



BENCHMARKING UPTOWN

26 Indicators of Community Importance

Produced by: Tampa Bay Partnership Foundation
Supported by: The Florida Blue Foundation



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Executive Summary

This report, produced by the Tampa Bay Partnership Foundation with generous financial support from the Florida Blue Foundation, is a first-of-its-kind community tool that applies the methodologies used in the *Regional Competitiveness Report* to one specific neighborhood. The neighborhood of interest is Uptown, also known as the University Area, in Hillsborough County, Florida.

Uptown is a neighborhood consisting of 5.4 square miles adjacent to the Tampa campus of the University of South Florida. The neighborhood is anchored by University Square Mall, with East Fowler Avenue and East Fletcher Avenue serving as significant thoroughfares throughout the community. These borders create a highly diverse neighborhood of roughly 46,000 people who live and work in the Tampa Bay region.

Diversity is one of the things residents said they love about living in Uptown. Unfortunately, impacts from historic policies rooted in system racism continue to have modern impacts and it is not uncommon across the United States of America to find that neighborhoods with the most diversity, i.e., places with a higher non-White, non-Hispanic population, are also neighborhoods where residents have lower incomes and poor health outcomes. Residents in these neighborhoods face greater barriers to breaking through the multi-generational hold poverty creates.

The struggles of overcoming multi-generational poverty in America are well documented. In Hillsborough County specifically, a child born to parents with high income¹ has a 23 percent chance of also belonging to the top income bracket² by age 35. However, a child born to low-income parents³ only has a seven percent chance of this same success. In parts of Uptown, the chances of a child reaching the top income bracket (for children born to parents at all levels of the income distribution) are as low as three percent.⁴

This reveals that Uptown residents face significant challenges in achieving upward mobility. Investment and systemic change are needed to ensure that all residents in the Tampa Bay region receive the same opportunity to prosper, and that the characteristics of their neighborhood are not holding them back. Actors at all levels are working to improve community outcomes ranging from residents to community intermediaries such as the University Area Community Development Corporation (UACDC), United Way Suncoast, and Soaring City Innovation Partnership, to large foundations such as the Florida Blue Foundation. This report is intended to help actors and the private sector in Tampa Bay to understand what neighborhood inequalities in Uptown make it especially difficult for Uptown residents to thrive.



¹ Household income in the 75th percentile of the income distribution, roughly \$95,000 in 2015.

² Household income in the 80th percentile of the income distribution.

³ Households income in the 25th percentile of the income distribution, roughly \$27,000 in 2015.

⁴ Data from opportunityatlas.org, as developed by Opportunity Insights from Harvard University. <https://opportunityinsights.org/policy/frequently-asked-questions/>

The table below summarizes the findings by highlighting where there are community assets and where there are community gaps.

<i>TOPIC</i>	<i>COMMUNITY ASSETS</i>	<i>COMMUNITY GAPS</i>
HEALTH OUTCOMES	None identified	Lower life expectancy and greater mental health needs
HEALTH ACCESS	High number of doctors' offices and community health centers	Low health insurance rates
HOUSING	Better affordability for homeowners	Worse affordability for renters (who represent most of the population)
FOOD	High level of overall food access	Lower percentage of healthy food options
CRIMINAL JUSTICE	None identified	High child incarceration rate
MOBILITY, BUSES	High access to bus stops	High reliance on buses suggests a need for more bus infrastructure
MOBILITY, SAFETY	None identified	High pedestrian and cyclist fatality rate
K-12 EDUCATION	Select high schools have high graduation rates	Lower numbers of teachers and funding per student, low levels of internet access at home
EMPLOYMENT	High percentage of workers employed within 10 miles of home	High barriers to employment such as educational attainment levels, higher share of immediate employment in the service industry, workers who cannot find employment in the immediate area must travel farther
INCOME	None identified	Low net worth suggests a lack of long term wealth generating power

Boxes where no assets were identified mean the analysis in this report did not reveal a community asset. Assets may exist that were not studied here.

Of course, there are topics that do not have a dataset to analyze and benchmark. Information such as the amount of money residents put towards rental application fees only to be denied a unit was of significant interest to community members. Such qualitative findings must come from residents and the community intermediaries who serve them. With this in mind, the findings from this report set the stage for community goal

setting and advocacy. However, community intermediaries should use report data with the resident's voice at the forefront.

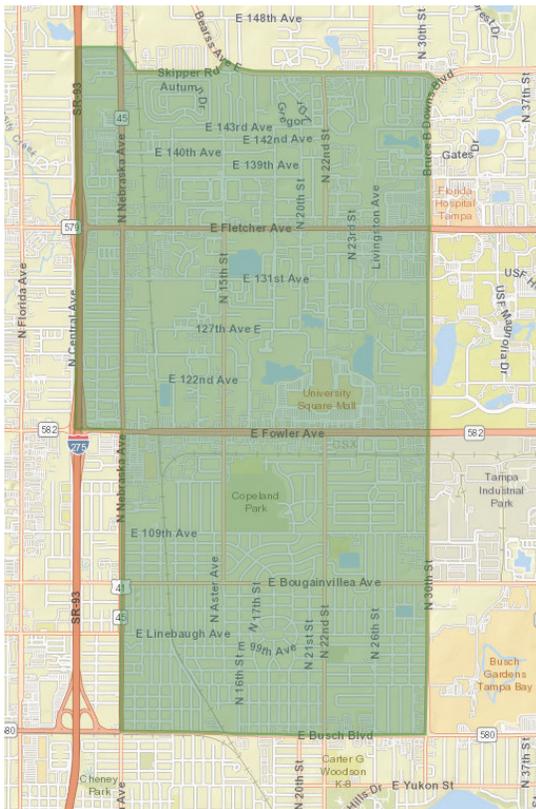
The full report dives deep into the topics listed above, with source notes and visualizations contextualizing Uptown's standing against the broader region.

INTRODUCTION

Where is Uptown?

Uptown, also known as the University Area, is a neighborhood adjacent to the Tampa Campus of the University of South Florida (USF) in the Tampa Bay region. Only 5.4 square miles, the neighborhood is anchored by University Square Mall. East Fowler Avenue and East Fletcher Avenue serve as major thoroughfares through the community. On the eastern border, running along Bruce B. Downs Boulevard, several regional institutions include: Florida Hospital Tampa, Moffitt Cancer Center, James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital, USF, an industrial park that houses Pepsi Tampa and Yuengling Brewing Company, and Busch Gardens theme park. On the neighborhood's west side, I-275 serves as the neighborhood boundary, as does Bearss Avenue East to the north and East Busch Boulevard to the south.

Map 1 - Uptown



Uptown is a highly diverse neighborhood. There is an 87% chance that two people selected at random will belong to different racial or ethnic groups.

These borders create a highly diverse neighborhood of roughly 46,000 people who live and work in the Tampa Bay region. In the Uptown neighborhood, there is an 87 percent chance that two people selected at random will belong to different racial or ethnic groups. Compare that to 80 percent in the City of Tampa and 70 percent in the entire Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater Metropolitan Statistical Area (encompassing Hernando, Hillsborough, Pasco, and Pinellas Counties, referred to as the Tampa MSA in the remainder of this report).

With this diversity in mind, it is less surprising to see how fast the neighborhood has grown over the last decade. From 2010 to 2020, the population of Uptown grew by 20 percent. Put another way, roughly one-in-five Uptown residents moved into the area in the last 10 years. Compare this to the 15 and 14 percent growth experienced by the City of Tampa and Tampa MSA over the same period.

Uptown Advantages and Challenges

Diversity is one of the things residents said they love about living in Uptown. From one resident's perspective, a combination of cultures and ethnicity (in Uptown) contributes to a diverse community and makes them a better person. Other community assets include the proximity to the beach and Busch Gardens for entertainment and the neighborhood's central location, making it easy to get to different places, whether by car or bus.

Unfortunately, it is not uncommon across America to find that neighborhoods with the most diversity, i.e., places with a higher non-White, non-Hispanic population, are also neighborhoods where residents have lower incomes and poor health outcomes. Residents in these neighborhoods face greater barriers to breaking through the multi-generational hold poverty creates. In community conversations, residents pointed out multiple barriers they face to improving their livelihoods which could be summed up by one resident's comment, "People working in the neighborhood who are keeping Tampa alive are struggling to find housing and raise a family."

Data backs this statement. Estimates provided by United Way Suncoast show that, as of 2018, more than one-third (39 percent) of households in Uptown are ALICE households, meaning they are Asset Limited, Income Constrained, and Employed. ALICE households struggle to maintain a family survival budget and likely cannot afford a \$400 hit to their monthly budget. More than two-thirds (68 percent) of the households in Uptown either have income below the federal poverty level or are ALICE households.⁵ Compare this to Hillsborough County, where 42 percent of households have incomes below the ALICE threshold.

ALICE numbers reveal that many families in Uptown struggle financially, while data from Opportunity Insights highlights the multi-generational pull created by poverty. The struggles of overcoming multi-generational poverty in America are well documented. In Hillsborough County specifically, a child born to parents with high income⁶ has a 23 percent chance of also belonging to the top income bracket⁷ by age 35. However, a child born to low-income parents⁸ only has a seven percent chance of this same success. In parts of Uptown, the chances of a child reaching the top income bracket (for children born to parents at all levels of the income distribution) are as low as three percent.⁹

This reveals that Uptown residents face significant challenges in achieving upward mobility. Investment and systemic change are needed to ensure that all residents in the Tampa Bay region receive the same opportunity to prosper, and that the characteristics of their neighborhood are not holding them back. Actors at all levels are working to improve community outcomes ranging from residents to community intermediaries such as the **University Area Community Development Corporation (UACDC), United Way Suncoast, and Soaring City Innovation Partnership, to large foundations such as the Florida Blue Foundation.**

This report is intended to help actors and the private sector in Tampa Bay to understand what neighborhood inequalities in Uptown make it especially difficult for Uptown residents to thrive.



68%

of households in Uptown have income below the federal poverty level or are ALICE households.

Asset Limited, Income Constrained, and Employed (ALICE) households struggle to maintain a family survival budget and likely cannot afford a \$400 hit to their monthly budget.

⁵ Estimates based on 2018 zip code level data provided by United Way Suncoast for the State of Florida. While the Uptown geography is not based on a collection of zip codes, zip code 33612 and 33613 are used where data necessitates analysis at this geographic level.

⁶ Household income in the 75th percentile of the income distribution, roughly \$95,000 in 2015.

⁷ Household income in the 80th percentile of the income distribution.

⁸ Households income in the 25th percentile of the income distribution, roughly \$27,000 in 2015.

⁹ Data from opportunityatlas.org, as developed by Opportunity Insights from Harvard University. <https://opportunityinsights.org/policy/frequently-asked-questions/>

What is this report? How to use it.

This report, produced by the Tampa Bay Partnership Foundation with generous financial support from the Florida Blue Foundation, is a first-of-its-kind community tool that applies the methodologies used in the *Regional Competitiveness Report* to one specific neighborhood. The *Regional Competitiveness Report* compares a single area, Tampa Bay, to other major cities on more than 60 indicators to benchmark and quantify the region's performance and progress.

Applying this analytical approach to the Uptown neighborhood identifies community strengths and gaps, helps community members advocate for funds and services, and sets the stage for community goal setting. This report compares Uptown to the City of Tampa, Hillsborough County, the Tampa MSA, and the State of Florida across more than 25 metrics broken out into categories of community importance.

Community intermediaries can use insights from the report to define strategies and lead to transformative investments in Uptown's future.



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Selecting Metrics

While inspired by the *Regional Competitiveness Report*, this benchmarking report has tailored metrics to Uptown. Soaring Cities Partnership and Crossover Church hosted two community feedback sessions in August and September of 2022 where residents expressed their opinions on the positive aspects and challenges they faced living in Uptown.

Major topics of conversation included mobility and pedestrian safety, homelessness, housing affordability, and the need for more services in the community for children and individuals impacted by the criminal justice system. Specific comments and insights are included throughout the report.

The findings in the *University Area Community Development Corporation's 2019 Community Survey* also informed metric selection. The UACDC surveys the community approximately every two years to help define programming and identify community needs. For example, a recent survey highlighted the desire for more jobs in the neighborhood that pay a livable wage, additional bus service options that address last-mile transit, the removal of three grocery bag per-person limits, and more rent-to-own housing programs.

This quantitative and qualitative data informed the final list of 26 metrics and reflected the community's needs. The metrics fall into five categories:

- **Civic Quality**
- **Mobility**
- **Talent**
- **Economic Vitality**
- **General Outcomes**

CIVIC QUALITY

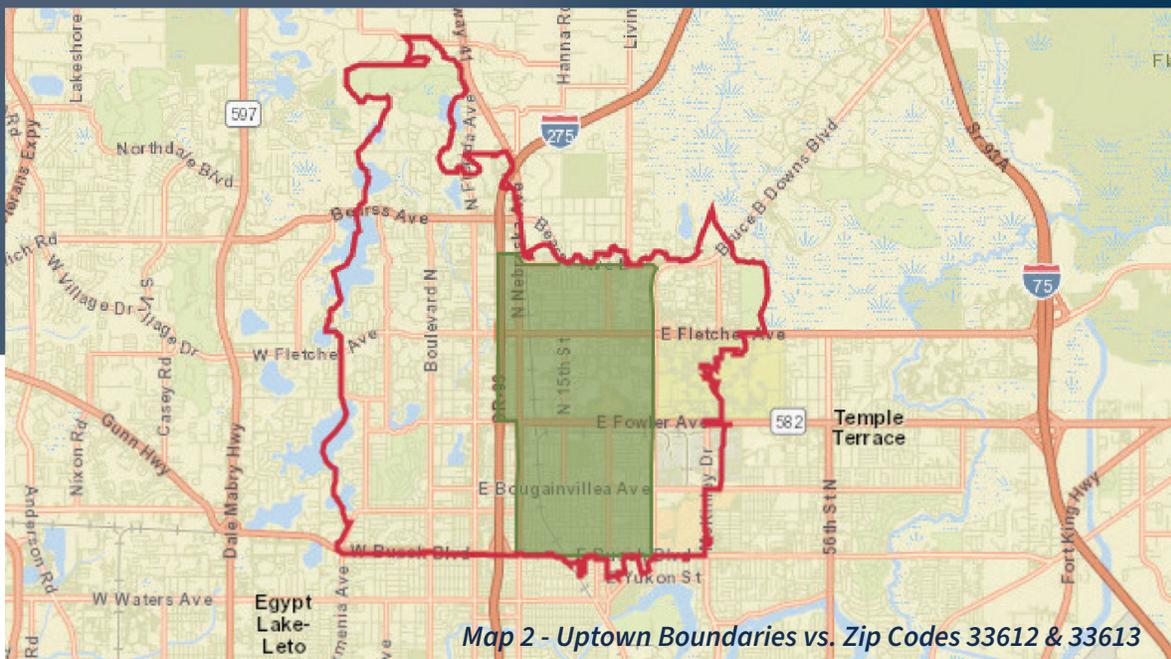
This section covers a wide range of topics, from health outcomes to the population impacted by the criminal justice system. It reinforces the point that neighborhood characteristics impact the lives of residents in the same way as where people work or go to school.

THE METRICS

Health Outcomes

Percentage of 2-1-1 Calls for Mental Health and Addiction Services

The share of total calls to 2-1-1 centers requesting mental health and addiction services. 2-1-1 is a free service across the country where individuals are directed to the community services they need in their area. It is important to note that data is only available at the zip code level, therefore the data reflected for this metric covers a larger geography than other metrics in the report. The Uptown neighborhood is contained within two larger zip codes (33612 and 33613). See the map below.



THE METRICS

Life Expectancy

Average life expectancy at birth for the population in each geographic area.

Why these metrics were selected and why they matter

The concept of health equity represents a “state in which everyone has a fair and just opportunity to attain their highest level of health.” This means removing obstacles to health and healthcare and addressing “preventable differences in the burden of disease, injury, violence, and opportunities to achieve optimal health,”¹⁰ otherwise known as health disparities. Stakeholders in this report were interested in understanding if health disparities exist that are specific to Uptown, as a starting point for working towards the goal of health equity.

The 2019 UACDC survey found that the top three areas for improvement for family health were weight loss, mental health, and lowering blood pressure. Calls to 2-1-1 for mental health services are used to reflect residents’ mental well-being.

Life expectancy is used as one measure of health equity. Differences in the life expectancy of individuals born in Uptown compared to the rest of the region would suggest that there are aspects about the community specifically impacting the health of residents, either positively or negatively. This is in line with the theory of the social determinants of health (SDoH) which states that health is the result of a combination of factors beyond simply medicine and healthcare. Health is also impacted by neighborhood factors such as educational access and quality, food access, economic stability, housing, and social inclusion.¹¹

WHAT THE METRIC SAYS ABOUT UPTOWN

Uptown has the highest rate of 2-1-1 callers requesting mental health services compared to the other geographies. Roughly one in four 2-1-1 calls in Uptown are primarily about mental health (25 percent). Compare this to 21 to 23 percent of calls in the City of Tampa and Hillsborough County and 12 percent in the Tampa MSA and State of Florida overall.

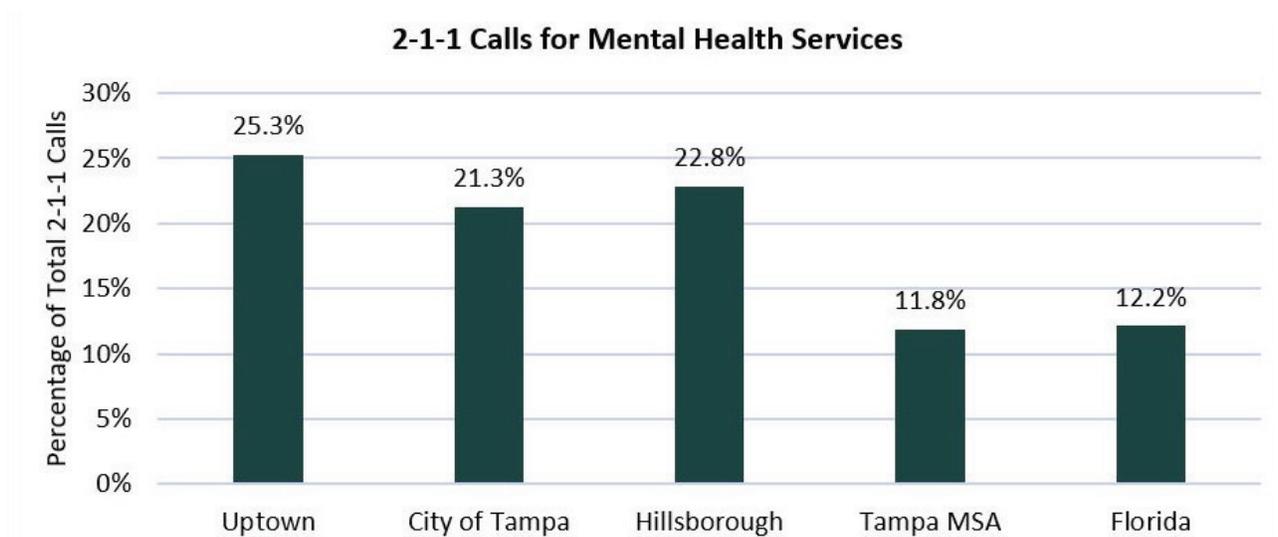
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Life expectancy for a child born in Uptown is 8 years less than the average life expectancy in Florida, and 5 years less than the overall life expectancy for the City of Tampa

¹⁰ <https://www.cdc.gov/healthequity/whatis/index.html>
¹¹ See the CDC website for more on the Social Determinants of Health, <https://www.cdc.gov/socialdeterminants/about.html>



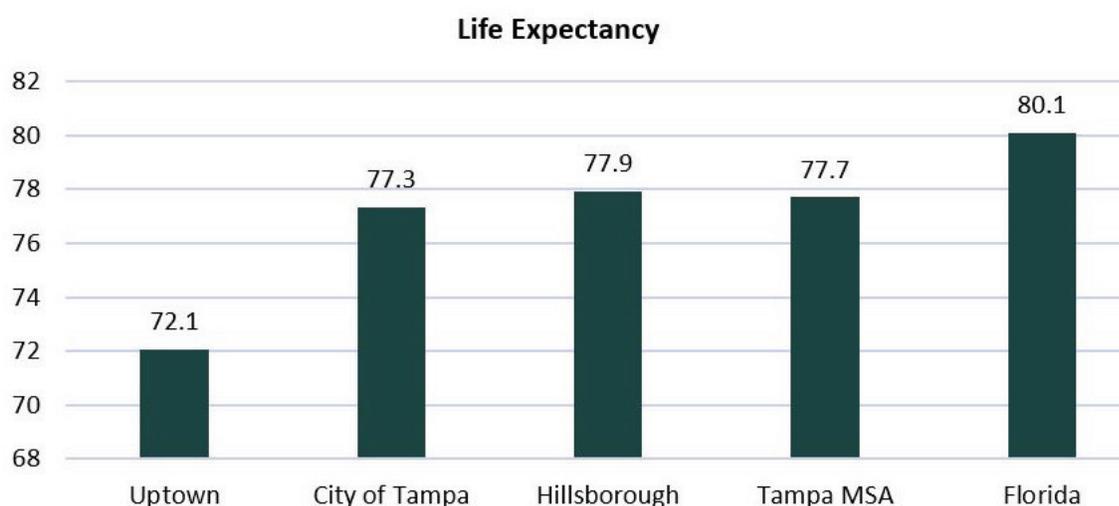
Figure 1 – 2-1-1 Calls for Mental Health Services



2-1-1 Counts Dashboard, Health Communication Research Laboratory at Washington University in St. Louis, all calls in 2021

This suggests there are health disparities present in Uptown that impact peoples’ daily lives. This is a complicated topic to unravel, but the report demonstrates that there are many metrics where Uptown residents have worse outcomes than surrounding areas. Further metrics will highlight disparities in access to healthcare, pedestrian safety, educational resources, food access, housing, and impacts from the criminal justice system. This is not an exhaustive list of the SDoH, but they likely contribute to the disparities in life expectancy shown in the chart below.

Figure 2 – Life Expectancy



Life expectancy at the census tract level from the National Center for Health Statistics. Average life expectancy for a child born in the area between 2010 and 2015.

HEALTHCARE ACCESS

Percent of the Population with Health Insurance

The share of the population in a region with health insurance, either public or private.

Health Centers per 10,000 People

The number of health centers in a designated geography, adjusted to show one health center for every 10,000 people. Health centers are “community-based and patient-directed organizations that deliver comprehensive, culturally competent, high-quality primary healthcare services to the nation’s most vulnerable individuals and families. Health centers integrate access to pharmacy, mental health, substance use disorder, and oral health services in areas where economic, geographic, or cultural barriers limit access to affordable healthcare.”¹² Health centers receive federal grant funding to run their operations.

Health Professionals per 1,000 People

Health professionals with a physical office in the geography, adjusted to show the total number of professionals per 1,000 people in the neighborhood/region.

Why these metrics were selected and why they matter

This collection of metrics measures healthcare access, both from an insurance coverage standpoint and a geographic standpoint, by analyzing the number of offices and doctors in the area. As the Regional Competitiveness Report states, “a higher share of insurance coverage within a community can manifest in better healthcare outcomes and reduces reliance on urgent-care facilities for non-emergency medical issues. The share of residents with health insurance may also be an indirect indicator of job quality within a region.”

Additional research on this topic is needed and has been requested by the community. Qualitatively, residents have shared they have difficulty obtaining health insurance, especially dental insurance.

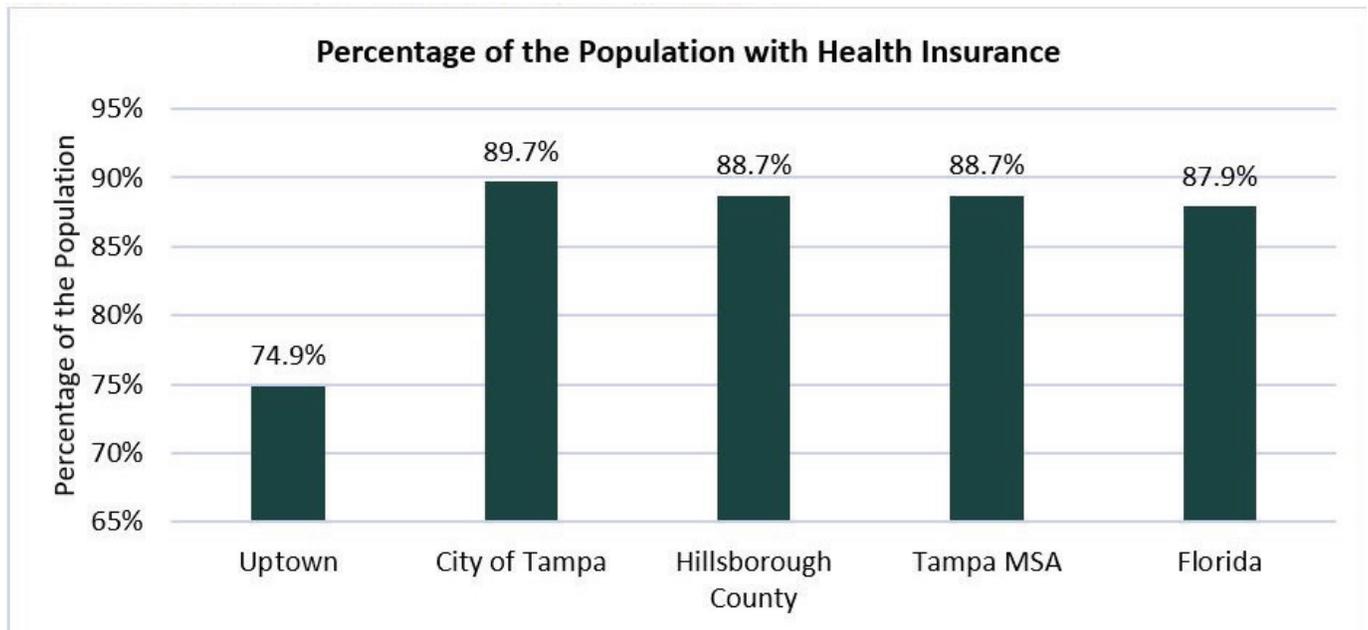
WHAT THE METRIC SAYS ABOUT UPTOWN

While 88 to 90 percent of the population in the City of Tampa, Hillsborough County, the Tampa MSA, and Florida have health insurance – this number drops to 75 percent for the residents of Uptown. Turning to local surveys, the 2019 UACDC report found that only 65 percent of the residents surveyed had health insurance. Compared with the comparatively high rates of other geographies, this range is a clear sign that neighborhood residents face significant barriers to finding health insurance.



¹² <https://bphc.hrsa.gov/about-health-centers/what-health-center>

Figure 3 – Percentage of the Population with Health Insurance



American Community Survey, 2020 5-year estimates

However, while a higher percentage of residents do not have health insurance in the Uptown neighborhood, Uptown has a similar per capita measure of doctors with offices in the area compared to the City of Tampa. Expanding the Uptown boundary slightly to include the hospitals and health centers across Bruce B. Downs Boulevard in the analysis causes the metrics on doctors per resident in Uptown to rise significantly. The charts below show health professionals and health centers (which specifically serve under-resourced populations) per person.

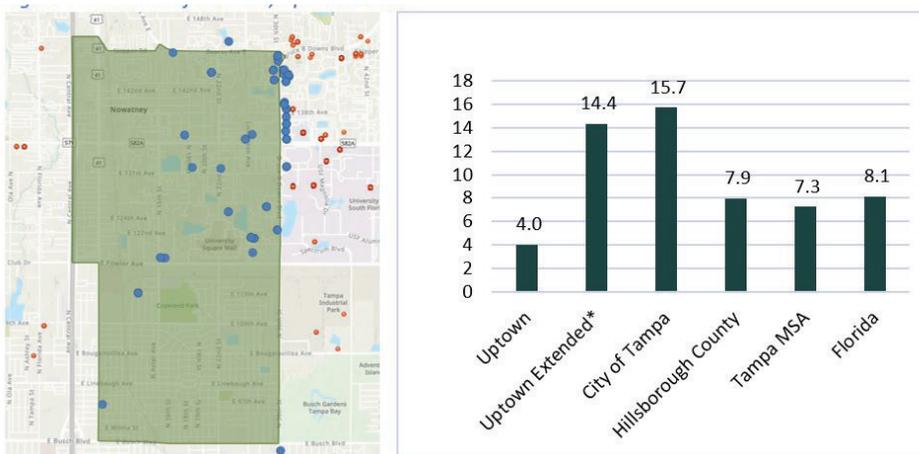
Uptown residents are

15-25%

less likely to have health insurance than elsewhere in the City of Tampa, the County, the region, or the state of Florida.



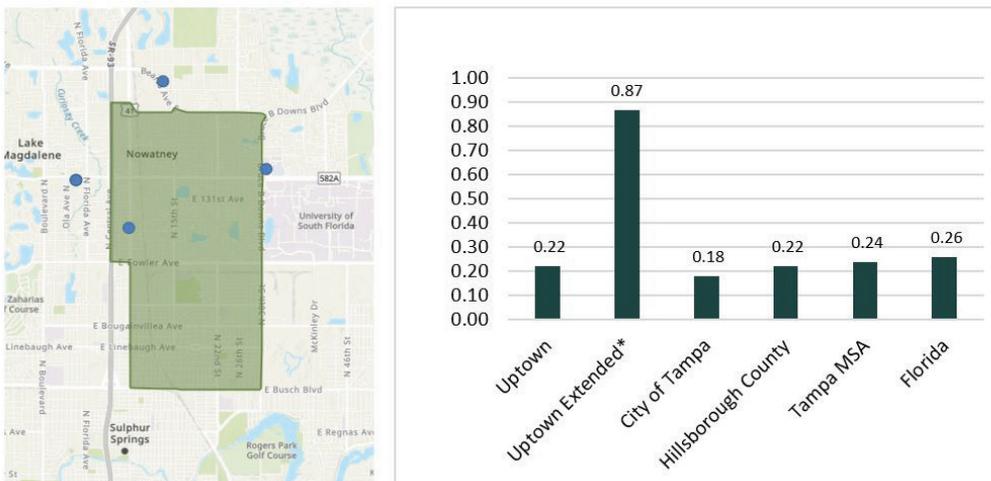
Figure 4 - Health Professionals, Uptown Detail



ArcGIS analysis of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Doctors and Clinicians national database, 2022

Looking only at offices within Uptown (the blue dots entirely inside the green area) shows only four health professionals for every 1,000 people. However, expanding the analysis by 0.1 miles to include doctors just across the street on Bruce B. Downs Boulevard captures enough doctors (blue dots just outside the green area) to send the number of health professionals per 1,000 people up to more than 14 – almost in line with the value for the City of Tampa, and higher than other geographies.

Figure 5 - Health Centers, Uptown Detail



ArcGIS analysis of the Health Resources and Services Administration health center locations, 2022

Looking only at health centers within Uptown (the blue dots entirely inside the green area) shows only 0.2 health professionals for every 10,000 people. However, expanding the analysis by 0.5 miles to include the health centers just outside of Uptown captures enough centers (blue dots just outside the green area) to send the number of health centers per 10,000 people up to more than 0.87 – almost in line with the value for the City of Tampa, and higher than other geographies.

Again, this analysis reveals sufficient healthcare providers in the Uptown neighborhood. Affordability of healthcare remains an issue, however. While the doctors included on the map above accept Medicare, this data does not reflect how many professionals in the area accept Medicaid, which a higher percentage of Uptown residents use as their primary form of healthcare.

The chart on the next page provides added context to the types of health insurance Uptown residents have compared to the typical coverage for residents of the Tampa MSA. While almost half of the Tampa MSA population has employer-based health insurance, only 28 percent of the Uptown population has this type of private coverage. More than one-third of Uptown residents have Medicaid or means-tested public coverage, compared to 18 percent of the total population. Individuals relying on public coverage such as Medicaid often experience benefits cliffs, where a small increase in pay makes them ineligible to receive public subsidies, which in turn, lowers their net-monthly income despite a raise.¹³This often traps individuals in low-paying jobs.

1/3

Over 1/3 of Uptown residents have Medicaid or means-tested public coverage compared to 18% of the total population.

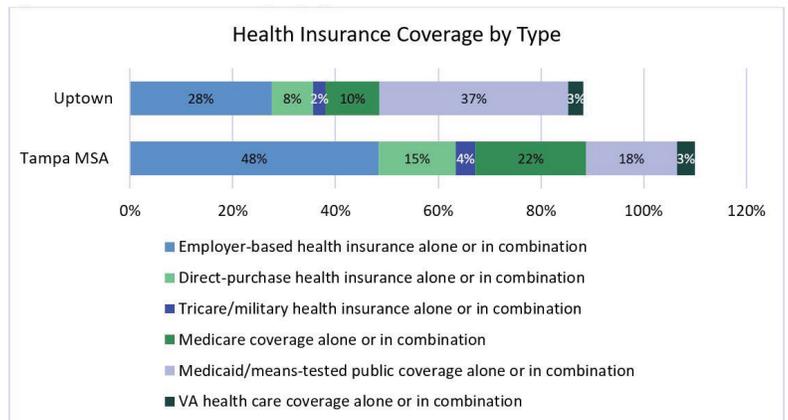
¹³ <https://fedcommunities.org/benefits-cliff-pitfalls/>



Benefits cliffs: where a small increase in pay makes them ineligible to receive public subsidies, which in turn, lowers their net-monthly income despite a raise. This often traps individuals in low-paying jobs.



Figure 6 – Health Insurance Coverage by Type



In summary, the data show that a lower percentage of Uptown residents have health insurance which explains the high number of government-funded Health Centers in the area. For those who do have health insurance there is also a high percentage of doctors’ offices in the surrounding area. However, the high rate of residents who rely on Medicaid for health insurance means many of these healthcare providers are likely not covered for Uptown residents.¹⁴

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY



Cost-burdened Renter Households

Households are considered cost-burdened when they pay more than 30 percent of their monthly income to housing expenses (including utilities). This measures the percentage of households paying more than 30 percent of their monthly income to gross rent.



Median Gross Rent

Gross rent includes utilities in the monthly calculation. The median is the middle value or middle person in a dataset. For this metric, 50 percent of renters pay below the median amount, and 50 percent pay above the median.



Housing Affordability Index (HAI)

Measures the ability of a typical resident to purchase a home in a geographic area. The HAI has a base of 100, representing where the median income is sufficient to qualify for a loan on a median-valued home and not be cost-burdened. HAI values higher than 100 indicate increasing affordability; HAI values less than 100 indicate areas where homes are less affordable and median income might be insufficient to purchase a median-valued home.

Why these metrics were selected and why they matter

Housing affordability was another major topic of concern expressed by the residents of the Uptown neighborhood during community meetings, with a specific focus on the increasing cost of rent. One resident noted that a two-bedroom, one-bath apartment that costs \$1,300 a month today might have cost as low as \$500 a month eight years ago and that new apartment buildings, while nice, are displacing current residents due to rental rate increases. One resident, a manager at a local restaurant, noted that every staff member at the business lives with someone else, whether roommates or their parents. It is “heartbreaking to see hard-working people who can’t find a place to go.”

These sentiments are consistent with the UACDC’s findings from their 2019 survey. Most residents, 79 percent, are renters. A similar percentage of residents have two to six people living in their homes but no more than two bedrooms (80 percent and 75 percent).

79%

of Uptown residents rent

75%

have 6 people living in their homes, but no more than two bedrooms

WHAT THE METRIC SAYS ABOUT UPTOWN

Uptown residents are more likely to be renters, and renters in Uptown are more likely to be cost-burdened than renters across the rest of the state. Roughly 61 percent of the renter households in Uptown are cost-burdened compared to 50 percent in the rest of the region.

While there are more cost-burdened renters, Uptown has the lowest median rent compared to other geographies. Apartments are relatively inexpensive in the Uptown neighborhood. Instead, residents' incomes are impacting their ability to find affordable housing.

~61%

of the renter households in Uptown are cost-burdened compared to 50% in the rest of the region.

Figure 8 – Median Gross Rent

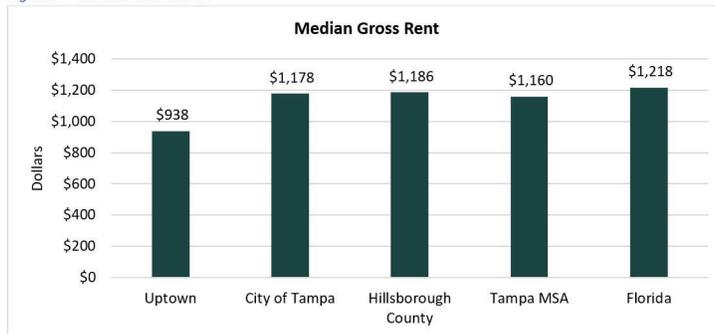


Figure 8 – Median Gross Rent

ESRI, 2020

A key issue arising from the community meetings was the struggle of applying to move into a new apartment complex. While there is not a dataset to explore, multiple residents in both community meetings noted that most apartment buildings require an application and a coinciding \$25-50 application fee. These applications often include a background check, and applicants are denied if they have a criminal record (this topic is discussed more in the section on the population impacted by the justice system). In the community feedback sessions, many residents expressed concern that they spent hundreds of dollars applying to move, only to not make it through the competitive process.

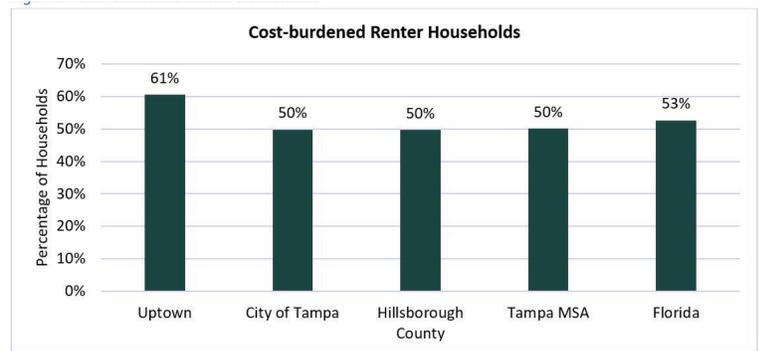


Figure 7- Cost-burdened Renter Households

ESRI, 2020

This contrasts with affordability for homeowners. In the chart below, values above 100 signal increasing affordability. The Uptown neighborhood's value of 115 means home affordability is 15 percent higher than the base required for the typical residents to qualify for a loan on a median-valued home in the area and not be cost-burdened. The City of Tampa is the least affordable, where affordability is four percent less than the base required to qualify for a median home.

Both median home price and median income impact this value. For comparison, the ratio of median income to median home price in the City of Tampa is 0.15 and 0.14 in Uptown. This could be interpreted as every \$0.15 of income in the City of Tampa can purchase \$1.00 of home value. While this shows Uptown to be slightly more affordable, it does not explain the 19-percentage-point difference in the HAI between the two geographies. This requires more research, especially considering that 79 percent of Uptown residents are renters.

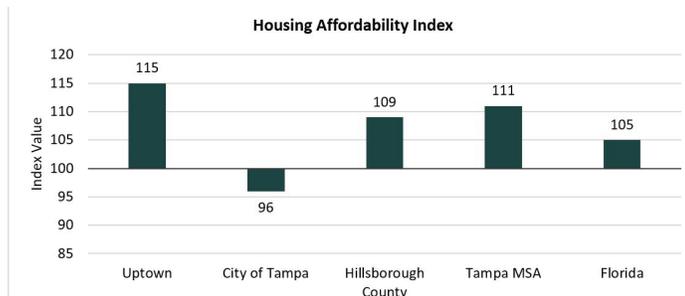


Figure 9 – Housing Affordability Index

ESRI, 2022

FOOD ACCESS

Population with Low Access to Supermarkets – The percentage of the population that lives more than half a mile away from a supermarket in an urban area or 10 miles away from a supermarket in a rural area.

Why these metrics were selected and why they matter

Access to healthy and affordable foods is one of the many social determinants of health discussed earlier in this report. Put another way, individuals who live in “food deserts,” where there are no grocery stores within a certain distance, are more likely to turn to convenience stores and junk food, which impact their health in the long term.

The 2019 UACDC survey found that almost one-third, 32 percent, of the population in Uptown faces challenges trying to eat healthy meals. The top obstacles to healthy eating were: 1) the cost of healthy food, 2) fresh food expires faster, and 3) they do not have time to cook fresh meals. In community meetings, one resident noted that there is “so much fast food in all the major thoroughfares – trying to find healthy food options is difficult.”

In community meetings, one resident noted that there is “so much fast food in all the major thoroughfares – trying to find healthy food options is difficult.”

32%

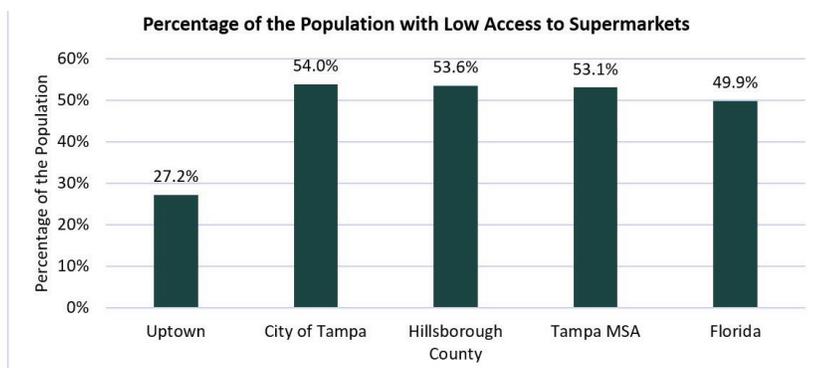
of the population in Uptown faces challenges trying to eat healthy meals.

WHAT THE METRIC SAYS ABOUT UPTOWN

The Uptown neighborhood performs better than the region and state for the share of the population with access to a supermarket. Only 27 percent of the Uptown population live beyond the half-mile range. Meanwhile, on average, half of the state population is considered low access to a supermarket, living either more than half a mile away in urban areas or more than 10 miles away in rural areas.



Figure 10 – Percentage of the Population with Low Access to Supermarkets



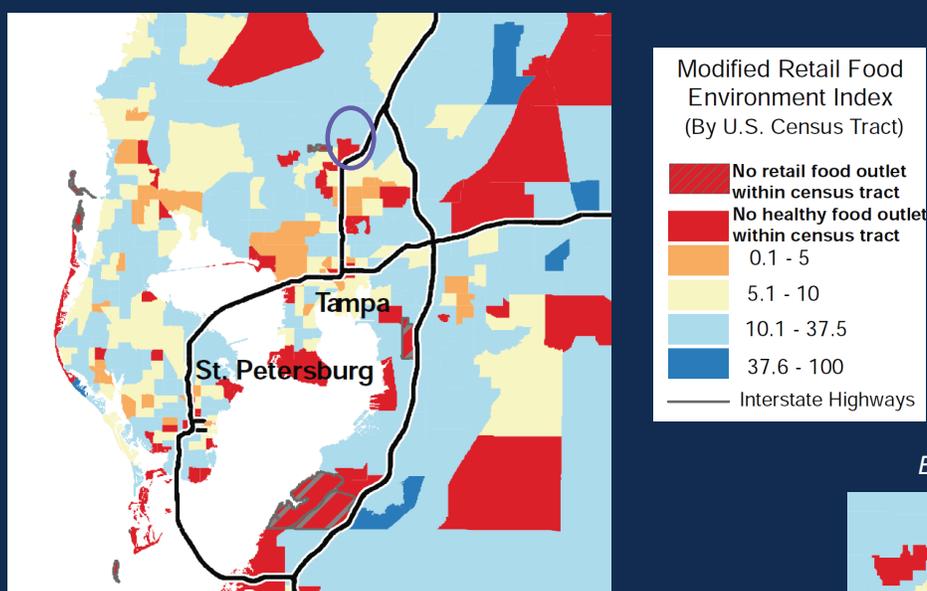
ArcGIS analysis of United States Department of Agriculture data, 2019.

every census tract in America. The mRFEI represents the percentage of food retailers in a neighborhood that are healthy compared to the total number of both healthy and non-healthy retailers.¹⁶

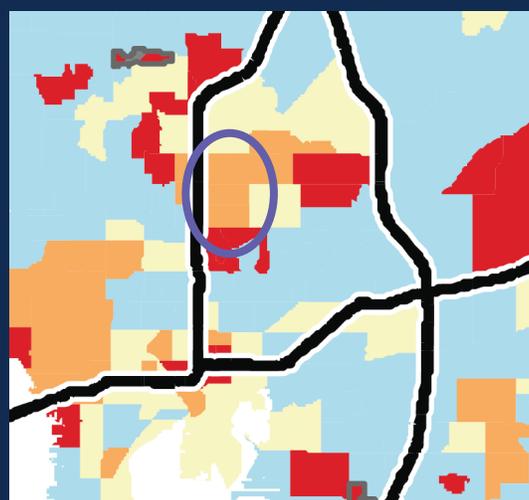
If Uptown had performed worse than the regional average, the data to the left might have signified a food desert. However, the concept of food swamps is worth mentioning here. Food swamps “are environments saturated with unhealthy foods because of the large number of corner stores and fast-food outlets in them.”¹⁵

While there is not a dataset more recent than 2008 (released in 2011) for the ratio of healthy to unhealthy food in a neighborhood, the CDC did release a study a decade ago showing the modified retail food environment index (mRFEI) for

Map 3 – Modified Retail Food Environment Index, Tampa Area



Map 4 – Modified Retail Food Environment Index – Uptown Detail



In 2011, that report included the map to the right for the Tampa Bay area. The Uptown neighborhood is circled in purple. Most of Uptown is orange, with some yellow tracts, signifying that (at least in 2008) in the orange areas only 0.1 to five percent of food retailers offered healthy food.

CDC, Census Tract Level State Maps of the Modified Retail Food Environment Index (mRFEI), 2011

¹⁵ https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2020/20_0029.htm

¹⁶ https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/downloads/census-tract-level-state-maps-mrfei_TAG508.pdf

POPULATION IMPACTED BY THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Why these metrics were selected and why they matter

During community meetings it became clear that many Uptown residents have seen their lives impacted by the criminal justice system in some way. This topic was part of the housing conversation where residents noted that without a “ban the box” style rule for housing applications, the current system allows apartment complexes to charge application fees to potential residents whose applications will inevitably be denied because of their criminal record. This leaves individuals with little to no choice in housing options and puts them in living situations that may increase their likelihood of reoffending.

Other residents noted that perhaps with more direction or support as a teenager, they may not have ended up in prison.

Some residents voiced frustration with the level of investigative work by police in the neighborhood. This aligns with the 2019 UACDC survey that found 67 percent of residents reported police actively patrolling their neighborhood. Still, only 61 percent of residents thought police effectively dealt with crime in their neighborhood.

While there is no standardized metric or dataset to estimate how many people in a given region have a criminal record and require re-entry services, this metric offers generational data showing the likelihood a child born in the area will find themselves in jail or prison.



Child Incarceration Rate

The percentage of children who grew up in the area who were in prison or jail as of April 1, 2010.



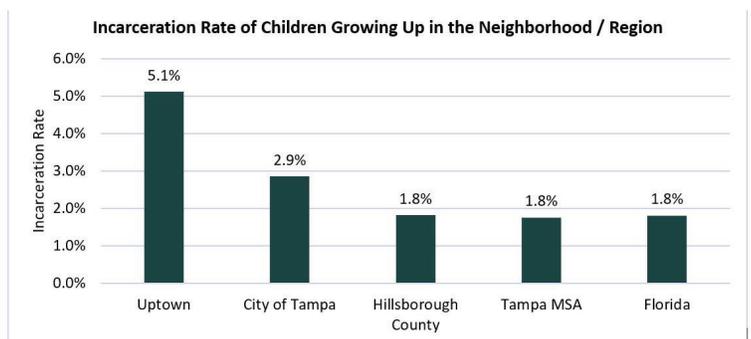
What the metric says about Uptown

The data shows that a child growing up in Uptown has roughly two times the chance of going to jail or prison compared to a child growing up somewhere else in the region or state. The data shows that five percent of children who grew up in Uptown were in jail or prison in 2010.

Generational data such as this necessarily feels out of date. The life trajectories and outcomes of children born in Uptown today, or even 10 years ago, will not be known for decades. While this data represents outcomes for individuals born decades ago, coupled with resident feedback, it is a strong indicator of two things.

- 1) In Uptown, an outsized portion of adult residents require re-entry services.
- 2) Changing the future trajectory of the neighborhood requires investing in Uptown children and teens today.

Figure 11 – Incarceration Rate of Children Growing up in the Neighborhood / Region



ArcGIS analysis of data published by Opportunity Insights. The incarceration rate for children of any race or gender born in households of any parent income percentile, 2010.

THE METRICS

MOBILITY

This section focuses on how easy it is to get around the Uptown neighborhood and how safe it is for pedestrians.

Workers Commuting by Bus

The percentage of workers (age 16 or over) who primarily take a bus or trolley bus to work.

Population that Can Walk to a Bus Stop

The percentage of the population in each geographic area within a 10-minute walk of a HART (Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority) bus stop.

Why these metrics were selected and why they matter

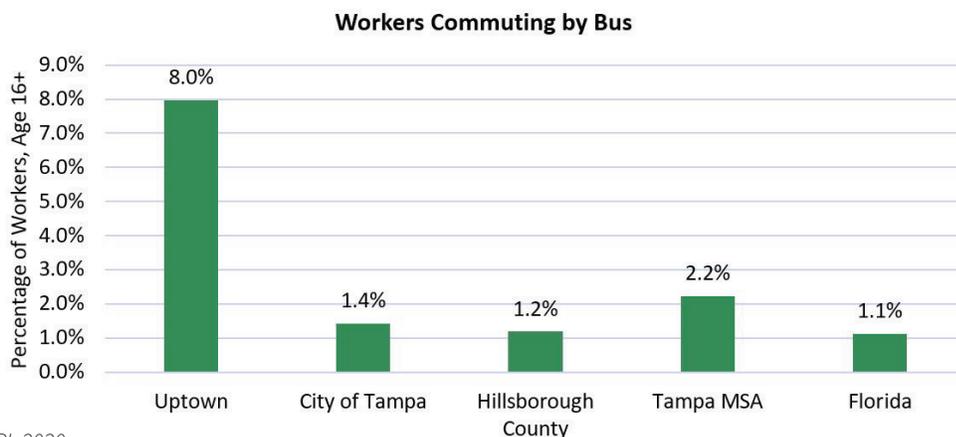
Buses were an essential topic of conversation for Uptown residents during community sessions. Residents requested more frequent service, especially along Route 30. They also expressed a need for more wheelchair-designated spots on the buses and infrastructure enhancements at bus stops – such as rain covers. One resident noted that there is plenty of space on buses for people who do not need wheelchairs, but if the two wheelchair spots on a bus are occupied, a person is left waiting outside for another hour before a different bus comes by with available wheelchair seating. Multiple residents noted they often find themselves waiting in the rain for a bus and then getting on the cold bus wet.

Bus service improvements are a longstanding need previously discussed by the community. The 2019 UACDC survey also included many bus-specific items on a wish list of services, including a last-mile shuttle bus that helps transport residents from their homes to bus stops.

WHAT THE METRIC SAYS ABOUT UPTOWN

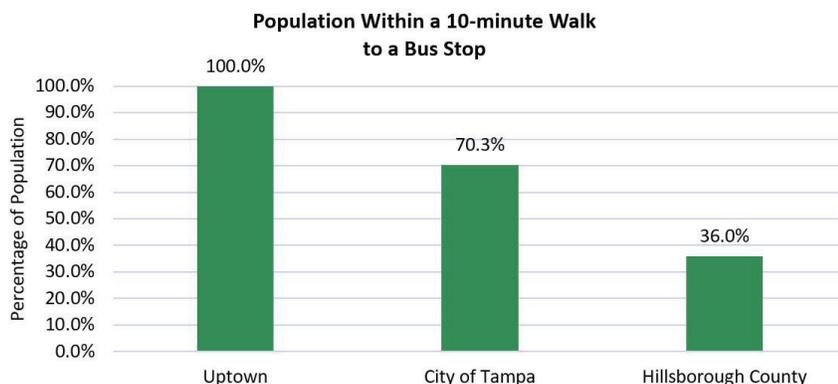
Together, these two metrics show that bus use and access in Uptown is extremely high. Uptown residents commute by bus at a rate almost six times higher than City of Tampa residents. An impressive 100 percent of Uptown residents are within a 10-minute walk of at least one stop, compared to 70 percent of the population in the City of Tampa.

Figure 12 – Workers Commuting by Bus



ESRI, 2020

Figure 13 – Population Within a 10-minute Walk to a Bus Stop



ArcGIS analysis of the population within a 10-minute walk from a HART bus stop. Bus stop locations sourced from Hillsborough County GIS Department. Bus stops from 2021, population data from 2022.

While these metrics do not show the percentage of residents who require additional services on buses, such as wheelchair spots, or the quality of bus stop infrastructure, they point to the more significant takeaway that residents' concerns and suggestions should be taken seriously. These are not nice-to-have improvements noted on a whim; they are concerns from a demographic group that relies on bus transit at much higher rates than the rest of the community.



PEDESTRIAN SAFETY & WALKABILITY

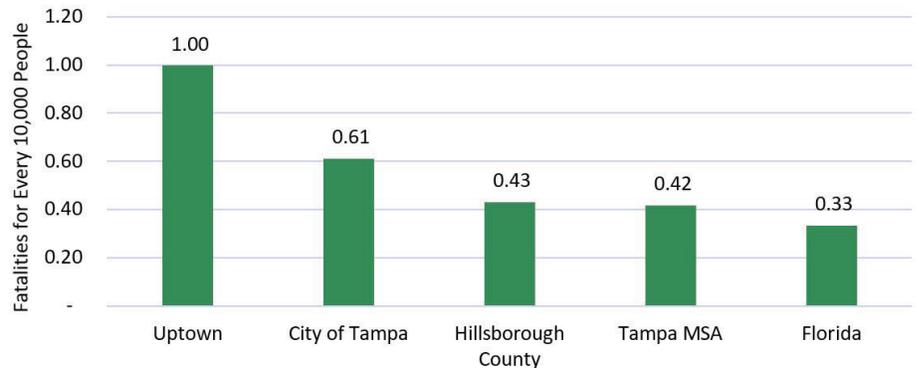
THE METRIC

Pedestrian and Bicyclist Fatalities

The number of pedestrian and cyclist deaths in the neighborhood for every 10,000 people. An annual average based on five years of data from 2016 through 2020.

Figure 14 – Pedestrian and Bicyclist Fatalities per Year

Pedestrian and Bicyclist Fatalities per Year per 10,000 Residents



ArcGIS analysis of accident data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Accident data for the five years from 2016 to 2020. Population data from 2022.

Why these metrics were selected and why they matter

Pedestrian safety was one of the top topics of conversation at the two community feedback sessions. Low-income neighborhoods often have higher rates of pedestrian deaths because of the poor condition of roadways, sidewalks, and infrastructure, in addition to a higher percentage of individuals who walk or bicycle as a major form of transportation. Smart Growth America’s annual Dangerous by Design report from 2020 found that “older adults and people walking in low-income neighborhoods were struck and killed at much higher rates than other populations in 2020, as with past years.” This intersects with racial demographics: “people of color, particularly Native and Black Americans, are more likely to die while walking than any other race of ethnic group.”¹⁷

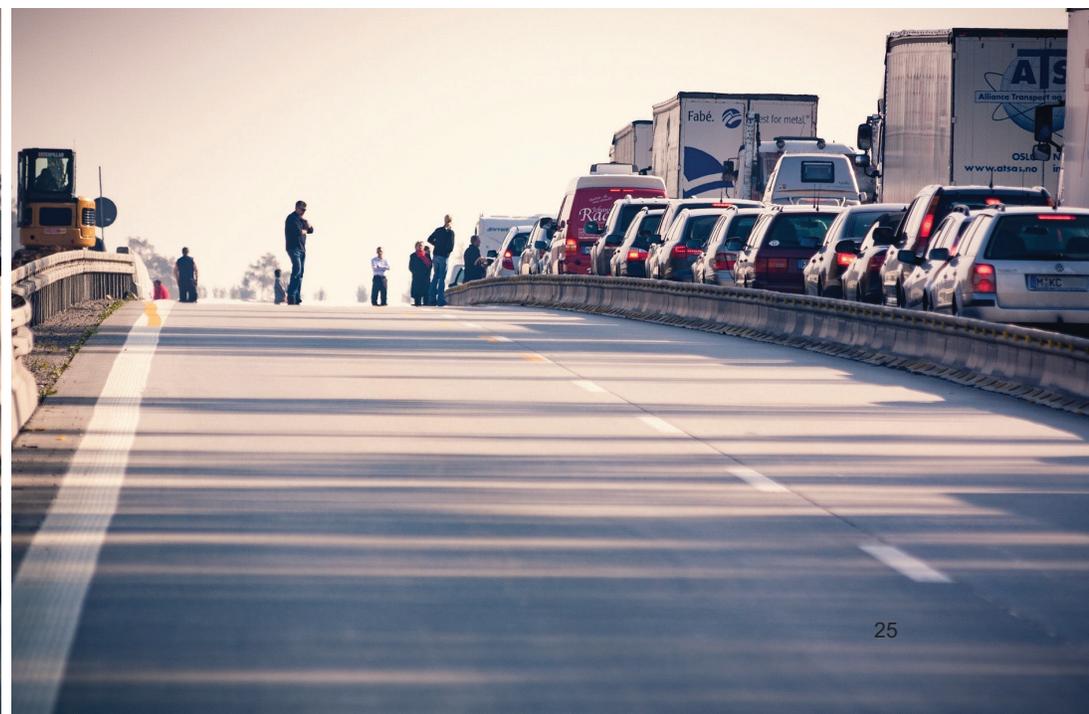
One resident at the community feedback sessions noted that they had just purchased a car. Before that, they were busing and biking everywhere and had been hit by a car while on their bike.

WHAT THE METRIC SAYS ABOUT UPTOWN

The data shows that the rate of pedestrian deaths in Uptown is higher than in any other geography studied. It is more than twice the fatality rate than in Hillsborough County, the Tampa MSA, or even all of Florida. For every 10,000 people in Uptown, roughly one pedestrian or bicyclist dies yearly from a car-related accident. In Uptown, a large percentage of the accidents (nine out of 23) over the last five years happened on Fowler Avenue, including the death of a 15-year-old boy on a bicycle in 2018.

¹⁷ <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/dangerous-by-design/>

In Uptown, a large percentage of the accidents (nine out of 23) over the last five years happened on Fowler Avenue



TALENT

This section focuses entirely on inputs and outcomes in the K-12 system rather than the capabilities of the Uptown workforce. See the economic vitality section for a discussion on higher education outcomes and how they intersect with employment prospects.



Teachers per 100 Students

The number of full-time classroom teachers in the district or school for every 100 students.



School Expenditures per Pupil

School-level expenditures per student, including local, state, and federal funding sources. Expenditures include costs for the day-to-day operations of schools, including, but not limited to, expenditures for instruction, administration, instructional support, and operation and maintenance.¹⁸



High School Graduation Rate

The percentage of students in a single enrollment cohort (or class) graduating from high school in four years.



Households with an Internet Subscription

The percentage of households in a region with an internet subscription, including dial-up, broadband, satellite, or another internet subscription.



Why these metrics were selected and why they matter

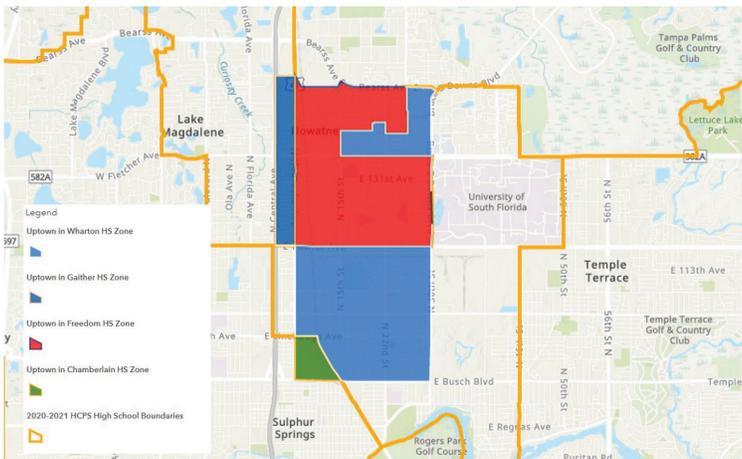
Community conversations revealed that residents care deeply about where their children are going to school, if they are graduating prepared for college, and if they receive the same quality of instruction as other students across the region. Teachers per 100 students and school expenditures per student show differences in dedicated resources for every student compared to the rest of the region.

High school graduation rates, focusing on recent changes over time, show which students may struggle to meet the basic requirements of high school graduation.

The percentage of households with an internet subscription shows that it is important not to assume every family has the same access to the internet. Internet access was especially important as K-12 education transitioned to online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. Any disparities in this metric suggest that certain students face greater struggles just to participate in online learning.

Freedom High School, Wharton High School, and Chamberlain High School were selected to represent the outcomes for students living in Uptown. Just over 94 percent of the population aged 15-19 in Uptown live in the zoning area for Freedom High School and Wharton High School, split almost equally between the two schools. A small portion of the population lives in the zoning area for Chamberlain High School, which was included in the analysis based on stakeholder interest. Collectively, these schools are referred to in this report as Uptown high schools. Gaither High School zoning also covers a portion of Uptown, and this school is not included in the analysis below. See the zoning map below for more detail.

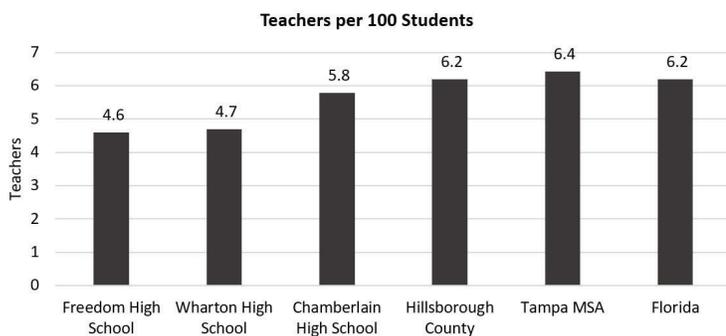
Map 5- Hillsborough County Public High School Zones in Uptown Neighborhood



WHAT THE METRIC SAYS ABOUT UPTOWN

All three Uptown high schools have a smaller teacher-to-student ratio than the Hillsborough County average and the rest of the state. Freedom High School and Wharton High School have the lowest staffing level, with only four to five teachers for every 100 students. Chamberlain High School still does not match the County benchmark, but it comes closer with five to six teachers for every 100 students.

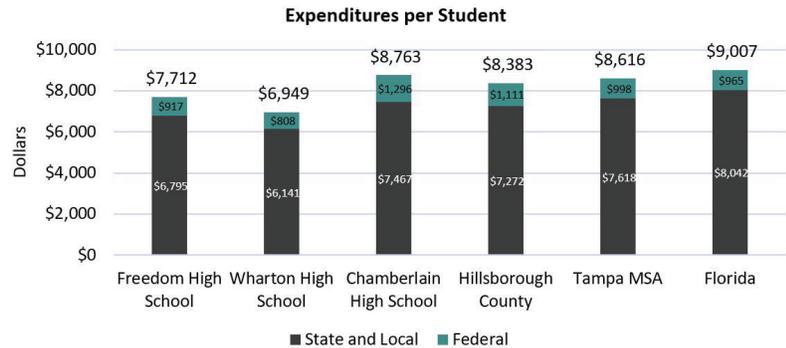
Figure 15 – Teachers per 100 Students



Florida Department of Education, 2020-21 academic year

Staffing levels then impact the number of dollars allocated to each student in the school. Expectedly, Freedom High School and Wharton High School spend fewer dollars per student than the rest of the county or state, given the smaller teacher counts. However, despite having lower staffing levels, Chamberlain High School has a higher allocation of funds for each student compared to the County. This mainly comes through via federal investment. Chamberlain High School has the most considerable amount of federal spending per student in the region.

Figure 16 – Expenditures per Student



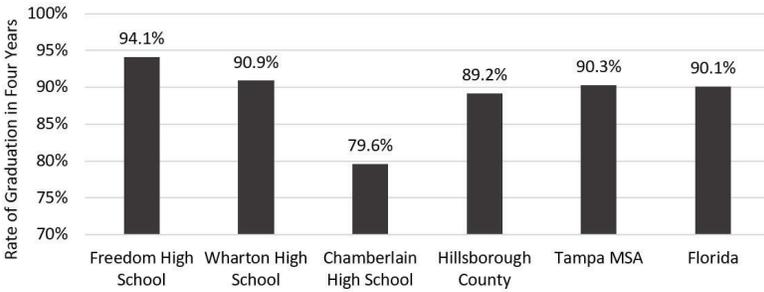
Florida Department of Education, 2020-21 academic year

These relationships flip when examining high school graduation rates. Freedom High School and Wharton High School, despite fewer teachers and less funding, have some of the highest graduation rates in the region. Chamberlain High has the lowest by a far margin.

This relationship may be explained by the fact that the State classifies a higher percentage of Chamberlain High School students as economically disadvantaged, 78 percent, compared to 61 percent at Freedom High School and 51 percent at Wharton High School. Economically disadvantaged students faced more significant challenges during the pandemic. Trend data clearly shows that these students at Chamberlain High School faced challenges, given that the graduation rate dropped from 86 percent to 78 percent in a year.

Figure 17 – High School Graduation Rate

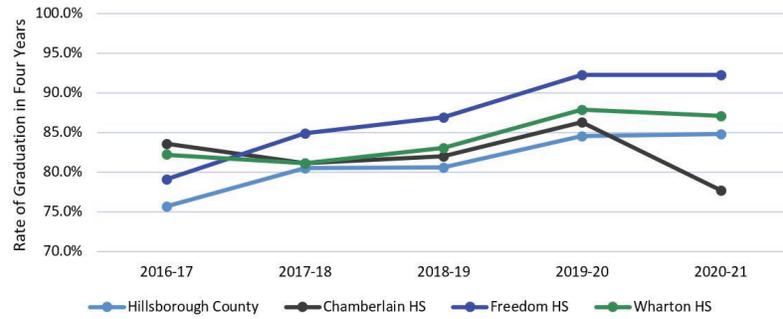
High School Graduation Rate
2020-21 Academic Year



Florida Department of Education, 2020-21 academic year

Figure 18 – High School Graduation Trend, Economically Disadvantaged Students

High School Graduation Rate, Economically Disadvantaged Students



Florida Department of Education

The data above also shows that graduation rates have been rising steadily across the region since 2016. However, residents expressed concern that students are graduating when they are not truly ready. As one Uptown resident and a former teacher noted, the “system pushed kids through because there is pressure on schools for funding to have ‘successful’ kids.” It is impossible to say based on this data whether the students graduating from Uptown high schools are prepared for an education beyond high school. However, the data does definitively show that the two schools mainly serving Uptown students, Freedom and Wharton High School, have fewer teachers per student and fewer dollars allocated to them.

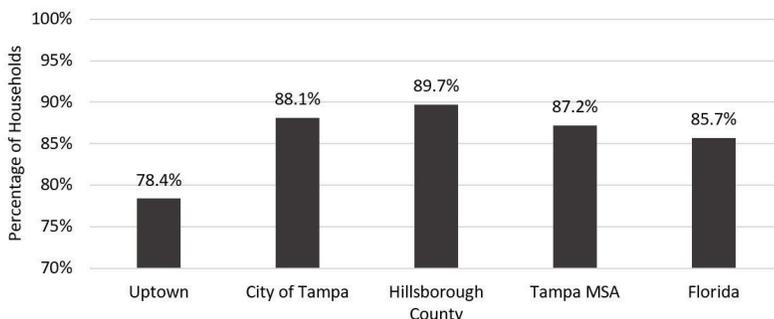
Finally, analysis of internet access rates shows that students in Uptown were likely at a more significant disadvantage for transition to online learning in 2020. Hillsborough County has the highest rates of households with some type of home-internet subscription (this does not include smartphones) at almost 90 percent. In Uptown, only 78 percent of households have an internet subscription for their home. The gap between households with and without internet is known as the digital divide.

The data shows that even in 2022, internet access is not universal across the country. Typically considered a rural vs. urban issue, rural homeowners struggle accessing the internet where providers do not see the economic returns of running broadband service in areas with small populations. In urban areas, however, a lack of internet access usually comes down to cost factors as households make difficult decisions about monthly bills.

This has implications for Uptown students and all residents who use the internet to apply for a job, housing, and attend college.

Figure 19 – Households with an Internet Subscription

Households with an Internet Subscription



US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2020 5-year estimates, accessed through ESRI

78%
of households in Uptown
have an internet subscription
for their home.

ECONOMIC VITALITY

This section focuses on the job opportunities available to Uptown residents and how integrated residents are in the economic system.



THE METRICS

Employment

Unemployment Rate

The percentage of people actively seeking a job but cannot find one.

Educational Attainment, Two-Year Degrees or Higher

The percentage of the adult population (age 25+) that has received an associate degree, bachelor's degree, or doctorate/professional degree.

Share of Jobs in Service Roles or Industry

The percentage of occupations in the region in food service roles and the percentage of total employment in the accommodation and food service industry (referred to as the hospitality industry in the remainder of this report).

Workers Traveling More than 25 Miles to Work

The percentage of workers who travel more than 25 miles from where they live to where they work.

20%

of Uptown residents have at least a two-year degree, compared to more than 40% of the population in other parts of the region.



Unemployment in Uptown is almost twice as high as any other geography studied.

8% of the workers in Uptown who want a job cannot find one.

Why these metrics were selected and why they matter

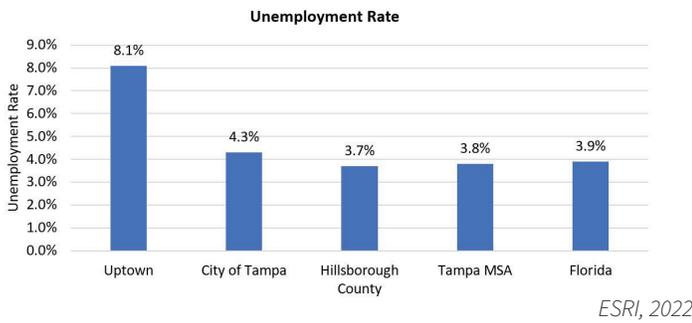
These metrics reveal the economic outcomes for Uptown residents. They paint a story about how difficult it is to find a job paying family-sustaining wages, especially for residents without a college degree. In feedback sessions, residents noted that wages go up with education and degree status, but they are not being hired because they do not meet the qualifications set by employers. Entry-level jobs might still require years of experience in job posts, but Uptown residents do not have the luxury of taking time to get unpaid experience in a field because they need to pay their bills.

What the metrics say about Uptown

Unemployment in Uptown is almost twice as high as any other geography studied. It is important to note what this metric truly measures. The unemployment rate measures the percentage of people in the labor market who have searched for work in the past two weeks but cannot find a job. If someone were to stop looking for a job, such as a stay-at-home parent, they would no longer be considered part of the labor market and would not be counted in this statistic. This means eight percent of the workers in Uptown who want a job cannot find one.

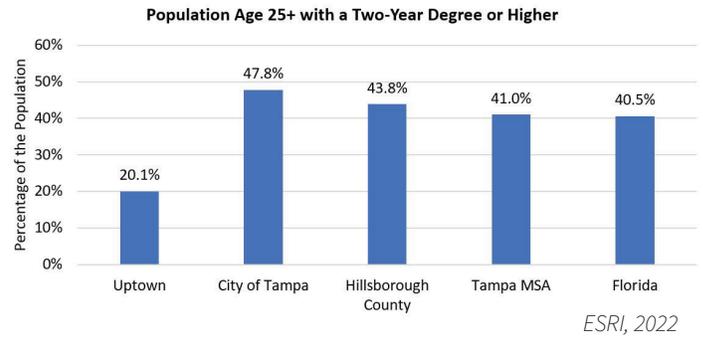


Figure 20 – Unemployment Rate



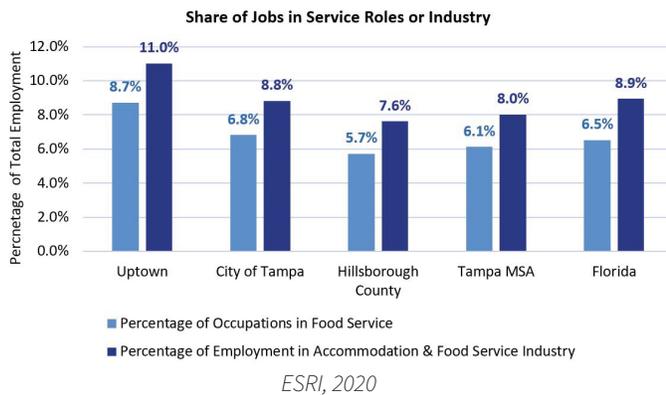
One explanation for why some residents cannot find work is the small share of the population with at least a two-year degree. Only one in five Uptown residents has at least a two-year degree, compared to more than 40 percent of the population in other parts of the region. This comes into play economically when employers require formal credentials on job applications and do not consider someone for a job if they lack a college degree. This is an important nuance. This indicator should not be interpreted to mean that Uptown residents lack the knowledge and abilities to perform a job. Instead, it shows that Uptown residents face higher barriers to making it through an employer’s screening process when employers use educational credentials as a proxy for skills on job postings.

Figure 21 – Population Age 25+ with a Two-Year Degree or Higher



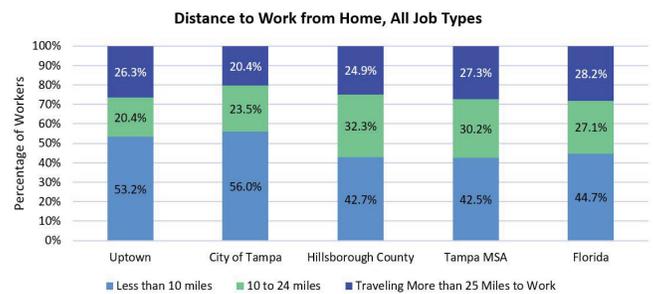
A higher percentage of the jobs available to Uptown residents are typically low-paying roles in the hospitality industry. Uptown has a higher rate of hospitality occupations, such as fast-food cooks and servers, and overall employment in the hospitality industry, such as hotels and restaurants, compared to other geographies. This is a necessary distinction because, for example, employment for a general manager at a hotel would be included in industry counts but not in counts of food service jobs. Together, this data shows that the positions immediately available to Uptown residents are likely to be food service jobs in the food service industry.

Figure 22 – Share of Jobs in Service Roles or Industry



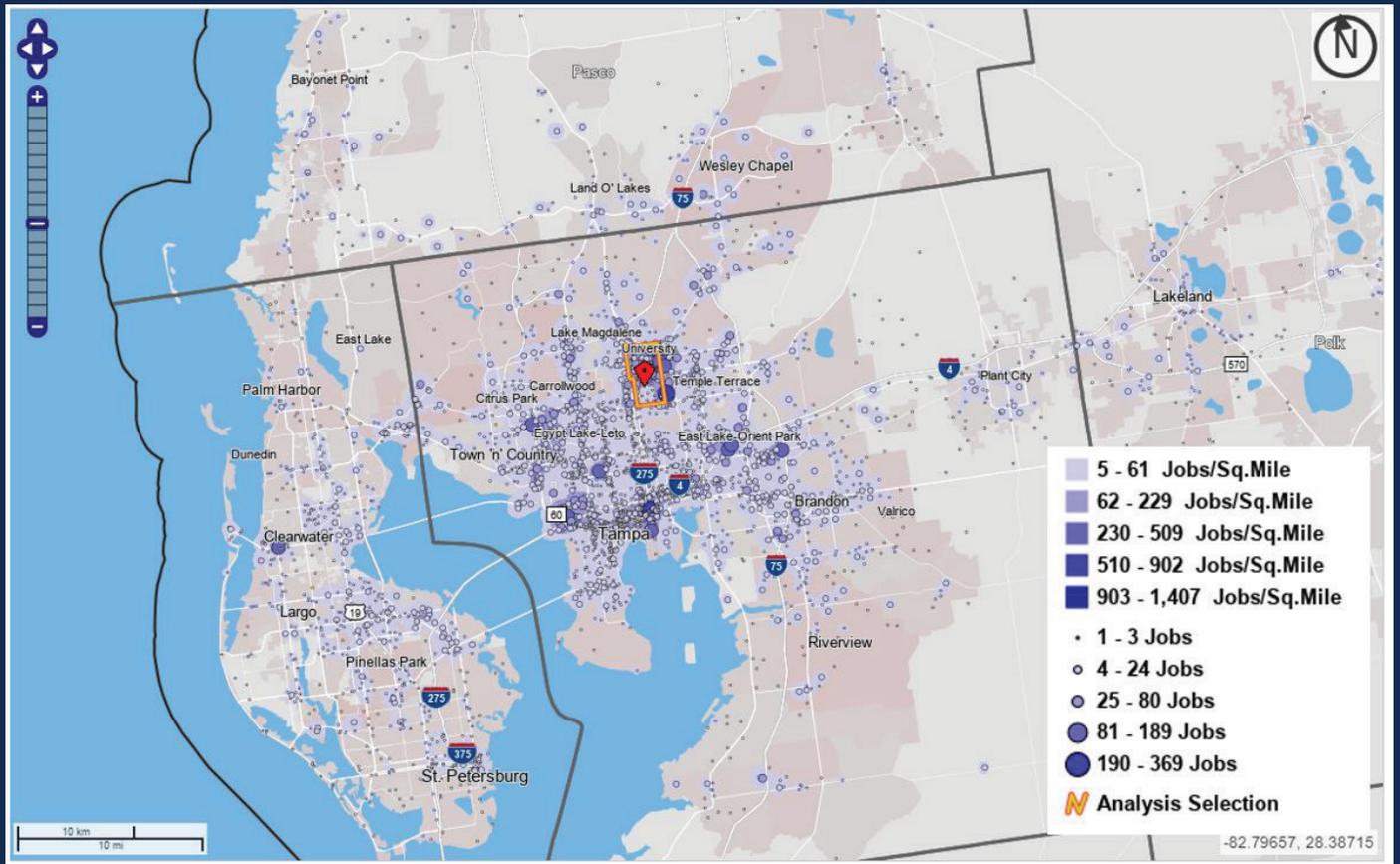
Rolled together, Uptown residents’ difficulty finding work and jobs that pay family-sustaining wages means some must travel farther to their place of work. Over half, 53 percent, of Uptown residents work less than 10 miles from their homes. This is expected in a dense, urban area. For comparison, 56 percent of City of Tampa residents work less than 10 miles from home. In contrast, however, 26 percent of Uptown residents travel more than 25 miles to work; this is more in line with geographies such as the Tampa MSA or Florida average where workers commute across multiple counties to work.

Figure 23 – Distance to Work from Home

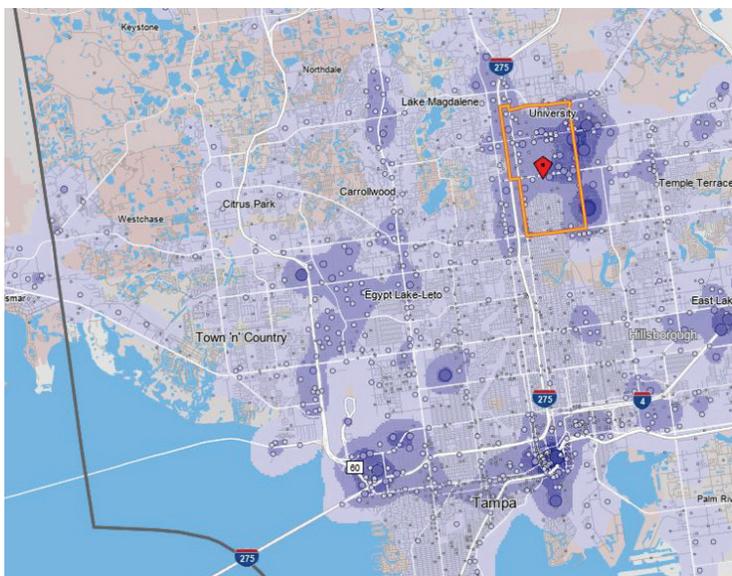


US Census Bureau, On the Map, 2019, distance/destination analysis for all primary jobs from a person’s home census tract to their work census tract

The maps on the next page show clusters where jobs for Uptown residents are the most concentrated. For residents who work farther away, there is not one clear hotspot; employment is more dispersed farther away from the neighborhood. In the detailed map, hotspots for Uptown employment include Busch Gardens, USF, Downtown Tampa, Westshore, and the East-Lake Orient Park neighborhood.



Map 6 – Uptown Resident Employment Locations



Map 7 – Uptown Resident Employment Locations, Detailed

Uptown residents face higher barriers to making it through an employer’s screening process when employers use educational credentials as a proxy for skills on job postings.

THE METRICS

INCOME

Median Household Income

Total annual household income for all earners in a household age 15+. Half of the households in the area will have an income higher than the median, and half will have an income lower than the median.

Median Net Worth

Total household assets, such as property and investments, minus any unsecured debt, such as medical bills, student loans, or credit card debt (secured debt includes mortgages, home equity loans, and auto loans). Half the households will have a net worth higher than the median, and half will have a net worth lower than the median.

Why these metrics were selected and why they matter

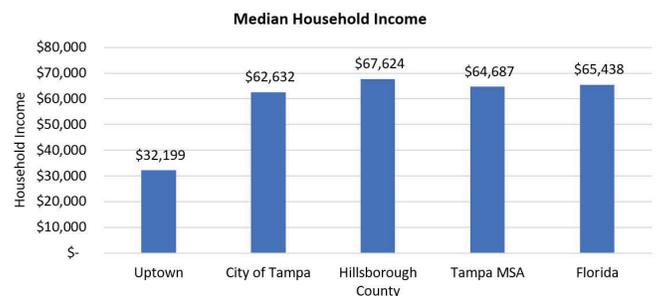
These metrics solidify understanding of Uptown's economic position. While residents did not specifically mention their assets or the total incomes they bring home, conversations clearly showed that Uptown residents weigh financial choices daily. Choices range from how much health coverage they can afford for their children to how many applications they can afford to put in as they search for an apartment.

Household income is an overarching indicator of the relative prosperity of a community, its buying power, and its reliance on the social safety net. Median net worth provides another way to view the financial health of the population outside of wage income. The main factors that impact median net worth are the value of real estate held, the amount of savings, and the accumulation of debt.¹⁹

WHAT THE METRIC SAYS ABOUT UPTOWN

Household income in Uptown is half of what it is in the rest of the region. The median income is \$32,000 annually, meaning half of Uptown residents bring home less than this amount.

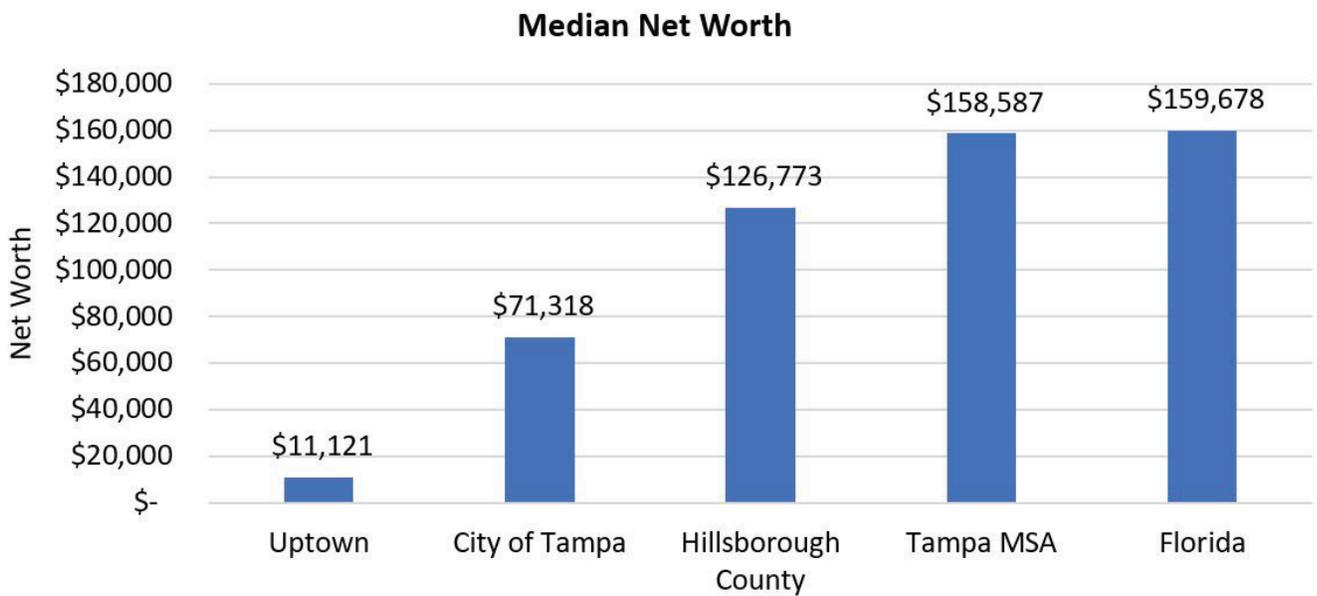
Figure 24 – Median Household Income



ESRI, 2022

The divide is starker looking at the median net worth for the region. Subtracting debts from assets, the median net worth for Uptown residents is only \$11,100 while the median net worth for all Florida residents is \$159,700. Given that most Uptown residents are renters and property holdings greatly influence this value, it is not surprising to see that Uptown residents have a low, median net worth. However, the range from Uptown to the City of Tampa and beyond is surprising. Metrics such as this implicate the challenges of escaping intergenerational poverty.

Figure 25 – Median Net Worth



ESRI, 2022

\$11,100

*median net worth
for Uptown residents*

\$159,700

*median net worth
for all Florida residents*

OUTCOMES

Outcomes measures highlight the culminating impacts of disparities in civic quality, mobility, investment in talent, and economic vitality. These are complicated, interconnected systems that, taken together, have substantial effects on the prosperity of Uptown residents.



THE METRICS

Households Below the Poverty Level

The percentage of households living below the federal poverty level, defined by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Population with Income Below the Poverty Level

The percent of the population living below the federal poverty level who also had income in the previous 12 months.

Female Householder Poverty Rate

The percentage of households headed by women below the federal poverty level, defined by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Why these metrics were selected and why they matter

Poverty metrics are often understood to be an insufficient means of describing the percentage of the population that is struggling in an area. Counts of ALICE households generated by the United Way are more comprehensive and create a true picture of what it is like to live paycheck to paycheck. However, poverty metrics offer the ability to compare geographies, large and small, consistently over time. People who live in poverty are struggling to secure basic human needs and require higher levels of social support. Increasing levels of poverty may translate into greater community needs regarding homelessness, crime, illiteracy, and health.²⁰

This list of poverty metrics was chosen to demonstrate that even those participating in the economy have difficulty escaping poverty. In addition, survey results from the UACDC showed that 44 percent of women in Uptown are single mothers and 29

percent of men are single fathers. Knowing whether Uptown has a relatively high percentage of single mothers living below the poverty level informs the types of services that should be created or provided.

Other residents noted that perhaps with more direction or support as a teenager, they may not have ended up in prison.

Some residents voiced frustration with the level of investigative work by police in the neighborhood. This aligns with the 2019 UACDC survey that found 67 percent of residents reported police actively patrolling their neighborhood. Still, only 61 percent of residents thought police effectively dealt with crime in their neighborhood.

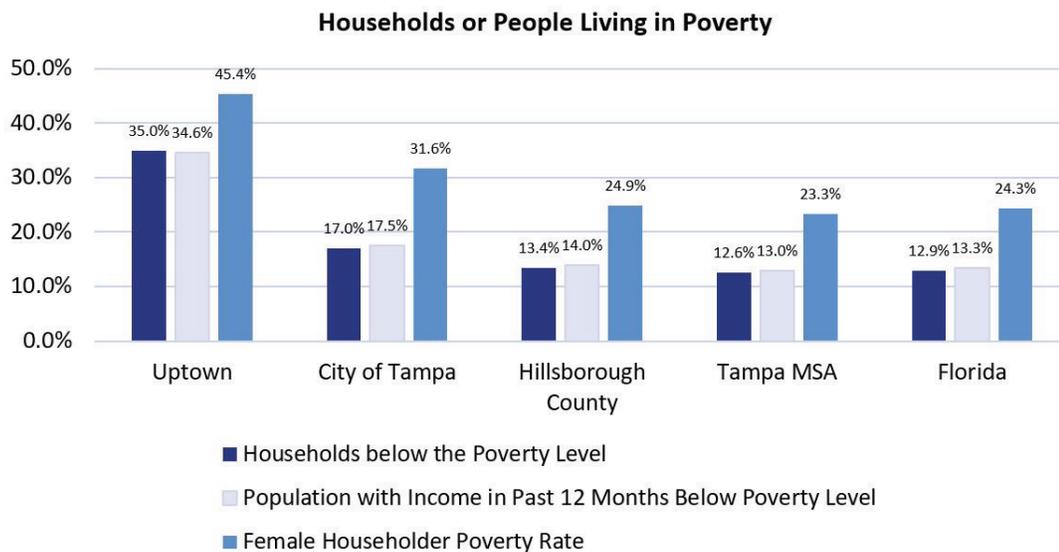
While there is no standardized metric or dataset to estimate how many people in a given region have a criminal record and require re-entry services, this metric offers generational data showing the likelihood a child born in the area will find themselves in jail or prison.

What the metric says about Uptown

This list of metrics can be combined into one visual, highlighting the unsurprising fact that a higher percentage of the Uptown population is struggling to escape poverty. Workers with jobs face similar poverty levels as the overall share of households, not only in Uptown but across the state.

The medium blue bar, showing the percentage of households headed by women (interpreted as single-mother households) living in poverty, is even higher in Uptown and the City of Tampa compared to the rest of the State. Single mothers are more likely to generate incomes below the federal poverty level. This data shows an even higher percentage of mothers in Uptown face significant challenges in providing for their families.

Figure 26 – Households or People Living in Poverty



US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2020 5-year estimates, accessed through ESRI



CONCLUSION

The table below summarizes these findings in two categories: community assets and gaps. Some surprising results include the high number of health professionals in the area and better affordability for homeowners. However, the corresponding gaps make it difficult for residents to take advantage of these assets. For example, a lower percentage of the Uptown population has health insurance. For those with health insurance, many rely on Medicaid, which makes more doctors' offices unreachable despite a relatively high number in the area.

Table 1 – Summary of Findings

TOPIC	COMMUNITY ASSETS	COMMUNITY GAPS
HEALTH OUTCOMES	None identified	Lower life expectancy and greater mental health needs
HEALTH ACCESS	High number of doctors' offices and community health centers	Low health insurance rates
HOUSING	Better affordability for homeowners	Worse affordability for renters (who represent most of the population)
FOOD	High level of overall food access	Lower percentage of healthy food options
CRIMINAL JUSTICE	None identified	High child incarceration rate
MOBILITY, BUSES	High access to bus stops	High reliance on buses suggests a need for more bus infrastructure
MOBILITY, SAFETY	None identified	High pedestrian and cyclist fatality rate
K-12 EDUCATION	Select high schools have high graduation rates	Lower numbers of teachers and funding per student, low levels of internet access at home
EMPLOYMENT	High percentage of workers employed within 10 miles of home	High barriers to employment such as educational attainment levels, higher share of immediate employment in the service industry, workers who cannot find employment in the immediate area must travel farther
INCOME	None identified	Low net worth suggests a lack of long term wealth generating power

Boxes with no assets identified mean the analysis in this report did not reveal a community asset. Assets may exist that were not studied here.



The challenges listed above culminate in a higher poverty rate in the region, even for working residents and especially for single mothers.

These findings now set the stage for community goal setting. The gaps may seem insurmountable when taken together, however, translating opaque percentages into absolute numbers reveals a more manageable set of metrics. The percentage of the population with health insurance is a strong example.

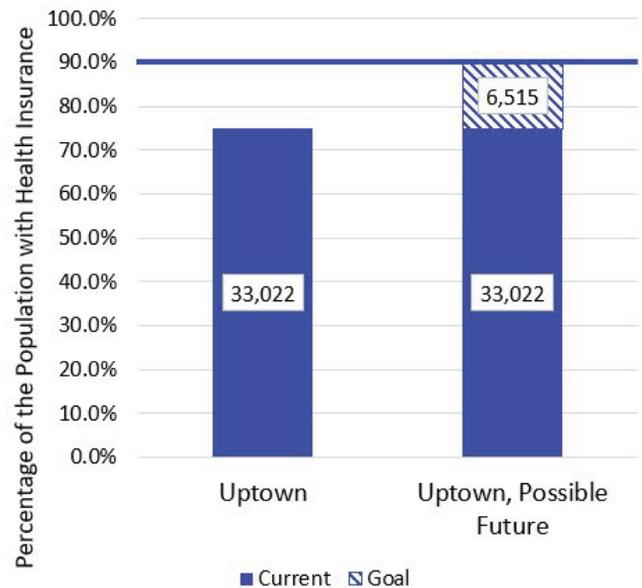
Currently, 75 percent of the Uptown population has health insurance. To bring that total percentage to the same level as the City of Tampa, a goal of 90 percent, approximately 6,500 more people in Uptown need health insurance.

An increase of 6,500 people will take time to achieve. However, if leaders can allocate resources over time, it is easier to imagine that community leaders might use this number to set a five or 10-year goal.

Of course, some topics still need a dataset to analyze and benchmark. Information such as the amount of money residents put towards rental application fees or the number of people in the neighborhood who were previously incarcerated will need to come from community partners who survey residents and interact with them daily. These are the intermediaries who know the community best and know what services are most needed.

Figure 27 – Goal Setting Example

Possible Goal, Population with Health Insurance



In short, this report should be used for community advocacy and goal setting where appropriate and always in conjunction with the resident's voice at the forefront. Thank you to community partners including the Florida Blue Foundation, University Area Community Development Corporation, United Way Suncoast, and Soaring City Innovation Partnership, who made uncovering these findings possible.

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