

SUMMARY

Stakeholder Interviews

Held November 17 through 21, 2014

UCF Area Pedestrian Safety Study



As part of the data collection efforts, six stakeholder interviews were held during the week of November 17, 2014. Here are the highlights of those interviews. Interviews were held with the following stakeholders, using the questions provided in Attachment A.

November 17 th	Central Florida Research Park – Carol Ann Dykes
November 17 th	Knights Circle – Rob Myers
November 18 th	Northview – Ellen Hughey, Seth Reder, and LaToya Moss
November 18 th	University Apartments – Adele Kelsey
November 19 th	Plaza on University – Amber Kenney
November 21 st	The Edge Orlando – Craig Galbo

Central Florida Research Park

Central Florida Research Park (CFRP) was created in 1978 in partnership with the University of Central Florida (UCF). With its location just south of UCF, the CFRP has become the 2nd largest research park in the United States with over 10,000 employees. Most of the businesses located within the CFRP are high tech oriented covering: simulation and training, hardware/building simulators, labs, sensors, electronics, robotics, and laser optics. There are few large parcels remaining for future development; therefore, any future development (and redevelopment) will be vertical. The roads located within the CFRP are private. About 48 to 60 students work with CFRP client groups.

Mobility Issues and Solutions

- Internal roads are private (would need to work with CFRP on any changes)
- Adequate sidewalks in place; consider making them wider, more inviting to encourage use
- More people out walking as well as cycling and jogging; professors seen riding their bicycles; no walkers on Challenger Parkway, mostly on Research Parkway
- Alafaya Trail and University Boulevard intersection is very dangerous and needs help; hotel/conference center being proposed in the southeast quadrant; new Plaza on University (retail and housing) in northwest quadrant
- In the summer, pedestrians looking for the quickest way to get out of the heat and rain; shelters or designated places to gather would help

- Not a lot of “in person” interaction between UCF and CFRP; if needed, the UCF shuttle is used (two buses loop through CFRP – routes 5 and 9)
- Growing “cut through” traffic through CFRP, especially since Woodbury Road opened; alternative to Alafaya Trail; concerns about having additional non-CFRP traffic using the private roads
- Peak times in the morning are staggered; however, afternoon peak travel time seems to be concentrated (adding to the congestion)
- Missing bike lanes in the area
- Bike racks will be added soon within CRFP
- No LYNX stop within CFRP; closest stops are along Alafaya Trail

Other Shared Observations

- Consider use of landscaping to funnel pedestrians to the desired crossings (similar to the changes at Fairbanks Avenue in front of Rollins College)
- Not many crosswalks along Alafaya Trail; lots of interaction between the students and UCF campus, also between the hotels and restaurants
- Consider mid-block crossings and have signals at official crosswalks
- Students are using the parking spaces at the Plaza at University as a “park and ride” lot to UCF
- No businesses with 24-hour shifts (no manufacturing in CFRP)
- Due to the need for experienced work force, few of the CFRP employees are millennials
- Increasing concerns/interest in having connectivity between the UCF/CFRP area and the Lake Nona area

Knights Circle

Knights Circle is located in the southeast quadrant of Alafaya Trail and McCulloch Road. It is the largest single, off-site college residential complex in the United States with 2,500 beds. The community is open 24 hours; however, office hours are limited to 9am to 7pm daily. About 90% of the residents are UCF students and employees; 7% are Valencia College students; others are Seminole State College and Full Sail students. Currently, Knights Circle is 99% occupied, with only 25 open beds; will have a wait list in the summer before the semester begins. There are two-, three-, and four-bedroom configurations. Knights Circle provides basic furniture (not TV); each resident has own bedroom and bathroom with shared common spaces.

Mobility Issues and Solutions

- Bike racks are located throughout the community
- Phase III is closest to the UCF campus and these residents tend to walk to campus; most take the shuttle
- No specific hazards for pedestrians or cyclists observed
- The University Boulevard/Alafaya Trail intersection is dangerous; a pedestrian overpass may draw pedestrians (rather than jaywalk)
- Existing sidewalks are in good condition; however, there are no sidewalks from the back entrance to Data Court; seems to have plenty of space to add sidewalks
- Overall lighting seems to be good
- Lots of students running recreationally; most along Corporate Drive
- Many Siemens employees (at the Quadrangle) walk to restaurants at lunch time, such as Crazy Moon and Tijuana Flats
- Distracted pedestrians and drivers are a BIG concern; sees that drivers make use of their “down” time (while waiting in traffic) to check phone information
- Inebriated students walk between Knights Circle and Mad Hatter
- Would like the shuttle service expanded (additional hours on the weekends as well as to other destinations like Waterford Lakes)
- Night time shuttle service recently expanded
- Suggested bus service to other destinations in the area, like Downtown Orlando and Cocoa Beach

Other Shared Observations

- No major renovations or investments anticipated in the near future; completed a \$42 million facelift three or four years ago; minor updates to happen include: new fitness center, gym, and clubhouse game room
- Overall, residents are well behaved; zero tolerance for crazy activities; one RA in each building

Northview

Northview is located in Seminole County, in the northeast quadrant of McCulloch Road and Lockwood Boulevard. Opened in Fall 2013, it is one of the newer residential communities, home to 600 residents. On the first floor are two faith based community centers: Hillel (Jewish) and campus ministries (Catholic), which serve residents and non-residents. Other sister properties are Knights Circle and the Rosen campus. No expansions are planned for the Northview community.

Mobility Issues and Solutions

- Majority of residents are UCF students and use the shuttle; Northview parking permit is required (eliminates the need for a campus parking permit)
- UCF shuttle stop is just outside the parking garage (behind the Chevron station); students tend to congregate inside the garage if it's hot or rainy (poses a safety problem); would like to have the shuttle stop at a different spot with shelter (a better place to congregate/gather)
- UCF shuttle is frequent; comes about every 10 or 15 minutes; or until full
- Bicycle parking provided on the first floor of the parking garage (used for employees and temporary visitors; students park on upper levels); bicycles must have Northview registration (not allowed to store in apartments)
- Crossing near the fire station is dangerous; just south of the fire station the sidewalk ends; need to fill the gaps in the sidewalk network; look at accessibility (especially in meeting ADA needs) to and from UCF campus along Orion Boulevard
- Additional crosswalks are needed in front of McDonald's
- Frequent accidents at the University Boulevard/Alafaya Trail intersection; pedestrian bridge would help
- Lighting is needed; add reflective surfaces

Other Observations Shared

- Northview is a hub of activity on game days; easy walk to the stadium
- Hillel is opening a full service Kosher restaurant in Spring 2015, which will draw non-residents to the property
- Likes the UCF banners (along University Boulevard and Alafaya Trail) as a means to announce that you're in a special place; difficult to have one grand entry to UCF campus since there are multiple access points
- Need to announce that you're in a different setting as you approach UCF; more awareness of surroundings is needed
- Need to be aware that there is a significant evening student population on the UCF campus (while there may be 10,000 employees leaving in the evenings, there are many night students arriving)
- Safety programs are conducted (active and passive) by the Seminole County Sheriff's Office and the University Police
- Northview (as well as the UCF campus) has protocols for every type of emergency (from lock downs to hurricane evacuations)

University Apartments

University Apartments is located just south of the University Boulevard and Alafaya Trail intersection along the west side of Alafaya Trail. This residential complex has had the same owner for the last 28 years and is not affiliated with UCF. There are 180 residents, with about half being students. The complex consists mostly of two-bedroom units.

Mobility Issues and Solutions

- With the absence of barriers, pedestrians cross Alafaya Trail where it's convenient; happens at several locations along Alafaya Trail
- LYNX bus stop is in front of the complex as well as across the street
- Students walk to campus rather than drive; many of the students come without a car
- There are a lot of bicycles (many have them even if they have a car); able to park in stairwells and in apartments
- On game days, it appears that there are private buses that drop off and pick up students at Habaneros (just north of University Apartments)
- Overpass at University Boulevard and Alafaya Trail may be helpful
- UCF shuttle does not stop at University Apartments; some residents have been walking to The Sterling (residential community just to the south) for the closest shuttle stop

Other Shared Observations

- A lot of students are hit coming out of the area bars; most recently on November 4th; lots of accidents at Knights Pub and The Next Door (not far from University Apartments)
- There is a lot of under aged drinking; worse on Fridays, game nights, and weekends
- Anticipates the corridor to have more intense development; every piece of available land will be used to build residential communities (or supporting services)

Plaza on University

Plaza on University is a mixed use community located in the northwest quadrant of University Boulevard and Alafaya Trail and just opened in Fall 2014. The community is 100% leased with 1,309 residents, primarily UCF students. Space is leased by the room (private space) with shared common areas. Each apartment is fully furnished. Rent is all inclusive (cable, internet, pest control) with a cap for utilities. There is a parking garage and residents pay to park here. The ground level will be retail with the following tenants: Bar Louie, Burger Fi, Floyd's Barbershop, GNC, Blades Pizza, Spoleto; some of which are now open and some will be open early next year.

Mobility Issues and Solutions

- There are two shuttle stops on the property; runs frequently every 10 – 15 minutes; shuttles are well used; asset
- Signals are needed at pedestrian crossings
- LYNX bus stop on University Boulevard and Turbine Drive
- There seems to be adequate parking; the first two levels are for retail customers (no charge); 200 residents are without vehicles
- There are bike racks on property, outside the parking garage
- Pedestrian bridge at University Boulevard and Alafaya Trail may be helpful; concerned about blocking signage identifying Plaza on University

Other Shared Observations

- Lighting does not seem to be a problem
- There's security on property; also oversees garage parking; additional security on game days
- Retail at Plaza on University is different from the surrounding retail, so not competing
- Measures taken to create a safe environment: well lit areas, locks on residential bedrooms, front door locks, and garage gates; cameras throughout the property
- 20 employees with 11 living on property
- Students need to be more cautious and aware

The Edge Orlando

The Edge Orlando is located on the west side of Alafaya Trail at Research Parkway. This community was built in 1999 and was purchased by the current owner in 2005. There are 930 residents and most are UCF and Valencia College students and currently at 100% occupied. Currently, there is no waiting list.

Mobility Issues and Solutions

- Majority of UCF students in the complex use the shuttle (easier; safe to use); runs from 7 am to 10 pm (Monday through Friday); operates randomly on Saturdays; also runs on game days; runs every 10 to 15 minutes
- Bicycle racks located throughout the property; every two buildings or so
- Alafaya Trail is dangerous
- LYNX bus stops on Alafaya Trail; within 50 feet of the entrances
- Residents walk frequently to the nearby Walgreen's; also walk to local bars; not well lit (especially for the walks to the local bars)
- Need a weekend circulator (suggested name: "Knight Rider")
- Wider sidewalks would help
- Would be helpful to have regular shuttles to Publix and Waterford Lakes
- 70% to 80% of residents have cars
- Parking pass at UCF is \$89 per semester (\$120 per semester for specific garages)
- Pedestrian bridge may help; however, recognizes that it will cost a lot of money to build
- Consider use of reflective wristbands as students exit bars

Other Shared Observations

- Minor upgrades ongoing; different improvements scheduled for each year
- Issues involve drunken pedestrians and distracted pedestrians
- Have a blueprint that will guide future redevelopment of area, especially in providing additional connectivity options

Summary

- Alafaya Trail is dangerous for all modes, especially pedestrians; need for additional crosswalks with signals
- Distracted pedestrians and drivers contribute to the dangerous traveling environment along Alafaya Trail
- UCF shuttle is asset and is well used; would like expansion of service
- Need to fill in sidewalk gaps
- Need to establish visual cues to convey that one is in a different setting (more pedestrians, less high speed vehicles)
- Mix of pedestrians trip purposes; recreational as well as travel to/from UCF
- Need more lighting/reflective surfaces for safer night time environment
- Need broader education/awareness of setting as move through it (not a high speed raceway)

Attachment A

List of Questions Used During Stakeholder Interviews

- What is the nature of the business or residential community and how are you tied to the UCF community? What are your business hours?
- What percentage of your business (or residential community) is made of UCF students/employees? How are they likely to travel to you?
- How do your employees/tenants get to work/school? Do they use transit, bikes, or walk?
- What are your concerns about the walking environment in the UCF area?
- Do you have any suggestions about to make walking in the UCF area safer and more inviting?
- Does your business/residential community have a UCF shuttle or LYNX bus stop nearby? Is it well used?
- Do you have bike racks on your property?
- Are there any locations that you can identify that seem particularly hazardous for pedestrians and cyclists?
- What do you like most about the corridor that you would like to see preserved?
- What do you dislike about the corridor that you would like to see changed?
- What is your vision for future development?
- Discuss any potential roadblocks you see in terms of future development.
- What criteria are most important in terms of development in the area for you? (such as: cost, locale, distance, traffic, security, safety, capability for future growth. parking)?