	45.9
STROKE	458	5.0	39.1	39.4
DIABETES MELLITUS	331	3.6	28.3	28.6
ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE	251	2.7	21.4	21.5
SUICIDE	171	1.9	14.6	14.7
AIDS/HIV	106	1.2	9	9
CHRONIC LIVER DISEASE AND CIRRHOSIS	97	1.1	8.3	8.1
PNEUMONIA/INFLUENZA	85	0.9	7.3	7.3
PERINATAL CONDITIONS	83	0.9	7.1	6.6
HOMICIDE	63	0.7	5.4	5.3

Source: Florida Department of Health, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Data Analysis



1. This disease group was not classified during 1970  
 2. Nephritis, Nephrotic Syndrome and Nephrosis

\*Age Adjusted to the 2000 U.S. Standard Population  
 Data Source: Florida Office of Vital Statistics

A growing concern in Florida is the increasing number of older adults who are being diagnosed with communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, and other sexually transmitted diseases. HIV/AIDS was the twelfth leading cause of death in Florida in 2006, totaling 1,722 individuals. In Hillsborough County HIV/AIDS was the tenth leading cause of death with 106 deaths during this period. Through 2007, nearly 149,000 HIV/AIDS cases have been reported in Florida; 62,156 have died as a result of this disease.

In 2006, there were 5,305 reported new HIV cases and 4,898 reported new AIDS cases in Florida. In this period, there were 345 reported new HIV cases and 342 reported new AIDS cases in Hillsborough County. Only Dade (1,396 HIV/1,223 AIDS), Broward (957 HIV/848 AIDS), Orange (407 HIV/354 AIDS) and Palm Beach (404 HIV/389 AIDS) had a greater number of reported new cases.

In 2006, those aged 50+ made up 21% of AIDS cases and 15% of the HIV cases reported in Florida. Of the 2,031 HIV/AIDS case deaths in 2005, 743 (36%) were among people 50 years old and above. Through 2006, persons aged 50 and older accounted for 27% of all people living with HIV/AIDS in Florida. Of the 21,868 living HIV/AIDS cases reported among persons aged 50 and older in Florida through 2006: males represent 75% and females represent 25%; whites represent 30%, blacks represent 51% and Hispanics represent 17%. Blood transfusion, once a common mode of transmission in this age group, has significantly declined over time. Currently, less than 1% of the reported cases among both men and women have a blood or other related risk.

[Data Source: Florida Office of Vital Statistics]

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), sexually active older people are much less likely than the young to use condoms, mainly because they do not see themselves as at-risk for sexually transmitted diseases or pregnancy. The following behavioral characteristics have been identified in persons in the 50 or older age group with HIV/AIDS:

- may be at higher risk for social isolation, including depression and social stigma
- Older persons with HIV/AIDS are more likely to live alone
- are most likely to be in denial and refuse treatment because they can not identify with the disease
- may not be considered for testing by medical professionals, even when they exhibit symptoms for HIV/AIDS
- may get back into the dating scene, after divorce or the death of a spouse
- do not consider that they need to use condoms
- tend to die sooner than others after an AIDS diagnosis because the disease has progressed without treatment. This is partially because physicians are much less likely to discuss symptoms suggestive of HIV infection with older patients
- Mistake the symptoms of HIV/AIDS for the aches and pains of normal aging.

[Source: CDC. *HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report, 2005 (Vol. 17)*]

Hepatitis C, one of the most common causes of chronic liver disease in the U.S. today, is becoming a major concern with 19,905 new cases reported in Florida in 2006; there were 10,159 cases for persons 50 and older. During this period, Hillsborough had a total of 1,295 new cases; 702 were adults over 50. At least 80% of patients with acute hepatitis C ultimately develop chronic liver infection, and 20% to 30% develop cirrhosis. Between 1% and 5% of patients may develop liver cancer. Hepatitis C is now the number 1 cause for liver transplantation in the U.S. [Data Source: Florida Office of Vital Statistics]

## **ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS**

The number of people in the United States who suffer from substance use disorders, surprisingly, exceeds the number of people who encounter other well-known diseases. Additionally, one in four deaths each year is attributable to alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drug use. In 2006, it is estimated that 22.6 million people aged 12 or older had a substance use disorder in the past year. Comparatively, in 2007, 15.2 million adults had diabetes; approximately 1.44 million Americans were expected to be diagnosed with cancer and 560,000 were predicted to die from the disease; 15.8 million confronted coronary heart disease; and more than 5 million Americans were diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

[Sources: Substance Abuse: The Nation's Number One Health Problem; 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health; Diabetes Mellitus Statistics, American Heart Association; Cancer Deaths Drop for Second Consecutive Year, American Cancer Society; Cardiovascular Disease Statistics, American Heart Association; and "What is Alzheimer's?", Alzheimer's Association.]

According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, excessive, long-term alcohol consumption can cause a variety of adverse health effects, including alcoholic liver disease, alcoholic pancreatitis, brain damage, and cardiomyopathy and compromised immune and endocrine functions. Excessive drinking is also associated with an increased risk for cancers of the esophagus, liver, and larynx, irregular heartbeats, and can exacerbate the health consequences of infection with hepatitis C, HIV and other infectious agents. Alcohol consumption can also alter neuronal function, resulting in cognitive deficits, and in neuroadaptations that contribute to the behavioral changes observed with alcoholism (tolerance, sensitization, loss of control, dependence, withdrawal, and relapse).

In the United States, alcohol is responsible for a wide-range of acute and chronic injuries and diseases which significantly contribute to the mortality of alcohol abusers along with intentional and unintentional victims. In 2001, 75,766 deaths were attributable to alcohol use and abuse. Acute conditions, including unintentional injuries such as motor vehicle injuries and fall injuries as well as intentional injuries such as homicide and suicide, attributed to 40,933 deaths. Chronic conditions, especially alcoholic liver disease and liver cirrhosis, were responsible for 34,883 deaths. Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis was the tenth leading cause of death in Hillsborough County in 2006 resulting in 97 deaths; it was the eleventh leading cause of death in Florida resulting in 2,183 deaths.

Injuries are the leading cause of death in the U.S. between the ages of 1 year and 44 years, and alcohol is the leading contributor to those injury deaths. It should be noted that many people who die from injury deaths attributable to alcohol use are persons other than the drinker. For example, 40% of people who die in crashes involving drinking drivers are persons other than the drinking driver; they include passengers in the same vehicle, passengers in vehicles struck by the drinking driver, bicyclists and pedestrians. Further, many homicide victims are fatally injured by persons who had been drinking.

[Source: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Five Year Strategic Plan, Fiscal Year 2008-2013.]

Substance abuse is often a significant factor in other social and health problems, including criminal activity, HIV infection, low birth weight babies, and physical/sexual abuse and neglect. A significant number of AIDS cases are directly linked to substance abuse of intravenous drug users. Most of the babies born with HIV infections are descendents of mothers who are intravenous drug users.

Increased health promotion efforts should be implemented to help prevent the misuse of alcohol and other legal and illegal substances among adults. Public awareness and education efforts should focus on increasing awareness of the relationship between alcohol and drug abuse and other health and social problems.

## NEEDS/OPPORTUNITIES

There is a need to improve the overall health of the residents through education, accessibility, and service. Special consideration must be given to the elderly seeking financial assistance. These programs must focus more on protective factors that reduce poor outcomes such as: increasing the resistance of youth to alcohol and drugs by promoting interpersonal skills and self-esteem; encouraging long-term goal setting; enhancing planning ability; and developing a close relationship with a positive role model.

## HEALTH PROMOTION STRATEGIES

A major promotion of Building Healthy Communities is dedicated to suggesting health promotion strategies to:

- Promote healthy diets and good nutrition
- Increase physical activity and fitness
- Prevent injuries.
- Reduce tobacco consumption
- Prevent alcohol and drug abuse
- Reduce unsafe sexual behaviors

## WELLNESS, PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGIES

Some of the opportunities that older adults have to learn how to remain well and maintain good physical and mental health include:

***Bereaved Parents of the USA*** offers times for mothers and fathers to share together, separately or in a support group setting to help overcome the grief caused by the death of a child. Meetings are held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm at South Florida Baptist Hospital.  
Contact Number: 813-661-9334

***Florida BRITE Project*** (Brief Intervention and Treatment for Elders) provides innovative outreach and intervention services designed to identify and serve men and women ages 55 and older with problems related to alcohol, prescription medication, over-the-counter medication, illicit drug use, and depression. Services include screening, brief interventions, treatment and referral Services, which are rendered at no cost to the consumers or their family, can be conducted in homes, senior centers, assisted living facilities, or other settings preferred by the client. For more information, contact the Centre for Women at 813-571-1784.

***LifePath Hospice*** provides grief support services facilitated by professionally trained, master's-level social workers and counselors to help individuals cope with the death of a loved one. Grief services include individual & family counseling, memorial services, adult retreat, and children services. For

additional information or to register for any of the grief services/events, contact the Bereavement Department at (813) 877-2200 or 1-800-209-2200.

***Mental Health Care, Inc.***, a non-profit organization supported by several governmental agencies and other organizations, provides an array of services to help residents of Hillsborough County cope with behavioral and mental disorders so that they can reconnect with life, family and community. MHC is the area's largest and most comprehensive provider of mental health services, delivering a full spectrum of support, ranging from training parents to care for disturbed children to crisis intervention for those at risk of injuring themselves or others. Some of the clients served by the agency suffer from severe and persistent mental illness and are offered viable alternatives to institutionalization. Through the use of the most promising medications, advanced counseling therapies and effective community-based programs, individuals receive assistance to remain where they truly belong - in their community. Available programs offered at several sites throughout the county include: prevention and education, early intervention, assessment, counseling, 24-hour emergency care, mobile crisis response team, residential treatment, inpatient care, crisis intervention, case management, medication management, employment assistance, skills acquisition training, affordable housing, and psychiatric care.

Contact Number: 813-272-2244

Website: <http://www.mhcinc.org/>

***South Florida Baptist Hospital*** provides free blood pressure checks every Tuesday between 1:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. Additionally, hospital staff conducts an Annual Spring Health Check Event in which Bone Density Scans, skin cancer screening, peripheral vascular test, carotid doppler ultrasound, CT heart score, prostate cancer screening, and blood profiles with full lipid panel are offered. Skin cancer and osteoporosis screenings are free. There is a nominal charge for the other screenings except for the CT heart score, which is \$150 (regularly \$300).

***Suncoast Clinics*** provide prevention, intervention and wellness classes on reducing obesity, providing better nutrition, alcoholic anonymous and reducing diabetes. These classes are held weekly at all 3 sites.

## **DIET AND NUTRITION**

Diet/nutrition is a proven factor related to heart disease, diabetes, certain cancers, and stroke. Improper diet can also lead to obesity which is a risk factor for severe chronic diseases. The National Cancer Institute has estimated that 35% of all cancer deaths in the United States may be attributed to diets typically too high in fat and too low in fruits, vegetables and fiber. Research shows that eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables may prevent certain cancers, heart disease and other chronic diseases.

## DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS

1. Eat a variety of foods.
2. Maintain a healthy weight.
3. Choose a diet low in fat, saturated fat and cholesterol.
4. Choose a diet with plenty of vegetables, fruits and grain products.
5. Use sugars only in moderation.
6. Use salt and sodium only in moderation.
7. If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so only in moderation (no more than one drink daily for women and two drinks daily for men).

*(Source: Personal Health Guide, U.S. Department of Health and Human Service Public Health Service).*

## OBSTACLES TO HEALTH CARE AND RELATED NON-MEDICAL SERVICES

Lack of transportation often causes seniors and others with limited incomes to delay or omit primary healthcare services and treatment for minor ailments. This delay in seeking needed healthcare often result in the need for more extensive treatment which ultimately increases the cost to those who least can afford it.

## TARGETS

- The health care facilities should increase the number of Spanish speaking employees to assist the Spanish residents.
- Encourage senior citizens to continue to be active by volunteering to become certified nursing aides and home health aides.
- Focus attention on elderly services and monitoring/evaluating existing programs for improvements.

The following Implementation Chart suggests strategies to combat the health situation in Plant City.

<b>HEALTH CARE--NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS</b>		
<b>GOAL: TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY, DELIVERY, AND ACCESSIBILITY OF HEALTH CARE IN EAST HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY.</b>		
<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED LEAD RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>COOPERATIVE LINKAGES</b>
<p><b>Education</b> Through ongoing promotional campaigns, seek to educate the public about healthy choices in diet, preventive care, childhood immunization, alcohol and drug use.</p>	South Florida Bapt. Hospital (SFBH) & HC Public Health Unit	Fl. Dept. of Education Food & Nutrition Mgt. Sect. School District DAACO US Dept. Of Agric. Media YMCA Sch. Advisory Council AIDS Network HC Health Care Plan
Assist the Florida Commission on Minority Health in the identification of health promotion needs of African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, and Native Americans.	SFBH HC Public Health Unit	Fla. Comm. On Minority Affairs School Bd. Area Hospitals HCC
Offer health fairs, seminars, and forums to stress the importance of regular visits to primary health care physicians or health clinics.	SFBH	Area Hospitals School Board USF School of Medicine, YMCA HCC
Support the efforts of the School Advisory Council to achieve goal of healthy drug free schools, safe school environment.	School District	School Advisory Council Schools DAACO Children's Board
Support recommendations in the Florida Action Plan for comprehensive school health education.	School District	School Advisory Council
<p><b>Accessibility</b> Provide alternative medical facilities such as mobile health units, satellite clinics, school site clinics, rotation clinics and on-job site clinics.</p>	SFBH H. C. Public Health Suncoast Clinic	USF/HCC Health Care Adv. Bd. College of Nursing

**HEALTH CARE  
NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS**

**GOAL: TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY, DELIVERY, AND ACCESSIBILITY OF HEALTH CARE IN EAST HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY.**

<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED LEAD RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>COOPERATIVE LINKAGES</b>
<b>Service</b> At South Florida Baptist Hospital & clinics provide bilingual medical personnel for Spanish speaking citizens.	SFBH	HC Health Unit HCC USF
Monitor, evaluate, and improve health care programs available at the Neighborhood service center through the Community Health & Human Services Department.	Neighborhood Service Center	Comm. Health & Human Services Dept. SFBH HCC USF
Provide counseling & case management for families to improve accessibility to service and maximize potential.	Catholic Charities	HRS HC Health Unit
<b>Elderly</b> Encourage more senior adults (55+) to become certified nursing aides & home health aides to work with the elderly population of East County.	Experience Works	Center for Elder Health Dept. Of Elder Affairs Public Health Unit USF College of Nursing
Monitor, evaluate and improve senior citizens nutrition & activity program.	Dept. of Aging Services (Hillsborough Co.)	Neighborhood Network Improvement League
Continue to offer disabled elderly residents assistance with light house cleaning & transportation through Dept. of Aging Services.	Dept. of Aging Services	Neighborhood Improvement League
Continue to offer elderly residents assistance with meals.	Meals-on-Wheels	BOCC Churches Salvation Army

**HEALTH CARE  
NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS**

**GOAL: TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY, DELIVERY, AND ACCESSIBILITY OF HEALTH CARE IN EAST HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY.**

<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED LEAD RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>COOPERATIVE LINKAGES</b>
Provide respite care to home bound elderly residents.	Life Care Hospice	Health Care Advisory Board Volunteers
<b>FINANCIAL</b>		
Coordinate with the Health Care Advisory Board for fair share of dollars & services to East Hillsborough County.	Neighborhood Service Center	Health Care Advisory Board Hillsborough BOCC Community Services

## **PHYSICAL SPACES**

Physical features and available amenities are important components for the creation of a “livable community”, a community which responds to the needs of its residents from birth to death. This requires a variety of services and opportunities that encourage independence and promote a desirable quality of life for all residents as they live and mature in the community. Factors that are important for citizens as they age within the community are the continued ability to access the physical features, goods, and services of the community; adequacy of senior friendly housing options; availability of services to modify homes to accommodate the needs of seniors with age related infirmities; responsiveness of zoning laws in addressing housing and accessibility needs of the elderly; and consideration of the needs of the elderly in local and regional planning.

## **SENIOR FRIENDLY HOUSING OPTIONS**

Securing and maintaining adequate housing is one of the greatest concerns of the elderly. Reductions in income, mobility and/or health frequently require that both older home owners and renters seek alternative living arrangements which range from “granny flats” to senior apartment complexes, group homes, assisted living facilities, and nursing homes. On the other hand, some seniors remain in their homes creating naturally occurring retirement communities while others are attracted to retirement communities which are planned developments for seniors.

### **Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs)**

According to the 2000 Census, areas of the City that have a large concentration of residents who are 65 years and older include Walden Lake and CountryWood.

There are two areas in Walden Lake with a significant population over the age of 65; one is Unit 1 east of Alexander Street (Old Walden Lake) and the other includes the subdivisions north of Timberlane Drive between Alexander Street and Turkey Creek Road. Among the elderly population are long-time residents who are aging in place and retirees who relocated to the area because of the available amenities, aesthetics, and charm of the community.

CountryWood, located north of the municipal boundaries on Sam Allen Road, is an age qualified manufactured housing community for people 55 years and older. All residents in this development have relocated from other places; some are from nearby areas but many are retirees who migrated from other states. Amenities which include three clubhouses, exercise facilities, golf, pools, spas, tennis, and parking area for recreational vehicles offer residents a resort-style setting in a location that is readily accessible to popular tourist attractions and Florida Gulf Coast beaches.



**Plant City Towers**, located at 103 West Mahoney Street, is a 74 unit, six-story complex for seniors. To live in this facility, residents must be at least 62 years old or have a mobility impairment which requires features of a handicap accessible apartment. Eight of the units at this site are handicap accessible.

**San Clemente Villas** is a 88-unit, five-story HUD elderly-housing facility that is being constructed by the Diocese of St. Petersburg on North Alexander Street as a part of the St. Clement Catholic Church campus.

## Independent Living Communities

Independent living communities are designed to not only provide adequate shelter, but to address the daily living needs of the residents. Currently, there are no independent living communities in Plant City.

## Assisted Living Facilities

Assisted living facilities, which are licensed and often supported by the State of Florida, serve as home for individuals who, because of age or infirmity, require help in performing one or more daily living tasks. Residents must be 18 years old or older and not require onsite medical supervision. Currently, Heritage ALF and Heritage View ALF are the only assisted living facilities in the city. However, there are six additional facilities within a ten mile radius of the city. The capacity for the facilities within the city is 51 residents. The capacity of the facilities in the adjacent areas of unincorporated Hillsborough County is 97 residents. The following table lists the assisted living facilities in and close to Plant City.

Name	Address	Phone	Capacity
Country Manor	2806 Sam Allen Road Plant City, FL 33565	813-759-9513	16
Cox Adult Living Facility	1906 Oscar Cox Trail Plant City, FL 33567	813-737-1551	12
Heritage ALF	1307 East Baker Street Plant City, FL 33563	813-244-1539	42
Heritage Oak ALF	2801 N. Branch Forbes Plant City, FL 33565	813-752-1076	16
Heritage View ALF of Plant City	104 N. Gordon Street Plant City, FL 33563	813-752-5106	9
Pleasant Manor ALF	6929 Durance Road Plant City, FL 33567	813-247-1736	20
Sharick's Deck Retirement Ranch	4506 Bruton Road Plant City, FL 33565	813-754-5223	25
Sunshine Manor	1270 McGee Road Plant City, FL 33565	813-707-8308	8
		<b>Total Capacity</b>	<b>148</b>

## **Adult/Family Care Homes**

An adult family-care home provides a full-time, family-type living arrangement in a private home for up to five aged or disabled people who are not related to the owner. The owner lives in the same house as the residents and provides housing, meals, and personal services; however, services vary. Adult family care homes are required to be licensed and inspected by the state of Florida.

## **Continuing Care Retirement Communities**

Continuing Care Retirement Communities, also called Life-Care Communities, offer different levels of care based on the needs of the individual or couple. The care level ranges from an independent living apartment or house to skilled nursing in an affiliated nursing home. CCRC residents are guaranteed care for the rest of their lives. The CCRC residents move from one setting to another based on their needs but continue to remain a part of their CCRC community. Many Continuing Care Retirement Communities have an entrance fee prior to admission as well as a monthly charge. The Florida Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) licenses and inspects the nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, or home health agencies that may be part of a CCRC. The Department of Financial Services regulates the CCRC contracts. Currently, there are no Continuing Care Retirement Communities in the Plant City area. Facilities close to Plant City include:

**Florida Presbyterian Homes, Inc.**, located at 16 Lake Hunter Drive in Lakeland, Florida on the shores of Lake Hunter, is a charming 48-acre picturesque, wooded neighborhood with graceful tree-shaded streets, rolling lawns, and flowering garden nooks. Three-hundred residents live in 115 cottages; 61 independent living apartments, 32 assisted living apartments, and 40 bed state-of-the-art, skilled nursing center.  
Phone: 863-688-5521

**Hudson Manor, Inc.** is located at 115 E Davis Boulevard in Tampa, Florida on historic Davis Islands less than one-half mile from Tampa General Hospital. It is conveniently located just blocks from the Davis Islands village and shopping district, a newly renovated city park and marina, tennis courts, a swimming pool and little league fields.  
Phone: 813-254-8399

**University Village**, a Westport Senior Living Community, is located at 12401 North 22<sup>nd</sup> Street in Tampa, Florida. Residents enjoy active, fulfilling lifestyles in a variety of senior housing options ranging from independent living to assisted living and skilled nursing.  
Phone: 813-975-5009  
Website: <http://www.universityvillage.net>

## **Nursing Homes**

**Community Care Center** is a licensed 120 bed nursing home located at 2202 West Oak Avenue.

**Health Center of Plant City** is a licensed 180 bed nursing home located at 701 North Wilder Road. The facility was designed and is managed specifically for short-term rehabilitation; it includes a short-term wing that is separate from long-term care. Services include in-house physical speech and occupational therapy, specialty nursing, and wound care programs. Programs are available 7 days per week to accommodate flexible rehabilitation schedules.

## **Public Housing**

The Housing Authority of Plant City is a quasi-public body that was created in 1956 to develop and manage public housing properties in Plant City. The agency owns and operates a total of 200 units which are located in three developments: Larrick Court with 60 units, Maryland Heights with 78 units, and Madison Park with 62 units. The units contain one to five bedrooms with the majority having two to three bedrooms. There are 40 one bedroom units which are predominantly occupied by residents 62 years and older. Currently, there are no vacancies in any of the developments. A total of 169 are on a waiting list for the availability of open units; 40 are elderly, 32 are handicapped/disabled and 101 are families.

## **HOME MODIFICATION SERVICES**

Seniors have a number of options available for the provision of home modification services. Assistance is available through several nonprofit agencies, primarily to address accessibility needs of older adults. Home builders can also provide guidance in modifying homes to accommodate seniors.

**The Center for Women, Inc.**, under the Senior Home Improvement Program (SHIP), provides emergency repairs such as roofing, carpentry, and plumbing for Hillsborough County homeowners over 60 years of age who are low-income. Also constructs wheelchair ramps, walker steps, and handrails for low-income elderly. Services are provided at no cost to the homeowners.

**Hillsborough County's Affordable Housing Office**, through the Rehabilitation Program, assists individuals and families repair their homes to meet the Minimum Housing Standards of Hillsborough County. It is not a remodeling program, but the Barrier Removal Program helps individuals with disabilities make their units more easily accessible through door widening, installation of wheelchair ramps, handicap bars and bathroom remodeling. The Elderly and Disabled Assistance Program helps elderly homeowners, who are 62 years or older and disabled, with emergency repairs like roofing, electrical and plumbing. Deferred or low interest

loans are provided to income qualified homeowners who reside in single-family homes located in Hillsborough County, outside the City of Tampa, for the housing rehabilitations programs.

## **IMPACT OF ZONING LAWS ON ELDERLY**

Zoning provisions typically impact the location and placement of housing that is designed to serve seniors. Plant City Zoning Code addresses the locational requirements for assisted living facilities, boarding homes and other multifamily buildings and provides for the addition of separate units that could be used to house elderly members on properties in single family residential neighborhoods. While zoning restrictions help preserve the integrity of residential neighborhoods, consideration should be given to adding provisions to accommodate the housing needs of seniors. For example, suites for one or two seniors in a single-family residence could also be appropriate in specific cases. This would provide seniors, if capable, an opportunity for limited independent living.

**Assisted Living Facilities:** The Plant City Zoning Code (Chapter 102) lists Assisted Living Facilities as a permitted use in all lands with a zoning designation of R-2 (Multi-Family Dwelling District). Assisted living facilities are licensed by the state department of elderly affairs under the Assisted Living Facilities Act, F.S. § § 400.401 – 400.454, and are subject to specific development criteria. In addition to being permitted in the R-2 zoning district, assisted living facilities are also a permitted use in the following zoning districts:

1. R-3 Multi-Family District,
2. C-1A and C-1B, Neighborhood Business Districts,
3. C-1 and C-2, General Commercial Districts,
4. Establishment of a Community Unit (CU) district (similar to a planned development, requires approval by the City Commission).

**Granny cottages & caregiver suites:** Although not specifically listed in the Plant City Zoning Code (Chapter 102) as “Granny Cottages or Caregiver” suites, Chapter 102 allows a second dwelling unit on property designated as R-1 and R-1B (Single-Family Dwelling District). A “garage apartment” is a permitted use and is limited in ground area to 15% of the lot or building site.

## **PLANNING AND DESIGN**

### **Consideration of the Needs of Elderly in Local and Regional Plans**

The following Objectives and Policies in the *Comprehensive Plan for the City of Plant City* address the needs of the elderly. The policy direction contained in these objectives and policies primarily focuses on the housing needs of the elderly and, in particular, addresses the provision of adult living facilities in Plant City.

## **Future Land Use Element**

**Objective 1.B:** *Permit the development of housing for the elderly in single, multiple or grouped living facilities within the city.*

**Policy 1.B.1:** *The City shall encourage congregate living facility options in character with surrounding neighborhoods through the city's development regulations.*

**Policy 1.B.2:** *The City shall encourage development of projects serving the elderly that are accessible to medical services, transportation, and other necessary support systems through the establishment of locational criteria within the city's land development regulations by February 1, 1990.*

**Policy 1.B.3:** *Calculate total beds permitted in adult congregate living facilities (ACLF) by determining the number of housing units which would be permitted on site and multiplying the units by the average persons per household for Plant City in the most recent U.S. Census. Density bonuses may be granted when the ACLF is part of a planned development.*

**Policy 1.B.4:** *The City shall support increased residential densities for developments that provide assisted elderly housing. Increased residential densities shall be in compliance with the Housing Element's definition of Assisted Elderly Housing and the adopted policies of the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Plant City.*

## **Housing Element**

**Policy A.3:** *The City shall provide an efficient, "fast-track" application processing for proposed housing development intended to meet the needs of the elderly and handicapped.*

**Policy A.4:** *The City zoning ordinances and land subdivision regulations shall include site selection criteria for location of housing for the elderly and handicapped.*

**Objective E:** *The City shall ensure the provision of adequate sites for assisted group homes and foster care facilities and aid, through appropriate zoning regulations, to establish facilities to meet the needs of persons requiring this type of housing.*

**Policy E.1:** *The City shall adopt or amend, as necessary, ordinances to provide for the zoning of group homes, including homes for the elderly and disabled.*

**Policy E.2:** *Locate group homes and assisted elderly housing within the City to provide for a variety of neighborhood settings and to avoid undue concentrations in individual neighborhoods. To that end, appropriate recommendations will have to be made in the Future Land Use Element, and revisions to the zoning ordinance will have to be implemented.*

**Policy E.3:** *Ensure the provision of adequate sites to establish assisted elderly housing through an approved site plan by the City Commission through the City's CU-Community Unit zoning district.*

**Policy E.4:** *The City's approval of assisted elderly housing sites shall be subject to the City Commission's determination that said use is compatible with surrounding uses through architectural style and design, that it meets the City's buffering and landscaping requirements and is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.*

**Policy E.5:** *Assisted Elderly Housing shall be located within Medium Density Residential (MDR), High Density Residential (HDR), Downtown Core (DC), and Commercial (C) land use categories as depicted on the Future Land Use Map, provided that such housing meets the following locational standards:*

1. *If Assisted Elderly Housing is located with Medium Density Residential (MDR) or High Density Residential (HDR), it shall be within one-half (1/2) mile of either the City's Downtown Core or the Commercial land use categories; and*
2. *Assisted Elderly Housing shall be within one mile of shopping, restaurant(s) and public recreation site(s).*

**Policy E.6:** *Buffers between assisted elderly housing and adjoining residential uses shall consist of walls, fencing and/or landscape buffers with compact evergreen hedges, trees, or other similar foliage. Buffers shall have a minimum height of 6 feet and a maximum height of 8 feet, except that in the case of landscape buffering, trees used for buffering may exceed the maximum buffer height of 8 feet.*

1. *Walls and Fencing – Walls and fences shall consist of eighty (80) percent solidity at installation. Solidity of walls and fences shall be determined by measurement taken perpendicular to the line of said wall or fence.*
2. *Landscape Buffers – Landscape buffers shall be designed so as to be fifty (50) percent or more opaque within a maximum of one year after issuance of certificate of occupancy and eighty (80) percent opaque within a maximum of 2 years. Opaqueness of landscape buffers shall be determined by measurement taken perpendicular to the line of said landscape buffer. Landscape buffers shall be a minimum of 4 feet in width measured perpendicular to property lines and shall be established along the entire length of, and contiguous to, the property line or lines.*

## **Recreation and Open Space Element**

**Policy 1.B.6:** *The City shall include accessibility for all (elderly, handicapped, and others with special mobility needs) as a design criteria for new facilities and shall “retrofit” all existing sites.*

### **Design of Parking Lots, Buildings and Landscaping**

As residents mature, the ability to move about often becomes more difficult because of injuries and age-related infirmities. To ensure accessibility by all residents, City codes and regulations require that all public facilities, including governmental, commercial, and industrial buildings and amenities, are designed without obstacles or impediments to older persons or persons of all age groups who have a disability.

### **Benefits of Universal Design**

Universal design is the design of products and environments so that they are usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. Universal design makes a home more user friendly regardless of physical features of the occupant. It doesn't matter if the inhabitant is young or old, short or tall, healthy or ill, have a disability or is a prize-winning athlete. Universal design features make it possible for people who are very different, as well as the inhabitants whose needs change, to be able to enjoy the same home. Common universal design features include the following:

No-step entry so that no one needs to use stairs to get into a universal home or into the home's main rooms.

One-story living where places to eat, use the bathroom and sleep are all located on one level, which is barrier-free.

Wide doorways that are 32-36 inches wide so that wheelchairs can easily pass through. They also make it easy to move big things in and out of the house.

Wide hallways that are 36-42 inches wide. That way, everyone and everything moves more easily from room to room.

Extra floor space so that everyone feels less cramped and people in wheelchairs have more space to turn.

Some universal design features just make good sense. Once built into a home, occupants may wonder how they ever lived without them. For example:

Floors and bathtubs with non-slip surfaces help everyone stay on their feet. They're not just for people who are frail. The same goes for handrails on steps and grab bars in bathrooms.

Thresholds that are flush with the floor make it easy for a wheelchair to get through a doorway. They also keep others from tripping.

Good lighting helps people with poor vision. And it helps everyone else see better, too.

Lever door handles and rocker light switches are great for people with poor hand strength. But others like them too because these devices are readily accessible when both arms are full of packages.

[Source: National Association of Home Builders]

## **NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

Market conditions will force developers, governmental entities, manufactures and suppliers to be more responsive to the needs and opportunities for the development of housing, commercial and industrial properties, and related infrastructure by providing appropriate support and facilities to correspond to the demands. Guidelines could be implemented or modified as necessary.

The inadequacy of cemetery space to accommodate an aging population is an issue that needs to be addressed through expansion of city-owned facilities, the development of additional facilities by private developers, or a combination of both.

<b>PHYSICAL SPACES/LAND USE NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS</b>		
<b>GOAL: TO IMPROVE THE ACESSIBILITY AND UTILIZATION OF FACILITIES IN PLANT CITY BY ENHANCING PHYSICAL SPACES AND LAND USE PROVISIONS.</b>		
<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED LEAD RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>COOPERATIVE LINKAGES</b>
<b>SHORT-TERM</b>		
Perform field review of all walkways on public right-of-way and facilities to determine compliance with ADA requirements and public safety	Public Works	Engineering Recreation and Parks
Review local land use ordinance and subdivision regulations to determine impact on needs and concerns of older residents	Planning & Zoning	Engineering Public Works Planning Commission
<b>INTERMEDIATE TERM</b>		
Secure funding to bring all walkways on public right-of-way and facilities into compliance with ADA requirements and to ensure public safety	Public Work	Engineering Community Services
<b>LONG TERM</b>		
Develop pedestrian mobility plan	Engineering	Public Work Planning & Zoning
Expand number of available cemetery spaces	Recreation & Parks	Engineering Public Works

# TRANSPORTATION

The ability to move from one place to another is an important quality of life determinant for residents. Whether, the trip is to the grocery store, post office, pharmacy, or doctor's office, the availability of reliable transportation is very important. In Plant City, numerous residents are without any means of private transportation. Persons without transportation will oftentimes do without needed healthcare and other services; they will often try home remedies as cures for various medical ailments. Individuals without reliable means of transportation also have problems obtaining and maintaining employment because of difficulties getting to and from work.

Plant City's ability to meet the transportation needs of its elderly is being challenged as this group continues to grow in number. Limited incomes and physical limitations are just some of the special needs of this population. Of the total group, a large number lives on an income that is less than \$10,000 per year, while many more are economically dependent on other sources to support their daily needs. More than 90 percent of the 65 and over population depend on the benefits of Social Security and Medicare. In regard to the mobility of the elderly, there are growing numbers of the older populations who are partially or temporarily physically dependent; they often require the assistance of canes, walkers, wheel chairs and other mechanized devices to ambulate from place to place.

In the urban areas of the county, public transportation systems are heavily subsidized by federal grants and revenues generated by ad valorem taxes from properties in unincorporated Hillsborough County and the cities of Tampa and Temple Terrace. The provision of services in less densely populated areas such as Plant City often requires a greater percentage of subsidization. However, there are no resources dedicated to implementing and operating public transit systems in smaller communities that are a part of a larger urban area. Therefore, in order for a public transportation system to be successful in such communities, it must be efficiently managed and operated. The keys to a successful streamlined service are identifying the best routes, proceeding to desired destinations, and operating the appropriate size vehicle during the high demand times at an affordable price.

The individuals most likely to use public transportation are the elderly, lower income, and persons with no personal vehicle. In the Plant City area, the primary concentrations of lower incomes (less than 75% of county median) are in census tract 129, which has a median income of \$22,790, and census tract 130.03, which has a median income of \$17,955. The median income for Plant City is \$37,584 and for Hillsborough County is \$44,007. (Source: 2000 U. S. Census, Households by 1999 Household Income Range)

## **AVAILABLE SERVICES**

### **Hillsborough Area Regional Transit (HART)**

Currently, HART operates an express service to link riders from Plant City with transportation centers in Tampa. Early morning service for Route 28X – East County Express, with buses leaving at 6:20 a.m. and 6:50 a.m., emanates from the Mount Zion Assembly of God Park-n-Ride in Northwest Plant City and terminates at the Marion Transit Center in downtown Tampa; this express service also makes limited stops in the Seffner area before reaching its destination. Return trips leave the Marion transit Center at 4:40 p.m. and 5:15 p.m. and arrive at the Mount Zion Park-n-Ride at 5:30 p.m. and 6:05 p.m. Fares for the express service are \$2.50 per one-way trip.

### **Job Access and Reverse Commute Program**

The JARC program supports transit services that assist welfare recipients and low-income individuals to access jobs, training, and child care as well as provide transportation to suburban job sites. This service is administered by Hillsborough County Employment Opportunity Program.

Contact Number: 813-272-5074, extension 216

### **Sunshine Line**

Sunshine Line is a service of the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners, operated with funding by the county, state grants and user fees. In addition to the county's general revenues, sources of funding include Hillsborough Health Care, Community Services Block Grant, Tampa Aids Network (TAN), and Title III (Older Americans Act). The mission of Sunshine Line is to provide safe, cost-effective transportation to eligible residents who are qualified on the basis of disability, age, or income. Services include a door to door component and a bus pass program.

In the door to door component, eligible riders are picked up from in front of their point of origin and dropped off in front of their destination. This service is primarily for transportation to and from medical appointments and Hillsborough County Aging Services programs. Other trips are provided on a space-available basis. Door to door service is operated from 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday. To access this service, reservations are required at least two business days in advance. Riders pay a co-payment for each trip. The co-pay is on a sliding scale based on income and ranges from \$0 to \$10.00 per one-way trip.

The bus pass program subsidizes the purchases of daily or monthly passes for eligible clients who live and travel with  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from a HART fixed bus route. For most clients there is no cost for the bus pass. If a co-payment is required, clients are advised of the amount when a pass is requested.

## **Private Providers**

**MMG** provides door to door transportation and bus passes for Medicaid compensable service. Eligible clients pay a \$1.00 co-pay per one one-way door to door trip or bus pass. Current services available through this Medicaid provider include:

1. Emergency transport 24 hours.
2. Next day urgent verified appointments.
3. Regular trips 7 days a week scheduled 48 hours in advance.
4. Trips to Medical Medicaid compensable service only.

**Plant City Dial-A-Ride** is a Plant City based taxi service which primarily serves areas of East Hillsborough County, including Plant City, Dover, Valrico, and Seffner. Service is provided Monday through Saturday from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Additional hours are available by appointment. Cost for the service is \$2.00 base rate plus \$2.25 per mile.

## **NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

The major issue with accessible health care, social services, child care, education and jobs is transportation. Although these services may be available, a person must have access to the services and opportunities. The eastern part of Hillsborough County has a large agricultural economic base. As a result, many of the farm workers are migrants. This portion of the population, along with elderly and those with one or no vehicle require some form of public transportation.

The ability to get from one place to another by bus, van, or cab is important to the residents of Plant City and surrounding areas in East Hillsborough County. Identifying funding resources along with the resolve to provide these resources for a public transportation system must be established in order to create a reliable, functional and accessible system that is acceptable to the public. In future years, the community should maintain involvement in the development of commuter rail and other forms of transportation.

<b>TRANSPORTATION NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS</b>		
<b>GOAL: TO IMPROVE THE MOBILITY OF THE RESIDENTS OF EAST COUNTY BY PURSUING AND MAINTAINING A PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.</b>		
<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED LEAD RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>COOPERATIVE LINKAGES</b>
<b>SHORT-TERM</b>		
Evaluate transportation alternatives for Plant City and East Hillsborough County.	Community Services	Planning Commission MPO HART HC Public Transp. Comm.
Work out funding concerns with Sunshine Line to assist residents with public transportation needs.	Community Services	Hillsborough County Sunshine Line
Enhance linkage of Plant City riders with HART and Citrus Connection	Community Services	HART MPO Planning Commission
Secure funding for operation of local transportation service.	Community Services	Elected Officials Dept. Of Transportation
Check with automobile dealers, schools, day care providers, and hotels for opportunities to transport passengers to enhance utilization of available transit service and increase revenue.	Community Services	Elected Officials
<b>INTERMEDIATE TERM</b>		
Enhance linkage between public transportation providers and private taxi services within East Hillsborough County.	Community Services	Plant City Dial-a-Ride Sunshine Line
Coordinate with automobile dealers for the acquisition of smaller, more fuel-efficient vehicles for transportation service.	Community Services	Elected Officials Dept. Of Transportation
<b>LONG TERM</b>		
Coordinate with various modes of transportation including Commuter Rail Study.	MPO	Planning Commission Elected Officials Dept. Of Transportation Plant City Transit

## COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

The community action plan incorporates priority issues which have been identified to develop and sustain a “livable community” that responds to the needs of the elderly. A timeline for completion has been established for each of these issues.

<b>COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN PRIORITY ISSUES</b>			
<b>GOAL: TO IMPLEMENT A COORDINATED AND FISCALLY SUSTAINABLE ACTION FRAMEWORK THAT RESPONDES TO THE NEEDS AND CONCERNS OF THE ELDERLY RESIDENTS OF PLANT CITY.</b>			
<b>PROPOSED ACTION</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTY</b>	<b>COMPLETION DATE</b>	<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>
<b>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT</b>			
Develop a marketing strategy that highlights the availability and accessibility of programs to improve the quality of life for residents of eastern Hillsborough County.	Neighborhood Service Center	2009	NSC Hillsborough County
<b>CULTURAL &amp; SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES</b>			
Through ongoing promotional campaigns, seek to educate the public about health benefits of participating in indoor and outdoor recreational activities	Recreation and Parks	2009 Ongoing	CPC General Fund
<b>EDUCATION</b>			
Focus on early education (Pre-K--2) to prepare children for the future through the early intervention reading and social skills program.	School District	2009 Ongoing	School District
Expand information to public about adult education at Plant City High School, HCC and USF.	Plant City Adult & Community School HCC USF	2009 Ongoing	School District

<b>HEALTH CARE</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTY</b>	<b>COMPLETION DATE</b>	<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>
<p><b>Education</b> Through ongoing promotional campaigns, seek to educate the public about healthy choices in diet, preventive care, childhood immunization, alcohol and drug use.</p>	South Florida Bapt. Hospital (SFBH) & HC Public Health Unit	2009 Ongoing	SFBH and Health Dept.
Offer health fairs, seminars, and forums to stress the importance of regular visits to primary health care physicians or health clinics.	South Florida Bapt. Hospital (SFBH) & HC Public Health Unit	2008 Ongoing	SFBH and Health Dept.
<p><b>Elderly</b> Encourage more senior adults (55+) to become certified nursing aides &amp; home health aides to work with the elderly population of East County.</p>	Experience Works	2009 Ongoing	Experience Works
Monitor, evaluate and improve senior citizens nutrition & activity program.	Dept. of Aging Services (Hillsborough Co.)	2008 Ongoing	HC
Continue to offer disabled elderly residents assistance with light house cleaning & transportation through Dept. of Aging Services.	Dept. of Aging Services	2008 Ongoing	HC
<b>PHYSICAL SPACES/LAND USE</b>			
Review local land use ordinance and subdivision regulations to determine impact on needs and concerns of older residents	Planning & Zoning	2012	CPC General Fund
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>			
Evaluate transportation alternatives for Plant City and East Hillsborough County.	Community Services	2009	CPC General Fund
Enhance linkage between public transportation providers and private taxi services within East Hillsborough County.	Community Services	2010	CPC General Fund

## **Special Thanks**

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### **Sponsors**

City of Plant City  
Greater Plant City Chamber of Commerce  
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