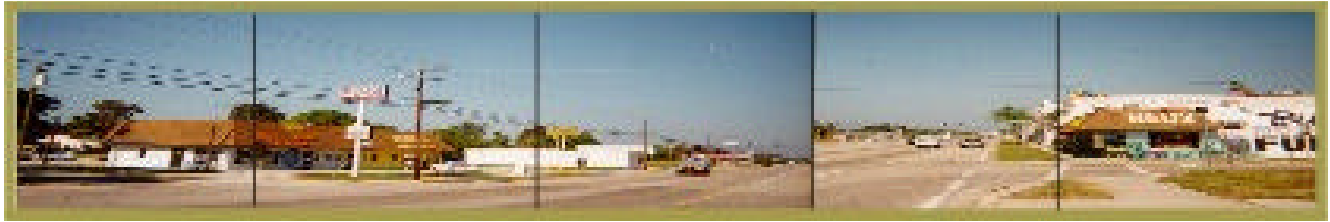


TWO: EXISTING CONDITIONS



Wide Angle View of the Nokomis Commercial Neighborhood Center at Colonia Lane and U.S. 41



Marina on Dona Bay –
U.S. 41



Neighborhood Center–
Colonia Lane



Neighborhood Center–
U.S. 41



Neighborhood Center –
US 41

General Description

The Nokomis Center is a two square mile area located within the greater Nokomis area just north of the City of Venice. The heart of the Nokomis Center is surrounded by water on three sides and contains approximately 290 acres of single family residential homes, 40 acres of multi-family, 80 acres of commercial, 12 acres of industrial and 6.5 acres of offices uses. U.S. 41 separates the Nokomis Center on the west with commercial uses located on both sides of the highway. The commercial strip along U.S. 41 north of Dona Bay is also included in the Nokomis Center study area. The historic community of Laurel (i.e., Laurel Community Development Area) is located just east and north of the Nokomis Center. The Seminole Gulf Railroad bisects the Nokomis Center further to the east. This chapter presents profiles of the existing conditions within the Nokomis Center (e.g., employment, population, housing and income) based on 1990 U.S Census Bureau data. Figure 2-1 shows U.S. Census Bureau geography for most of the larger Nokomis area.

Commercial Areas

The three commercial areas in the Nokomis Center each have a distinct character as defined by building style, business profile, land use and roadway characteristics. Many of the commercial area buildings were built after 1940 and prior to 1970, before the County adopted a comprehensive Zoning Code and Atlas in 1975. In the absence of early zoning and land development codes, many commercial properties have non-conforming development, such as substandard sized lots, insufficient parking and unscreened utilities. Others have non-conforming land uses that are inconsistent with existing zoning. Figure 2-2 shows existing conditions within the three commercial areas, which are described in greater detail. Figure 2-3 shows existing land uses within the Nokomis Center. Figure 2-4 shows existing zoning. Both maps are located at the end of the chapter.

U.S. 41 Commercial Corridor

The Commercial Corridor south of Collins Road to Dona Bay is dominated by highway-oriented retail and service industries. Buildings date from the 1930s with some new construction. There are some vacant properties and vacated buildings and some deteriorated buildings (see Figure 2-2A). Office, construction and transportation businesses have a significant presence. The corridor includes commercial businesses that serve primarily local residents, such as a hardware store, and more regional uses, such as restaurants, gas stations and convenience stores. Residential uses including mobile home parks and multi-family buildings are interspersed among the commercial properties. A marina with boat and jet-ski rentals is located at the southern end of the corridor.

Figure 2-1: 1990 U.S. Census Bureau Geography
(see table of contents for link to document)

Albee Road is a major intersection along the U.S. 41 commercial corridor, serving as a “gateway” to Casey Key, the public beaches and boat ramp. Because of its gateway significance, future commercial development along Albee Road should define a sense of place. A sense of place can be developed through architectural guidelines (see Project Sheet UD-1) and landscaping. Planting materials in the Albee Road median and the required landscaped buffers on commercial properties should be coordinated. Collins Road is the “gateway” to the Laurel Community and needs a similar treatment.

Nokomis Commercial Center

The historic Nokomis Commercial Center is located between Dona Bay and Roberts Bay. The City of Venice is located south of Roberts Bay, where Mediterranean Revival style architecture is predominant giving Venice its distinctive appearance. Typical of a community’s commercial core, retail trade and service industries dominate the Nokomis Commercial Center. Two-story Mediterranean Revival buildings characterize the commercial area east of U.S. 41, with historic single-family homes on Nippino Trail being used for commercial businesses. There are mostly vacant properties and substandard buildings along the west side of U.S. 41. (See Figure 2-2B.) This area is adjacent to homes being recommended for a local historic district. Architectural design standards are needed to ensure new development is compatible with the existing historic character. On both sides of U.S. 41, small lot sizes make it difficult for new development to meet current zoning and land development regulations. Parking is severely limited, with existing businesses using off-site lots and the rights of way for parking. Zoning code relief should be coordinated with capital improvements for roadway and water and sewer improvements to encourage redevelopment in this area.

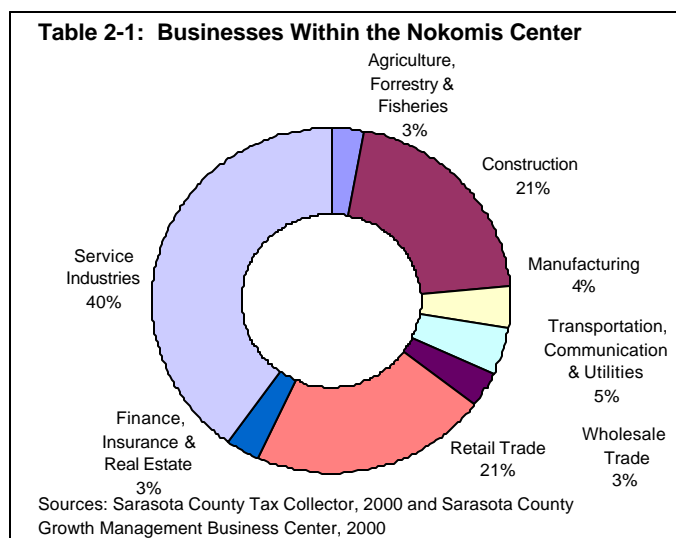
Colonia Lane is a major roadway which connects U.S. 41 to Albee Farm Road and serves as an entryway to the Colonia Lane Commercial and Industrial Area to the east. The intersections at U.S. 41 and at Albee Farm Road are “gateways” to the Nokomis Center.

Colonia Lane Industrial and Commercial Area

The Industrial and Commercial Area is located approximately one half mile east of U.S. 41, between the railroad tracks and Ravenna Street. Most businesses in this area are in retail and service industries. A sizable number of manufacturing, construction and wholesale trade industries also are found here. There is a convenience store at the intersection of Riverview Boulevard. Single-story cement block buildings constructed after 1950 characterize the area. Storage areas remain unscreened and many businesses lack adequate parking (see Figure 2-2C). Streets near the railroad tracks (i.e., Central Ave., Church Street and Palm Avenue) are not maintained and have poor traffic circulation patterns. Residents have asked that, in the long term, uses on Colonia Lane be de-intensified to more neighborhood commercial uses. These improvements can be encouraged through streetscape improvements and land use changes that allow transitions from industrial to neighborhood commercial uses, especially when the County develops a recreational trail on the railroad corridor.

Business Characteristics

Of the approximately 266 businesses within the Nokomis Center, most are in the service, construction or retail industries (see Table 2-1). Thirty-two percent of all businesses within the Nokomis Center are home based. Almost eight percent of the home based businesses are in the construction and service industries. Business and employment profiles on the following page provide additional comparisons and detail about businesses in the Nokomis Center. The data is described according to U. S. Census Bureau’s division of the Nokomis area. Table 2-2 compares the distribution of employment between Nokomis and the rest of Sarasota County. Table 2-3 shows the locations of businesses in the Nokomis Center. Table 2-4 lists blighted conditions generally found within the commercial areas. Blighted conditions are further described in the “Demographics” section of this chapter and must be confirmed through a finding of necessity, consistent with state statues.



Tables 2 - 2 – 2 - 4: Business and Employment Profiles

(see table of contents for link to document)

FIGURE 2-2: Existing Conditions in the Commercial Areas

(see table of contents for link to document)

Residential Areas

Residential areas in the Nokomis Center are diverse and have considerable range in location, size and price. There are 552 single-family residences, 94 duplex units, 89 multi-family units and 886 mobile homes (i.e., 335 in residential mobile home parks and 551 in the Residential, Combination Zone District).

Low-Moderate Income Areas and Affordable Housing

Affordable housing is a critical concern of Nokomis residents. Housing assistance programs are important to individual homeowners who meet low-moderate income criteria. (See Project Sheet NH-1.) Flexibility in County regulations and innovations in housing styles will further assist low-moderate income homeowners with new home construction. (See Project Sheet NH-2.)

The federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) used 1990 U.S. Census Bureau data to establish most of the Nokomis Center as a low to moderate-income area. On an area-wide scale, a low-moderate income classification makes the Nokomis Center eligible for federal funding through HUD's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The classification may change for some, or all of the, Nokomis Center when the 2000 U.S. Census data becomes available in the future. In areas where HUD has not established low-moderate incomes, the County can develop a socioeconomic profile of the community as the basis for CDBG funding assistance. Blight is one possible condition that the County can use to ensure that the Nokomis Center continues to be eligible for CDBG funding in the future.

Blighted Conditions

Florida State Statutes Chapter 163 includes a definition of blight and guidelines for designating an area as having blighted conditions. Such a designation can lead to additional funding opportunities. Blighted conditions that may be evident in the Nokomis Center include defective or inadequate street and lot layout, inadequate parking, deterioration of sites (see Table 2-4). Information contained in Table 2-4 and Figure 2-4 can be used as a starting point for establishing finding of necessity for the Nokomis Center in the future. Residential areas should also be included in any findings of necessity.

Urban Infill and Redevelopment Areas

The Nokomis Center may be eligible for other funding sources, such as the Florida Department of Community Affairs Urban Infill and Redevelopment Assistance Grant Program. The County should establish the Nokomis Center as an "Urban Infill and Redevelopment Area" on the Comprehensive Plan.

Demographics

Demographic data comparing 1990 U. S. Census Bureau Data for Sarasota County with the Nokomis Center are illustrated on Table 2-5, Population; Table 2-6, Housing; and Table 2-7, Income.

Population – Table 2-5

<p>Total Population in 1990</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> μ Sarasota County – 277,776 μ Census Tract 22 – 10,969 μ Nokomis Census Defined Place (CDP) – 3,448 <p>Source: US Census of the Population and Housing</p>	<p>Median Age of Population in 1990</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> μ Sarasota County – 49.5 μ Census Tract 22 – 58.3 μ Nokomis Census Defined Place (CDP) – 43.5 <p>Source: US Census of the Population and Housing</p>
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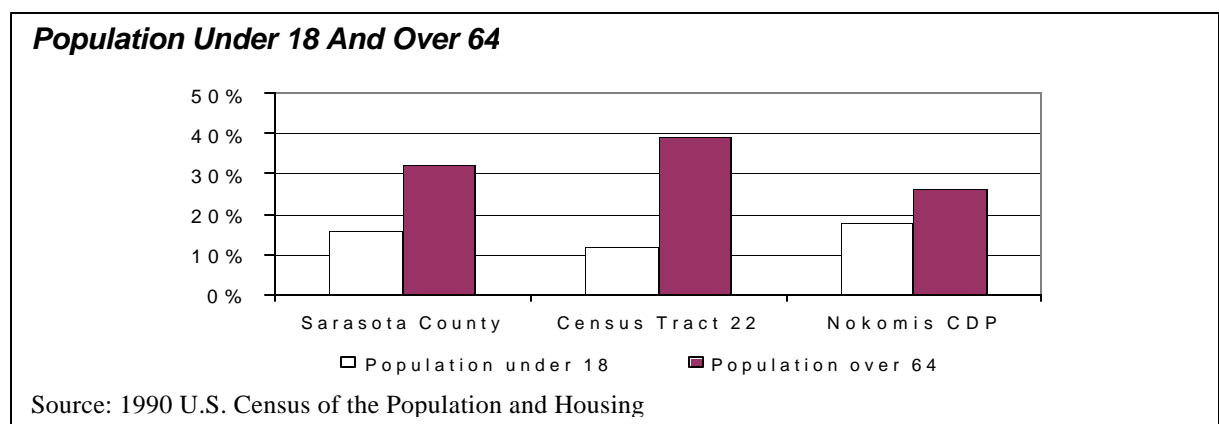


Table 2-6: Housing Profile

(see table of contents for link to document)

Table 2-7: Income Profile

(see table of contents for link to document)

Figure 2-3: Existing Land Use

(see table of contents for link to document)

Figure 2-4: Existing Zoning

(see table of contents for link to document)