

Look At Long-Term Benefits

I recently read a letter from Grant Rimbey who has been tireless in leading efforts in Temple Terrace to rid 56th Street of its blighted shopping area south of Busch and replace it with a town center composed of shops and residences, etc., in an attractive setting.

Mr. Rimbey's letter expressed his frustration with the unwillingness of our citizens to support a revitalization – a sad testament to shortsightedness.

Unfortunately, it seems as though our citizens are more focused on their immediate pocketbooks than any long-term benefits to themselves and the community.

It's perfectly understandable that many people must watch their spending and don't want to pay unnecessary taxes for poor returns.

But, think of the returns if we get rid of the blighted buildings and transform this block into a safe, beautiful and attractive business area.

Not to mention the fact that deserted buildings invite crime and vandalism. And think of the decline in all our property values with the continued predominance of a near-deserted strip mall at the entrance to our neighborhood.

Why is it so difficult to see that if your house ends up worth \$100,000 less than the same house in, say, New Tampa, then saving a few dollars a year in taxes will take a

mighty long time to recoup?

We will soon have an influx of professionals with the Moffitt Cancer Center joining with Merck to form M2Gen, the cancer research center.

My understanding is that this will likely be built in the area next to McKinley Drive between the University of South Florida and Temple Terrace.

Here's the question: If you were a professional researcher moving into the area, would you be attracted to Temple Terrace to buy your home or would you decide to accept the inconvenience of commuting from somewhere like Davis Island or perhaps New Tampa?

It is one thing to use the "politically correct" argument against rebuilding by stating that the area's lower socioeconomic groups are not going to benefit from revitalization.

But this is like saying we should not ever support the arts or other community assets because only "elitists" can afford it or appreciate it.

This is specious and insults an entire group of people. Following the same line of reasoning, we should just allow the whole city to molder away – that way nothing is unaffordable but, of course, nothing will have any value.

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