



Road Map to Success:
Market Street Visioning Summary Report
2021

Introduction

Market Street offers a unique hub of local businesses offering outdoor dining, retail and entertainment in a walkable shopping district. Nestled near I-10 and Thomasville Road, the tree-lined street and open community spaces provide a perfect gateway to local Tallahassee businesses that are in close proximity to a variety of neighborhoods and apartments.

The focus of this report is to address both aesthetic and functional improvements that can be initiated to make the Market Street area a regional draw where local businesses thrive, residents connect, and memorable consumer experiences are made; all which result in job growth and improved economic vitality for Leon County.

The Covid-19 pandemic has made the case abundantly clear for accessible, outdoor, vibrant public spaces where social interaction can thrive. Captivating public spaces draw people who, in turn, support surrounding business and imbue an area with a sense of interest and activity. Market Street can be such a place – benefiting greatly from a temperate climate that accommodates activity year-round.

With a few immediate improvements, Market Street can become a thriving, vibrant walkable urban center fostering continued job growth. By the end of the sessions, and with further support from an electronic survey that was shared with business consumers, design and programming recommendations were prioritized for the future of the Market Street area. The following themes emerged:

- 1) Community Connections
- 2) Identity, Branding + Art
- 3) Safety
- 4) Activation

History

In 2011 a Market District plan was created with the involvement of public and private partners. Planning Department staff worked with community groups, neighborhood associations, and other governmental agencies to create a plan. To date, very few of the recommendations have been implemented. Much has changed since 2011, and more recently, Market Street business owners wanted to re-assess needed enhancements and develop an updated list of current priorities. They sought KCCI’s help in coordinating visioning and priorities. KCCI has a history of citizen-driven projects that have enhanced sense of place including Getting Gaines Street Going, Discovery play area in Cascades Park, Midtown activities, the iconic TLH letters, Frenchtown Farmer’s Market, Florida’s first educational bicycle park and more.

On November 10th and 12th forty-nine Market Street business leaders and community stakeholders convened virtually to collaboratively envision current priorities and discuss how Market Street could further thrive. The 2011 plan was used as a basis for discussions. The workshops were facilitated by the Center for Active Design (CFAD), a non-profit, nationally-recognized organization that uses design to foster healthy and engaged communities.

Solutions

What especially rose to the top in priorities was the desire to see an improved pedestrian experience, more connectivity, and identity. There are low-cost items that can easily be implemented now to make a big impact.

- Repainting existing crosswalks and painting a mid-street crosswalk
- Adding and maintaining planters
- Incorporating seating; and
- A brand refresh that represents the area

“This vision is shared by the Market Street’s business community, a group of proponents for investment in the area who have pledged to formalize their advocacy into a local business association.” – Jay Foster, Market Street business owner

Market Street: A Road Map to Success

Goals are listed in priority order in each section.

THEME

SHORT-TERM GOALS

LONG-TERM GOALS

Community
Connections

- Encourage pedestrian crossings with **new mid-street crosswalk**, and more visible crosswalks (multiple locations)
- **Transform hidden wooded area** to a Market Street area amenity
- Improve or create connected pathways within properties along Market Street
- Provide bicycle parking
- Identify specific improved connections within privately owned lots (pedestrian pathways, plazas with art, seating or greenery within parking lot) outside of public right of way
- Install sidewalk amenities such as **seating and creative trash receptacles**

- **Improve pedestrian and cycling infrastructure**
- Creation of a plaza space
- Traffic study to identify if implementation of **roundabout(s)** and on street parking would be beneficial (while maintaining the local feel of the existing oak trees)
- Install wayfinding that coincides with **local flavor of Market District** and provides awareness to other community assets (i.e. 15 minutes to Florida State Capitol, 5 minutes to Bannerman Crossing, 1 mile to Maclay Gardens, 6 miles to Cascades Park)
- Improve **sidewalks**

Identity,
Branding +
Art

- Create new Market District **signage** that represents local flavor and welcomes visitors to the multiple entry points of Market Street
- Work with business owners to install more moveable **planters and greenery**; use planters and other measures to create additional seating space for surrounding businesses and pedestrians
- Beautify utility and traffic control boxes
- Create **branding mural** for Instagram photos and hashtag location
- Identify a **signature event** to draw new and repeat visitors
- Utilize brand/tagline and distinct visual for the brand throughout business activities
- Integrate brand into modern way-finding signage such as digital kiosk sign
- Create a consistent sign ordinance for the area; new development signs should include Market District brand
- Integrate positive, uplifting quotes to inspire on sidewalks and other infrastructure

- Focus on **lighting, landscaping** and **art** to manifest the brand and to create a **photogenic atmosphere**
- Unify landscaping to create a coherent, welcoming, aesthetically pleasing feel for the district
- Coordinate landscaping improvements with city-led infrastructure improvements
- Strengthen **natural connections** along the corridors while focusing to **maintain mature trees** and canopy to provide shade
- Best utilize public land, such as Martin Hurst Road to create **additional nature, walking and biking pathways** and points of connectivity
- Improve and resurface walkways to **enhance accessibility**
- Create landscaping improvements and landscaping enhancements to further support local identity

Safety

- **Add lighting** along Market Street and beyond
- **Improve efficiency and safety** by consolidating waste service locations and adding lighting by each location
- Secure **police enforcement of speed limits** and loitering on private property
- Use **tree canopies and shade structures** to create shade

- Traffic calming with high-profile, **raised crosswalks**
- **Traffic calming** on-street parking that complements the existing Oak Tree canopy
- Redesign intersection of Market Street and Maclay Blvd with traffic roundabouts
- Improve sidewalks
- Improve cycling lanes

Activation

- Create updated **Market District Business Association**, collect dues, hold board meetings, and stay active
- Leverage basic infrastructure such as crosswalks with new paintings and trash receptacles as **branding opportunities**
- Work with City of Tallahassee Parks & Recreation to add white lights to the tree canopy
- Create permanent infrastructure enhancement to extend visitor’s length of stay that includes seating and play equipment at overhauled stormwater pond and a smaller version on private property
- Experiment with **affordable engagement opportunities** such as outdoor games, local public art installations, and outdoors performances by local musicians by storefronts.
- Provide **outdoor classroom** to engage local school during walking field trips.

- **Landscaping Master Plan** to support activation plans and create connectivity
- Work with Visit Tallahassee to showcase district to outside travelers
- Enhance Martin Hurst Road to compliment Market Street and surrounding activities.
- Pilot pedestrian day on Market Street to coincide with an event
- Secure someone to manage social media for Market Street area and plan signature event
- Create schedule of **regular programming**, featuring signature event

*Goals are listed in priority order in each section.

Community Connections

Encourage physical activity and connectivity by improving walkability, cycling and other transportation opportunities. Create an inclusive and welcoming urban area for consumers of all ages and backgrounds.

Pedestrian safety and connective pathways were top priorities identified in the survey.

Design Inspiration Images



Identity, Branding + Art

Strengthen the Market Street experience and Market District brand to achieve a sustainable urban image by integrating physical and non-physical elements (i.e. culture, activities, social aspects) through new strategies.

Brand should be communicated thru: 1) Infrastructure, 2) Art (visual and performing), 3) Events, and 4) General Communication.

Design Inspiration Images



Safety

Ensure a sense of safety in and near Market Street.

People living near a popular park that is used by many people exhibit higher levels of civic trust, which is 10% more than residents who do not report such proximity. (Center for Active Design, 2017)

Design Inspiration Images

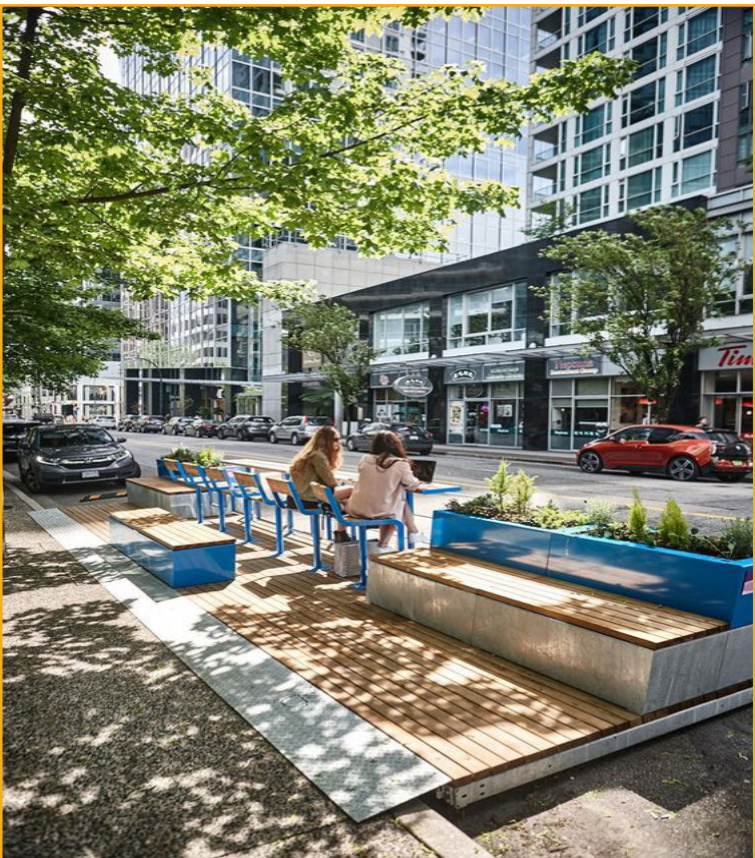


Activation

Promote interaction among community members and tourists by leveraging Market Street as a hub of dining, shopping, entertainment, arts and culture.

Transforming an underused parking area into a public plaza resulted in a 172% increase in retail sales for surrounding local businesses. (NYC DOT, 2012)

Design Inspiration Images



Community Input

Community Input was given through the form of workshop participation, meetings, and an electronic survey.

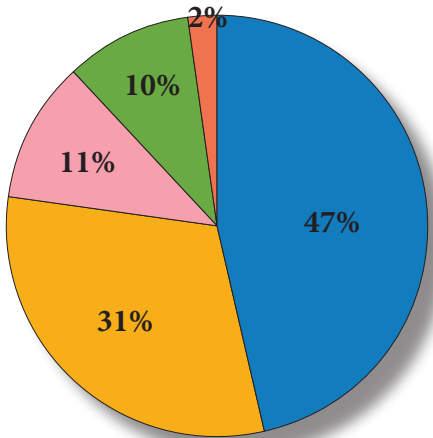
To allow for input from more than the workshop participants, a Qualtrics survey was created that posed questions to help prioritize items mentioned from conversations. The survey link was shared with Market Street businesses and they were encouraged to share with their customers. More than 300 people responded. Enhancements to pedestrian safety were deemed the most important.

Survey questions included items such as:

- “What are your priorities for improving the Market Street area? Please rank the following options, with your top priority being the #1 rank.”
- “When you are in an urban shopping space, which factor most makes you enjoy the space?”

#1 Ranked Priorities for Exploring the Market Street Area

- Multi-use Sidewalks
- Crosswalks
- Enhanced Signage
- Roundabouts
- Decorative Streetlights

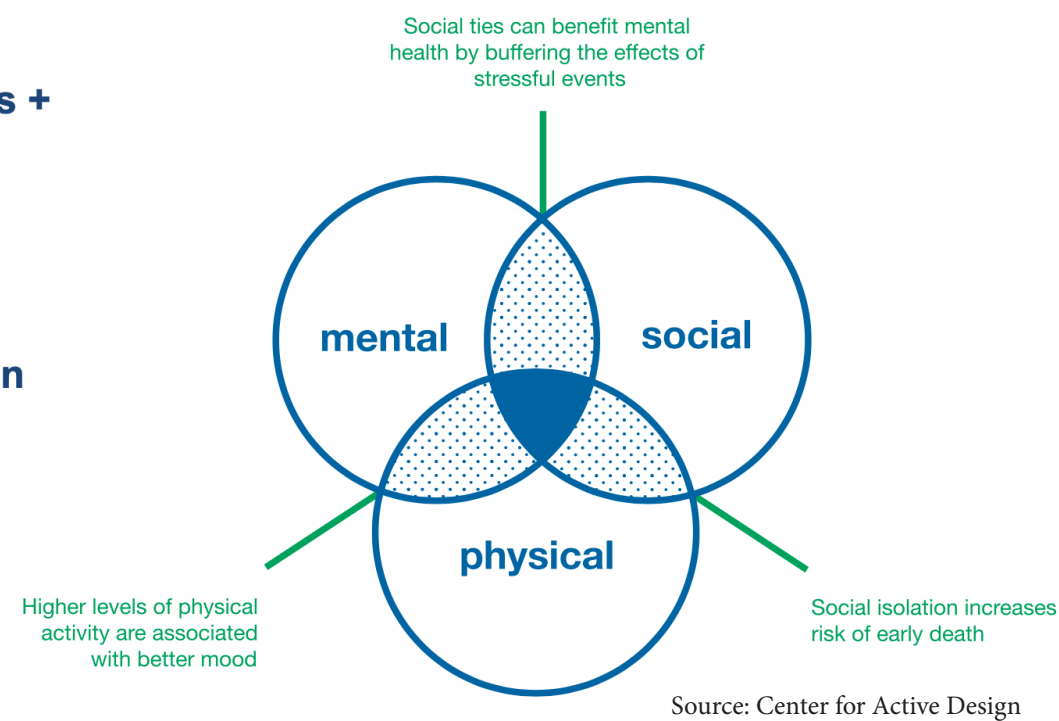


47% of respondents ranked multi-use sidewalks as their top priority for exploring the Market Street area.

The majority of survey respondents lived in the 32312 zip code (67 people) and identified themselves as nearby residents (89 people). There are a variety of improvements that can be done to make Market Street a vibrant and pedestrian-friendly shopping, dining, entertainment area where neighbors come together and local businesses thrive. The survey gathered feedback from participants to improve the area’s sense of place and help to make it an even more amazing place to work, shop, dine, exercise, and live.

4 Key Themes Addressing Interconnected Health Outcomes

- 1. Community connections + pedestrian safety
- 2. Identity, art + branding
- 3. Nature + landscaping
- 4. Maintenance + activation



Below are some of the survey question results:

- Please rank what is most important to you when exploring Market Street, with #1 as most important.
47% ranked improved multi-use sidewalks and pathways as top priority
- Which of the following strategies would make you feel safest in the Market Street area? Please rank the 4 options, with your top choice being the #1 rank.
48% ranked visible pedestrian/biking paths as most important
- What are your top priorities for improving traffic safety in the Market Street area?
45% ranked their top priority as redesigning the intersection of Maclay Blvd and Market Street to be more pedestrian friendly
- Top preferences for enhancing community connections between Market Street and neighboring areas: *community events celebrating local businesses, and outdoor seating distinct with the Market Street feel.*
- Top preferences for traffic control included *colorful crosswalks (39%) and street parking with native landscaping (32%).*

Center for Active Design started the visioning workshops with an educational presentation on placemaking and the community benefits. During the visioning workshops, participants were able to meet in small groups where each group discussed different topics. Participants then came back to the full virtual meeting and shared their priorities and ideas with the entire group. Priorities mentioned throughout this report were all items that came from the workshops.

“Front porch” improvements

METHOD

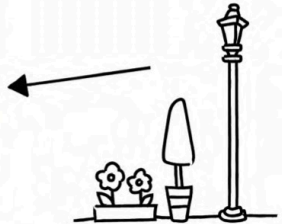
Each ACES respondent was randomly assigned just one photo and asked to imagine it was their local library and respond to questions.



PHOTO 1
LIBRARY WITHOUT
ENTRANCE IMPROVEMENTS



PHOTO 2
LIBRARY WITH SMALL-SCALE
ENTRANCE IMPROVEMENTS



I would feel
extremely welcome
attending an event
at the library

49%

59%

+10%
extremely welcome

Center for Active Design shared that minor aesthetic improvements make people feel more welcomed. -Source: Center for Active Design



People who are socially engaged tend to live longer and be healthier physically and mentally. (Leyden, 2003).

Conclusion

Struggling businesses are working to rethink and rebrand their customers’ experiences. And a weary public is looking for fun – and safe – spaces to express a bit of normal living. The Market Street area represents the potential of these two forces, creating a people-focused district for shopping, dining, and well-rounded living.

In summary, with a few improvements, Market Street can become a thriving, vibrant walkable urban center fostering continued job growth. There are numerous opportunities to improve the area’s connectivity, identity and safety while further activating the area. This will take a collaborative effort between public and private partners, but immediate improvements can be obtained in 2021.

The following low-cost items can easily be implemented to make an impact:

- Repainting existing crosswalks
- Painting a mid-street crosswalk
- Planters along Market Street
- Incorporating seating
- Adding artistic elements
- Refreshed brand

The Market Street area is transforming with private business enhancements. A new hotel has opened alongside significant Market Square private sector improvements. To the north of Market Street, a public park is slated for construction. And some of Tallahassee’s most distinct, locally-owned businesses are situated right along Market Street.

Now more than ever, we need to design and construct pathways for ‘enjoyable walkability’ to improve our city and boost the local economy.

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