

## **EXHIBIT B**

Finding of Necessity for the  
West U.S. 192 Community Redevelopment Area

# FINDING OF NECESSITY

## FOR THE WEST U.S. 192 COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA

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# Executive Summary

Osceola County has identified an area along the West U.S. 192 corridor that may benefit from the creation of a Community Redevelopment Agency. In accordance with the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969, Chapter 163 Part III, Florida Statutes, a local government must make an area assessment and generate a “finding of necessity”, based on data and analysis, in order to make a determination that “slum” or “blight” exists within the study area. This report includes an executive summary, reference to the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969 and requirements set forth in Chapter 163 of the Florida Statutes, explanation of the study area, the project methodology, an evaluation of blight factors, and a conclusion of findings.

The initial step when evaluating the appropriateness of an area for designation as a Community Redevelopment Agency is determining the existence of “slum” or “blight” conditions within a designated study area. This study describes the physical and the regulatory requirements within the study area that are associated with blight, as defined by Florida Statutes. The purpose of facilitating this study was to improve an area experiencing decline that would greatly benefit from the assistance of a Community Redevelopment Agency.

### Study Area

The study area boundary runs along U.S. 192, from the County line on the west to the City of Kissimmee limits on the east. This area, consisting of approximately 12,128 acres, was identified as being economically, environmentally, and aesthetically distressed. Much of the area consists of vacant, under-utilized properties that may have environmental constraints.

### Florida Statutes

Per Section 163.340(8), Florida Statutes, in order for an area within a county to be considered a Community Redevelopment Area, two or more of the following blight factors must be present. The table below illustrates the blight factors identified in the West U.S. 192 study area.

Blight Factor Required by Statute	Meets Criteria
163.340(8)(a) Defective/Inadequate Transportation Facilities	✓
163.340(8)(b) Depreciating Assess Property Values	Inconclusive
163.340(8)(c) Faulty Lot Layout	✓
163.340(8)(d) Unsanitary/Unsafe Conditions	✓
163.340(8)(e) Site Deterioration	✓
163.340(8)(f) Building Density Patterns	✓
163.340(8)(g) Falling Lease Rates	✓
163.340(8)(h) Tax or Special Assessment Delinquency	Not Analyzed
163.340(8)(i) Vacancy Rates	✓
163.340(8)(j) Crime Incidents	✓
163.340(8)(k) Fire/Emergency Medical Service Calls	✓
163.340(8)(l) Florida Building Code Violations	Inconclusive
163.340(8)(m) Diversity of Ownership or Defective or Unusual Conditions of Title	Inconclusive
163.340(8)(n) Governmentally Owned Property with Adverse Environmental Conditions	Not Analyzed

### Blight Factor Summary

All fourteen (14) of the blight factors were analyzed, nine (9) factors were analyzed in depth and met the criteria for blight, and for three (3) factors the data was inconclusive. Therefore, the analysis indicates that the West U.S. 192 study area would benefit from the establishment of a Community Redevelopment Agency to implement redevelopment activities.

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## Introduction

In January of 2012, the West 192 Economic Advisory Committee, established by resolution by the Board of County Commissioners, presented a report that included fourteen recommended strategies for enhancement and redevelopment of the West U.S. 192 corridor. One of the recommended strategies identified was to develop a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). The Board of County Commissioners requested that the Committee and County staff continue to work on these fourteen recommended strategies. The next step for the development of a CRA is to undertake a “finding of necessity”.

This report has been prepared to fulfill a “finding of necessity” in accordance with the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969, Chapter 163 Part III, Florida Statute. This “finding of necessity” is based on field observation and data and analysis, in order to make a determination that “slum” or “blight” exists within the study area. This report includes an assessment of blight factors, as identified in Section 163.340, Florida Statutes, a conclusion of findings and photo documentation of the study area.

## Community Redevelopment Act of 1969

The Community Redevelopment Act of 1969 (“Act”), Chapter 163 Part III, Florida Statutes, authorizes local governments to establish community redevelopment agencies to improve slum and blighted areas within their jurisdiction. The Act sets forth the legal process by which local governments may establish community redevelopment agencies and provide financing and regulatory processes to undertake the complex task of overcoming the conditions that contribute to the causes of slum and blight in declining areas of the County.

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### Section 163.335, F.S. - CRA Study Area Determination

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**Section 163.335, F.S.** requires local government desiring to establish a community redevelopment agency to adopt, by resolution, a finding that one or more “slum” or “blighted” areas exist within its jurisdiction and that the rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment of such areas is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals or welfare of the residents in the area. Upon adoption of a redevelopment plan, the County’s redevelopment agency can begin implementing the plan, including the creation of a tax increment trust fund for the redevelopment area. The following paragraphs discuss “slum” and “blight” as defined in the Florida State Statute.

**Section 163.335(1), F.S.** ... slum and blighted areas which constitute a serious and growing menace, injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and welfare of the residents of the state; that the existence of such areas contributes substantially and increasingly to the spread of disease and crime, constitutes an economic and social liability imposing onerous burdens which decrease the tax base and reduce tax revenues, substantially impairs or arrests sound growth, retards the provision of housing accommodations, aggravates traffic problems, and substantially hampers the elimination of traffic hazards and the improvement of traffic facilities; and that the prevention and elimination of slums and blight is a matter of state policy and state concern in order that the state and its counties and municipalities shall not continue to be endangered by areas which are focal centers of disease, promote juvenile delinquency, and consume an excessive proportion of its revenues because of the extra services required for police, fire, accident, hospitalization, and other forms of public protection, services, and facilities.

**Section 163.335(2), F.S.** ... certain slum or blighted areas, or portions thereof, may require acquisition, clearance, and disposition subject to use restrictions, as provided in this part, since the prevailing condition of decay may make impracticable the reclamation of the area by conservation or rehabilitation; that other areas or portions thereof may, through the means provided in this part, be susceptible of conservation or rehabilitation in such a manner that the conditions and evils enumerated may be eliminated, remedied, or prevented; and that salvageable slum and blighted areas can be conserved and rehabilitated through appropriate public action as herein authorized and the cooperation and voluntary action of the owners and tenants of property in such areas.

**Section 163.335(3), F.S.** ... powers conferred by this part are for public uses and purposes for which public money may be expended and police power exercised, and the necessity in the public interest for the provisions herein enacted is declared as a matter of legislative determination.

**Section 163.335(4), F.S.** ... tourist areas or portions thereof which are deteriorating and economically distressed due to building density patterns, inadequate transportation and parking facilities, faulty lot layout, or inadequate street layout, could, through the means provided in this part, be revitalized and redeveloped in a manner that will vastly improve the economic and social conditions of the community.

**Section 163.335(5), F.S.** ... the preservation or enhancement of the tax base from which a taxing authority realizes tax revenues is essential to its existence and financial health; that the preservation and enhancement of such tax base is implicit in the purposes for which a taxing authority is established; that tax increment financing is an effective method of achieving such preservation and enhancement in areas in which such tax base is declining; that community redevelopment in such areas, when complete, will enhance such tax base and provide increased tax revenues to all affected taxing authorities, increasing their ability to accomplish their other respective purposes; and that the preservation and enhancement of the tax base in such areas through tax increment financing and the levying of taxes by such taxing authorities therefore and the appropriation of funds to a redevelopment trust fund bears a substantial relation to the purposes of such taxing authorities and is for their respective purposes and concerns. This subsection does not apply in any jurisdiction where the community redevelopment agency validated bonds as of April 30, 1984.

**Section 163.335(6), F.S.** ... there exists in counties and municipalities of the state a severe shortage of housing affordable to residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly; that the existence of such condition affects the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of such counties and municipalities and retards their growth and economic and social development; and that the elimination or improvement of such condition is a proper matter of state policy and state concern and is for a valid and desirable public purpose.

**Section 163.335(7), F.S.** ... prevention or elimination of a slum area or blighted area as defined in this part and the preservation or enhancement of the tax base are not public uses or purposes for which private property may be taken by eminent domain and do not satisfy the public purpose requirement of s. 6(a), Art. X of the State Constitution.

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## Section 163.340, F.S. - Finding of Necessity for Blighted Areas

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The following paragraph provides the definition of “blighted areas” as defined in Section 166.340(8) of the Florida Statute, and which are the basis for a Finding of Necessity for a blighted area.

**Section 163.340(8), “Blighted area”** means an area in which there are a substantial number of deteriorated, or deteriorating structures, in which conditions, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies, are leading to economic distress or endanger life or property, and in which two or more of the following factors are present:

- (a) Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, bridges, or public transportation facilities;
- (b) Aggregate assessed values of real property in the area for ad valorem tax purposes have failed to show any appreciable increase over the 5 years prior to the finding of such conditions;
- (c) Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness;
- (d) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions;
- (e) Deterioration of site or other improvements;
- (f) Inadequate and outdated building density patterns;
- (g) Falling lease rates per square foot of office, commercial, or industrial space compared to the remainder of the county or municipality;
- (h) Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land;
- (i) Residential and commercial vacancy rates higher in the area than in the remainder of the county or municipality;
- (j) Incidence of crime in the area higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality;
- (k) Fire and emergency medical service calls to the area proportionately higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality;
- (l) A greater number of violations of the Florida Building Code in the area than the number of violations recorded in the remainder of the county or municipality;



- (m) Diversity of ownership or defective or unusual conditions of title which prevent the free alienability of land within the deteriorated or hazardous area; or
- (n) Governmentally owned property with adverse environmental conditions caused by a public or private entity.

## Study Area & Project Methodology

In January of 2012, the West 192 Economic Advisory Committee, established by resolution by the Board of County Commissioners, presented a report that included fourteen recommended strategies for enhancement and redevelopment within a study area defined along the West U.S. 192 corridor. One of the recommended strategies identified was to develop a Community Redevelopment Agency. Approximately 12,128 acres in size, the study area is defined as U.S. 192 from the County line on the west to the City of Kissimmee limits on the east.

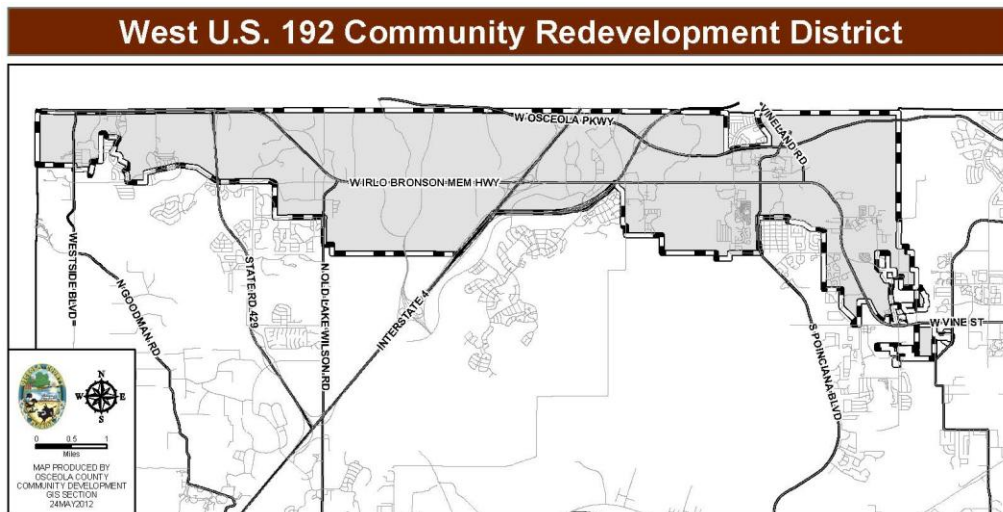
### Study Area Description

The CRA finding of necessity study area boundary incorporates most of the existing MSBU three tiers and extends to the Osceola Polk County line. Properties within incorporated City of Kissimmee were excluded from the study area, refer to the map below. Initially, the team looked at just the area directly surrounding the corridor, but later expanded the study area to include available land and transit ridership opportunities on both sides of the corridor. Individual properties were then assessed for inclusion based on opportunities for redevelopment. The study area boundary is defined as U.S. 192 from the County line on the west to the City of Kissimmee limits on the east. Much of the area consists of vacant, underutilized properties that may have environmental constraints.

This study area was selected because it conforms to applicable provisions of Section 163.340, Florida Statutes, relating to areas considered for community redevelopment. According to the definition provided by Florida Statute, the area must include a substantial number of deteriorating structures and conditions leading to economic distress, two or more of the fourteen factors must be present to determine blighted conditions exist in the area. This report documents the existence of nine of those factors, establishing that blighted conditions do exist in the recommended West 192 study area.

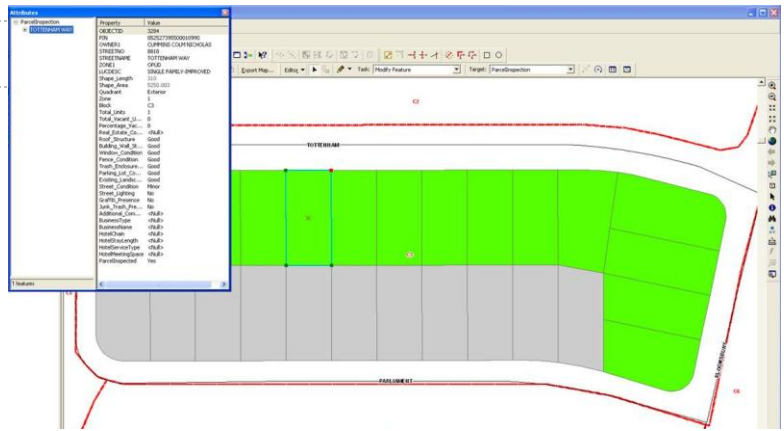
The recommended boundary was determined based on the following criteria:

- Statutory criteria pertaining to site and economic conditions that warrant the use of redevelopment powers provided by Statute;
- Consideration of future development or redevelopment potential based on factors including vacant property and condition of structures; and,
- Consideration of sound planning principles for continuity of future land use based on zoning-future land use consistency, transportation systems, and the efficient provision of government utilities and services.



## Project Methodology

Staff conducted detailed field inventory of every property within the West U.S. 192 study area to identify and document existing conditions. In addition to photos taken for each property, staff documented the existing conditions of the property's structures, parking area, landscaping, and graffiti, etc., using ArcView GIS on mobile laptop computers.



Field observers rated various characteristics of each property within the study area that related to the site and building structures. The rate of condition was based on a scaled criteria from "Good to Critical". Below is an example of the rating scale used during field observation.

- Good:** Needs only normal maintenance (less than 10% requires replacement)
- Minor:** Worn, loose or cracked (10-20% requires replacement)
- Major:** Badly deteriorated and in need of major repair (20-50% requires replacement)
- Critical:** Badly deteriorated, inoperative/ unsafe, complete replacement is required (50% +requires replacement)
- Not Applicable/ Not Present:** Does not present the item in observation



Following the field inventory, each parcel in the study area was individually evaluated through GIS-based analysis with respect to identified physical conditions. In addition to field inventory, an extensive GIS database was provided by the Osceola County GIS Department and the Osceola County Property Appraiser Office. Additional sources were instrumental in determining the blight conditions, including the Osceola County Health Department, Sherriff's Office, Code Enforcement Office and Fire Rescue/ EMS Office. The following table represents the blight factors and databases used to determine this finding of necessity for blight.

### BLIGHT FACTORS ANALYZED

Condition/ Factor Required by Statute	Indicator/Data Source
<b>163.340(8)(a)</b> Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, bridges, or public transportation facilities ( <i>Defective/Inadequate Transportation Facilities</i> )	Field Inventory/ GIS Analysis
<b>163.340(8)(b)</b> Aggregate assessed values of real property in the area for ad valorem tax purposes have failed to show any appreciable increase over the 5 years prior to the finding of such conditions ( <i>Depreciating Assessed Property Values</i> )	Osceola County Property Appraiser Data (2006-10)
<b>163.340(8)(c)</b> Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness ( <i>Faulty Lot Layout</i> )	Field Inventory/ GIS Analysis
<b>163.340(8)(d)</b> Unsanitary or unsafe conditions	Field Inventory/ GIS Analysis
<b>163.340(8)(e)</b> Deterioration of site or other improvements ( <i>Site Deterioration</i> )	Field Inventory/ GIS Analysis
<b>163.340(8)(f)</b> Inadequate and outdated building density patterns ( <i>Building Density Patterns</i> )	GIS Analysis
<b>163.340(8)(g)</b> Falling lease rates per square foot of office, commercial, or industrial space compared to the remainder of the county ( <i>Falling Lease Rates</i> )	RERC Report, September 2011
<b>163.340(8)(h)</b> Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land ( <i>Tax/Special Assessment Delinquency</i> )	Not Analyzed
<b>163.340(8)(i)</b> Residential and commercial vacancy rates higher in the area than in the remainder of the county ( <i>Vacancy Rates</i> )	RERC Report, September 2011
<b>163.340(8)(j)</b> Incidence of crime in the area higher than in the remainder of the county ( <i>Crime Incidents</i> )	Osceola County Sheriff's Office Data (2010)
<b>163.340(8)(k)</b> Fire and emergency medical service calls to the area proportionately higher than in the remainder of the county ( <i>Fire/EMS Calls</i> )	Osceola County Fire Rescue/ EMS Data (2010)
<b>163.340(8)(l)</b> A greater number of violations of the Florida Building Code in the area than the number of violations recorded in the remainder of the county ( <i>Florida Building Code Violations</i> )	Inconclusive
<b>163.340(8)(m)</b> Diversity of ownership or defective or unusual conditions of title which prevent the free alienability of land within the deteriorated or hazardous area ( <i>Unusual Conditions of Title</i> )	Inconclusive
<b>163.340(8)(n)</b> Governmentally owned property with adverse environmental conditions caused by a public or private entity	Not Analyzed



# Blight Factor Findings

## Blight Factor (a) Defective/Inadequate Transportation Facilities

**Section 163.340(8)(a), F.S.,** Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, bridges, or public transportation facilities was evident in the study area. The analysis identified deficiencies in roadway connection, public transit, street condition and parking facilities. The culmination of this inadequate infrastructure is evidence of blight. A detailed explanation of each is provided below.

**Roadway Connections:** U.S. 192 is the major thoroughfare serving the study area. The level of service (LOS) of U.S. 192 within the study area is broken down by the roadway segment as displayed on the adjacent table. The LOS is rated from A through F, A is the best roadway service and F is the worst roadway service. Of the eight roadway segments for U.S. 192, six are rated C or below. This shows that there is significant congestion on U.S. 192.

U.S. 192 Segment	LOS Rating
Lake County Line to SR 429 (Western Beltway)	F
SR 429 (Western Beltway) to World Drive	E
World Drive to I-4	B
I-4 to Parkway Boulevard	C
Parkway Boulevard to Polynesian Isle Boulevard	C
Polynesian Isle Boulevard to Vineland Road (SR 535)	C
Vineland Road (SR 535) to Siesta Lago Drive	B
Siesta Lago Drive to Hoagland Boulevard	C

There are opportunities for cross access connection on properties adjacent to U.S. 192. This would assist in relieving congestion on U.S. 192. While the majority of the corridor is able to accommodate the traffic from existing development, traffic is forced to use U.S. 192 due to the lack of alternative routes. This further illustrates the inadequate transportation system. CRA funds could be utilized to make road improvements, enhance transportation facilities, and reduce congestion without adversely impacting existing neighborhoods.



**Public Transit:** The West U.S. 192 corridor is currently served by Lynx Bus #55 (W. U.S. 192/Four Corners) and #56 (W. U.S. 192/Magic Kingdom). The #55 and #56 bus frequents each stop every half an hour. While bus service does exist within the study area, the frequency of service is not adequate to serve the existing and future needs of the corridor. The study area contains transit dependent populations, such as low income, elderly and tourist populations. The Public Transit Maps are located in **Appendix A** of this document.

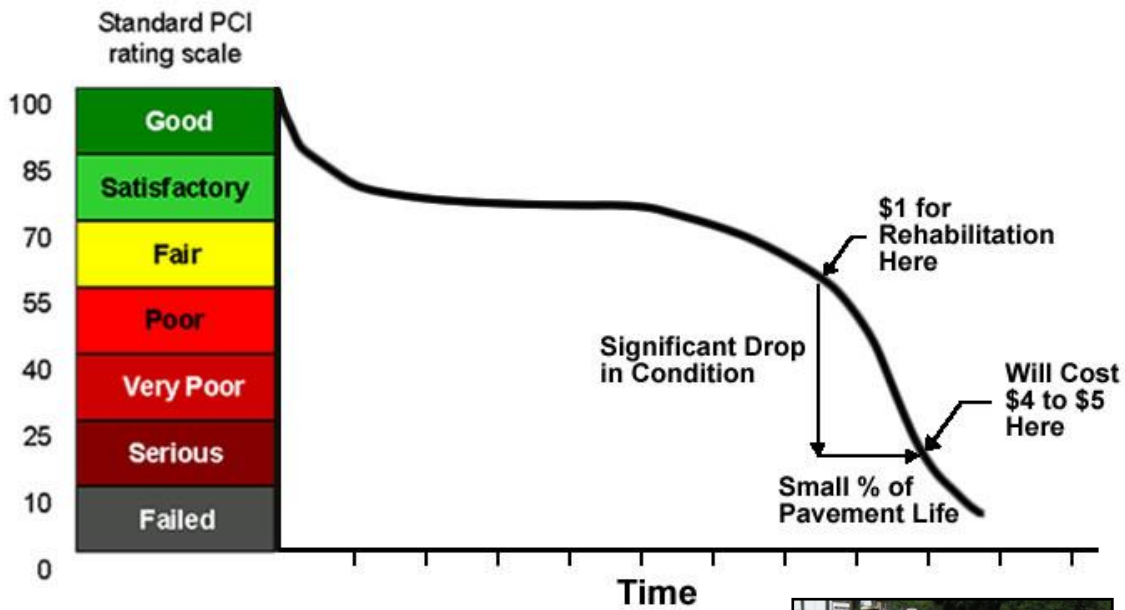


Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is an alternative for the corridor to provide more efficient transit options for riders. The more transit opportunities made available, the greater opportunity for increased ridership and growth. The lack of transit options and frequency of stops represents a clear inadequate transportation system. Osceola County will be participating in an Alternatives Analysis for the U.S. 192 corridor with LYNX and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The Analysis will look at ridership potential, evaluate different modes of transportation and estimate project costs for the U.S. 192 corridor. Increasing development and tourism motivates the purpose for the Analysis.

**Street Condition:** According to the County’s Pavement Condition Index (PCI) on the County maintained roadways within the study area, nearly 16% of all roadway segments within the study area have a PCI rating of “Poor” and 19% have a rating of “Fair”. Roadways are evaluated based on their current conditions using the PCI scale, illustrated graphically below, where a PCI of 100 is a roadway in good condition and a PCI of 0 is in failing condition. Loose gravel, dirt roads and potholes are just a few of the factors that

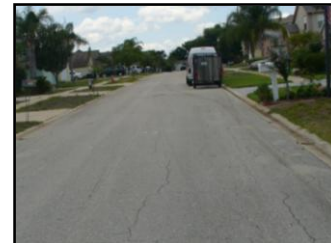


contribute to these poor ratings. These deficiencies in infrastructure are further evidence of the inadequate transportation system. The full list of County maintained streets and their associated PCI rating is located in **Appendix B** of this document.



PCI Summary Table

Rating	Roadway Segments	Percentage
Good	31	22%
Satisfactory	55	39%
Fair	27	19%
Poor	23	16%
Very Poor	5	4%
Serious	1	1%
Failed	0	0%
Total	142	100%



**Parking Facilities:** A total of 867 parking facilities within the study area were identified as being in either “Minor”, “Major” or “Critical” condition. Many businesses front their parking lots along the West U.S. 192 corridor. This causes an overabundance of asphalt to be the first thing people see as they drive through the area, much of which is currently in “Critical/Major/Minor” condition. The Parking Facilities Maps are located in **Appendix A** of this document.



**Summary of Blight Factor (a) Defective/Inadequate Transportation Facilities:** The roadway connections, public transit, street condition, and parking facilities were analyzed. It has been found that the West U.S. 192 Study Area has defective/inadequate transportation facilities.

## Blight Factor (b) Depreciating Assessed Property Values

**Section 163.340(8)(b), F.S.,** Aggregate assessed values of real property in the area for ad valorem tax purposes have failed to show any appreciable increase over the five years prior to the finding of such conditions.

The property values from 2006 – 2010 decreased by 261%, from approximately \$2.4 billion to approximately \$674 million. While the value fluctuated throughout the five year period, it decreased over the five year period. This analysis was completed by obtaining the total assessed values per acre (cumulative summation of values for all properties) for each year, which included all land and buildings within the study area. Property assessments are based on market values and are assessed yearly. The study area includes a number of government-owned properties; therefore an assessment of taxable values per acre was also performed. The total annual assessed values are included in the adjacent table. The Assessed Value Maps are located in **Appendix A** of this document.

Year	Total Assessed Value
2006	\$2,436,125,111
2007	\$852,850,681
2008	\$2,736,634,827
2009	\$778,209,023
2010	\$674,747,672

**Summary of Blight Factor (b) Depreciating Assessed Property Values:** The assessed values from 2006 – 2010 were analyzed. This blight factor requires data over the previous five years from the finding, 2007 – 2011. Since the 2011 data was unavailable this analysis was found inconclusive.

## Blight Factor (c) Faulty Lot layout

**Section 163.340(8)(c), F.S.,** Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness was evident in the study area. This was determined through analysis of zoning and land use consistency, wetlands and floodplain.

**Zoning/Land Use Consistency:** Future land use map designations identify the future use of the property that is consistent with the projected future growth and development patterns that are most appropriate for that area. Zoning classifications provide more specific requirements, such as setbacks, for the property when development is being proposed. 408 properties within the study area have a zoning classification that is not consistent with the future land use map designation. These properties comprise of approximately 10% of the parcels within the study area. When proposed development applications are brought forward, the existing zoning district is reviewed for consistency with the future land use designation, pursuant to the Future Land Use Map. The list of inconsistent future land use and zoning designations is on page 11.

Future Land Use Example



Zoning Example



Inconsistent Future Land Use and Zoning in the Study Area	
Zoning	Future Land Use
Agricultural Development/Conservation	Low Density Residential
Agricultural Development/Conservation	Medium Density Residential
Agricultural Development/Conservation	Tourist Commercial
Agricultural Development/Conservation	Tourist Commercial
Commercial Tourists	Low Density Residential
Estate Development (E-1, E-1A, E-2)	Tourist Commercial
Public Institution District	Commercial
Public Institution District	Low Density Residential
Rural Development - One Acre	Low Density Residential
Rural Development - One Acre	Tourist Commercial
Residential Multiple Family Two	Tourist Commercial
Residential Multiple Family Three	High Density Residential
Residential Multiple Family Three	Low Density Residential
Residential Multiple Family Three	Tourist Commercial
Residential Manufactured Housing (RMH, RMH-1)	Low Density Residential
Residential Single Family (RS-1, RS-3, RS-1C)	Tourist Commercial
Residential Single Family (RS-1, RS-3, RS-1C)	Tourist Commercial

**Wetlands:** The National Wetlands Inventory, prepared by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, identifies a number of wetlands in the study area. The majority of these wetlands are within Flood Zone A or AE. Wetlands are unsuitable for development. Depending on the classification of the wetland, it can be determined if the wetland can be mitigated. A portion of the properties within the study area have on-site wetlands that impact the developable area of the lot. The wetlands in the study area further limit the size, adequacy, accessibility and usefulness of the properties. The National Wetland Inventory Maps are located in **Appendix A** of this document.

**Floodplain:** Portions of the study area are in a high-risk flood zone. Zones A and AE are hazard areas inundated by 100-year flooding. In other words, the chances of a flood occurring within 100 years are high. Flood insurance is required for development within these zones. The properties within the floodplain, the size, adequacy, and usefulness of the land are negatively impacted. The Floodplain can be filled by adding costly fill dirt and by providing compensation storage at a land ratio of one-to-one per land area filled, but further impacts the size and usefulness of the property. FEMA maps are currently in the process of being updated which may change the location of some flood prone areas, but will not remove this development constraint. The Floodplain Maps are located in **Appendix A** of this document.

**Summary of Blight Factor (c) Faulty Lot Layout:** The future land use and zoning designations, wetlands, and floodplain were analyzed. The West U.S. 192 Study area was found to have faulty lot layout as determined through these criteria.

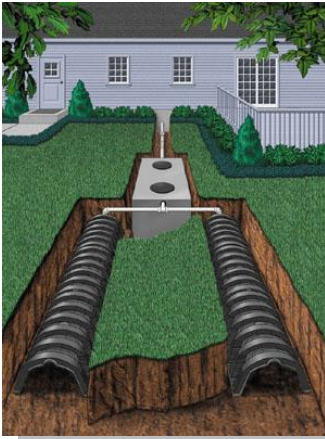
## Blight Factor (d) Unsanitary/Unsafe Conditions

**Section 163.340(8)(d), F.S.,** Unsanitary or unsafe conditions are evident in the study area with deficient septic systems, street lighting, the presence of junk and debris, structure conditions and floodplains.

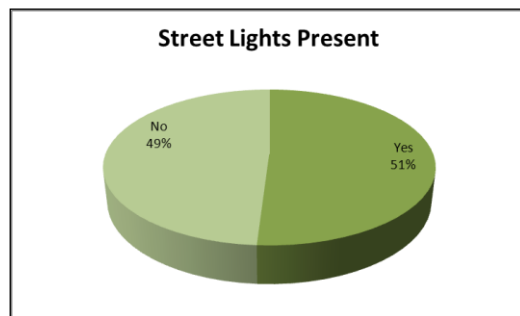
**Septic Systems:** A total of 168 properties within the study area are currently using a septic system. Sewer and water lines are currently available to the study area. Using septic in an urbanized area (within the Urban Growth Boundary) limits the value of properties and the potential intensity of future development. Septic systems can only serve small lots. This limits the ability to develop larger lots to serve the area more intense facilities and services. This results in fragmentation of development along the corridor and limits the ability to meet market demand. The properties currently on septic may be required to connect to central sewer and water when future development of the property is requested, or when service is within



200 feet. In addition, septic systems require regular maintenance and related costs. When septic systems are not properly maintained, they may overflow, drain into the stormwater system, lakes or even contaminate drinking water, which creates unsanitary conditions. The Septic Maps are located in **Appendix A** of this document.

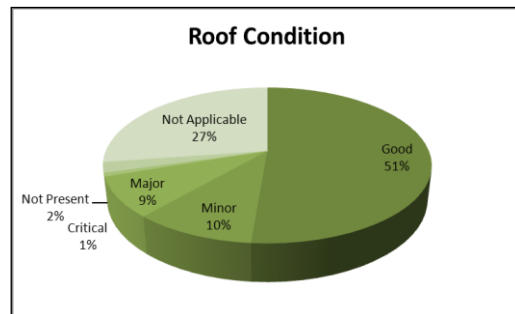


**Street Lights:** Street lighting increases safety for motorists, pedestrians, and for property owners. Studies have shown that darkness results in a large number of accidents and fatalities, especially those involving pedestrians. A lack of street lighting is often reflected in areas with increased crime. Within the study area the lack of adequate street lighting creates an overall unsafe environment. According to the site assessments approximately 49% of the parcels do not have street lights associated with them. Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) offers guidelines to reduce incidents of crime through good lighting standards.

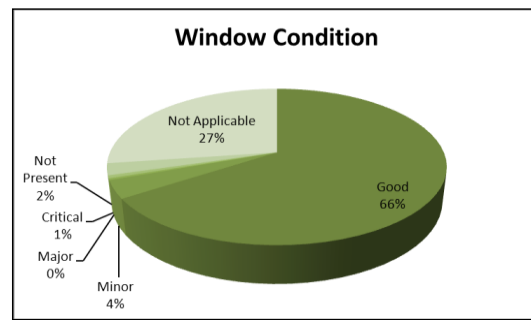
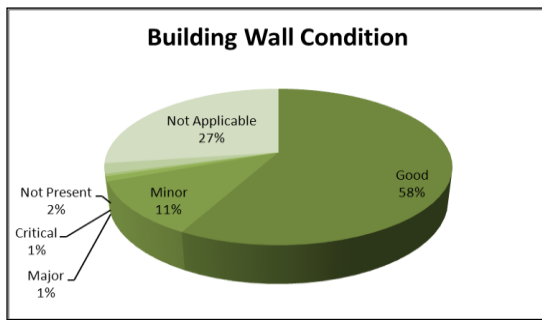


**Junk, Trash & Debris:** According to field observation, 133 properties had evidence of junk, trash and debris. Loose junk and trash creates an unsanitary environment and reduces value. The Junk, Trash & Debris Maps are located in **Appendix A** of this document.

**Structure Conditions:** Properties identified as having building structures in either major or critical condition are typically uninhabitable and a danger to people and animals. Typically these structures are vacant and become an unsafe nuisance to the neighborhood. The structure condition was evaluated by the building wall condition, the window condition and the roof condition. A number of structures within the study area were found to be in major or critical condition. Twenty percent of the



parcels had minor, major, or critical roof condition, 13% of parcels had minor, major, or critical building wall condition and 5% of parcels minor, major, or critical window condition. These structures are badly deteriorated and in need of major repair or replacement, creating unsanitary and unsafe conditions. The Roof Condition, Building Wall Condition and Window Condition Maps are located in **Appendix A** of this document.



**Floodplain:** Portions of the study area are in a high-risk flood zone. Zones A and AE are hazard areas inundated by 100-year flooding. In other words, the chances of a flood occurring within 100 years are high. Flood insurance is required for development within these zones. The properties within the floodplain, the size, adequacy, and usefulness of the land are negatively impacted. The Floodplain can be filled by adding costly fill dirt and by providing compensation storage at a land ratio of one-to-one per land area filled, but further impacts the size and usefulness of the property. FEMA maps are currently in the process of being updated which may change the location of some flood prone areas, but will not remove this development constraint. The Floodplain Maps are located in **Appendix A** of this document.

**Summary of Blight Factor (d) Unsanitary/Unsafe Conditions:** The septic systems, street lights, junk, trash & debris, structure condition and floodplain were analyzed. The West U.S. 192 Study area was found to have unsanitary/unsafe conditions as determined through these criteria.

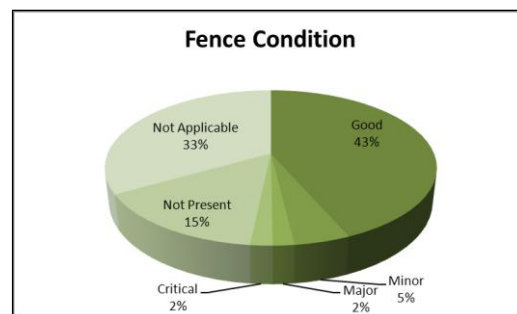
## Blight Factor (e) Site Deterioration

**Section 163.340(8)(e), F.S.,** Deterioration of site or other improvements was evident in the study area in assessment of critical building wall, roof, windows, doors, fencing, landscaping, the presence of graffiti and junk and debris.

**Building Structure Condition:** The condition of building structures in the study area were documented through field observation. Observers rated the building wall, roof, windows and doors of the building structures within the study area. Twenty one (21) structures were identified as being in critical condition, 43 structures were identified as being in major condition and 471 structures were identified as being in minor condition. Structure were individually observed at each property and rated according to their condition. The condition rates were based on the following criteria:

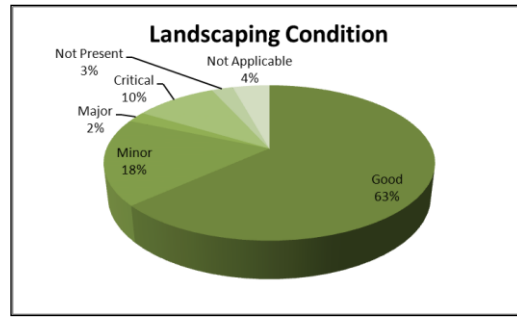
- Good:** Structure needs only normal maintenance (less than 10% requires replacement)
- Minor:** Structure is worn, loose or cracked (10-20% requires replacement)
- Major:** Structure is badly deteriorated and in need of major repair (20-50% requires replacement)
- Critical:** The structure is badly deteriorated, inoperative or unsafe to the extent that complete replacement is required (50% or more requires replacement)
- Not Applicable:** A vacant lot – with no existing structure present

**Site Condition:** The condition of the properties, not including the building structures, was documented through field observation. Properties were individually observed at each property and rated according to their condition. Observers rated the landscaping, fencing and presence of graffiti and junk, trash and debris on the properties within the study area. Three hundred and ninety nine (399) properties were identified as being in critical condition in terms of landscaping, 76 properties

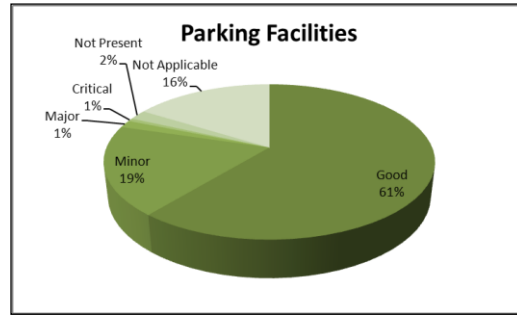




were identified as being in critical condition in terms of fencing. Forty four (44) parcels were identified as having graffiti while 133 parcels had junk, trash and debris present. Identifying these issues is helpful in determining which area are in greater distress. These factors are the most obvious indication of site deterioration and blight. The Landscaping, Fencing, Graffiti and Junk, Trash and Debris Maps are located in **Appendix A** of this document.



**Parking Facilities:** A total of 90 parking facilities within the study area were identified as being in either “Major” or “Critical” condition. A total of 777 parking facilities were identified as needing at least minor repair, which illustrates site deterioration. Many businesses front their parking lots along the West U. S. 192 corridor, causing an overabundance of asphalt to be the first thing people see as they drive through the area. The Parking Facility Maps are located in **Appendix A** of this document.



**Foreclosures:** There are a number of bank-owned condos and bank owned parcels within the study area. These properties, once becoming noticeably vacant, become a target for vandalism, vagrant habitation, and dumping. These properties quickly become distressed, as well as reducing the value and safety of the area. The Foreclosure Maps are located in **Appendix A** of this document.

**Summary of Blight Factor (e) Site Deterioration:** The building structure condition, site condition, parking facilities and foreclosures were analyzed. The West U.S. 192 Study area was found to have site deterioration as determined through these criteria.

## Blight Factor (f) Building Density Patterns ✓

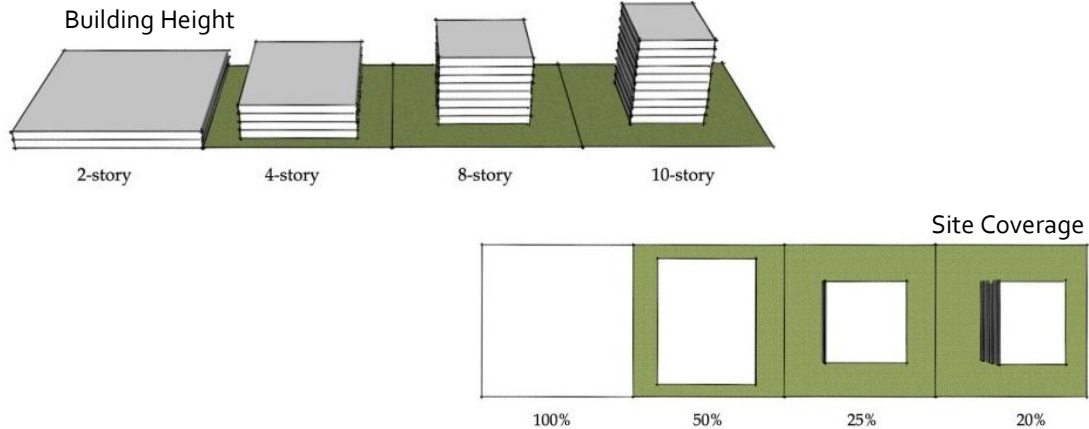
**Section 163.340(8)(f), F.S.,** Inadequate and outdated building density patterns was evident within the study area.

The inefficient utilization of a parcel is indicative of the pattern of development for the area. Outdated building patterns are representative of parcels that do not utilize their full potential. Building centered towards the front of the lots, with parking in the rear and multiple uses in a multistory building are examples of how developers can maximize use while initiating a good pattern for development. Funding from a CRA can assist in the development of modern development standards and redevelopment of existing properties with more efficient patterns of development.

**Intensity:** Intensity is a measurement of how much a building site can be utilized by structures. Intensity is determined by calculating floor area ratios (FAR). FAR is the relationship between the total floor area of a proposed structure and the gross area of the building site.

**Density:** Density is defined as the number of residential units permitted per acre. Density is determined by dividing the total number of units by the total site area less right-of-way. Future Land Use is the preferred future vision of the development of land as it relates to use and density. Zoning regulates the current use of the land and development in relation to building size, bulk, density and the way land is used. The table below identifies the zoning district and future land use designation for properties within the study area. A

number of properties within the study have zoning districts that are not consistent with the future land use designations which contribute to the inadequate or outdated building and density pattern.

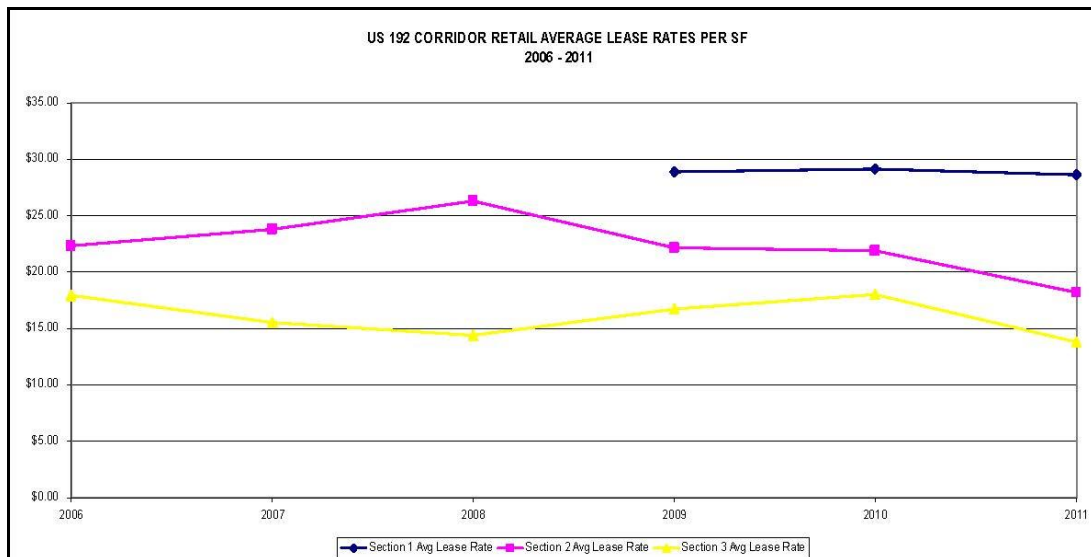


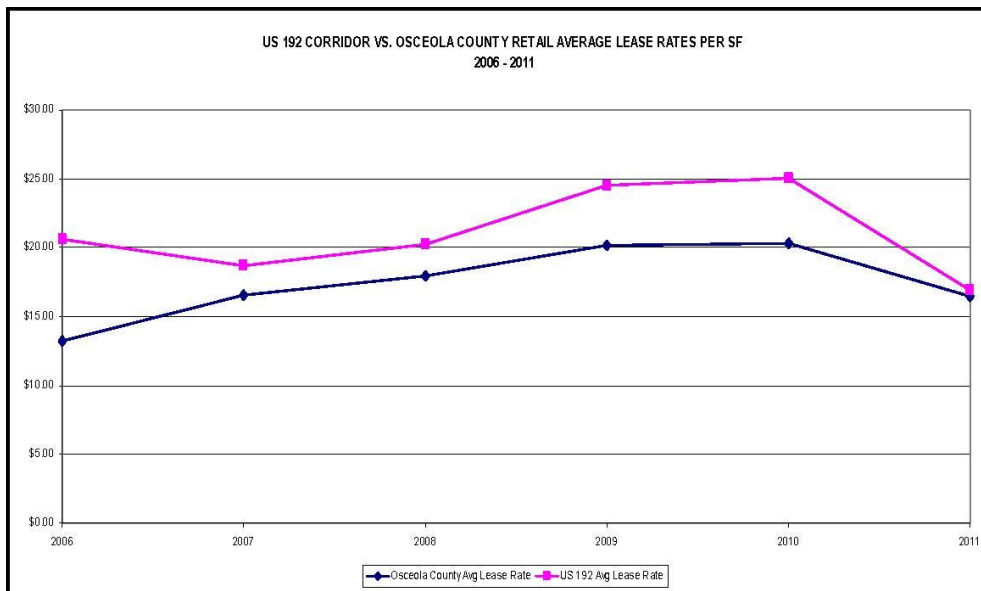
Through the site assessment process it has been determined that a majority of the properties within the study area do not take full advantage of their development allowances. The development adjacent to West U.S. 192 has a large portion of low density motels and strip centers. These types of developments do not take full advantage of the density/intensity allotment.

**Summary of Blight Factor (f) Building Density Patterns:** The density and intensity of the parcels were analyzed through the site assessment process. The West U.S. 192 Study area was found to have inadequate and outdated building density pattern as determined through these criteria.

## Blight Factor (g) Falling Lease Rates ✓

**Section 163.340(8)(g), F.S.,** Falling lease rates per square foot of office, commercial, or industrial space compared to the remainder of the county. A report provided by Research Real Estate Consultants (RERC) in September 2011 determined that while Section 1 lease rates have been stable from 2006-2001 Section 2 and 3 have seen declines in lease rates during that same period. The West U.S. 192 corridor’s average lease rate per SF has generally been higher than the County’s average. However, the corridor’s average lease rate has declined to match the County’s rate over the past year.





- Notes:
1. These tables were provided by RERC, September 2011
  2. "Section" equals "Zone" in terms of the maps in **Appendix A**.
  3. Only the properties adjacent to or with direct access to West U.S. 192 were used in this analysis.

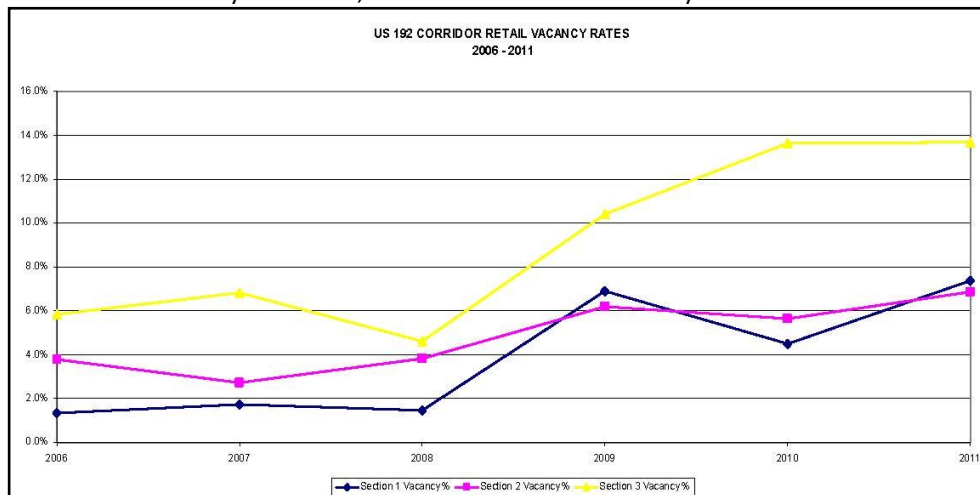
**Summary of Blight Factor (g) Falling Lease Rates:** The falling lease rates were analyzed in the U.S. 192 Corridor Study: the changing form of tourist and visitation activity in Osceola County report, dated September 2011, provided by RERC. The West U.S. 192 Study area was found to have falling lease rates as determined by this report.

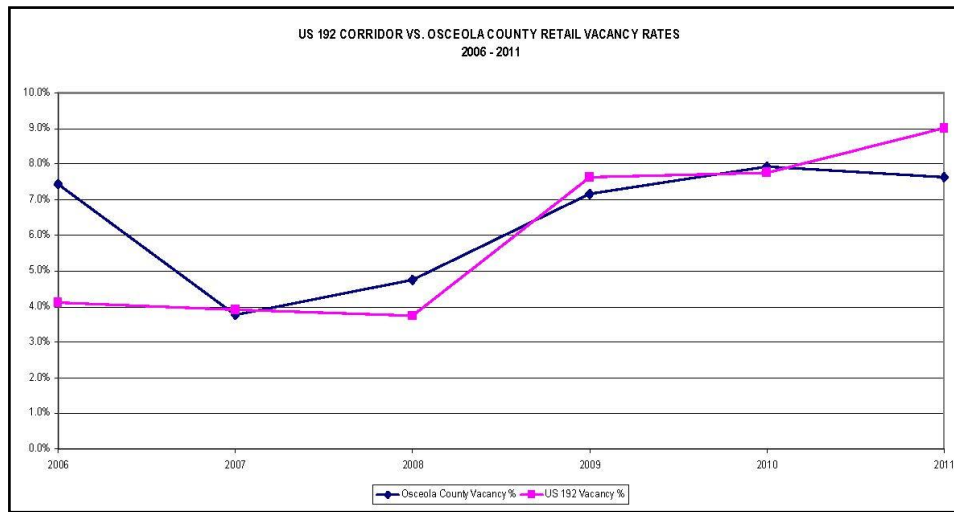
## Blight Factor (h) Tax or Special Assessment Delinquency

**Section 163.340(8)(h), F.S.,** Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land. This blight factor was not analyzed.

## Blight Factor (i) Vacancy Rates

**Section 163.340(8)(i), F.S.,** Residential and commercial vacancy rates higher in the area than in the remainder of the County. The vacancy rate of the study area has increased since 2007. A report provided by Research Real Estate Consultants (RERC) in September 2011 determined that the Section 3 vacancy rate is almost double that of Section 1 and 2. The West U.S. 192 corridor's vacancy rate has generally been at or below that of Osceola County. However, in 2011 the corridor's vacancy rate exceeded that of the County.





- Notes:
1. These tables were provided by RERC, September 2011
  2. "Section" equals "Zone" in terms of the maps in **Appendix A**.
  3. Only the properties adjacent to or with direct access to West U.S. 192 were used in this analysis.

**Summary of Blight Factor (i) Vacancy Rates:** The vacancy rates were analyzed in the U.S. 192 Corridor Study: the changing form of tourist and visitation activity in Osceola County report, dated September 2011, provided by RERC. The West U.S. 192 Study area was found to have higher vacancy rates than the remainder of the County as determined by this report.

## Blight Factor (j) Incidence of Crime

**Section 163.340(8)(j), F.S.,** Incidence of crime in the area higher than in the remainder of the county. The percentage of crime in an area can be a strong indicator of deteriorating conditions. The Osceola County Sheriff's Office indicated that there were 0.65 crimes per capita within the study area, compared to 0.08 crimes per capita for the County as a whole (*Osceola County Sheriff's Office, 2010*). An incident is considered a crime if a report is prepared. The high percentage of crime in an area may discourage the private sector of investing in redevelopment. Crime is closely related to deteriorating conditions including high unemployment rates, high vacancy rates, and unsafe and unsanitary conditions. Left unaddressed, the crime rates will most likely continue to escalate, making a less desirable environment for growth and development.

According to the Osceola County Sheriff's Office, a total of 3,883 phone calls were made to 911 regarding crime incidents within the 2010 calendar year. Incidents are spread out throughout the study area. This can be viewed on the Crime Maps, located in **Appendix A** of this document. Maps labeled Part 1 indicate violent crimes and maps labeled Part 2 indicate non-violent crimes.

Crime Incident Phone Calls, 2010		
Event Type	Study Area	Countywide
Crime (Violent)	1,735 calls	6,459 calls
Crime (Non-Violent)	2,148 calls	14,352 calls

Source: Osceola County Sheriff's Office, 2012

Per Capita Crime Incident Phone Calls, 2010		
	Study Area	Countywide
Total Crime	3,833	20,811
2010 Population	5,931	268,685
Per Capita	0.65	0.08

Source: Osceola County Sheriff's Office, 2012

**Summary of Blight Factor (j) Incidence of Crime:** The incidence of crime was analyzed. The West U.S. 192 Study area was found to have higher incidence of crime than the remainder of the County.

## Blight Factor (k) Fire & EMS Calls

**Section 163.340(8)(k), F.S.,** Fire and emergency medical service calls to the study area were documented to be proportionately higher than in the remainder of the county.

The percentage of fire and emergency medical service calls can be a strong indicator of a blighted area. In 2010 the incidence of fire and emergency medical service calls within the study area was higher than in the remainder of the County. For FIRE calls, a per capita rate of 0.37 calls per capita were reported within the study area, while on 0.04 calls per capital were reported within the County as a whole. For EMS calls, a per capita rate of 0.46 calls per capita were reported within the study area, while on 0.06 calls per capital were reported within the County as a whole. This indicates that the study area has a much higher incidence of fire and emergency needs and would be considered a high risk area. A high incidence of fire and emergency medical service calls can coincide with a higher incidence of crime. The data was based on calls where fire and/or medical vehicles were dispatched. The FIRE and EMS Maps are located in **Appendix A** of this document.

Emergency Calls, 2010		
Event Type	Study Area	Countywide
FIRE	2,212 calls	10,977 calls
EMS	2,729 calls	14,981 calls

Source: Osceola County Fire Rescue and EMS, 2012

Per Capita Emergency Calls, 2010		
	Study Area	Countywide
FIRE	2,212	10,977
Per Capita	0.37	0.04
EMS	2,729	14,981
Per Capita	0.46	0.06

Source: Osceola County Fire Rescue and EMS, 2012

**Summary of Blight Factor (k) FIRE & EMS Calls:** The fire and emergency medical service calls were analyzed. The West U.S. 192 Study area was found to have higher incidence of fire and emergency medical service calls than the remainder of the County.

## Blight Factor (l) Florida Building Code Violations

**Section 163.340(8)(l), F.S.,** A greater number of violations of the Florida Building Code in the area than the number of violations recorded in the remainder of the county. Based on field observation, there was evidence of Florida Building Code violations; however the observed structures were not formally processed as violations at the time of this report. The data is therefore deemed inconclusive.

## Blight Factor (m) Diversity of Ownership or Defective or Unusual Conditions of Title

**Section 163.340(8)(m), F.S.,** Diversity of ownership or defective or unusual conditions of title which prevent the free alienability of land within the deteriorated or hazardous area. Analysis of the Property Appraiser’s ownership data indicated a diversity of ownership. Full title searches were not conducted due to time restrictions and unavailable funding resources. The data is therefore deemed inconclusive.

## Blight Factor (n) Governmentally Owned Property with Adverse Environmental Conditions

**Section 163.340(8)(n), F.S.,** Governmentally owned property with adverse environmental conditions caused by a public or private entity. This blight factor was not analyzed.

## Conclusion

The data and analysis presented in this report provides a factual basis for the Osceola County Board of County Commissioners to make a legislative finding that the West U.S. 192 study area constitutes as a blighted area. This study documents the existence of nine (9) of the fourteen (14) required blight factors outlined in Florida Statutes, which required only two (2). This report provides a finding of necessity that identifies one or more “slum” or “blighted” areas exist within the defined study area and that the rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment of the study area is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals, or welfare of the residents in the area.