



**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA
CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS - PLANNING COMMISSION
TUESDAY, JULY 8, 2025 - 6:00 PM**

- 1. Call Meeting to Order**
- 2. Approval of Minutes**
 - a. June 10, 2025
- 3. Old Business**
 - a. Public Hearing: Lima Properties, LLC – Martin Luther King Drive – PIDN: 60119334.000, 60119332.000, 60119330.000, 60119340.000, 60119328.000, and 60119328.050 – Requesting a zoning change from R-D Two Family Residential to CMX-1 Neighborhood Commercial/Mixed Use – Donovan Scruggs
 - b. Public Hearing: Approve the Draft Ocean Springs 2045 Comprehensive Plan update. Slaughter and Associates/Mike Slaughter
- 4. New Business**
- 5. General Public Comment**
- 6. Commissioner’s Forum**
- 7. Adjourn**

The Minutes of the City of Ocean Springs
Planning Commission
Tuesday, June 10, 2025

1. Call Meeting to Order

A meeting of the City of Ocean Springs Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Andy Phelan at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday April 8, 2025. The members present were Matthew Hinton, Kevin O'Connell, Joey Conwill and Joeseeph McCormick and Marshall Johnson. Absent was Andy Phelan and Nicholaus Geiser. Also present was Wade Morgan Planning Director, Planning Administrator Hannah Sullivan, and City Attorney Will Norman.

2. Approval of Minutes:

- a) May 13, 2025

A motion was made by Kevin O'Connell seconded by Joey Conwill to accept the minutes from May 13, 2025, as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Old Business:

- a) **Public Hearing: 901 Bienville Blvd. northwest corner of Bienville Blvd. and Washington Ave.- Requesting the Vacation of Alley; abutting PIDN: 60119054.000, 60119056.000, 60119058.000, 60119046.000, 60119042.000, 60119048.000, 60119050.000 - Tom Davies**

A motion was made by Marshall Johnson and seconded by Kevin Oconnell to open public hearing. The motion carried unanimously. Dan Burton, Mellisa Burton and James Charles Spoke in opposition. Ellen Hall, Tim Charleson spoke. A motion was made to accept a letter from Raj Tuli and Tom Davies into the record. The motion carried unanimously. A motion was made by Kevin Oconnel and seconded by Marshall Johnson to close public hearing. The motion carried unanimously. A motion was made by Kevin Oconnell and seconded by Joey Conwill to recommend approval of the vacation of the alley. The motion carried unanimously.

- b) **Public Hearing: Spring Plaza Subdivision – 1515 Bienville Blvd – PIDN: 61265011.000 – Request approval for a Minor Subdivision of a 3-lot subdivision –Zoning: C-H Regional Commercial – Abe Karmel**

A motion was made by Kevin Oconnell and seconded by Joey Conwill to open public hearing. The motion carried unanimously. A motion was made by Marshall Johnson and seconded by Joey Conwill to close public hearing. The motion carried unanimously. A motion was made by Joey Conwill and seconded by Kevin Oconnell to recommend approval of the minor subdivision. The motion carried unanimously.

4. New Business:

- a) **Public Hearing: North side of Bienville Blvd; between Lakeview Drive and MS Hwy 57 – PIDN: 61104005.000 – Request for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to build a mixed-use development for retail and residential use – Zoning: C-H Regional commercial - Sawgrass Development, LLC**

A motion was made by Marshall Johnson and seconded by Kevin Oconnell to open public hearing. The motion was carried unanimously. A motion was made by Marshall Johnson Kevin O'Connell to close public hearing. The motion carried unanimously. A motion was made by Joey Conwill and seconded by Kevin Oconnell to recommend approval of the conditional use permit. The motion carried unanimously.

- b) **Public Hearing: 3419 Bienville Blvd - PIDN: 60127491.050 - Request approval of a Commercial Subdivision Final Plat - Zoning: C-H Regional Commercial District - KD Ocean Springs, LLC**

A motion was made by Kevin Oconnell and seconded by Joseph McCormick to open public hearing. The motion was carried unanimously. A motion was made by Joseph McCormick and seconded by Kevin Oconnell to close public hearing. The motion carried unanimously. A motion was made by Joseph McCormick and seconded by Marshall Johnson to recommend approval of the commercial subdivision final plat. The motion carried unanimously.

- c) **Public Hearing: 4005 Government St - PIDN: 60127030.040 - Request approval for a Minor Subdivision of a 4-lot subdivision - Zoning: R-1 Low Density Single Family - Roland Williams**

A motion was made by Kevin Oconnell and seconded by Marshall Johnson to open public hearing. The motion was carried unanimously. A motion was made by Joseph McCormick and seconded by Kevin Oconnell to close public hearing. The motion carried unanimously. A motion was made by Joseph McCormick and seconded by Marshall Johnson to recommend approval of the Minor subdivision. The motion carried unanimously.

d) Public Hearing: Sells St; located between 132 Pine Drive and 140 Pine Drive – Requesting the Vacation of Right of Way – Zoning: R-1 Low Density Single Family - Jacklyn Wrigley & Erich Nichols

A motion was made by Kevin Oconnell and seconded by Joey Conwill to open public hearing. The motion was carried unanimously. Jacklyn Wrigley spoke about the request. Margaret Hopper and Stacey Broussard spoke in opposition. Erich Nichols spoke regarding the request. A motion was made by Kevin Oconnell and seconded by Marshall Johnson to close public hearing. The motion carried unanimously. A motion was made by Kevin Oconnell and seconded by Marshall Johnson to recommend approval of the vacation contingent upon a merger of PIDN 61395002.000 and PIDN 60129890.000 The motion carried unanimously.

e) Public Hearing: 1209 Robinson Street – PIDN: 60119434.000 – Request a zone change from R-D Two Family Residential to CMX-2 Community Commercial/Mixed Use – Zoning: R-D Two Family Residential - Lloyd Vincent Thurmon

A motion was made by Kevin Oconnell and seconded by Joey Conwill to open public hearing. The motion carried unanimously. Ester Payton, Greg Gibson, Julia Illane, James Lewis, Renee Oliver, Francine Silia Claymore, Greta Whales, Warrior Hughs spoke in opposition of the rezone. A motion was made by Kevin Oconnell and seconded by Joseph McCormick to close public hearing. The motion passes unanimously. A motion was made by Kevin Oconnell and seconded by Joseph McCormick to recommend denial of the rezone. The motion carried unanimously.

5. General Public Comment

James Lewis thanked the planning commissioners.

6. Commissioners Forum

Mathew Hinton said his final farewell to the planning commissioners and thanked the residents for all of their support. A letter from Andy Phelan was read to the commissioners thanking Matthew Hinton for his time and service to the city and the Planning Commission.

7. Adjourn

A motion was made by Marshall Johnson seconded by Joseph McCormick to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING
POST OFFICE BOX 1800
OCEAN SPRINGS, MS 39566-1800
228-875-4415

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT

PUBLIC HEARING DATE: July 8, 2025
June 17, 2025 – BOA (Appeal)
May 13, 2025

APPLICANT: Donovan Scruggs, representative

PROPERTY OWNERS: Lima properties LLC

REQUESTED ACTION: Zone change from R-D to CMX-1

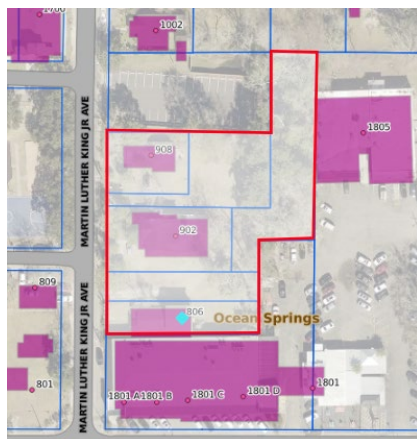
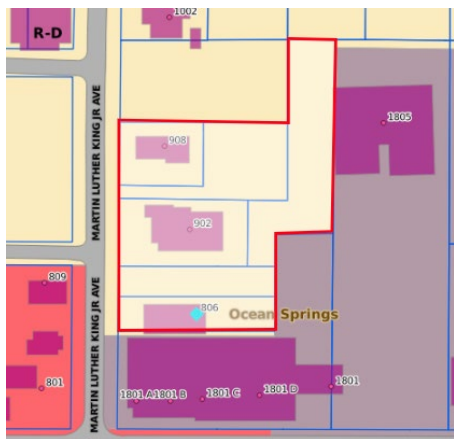
DATE OF REQUEST: April 7, 2025

LOCATION: East side of Martin Luther King Jr Ave
Between Government St and Railroad St

PARCEL NUMBERS: 60119334.000, 60119332.000, 60119330.000, 60119340.000,
60119328.000, & 60119328.050

DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST:
The applicant requests approval for a zoning change from R-D Two Family Residential to CMX-1 Neighborhood Commercial/Mixed Use District.

ADJACENT ZONING AND LAND USE:
Subject Property: R-D Two Family Residential/Single Family Dwelling & Vacant Lots
North: R-D Two Family Residential
South: CMX-2 Community Commercial/Mixed Use
East: CMX-2 Community Commercial/Mixed Use
West: Across Martin Luther King Jr. Ave, R-D Two Family Residential & C-H Regional Commercial



FINDINGS:

- The applicant's representative submitted a new application and supporting documents (attached).
- The property is currently zoned R-D Two Family Residential. There are three homes located on three parcels and the other three parcels are vacant.
- The six parcels total approximately 1.14+/- acres.
- R-D is a low density single-family detached dwellings that allows 1-3 du/acre that are consistent with traditional suburban development patterns.
- CMX-1 is the least-intense commercial mixed-use district with a maximum two-story height building that applies to neighborhood corridor areas with smaller scale commercial uses and a variety of surrounding residential uses. Residential uses are allowed by right, including detached, attached and live/work units, only if scale, form and design requirements are met.
- R-D has a minimum lot area of 7,500 sq ft; CMX-1 does not have a minimum lot area requirement.
- R-D has a minimum lot width of 70 feet; CMX-1 has a minimum lot width of 25 feet.
- Setbacks requirements for R-D & CMX-1:
 - R-D:
 - Front & Rear: 25 feet
 - Side & Side Street: 10 feet
 - CMX-1:
 - Front: 5 feet
 - Rear: 10 feet
 - Side: 5 feet
 - Street Side: 10 feet

REZONE CRITERIA: UDC (Pages 43-44)

1. The UDC Section 2.15.5 provides the following criteria. In its review of an application, the Hearing Bodies shall consider the following criteria as applicable to the UDC text or Zoning Map amendment. No single factor is controlling; instead, each must be weighed in relation to the other standards.
 - A. Consistency. Rezoning shall be consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan;
 - B. Mississippi law requirements. There must have been either an error in the initial zoning or a change in the character of the neighborhood to such an extent as to justify reclassification of the property and some demonstrated compelling need before existing zoning may be changed;
 - C. Adverse Impacts on Neighboring Lands. The Hearing Body shall consider the nature and degree of an adverse impact upon neighboring lands. Lots shall not be rezoned in a way that is substantially inconsistent with the uses of the surrounding area, whether more or less restrictive. Further, the City finds and determines that vast acreages of single-use zoning produces uniformity with adverse consequences, such as traffic congestion and air pollution. Accordingly, rezonings may promote mixed uses subject to a high degree of design control;
 - D. Suitability as Presently Zoned. The Hearing Body shall consider the suitability or unsuitability of the tract for its use as presently zoned. This factor, like the others, must often be weighed in relation to the other standards, and instances can exist in which the use for which land is zoned may be rezoned upon proof of a real public need, substantially changed conditions in the neighborhood, or to effectuate important goals, objectives, policies, and strategies of the Comprehensive Plan, specification, or UDC;

- E. Health, Safety, and Welfare. The amendatory ordinance must bear a substantial relationship to the public health, safety or general welfare, or protect and preserve historical and cultural places and areas. The rezoning ordinance may be justified, however, if a substantial public need or purpose exists, and this is so even if the private owner of the tract will also benefit;
 - F. Public Policy. Certain public policies in favor of the rezoning may be considered. Examples include a need for affordable housing, economic Development, mixed-use Development, or sustainable environmental features, which are consistent with neighborhood, area, or specific plans;
 - G. Size of Tract. The Hearing Body shall consider the size, shape, and characteristics of the tract in relation to the affected neighboring lands. Amendatory ordinances shall not rezone a single lot when there have been no intervening changes or other saving characteristics. Proof that a small tract is unsuitable for use as zoned, or that there have been substantial changes in the immediate area, may justify an amendatory ordinance;
 - H. Other Factors. The Hearing Body must consider any other factors relevant to a rezoning application under state law; and
 - I. The council shall not regard as controlling any advantages or disadvantages to the individual requesting the change but shall consider the impact of the proposed change on the public at large.
2. The applicant addressed the criteria as part of their application.
 3. The draft Comprehensive Plan designates this area as “Low Density Commercial Center.”
 4. The applicant has provided a proposed site plan: See attachments.

PUBLIC FEEDBACK:

None received as of July 3, 2025.

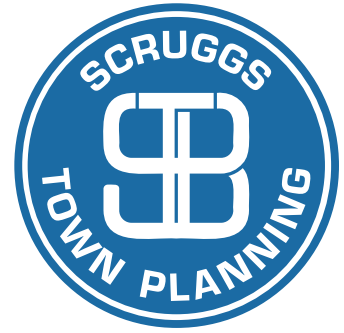
POTENTIAL MOTIONS:

To recommend **approval** of the rezoning of parcels 60119334.000, 60119332.000, 60119330.000, 60119340.000, 60119328.000, & 60119328.050 from R-D Two Family Residential to CMX-1 Neighborhood Commercial/Mixed Use.

– OR –

To recommend **denial** of the rezoning of parcels 60119334.000, 60119332.000, 60119330.000, 60119340.000, 60119328.000, & 60119328.050 from R-D Two Family Residential to CMX-1 Neighborhood Commercial/Mixed Use.

June 27, 2025



Mr. Wade Morgan, Planning Director
City of Ocean Springs
1018 Porter Avenue
Ocean Springs, MS 39564

RE: Rezoning Appeal Along MLK, Jr. Ave., Ocean Springs - LIMA Properties - Amended Application

Dear Mr. Morgan:

At the June 17, 2025 meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen, the request to rezone the above referenced site by LIMA Properties, LLC was returned to the Planning Commission for re-consideration. This 'return' resulted primarily from additional information being provided at Public Hearing with the Board of Aldermen. Consequently, the Planning Commission is scheduled to conduct an additional Public Hearing on the proposed rezoning.

With the appeal that was heard on June 17, a Land Use Report was provided that addressed the changes in neighborhood character and public need that are required for a rezoning. This Report was filed after the Planning Commission voted to recommend denial of the application on May 13, 2025. At the Planning Commission, the application and presentation for the rezoning request heavily considered the proposed use of the property and not the requirements for a rezoning. Similarly, the dissent and arguments against the rezoning were based primarily on the proposed use. The rezoning of property should not be based on a specific plan or proposed use but the compatibility of the proposed district with adjacent districts and neighborhood. Additionally, with a rezoning, the Planning Commission and Board of Aldermen should consider if the uses within a proposed district are compatible with surrounding uses. A rezoning must be supported by the changes in character and public need evidenced in the hearing. Because there is no specific plan for the development and a rezoning should not be based on a plan, I am requesting that all information provided by the applicant that relates to the proposed re-use of the site be removed from the application and packet.

While a number of individuals spoke against the rezoning, none of the arguments focused on the lack of change in the neighborhood. In contrast, many of the opponents actually confirmed that changes in character of the neighborhood were present in the comments that were made. These comments included the removal of houses, the development along Government Street to include the adjacent Blue Dog Bistro and Crawfish House, Macedonia's parking lot, increased traffic along Marting Luther King, Jr. Avenue, and the decline of the structures on the subject properties. These are 'changes' to the character of the area that were previously traditional, single-family residential uses (see attachments). For this reason, I urge the Planning Commission to consider the report provided and recommend for a rezoning based on a change in neighborhood character and public need. With the removal of single-family homes, a special exception for a parking lot, and the intensification of the Broome's site, the subject property is surrounded my non-residential uses on four sides.

The Land Use Report provided to the Board of Aldermen is attached for your consideration with an amended application. If there are questions related to this letter or the attached information, please feel free to call at 228.348.1315 or email to donovan@scruggsplanning.com.

Sincerely,

Donovan Scruggs, AICP

Donovan Scruggs Town Planning and Consulting, LLC
317 Pine Drive, Ocean Springs
Mississippi 39564
Ph: 228.348.1315
EM: donovan@scruggsplanning.com

Land Use Report for a Zoning Amendment for Six Parcels of Land Located along East Side of Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue Appeal of Planning Commission Decision

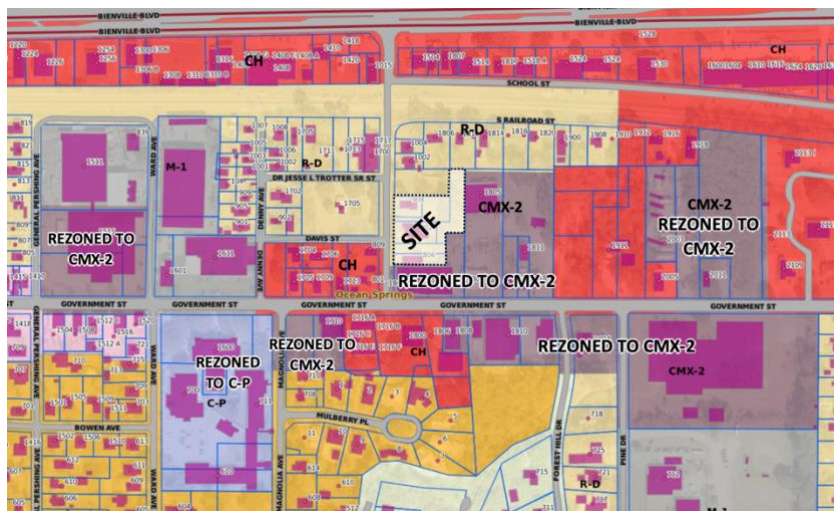
Prepared by: S. Donovan Scruggs, AICP
Date: May 20, 2025

Lima Properties, LLC recently purchased six parcels along Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue in Ocean Springs. The parcels are along the east side of the corridor and within an area that has been significantly changing over the past 30 years. In the early 1990s the area was almost exclusively single-family residential. The primary exceptions included Macedonia Baptist Church, Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, and Broome's Grocery. The area has slowly and incrementally changed over the years, and this change is a primary factor in this application. This report will address the changes within the area, the public need to support the zoning map amendment, and the related appeal of the Planning Commission's recommendation.



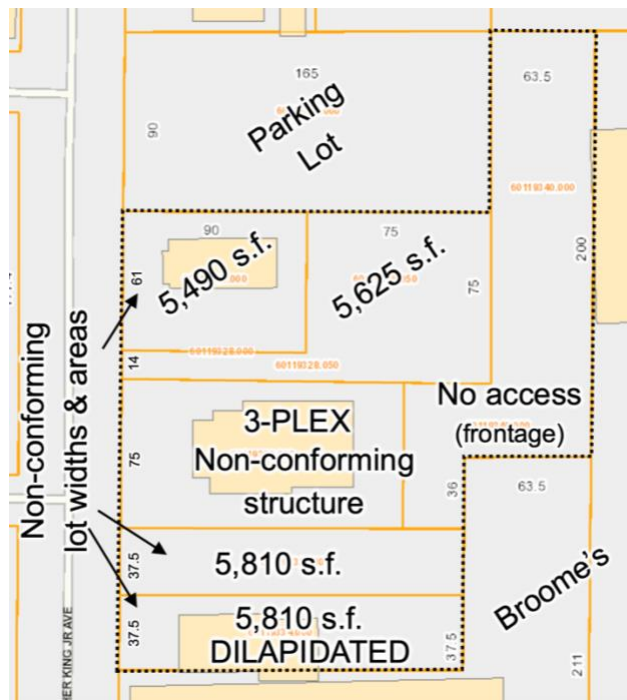
Zoning and Land Use.

The area has changed greatly over the years with zoning amendments and other approvals to accommodate or encourage more commercial and non-residential uses. Zoning along Government Street has changed to accommodate existing buildings and their renovations or expansions. The amendments have encouraged changes and more appropriate uses and should not be considered negative, in general. These changes have impacted the subject site. Most notably, the Broome's property on the adjacent site was changed from Highway Commercial (CH) District to Community Commercial/Mixed Use (CMX-2) District. This change in zoning allowed Broome's Grocery to be renovated into a multi-tenant building that includes restaurants and retail spaces.



At the same time, the zoning of the YMCA was changed to accommodate its expansion and renovations. While the use was permitted, the setbacks and other requirements of the CH District were not ideal for the downtown environment. Earlier the areas along the east side of Pine Drive and north of Government Street were rezoned to CMX-2. These properties were designated as Industrial and the rezoning directed the potential re-use towards more compatible uses.

The CH zoning designation is still present on the parcels immediately west of the site and on the Furr Properties to south. Also, the northern properties (south of Bienville Boulevard and north of CSX Railroad) are designated as CH District. This 'sandwiches' the subject site and the MLK corridor between the most intense commercial district that prohibits single-family residential. This CH zoning designation has likely led to the removal of the single-family homes (801 and 809 MLK) that were located directly west of the subject site, and this district is not appropriate for the area. The CH zoning is incompatible with the subject site's existing zoning and the area, in general.



R-D ZONING DISTRICT PROFILE

Medium density single family detached, single family attached, and two-family dwelling district. Allows for urban lot sizes and infill development for a net density of 6-10 dwelling units/acre.

Lot Dimensions		
	Min.	Max.
Lot Size	7,500 sf	N/A
Lot Width	70 ft	N/A
Front Set-back	20 ft	N/A
Side Setback	10 ft	N/A
Rear Setback	15 ft	N/A
Building Height	N/A	35 ft

More recently, other areas were rezoned to CMX-2. These include the properties at the corner of Magnolia Avenue and Government Street that was recently developed as the First Bank and the 1515 Government Street.

Existing Zoning.

A review of the area demonstrates significant changes have occurred over the last 30 years. Despite two Comprehensive Plans (and a pending third plan) and a new Unified Development Code (UDC), there has been no comprehensive rezoning or evaluation of the district boundaries. Changes in zoning (map amendments) have been almost exclusively through land owner petitions. The subject properties were designated as R-3 from 1984 until 2019 when the property was reclassified to R-D. The R-D is consistent with R-3 District of the prior zoning ordinance and substantially, has not changed. The current R-3 District is more restrictive within the new ordinance.

While R-3 and R-D have been the zoning districts of the properties for more than at least 40 years, the parcels do not meet the requirements of the district. Most notably, the parcels are too narrow and too small for the R-D District that requires a minimum lot size of 7,500 square feet and width of 70 feet. One lot has no frontage or access. The two southernmost parcels (adjacent to Broome's) are only 37.5 feet in width. The southern structure (806 MLK) is severely dilapidated (images to right). With setback requirements of 10 feet the building would be difficult to rehabilitate because of the setback encroachment. This building has been vacant and without power for several years.



The center structure (902 MLK) of the parcels includes three apartments. This multifamily use is not permitted in the R-D District. Because the deterioration or disrepair of these buildings the costs to repair exceeds 50 percent.

Other existing parcels within the site are nonconforming which could make new development difficult or impossible. In order to redevelop the site effectively, a rezoning is needed. A reconfiguration or combination of the lots or a re-subdivision is likely. The existing district is not compatible with the adjacent site or zoning district and requires a buffer area between the commercial district. In addition, the moving towards the more compatible district will remove the need for additional setbacks or buffering.

Change in Character.

The subject property or site includes six parcels that were recently owned by two separate property owners. According to Jackson County Land Records, separate deeds are listed for each property and they have not been combined. While there are three residential structures on this site, the southernmost structure (806 MLK) has been used as storage (nonconforming use) for several years and electricity has not been connected. With its state of disrepair, it is no longer a legal, nonconforming structure. The other two structures (902 and 908 MLK) on the site are occupied but only the single-family residence on the northern parcel (908 MLK) is a conforming use on a nonconforming lot.

A review of GoogleEarth demonstrates a significant amount of change that has occurred within the area. Much of this growth and change has been along Government Street, but significant changes have occurred along the MLK, Jr. corridor.

In 1997 Macedonia Baptist Church initiated the construction of its current building. In doing so, it acquired additional parcels west of the site along Weed Street (Rev. Jesse L Trotter, Sr. Street). This removed two parcels from tax rolls, and it removed two viable lots from the community. Similarly, the church constructed a parking lot on a residential lot on the east side of MLK, Jr. Ave in 2020. The lot had been green space for years and is adjacent to the subject



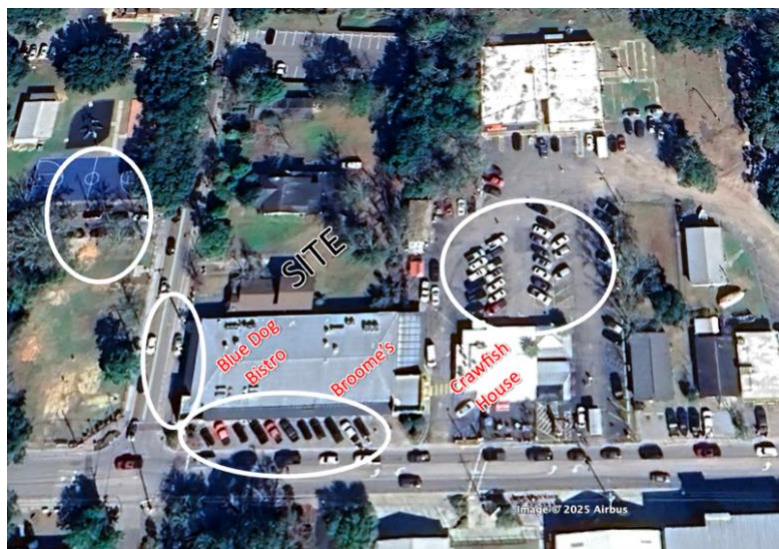
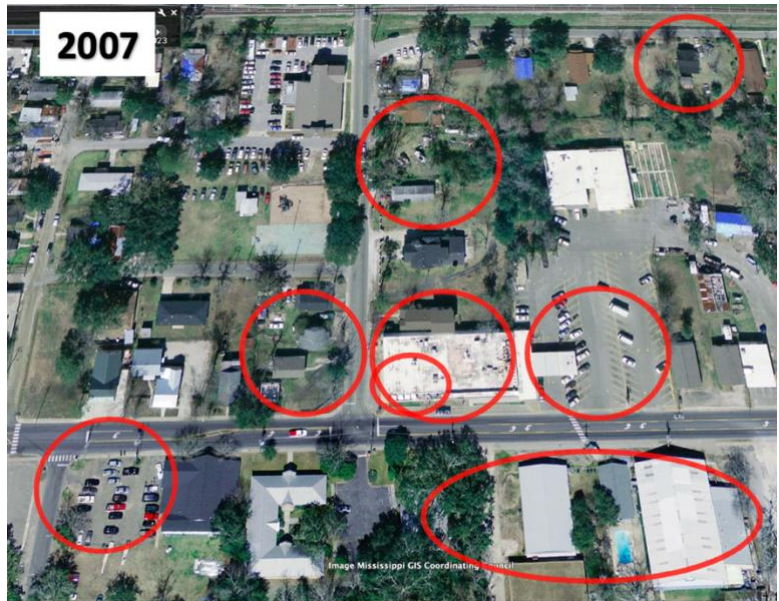
site. The asphaltting of the green space on the adjacent parcel to the north changed the character of the corridor.

Another development in the 1990s included the development of the Furr building located south of the intersection of Government Street and Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue. In the early 2000s as development or redevelopment pushed eastward along Government Street, more growth was encouraged. This new growth included the establishment of the Mary C. O’Keefe Center, the expansion of Ocean Springs Lumber, and the growth and redevelopment of commercial structures along Bienville Boulevard near the northern portion of Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue.

Similarly, the removal of two residential structures (801 and 809 MLK) directly across the street from the subject site further eroded the residential character of the area. This occurred in approximately 2010. Lots that in the early 2000s included single-family residential structures are now “non-residential, vacant lots”. This was encouraged by the Highway Commercial (CH) designation by the City. With MLK Park and Macedonia Baptist Church, the entire west side of the street from Government Street to CSX Railroad right of way has evolved into non-residential uses.

Commercial and non-residential changes have continued within the area. The Broome’s renovation represents a significant change in overall intensity to the area. At one time, Broome’s Grocery was a center of the community. As times changed, the grocery store changed to a restaurant after a renovation. This included ‘breaking up’ the building into other tenant spaces. This included a couple of retail establishments and the Blue Dog Bistro. For years, the customers of the grocery store parked along the east side of the Broome’s building. With the renovation, Blue Dog Bistro now has its access at the corner of Government Street and Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue. This places customers and parking along the MLK, Jr. corridor. Parking spaces along Davis Street are often used by employees and customers. This renovation introduced parking along Government Street and MLK, Jr. Avenue that was previously very rarely used. This has helped to commercialize the area.

Much of the intensity and westward push of parking evolved from the development of the Crawfish



House. The outbuilding was once part of Broome's Grocery and seasonally used to boil crawfish. During the renovation the Crawfish House emerged as a sitting area to eat crawfish on site. It expanded numerous times with the additions of awnings and roof structures. Garage doors were added to provide protection from the weather and heat. The picnic tables and awnings slowly transitioned into a restaurant with a full menu. These expansions reduced the parking on the site and increased seating capacity and parking demand. This building is located approximately 60 feet from the southeast corner of the proposed site. These improvements have pushed parking towards the west to include MLK, Jr. Avenue and Davis Street.

To put more pressure in the area, the YMCA expanded during this same time. As a result its membership expanded. With more space, more machines, and more members, more parking was needed. At one time much of the needed parking at the YMCA was provided by Broome's. But as the parking was reduced and buildings expanded at Broome's, the YMCA was forced to provide most of its on parking.

This commercial investments along the eastern portions of downtown continue to encourage more development. This should be considered desirable and consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan. It is opposite of sprawl that would encourage development in less mature and unready areas of the City.

Public Need.

The subject property is located within a transitional and mixed use area. There has been no investment in new single-family or two-family residential properties in a number of years. The subject properties have been either vacant or serving as rental property, and as a result little investment has been made into the structures. This lack of investment has caused all of the subject properties to decline.

The five parcels along the northern portion of the site had been listed for sale for more than two years. These were available to any willing purchaser for the requested price. The owners were not extremely motivated with existing tenants and monthly rents. The site to south and adjacent to Broome's was not listed for sale. The current property owners worked to add the sixth parcel to the south. This should be viewed as a positive step because of the condition of the southern property (see exhibit 1). The addition of the southern property makes for a more cohesive development.

The southern property (806 MLK) is vacant and in a state of disrepair. Electrical service was disconnected to the structure several years ago. The site is blighted and should be demolished. Properties in this condition negatively impact adjacent properties. Collectively, the two structures (902 and 908 MLK) to the north also contribute to the blighting influence. The parking lot added by the church also negatively impacts the property, as well.



While zoning of the properties designated as Highway Commercial (CH) District has not changed, the incompatibility of the zoning provides a high degree of uncertainty on the property located immediately west of the site. Because this district prohibits single-family residential, the prior buildings on the site were nonconforming. This causes problems with permitting, financing, and other components. The CH designation makes the property more attractive for commercial development that could have negative impacts on low density, single-family residential properties.

With the growth in the area and the overall change in character, maintaining a low or medium density residential designation does not 'fit' the neighborhood. It is conflicted with the CMX-2 and CH properties that are located to the south, east, and west. The increased intensity of the area should promote a similar designation for the site. At one time, the subject property was adjacent to residential uses to the west and north, but as change has occurred the site is now surrounded by commercial and non-residential uses. At present, the three structures are in disrepair. The six parcels generate approximately \$8,000 in ad valorem taxes. The redevelopment of the site with new structures could generate substantially more revenues for the City, County and School. The rezoning and redevelopment of the site could encourage sales tax with a commercial development or additional customers with any residential component.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

The Development Tier map of the Comprehensive Plan functions as the City's Future Land Use Map. This map identifies the site as Commercial Center, Low. This designation is consistent with the proposed rezoning. According to the Comprehensive Plan:

The Commercial Center Low Intensity Tier is intended to accommodate smaller mixed use activity centers that are generally connected and integrated into the surrounding neighborhoods. These centers have a community or neighborhood emphasis, and include a range of retail and service uses.

In downtown and the central business district, the Comprehensive Plan emphasizes the importance of In-fill Development. This form of development is described in Section 4.2.2. of the Plan and provided below:

Due to the lower density nature of residential development, there is strong potential for in-fill development in the CBD. In-fill development consists of using vacant, underused, or orphaned land for new development. It can create more affordable development since it uses existing infrastructure. It also can be used to encourage population growth needed to sustain commercial activities and vitality in the heart of the City. Furthermore, by using land in mature areas, in-fill development can reduce the demand for housing in undeveloped areas that require new services and reduce the cost to taxpayers. Forms of potential in-fill development include:

- The addition of new dwellings on vacant lots or other undeveloped parcels surrounded by existing residential development
- Dwelling units added to existing houses and businesses (e.g., upstairs apartments)
- Small, detached dwellings added to lots of sufficient size with existing houses (e.g., "granny " flats)
- Redevelopment of properties
- Neighborhood-related, non-residential development



In-fill development inevitably leads to higher density and a mixing of uses. Historically, the City has been encumbered with zoning and subdivision battles fought by residents trying to prevent new development in the downtown planning area. Residents used expected diminished property values as the reason for requesting the City's Planning Commission and Board of Aldermen to deny such rezoning and subdivision requests. Upon occasion, the argument that the new development would diminish existing property values was supplemented by arguments that it also would harm the character of the area. Most national studies have shown that in-fill development if designed properly enhances property values. The adverse impact on community character may have some validity, but proper design can mitigate potential and perceived adverse results of new development.

The Plan also addresses Smart Growth, and the proposed rezoning will promote this form of development.

Benefits of Smart Growth Include:

- **More compact, mixed use development through clustered, higher density centers, corridors and infill development**
- Greater preservation of open space, natural resources, and critical environmental lands
- More sustainable growth and cost-effective infrastructure provision through the linking of available infrastructure and development phasing decisions
- Alternative transportation opportunities and increased energy conservation through the encouragement of walking, cycling and public transit
- **Better variety of housing choices and easier access to housing, jobs, shopping, recreation, entertainment and community services**
- **A jobs/housing balance that allows people to live and work in the same community and supports the fiscal sustainability of the municipal government.**

The Comprehensive Plan identifies a number of Goals and Policies to guide its implementation. The project is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, and this consistency is important when considering a rezoning. A review of Policies and Goals are listed below (with comments addressing consistency in italics).

Policy 1.1: Provide for a diverse, yet complementary mix of residential and non-residential uses to meet the needs of the City's businesses and residences. *The subject site is adjacent to commercially zoned properties on three sides and a parking lot along the north property line. The proposed rezoning to CMX-1 will provide a transitional district between the CMX-2 areas along Government Street and the neighborhood north of the site. The zoning will allow appropriate commercial, mixed-use, or residential uses.*

Policy 1.4: Develop compatible mixed-use activity centers and infill development consistent with neighborhood character. *The requested rezoning is directly consistent with the policy by providing a more flexible zoning designation to encourage infill development. The zoning will also complement the existing mixed-use activity center that includes recreational, religious, retail, dining, and housing opportunities.*

Policy 1.5: Encourage compatible infill development that is designed and constructed to be consistent with the character of the existing neighborhood. *The proposed rezoning will provide a compatible, transitional use and district for the neighborhood. At present, the site is not compatible with the area. Structures are substandard or in disrepair with numerous nonconformities that deter reinvestment or redevelopment.*

Policy 1.7: Promote appropriate interconnectivity between adjacent land uses, including connections between non-residential development and adjacent neighborhoods. Lot patterns should be designed to provide safe and direct connections between residential and non-residential uses for pedestrians as well as automobile. *With surrounding non-residential uses, the existing site is not compatible and the current zoning prohibits or discourages redevelopment. The proposed CMX-1 District will provide an improved connectivity to the adjacent properties. This will be enhanced with a resubdivision or redevelopment to eliminate the land-locked and flag lots.*

Policy 3.8: Establish a transition area around the Downtown area. A mix of uses will provide a buffer between the more intensive, business-oriented areas and the nearby lower-intensity residential areas. In the transitional area, the principal uses should include residential, bed and breakfast inns, low-intensity professional offices, neighborhood service business, child-care centers, and similar uses. A mix of single-family and moderate density multi-family (townhouse units, with a maximum of four units) should be permitted. *The CMX-1 was designed to provide a transition area between the commercial areas of downtown and nearby residential districts. This transition may include less intense commercial uses or higher density residential. With non-residential properties surrounding the subject site, the proposed zoning meets this criteria.*

Policy 4.1: Provide greater flexibility in the types of units allowed within the City, including provisions for residences on the upper floors of non-residential structures and a variety of moderate density unit types, such as patio homes, town homes and zero lot line homes. *The proposed zoning permits a number of residential and commercial uses that are compatible with the area. It is likely that residential uses will be developed on this site, and the requested zoning designation provides greater flexibility. The lots and structures that are currently considered nonconforming would be conforming with the proposed rezoning.*

Policy 4.10: Maintain compatible transitions between different land use and housing types through effective land use and site design regulations. This policy is intended to allow for development of a compatible mix of unit types and neighborhood scale services. *The site is 'buffered' from single-family uses by existing non-residential uses or districts. The proposed rezoning provides a neighborhood scale request with permitted uses that encourage a compatible transition between more intense commercial areas and residential districts.*

Policy 4.11: Protect stable single-family neighborhoods from the intrusion of incompatible residential and non-residential land uses. This policy is intended to protect neighborhoods from blighting influences; it is not intended to preclude development of different types of residences, neighborhood commercial centers or community services within neighborhoods if they can be designed and maintained in a manner that enhances neighborhood stability. *The proposed rezoning is located along a primary corridor with traffic volumes that have ranged from approximately 5,200 to 8,500 trips per day. In addition, the properties adjacent to this site are primarily non-residential or commercial. The proposed rezoning will not encourage the intrusion of incompatible uses to the area.*

Policy 5.11: Maximize sales tax revenues as a major funding source for City services. *Infill development, whether it is additional housing units or new businesses, will provide increased sales tax revenues. This can come in form of direct sales by the additional businesses or additional customers for surrounding businesses. Underutilized or vacant properties provide little or no benefit to a community in terms of sales tax revenues.*

Rezoning Criteria

Section 2.15.5 Outlines criteria that the Planning Commission and Board of Aldermen shall follow in consideration of text and map amendments. These criteria (italics) and the relationship to the project are addressed below:

A. Consistency. Rezoning shall be consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan. *The project is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan of the City. Policies of the Plan indicate that the City should "provide a diverse, yet complementary mix of residential and non-residential uses".*

Specific consistencies with the Comprehensive Plan are addressed in the previous section.

B. Mississippi law requirements. There must have been either an error in the initial zoning or a change in the character of the neighborhood to such an extent as to justify reclassification of the property and some demonstrated compelling need before existing zoning may be changed. *As indicated in this report, there has been a substantial change in the character of the neighborhood. The property has been 'zoned' R-D or R-3 for more than 40 years, and no duplexes have been developed. The area has become increasingly non-residential. This includes the expansion of commercial and short-term rentals along Government Street, the expansion of Macedonia Baptist Church and its parking lot, and the removal of residential structures within the immediate area. The intensification and redevelopment of the Broome's site has significantly impacted the subject property and Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue. The rezoning will promote a more compatible housing or commercial development consistent with the neighborhood. The compatibility is provided with the transitional zoning of the CMX-1 District. By*

encouraging the redevelopment, the removal of the blighted properties will enhance a primary corridor into downtown Ocean Springs.

The applicant is not asserting that there is an error or mistake in zoning.

C. Adverse Impacts on Neighboring Lands. The Hearing Body shall consider the nature and degree of an adverse impact upon neighboring lands. Lots shall not be rezoned in a way that is substantially inconsistent with the uses of the surrounding area, whether more or less restrictive. Further, the City finds and determines that vast acreages of single-use zoning produces uniformity with adverse consequences, such as traffic congestion and air pollution. Accordingly, rezonings may promote mixed uses subject to a high degree of design control. *The site will have no adverse impact on neighboring lands. The properties adjacent to the north, west, and east are non-residential. Change in the area has resulted from the removal of residential properties. The commercial area of Broome's will be more compatible with the property if a commercial designation is provided. At present, the subject site includes dilapidated or nonconforming structures or lots that discourages or prohibits reinvestment. Providing a designation that will encourage or allow investment or redevelopment will enhance the adjacent properties and the stie.*

D. Suitability as Presently Zoned. The Hearing Body shall consider the suitability or unsuitability of the tract for its use as presently zoned. This factor, like the others, must often be weighed in relation to the other standards, and instances can exist in which the use for which land is zoned may be rezoned upon proof of a real public need, substantially changed conditions in the neighborhood, or to effectuate important goals, objectives, policies, and strategies of the Comprehensive Plan, specification, or UDC. *The existing zoning designation represents a significant hurdle or barrier for the use of the site. The property is specifically zoned for single-family or duplex developments with a minimum of 70 ft. lot widths and 7,500 square feet. Only one of the six properties meets these standards. Of the three structures, only one is conforming. The redevelopment of the site is greatly hampered by the existing zoning.*

E. Health, Safety, and Welfare. The amendatory ordinance must bear a substantial relationship to the public health, safety or general welfare, or protect and preserve historical and cultural places and areas. The rezoning ordinance may be justified, however, if a substantial public need or purpose exists, and this is so even if the private owner of the tract will also benefit. *The properties, in their current state, are adverse to the general welfare of the city. The southern structure is unsafe and needs to be demolished.*

F. Public Policy. Certain public policies in favor of the rezoning may be considered. Examples include a need for affordable housing, economic Development, mixed-use Development, or sustainable environmental features, which are consistent with neighborhood, area, or specific plans. *The proposed rezoning will encourage the redevelopment of substandard, nonconforming, or dilapidated structures. The sites are underutilized and are ideal for 'infill' development that is promoted in the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan also addresses the need for more flexible regulations to encourage more diverse housing. The CMX-1 District provides this flexibility.*

G. Size of Tract. The Hearing Body shall consider the size, shape, and characteristics of the tract in relation to the affected neighboring lands. Amendatory ordinances shall not rezone a single lot when there have been no intervening changes or other saving characteristics. Proof that a small tract is unsuitable for use as zoned, or that there have been substantial changes in the immediate area, may justify an amendatory ordinance. *The site is adjacent to the commercial areas on three sides. To the north is a non-residential use of a parking lot. The proposed district will serve as a transitional district for nearby residential areas. This should not be considered a "spot zoning." The buildings and lots are not consistent with the current zoning and hinder or prevent redevelopment or improvements within the existing district.*

H. Other Factors. The Hearing Body must consider any other factors relevant to a rezoning application under state law. *No other factors related state law are present that should prevent the rezoning of the site.*

I. The council shall not regard as controlling any advantages or disadvantages to the individual requesting the change, but shall consider the impact of the proposed change on the public at large. *The requested zoning is consistent with surrounding and adjacent properties.*

Summary.

The owner/applicant is requesting a rezoning from Two Family Residential (R-D) to CMX-1 or Neighborhood Commercial District. The applicant recently acquired the parcels that had been for sale for more than two years. The configuration of the properties along with nonconformities, dilapidated structures, or substandard structures have discouraged the redevelopment of the parcels.

The change in neighborhood character has been demonstrated with the intensification of commercial areas and rezoning along Government Street. Additionally, areas along Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue have changed with the removal of residential structures and expansion of non-residential uses.

In their current state, the existing structures provide a blighting influence along the corridor. The structures cannot be rehabilitated due to nonconformities and the requirements of the district. The current zoning does not match the current uses, structures, or lot sizes. The buildings are currently rental properties or vacant. The rezoning will encourage redevelopment of these properties. The subject property should be rezoned based on the following points:

1. CMX-1 is the most appropriate district. With no specific plan, the CMX-1 District provide flexibility for moderate housing densities or neighborhood commercial uses. The district provides a transitional district between the more intense CH and CMX-2 Districts within the area.
2. Change has occurred within the area. The expansion of non-residential uses such as Macedonia Baptist Church's expansion in the late 1990s and the more recent development of a parking area have removed viable residential lots from the area. The removal of single-family residential structures along the west side of MLK, Jr. Avenue at Government has also contributed to the change in character. However, the single most important change has been the redevelopment of the Broome's building that has significantly intensified the area. With Blue Dog Bistro operating adjacent to the front door of the southernmost parcel and the Crawfish House at the back door, the expanded commercialization of the Broome's property has impacted the six parcels of Lima Properties.
3. Public Need for improved buildings and sites. The buildings on the site are deteriorated. The southern most building (806 MLK) is nonconforming, vacant and past the stage of repair. The home would be difficult to rebuild on the site in the current district. The other structures or lots are nonconforming. Collectively, the buildings are a blighting influence along the corridor. The rezoning will encourage reinvestment and redevelopment. This redevelopment is not practical with the more rigid standards of the RD District and odd configuration of the site.
4. Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed rezoning is consistent with a number of policies of the Comprehensive Plan. Diversity of housing types, flexibility in zoning, in-fill development, intensification in areas adjacent to the CBD, and transitional zoning between more intense districts and neighborhoods are portions of the Plan addressed in this report that are consistent with this request.

Based on the Change in Character, consistency with Comprehensive Plan and Public Need, the applicant requests the approval of the request for the rezoning to CMX-1 and the rejection the recommendation of the Planning Commission.



EXHIBIT 1

Within the immediate area, the vast majority of residential structures that were adjacent to the subject site have been removed. These lots are now vacant or a parking lots. Properties to the south have been removed and replaced with medical and professional offices (Furr Development). Broome's is located to the south and east. The site has expanded and redeveloped with the Crawfish House and Blue Dog Bistro.

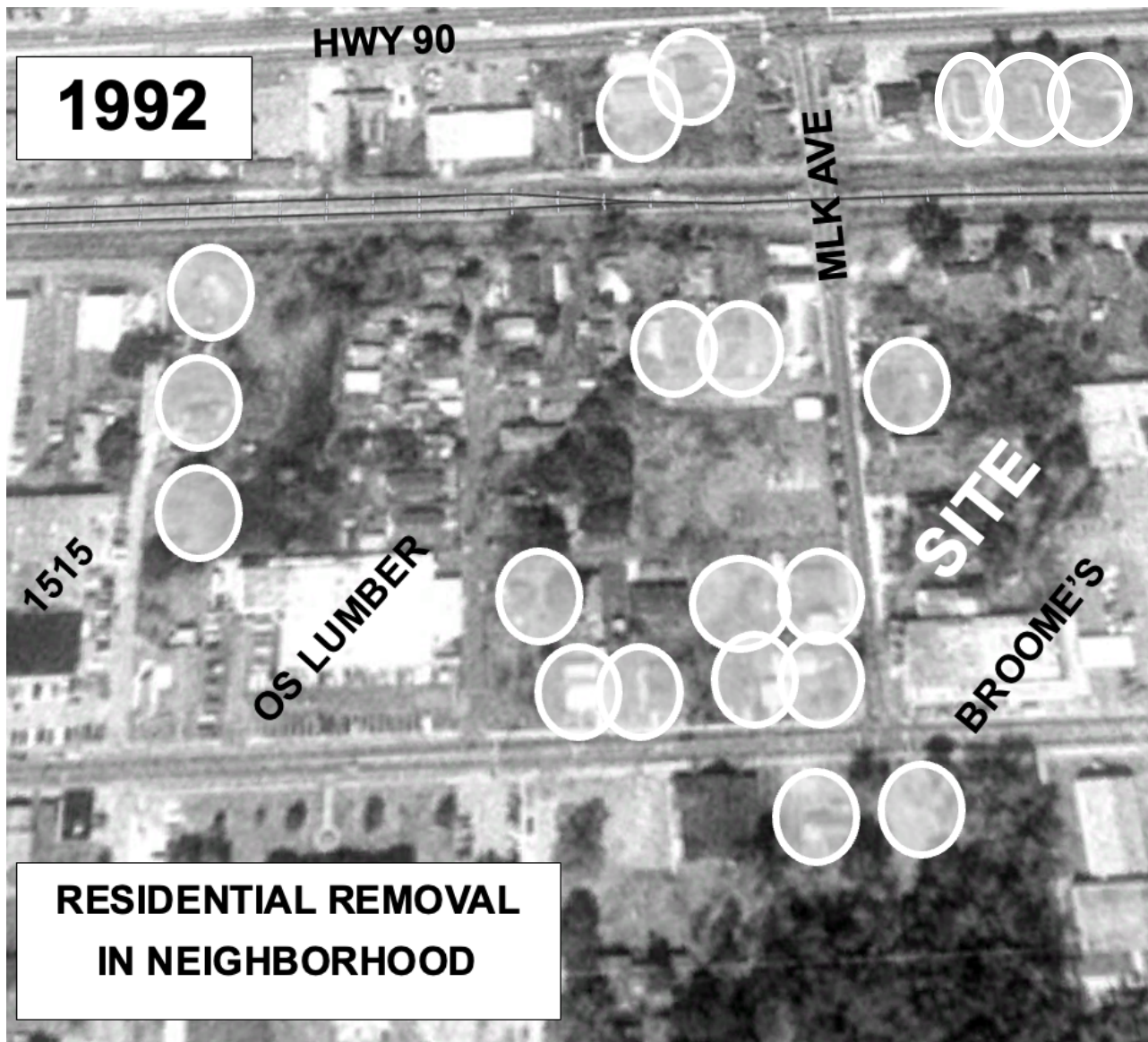


Exhibit 2



The image above from 1972-1973 shows the Single Family Residential character that existed 50 years ago. This has slowly but undoubtedly changed. Pressures from commercial changes along Highway 90 and Government Street have increased pressures on Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue that pushes the corridor towards a more intense residential or commercial use. With the diminishing presences of residential structures on MLK, the rezoning is appropriate.

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PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT

PUBLIC HEARING DATE: July 8, 2025

APPLICANT: City of Ocean Springs

DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST:

Public Hearing on the adoption of the 2045 Ocean Springs Comprehensive Plan

HISTORY OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANS: (excerpt from the Draft Comprehensive Plan)

Ocean Springs' planning history reflects a continuous effort to manage growth, enhance livability, and address emerging challenges through comprehensive and focused planning initiatives. Planning in Ocean Springs can be divided into key phases before and after Hurricane Katrina. Before Katrina, Ocean Springs' comprehensive planning focused on infrastructure (primarily automotive) and community facilities and separating land uses into distinctly different neighborhoods and districts. Post-Katrina, however, the City began incorporating traditional neighborhood design, urbanism, mixed-use, and walkability into community planning. These elements endure in today's plans for Ocean Springs' future growth and development.

Pre-Hurricane Katrina Comprehensive Plans

The 1965 Comprehensive Plan

Ocean Springs began formal planning in the late 1950s, culminating in the "Evaluation of the Economy—Long Range Land Use Plan for Ocean Springs, Mississippi" in 1965. This plan and subsequent publications, such as the Major Thoroughfare Plan (1966) and the Community Facilities Plan (1966), identified issues such as strip commercial development and the need for controlled land use.

1971 Comprehensive Plan

The 1971 Plan included reports on community goals, economic and population studies, inventory and analysis, housing, public improvements, and a comprehensive development plan. It set goals for city growth and development until 1990.

2001 Comprehensive Plan

The planning process for the 2001 Comprehensive Plan began in 1995 and aimed to guide development from 2000 to 2020. It was the city's first official land use strategy, focusing on data collection and issue identification. The plan included goals for city growth and addressed issues from previous plans.

Post-Hurricane Katrina Community Planning

The Mississippi Renewal Forum

The devastation of Hurricane Katrina in 2005 led to the *Mississippi Renewal Forum*, which emphasized building compact, pedestrian-friendly, and mixed-use neighborhoods. The *Mississippi Renewal Forum's* recommendations for Ocean Springs, along with the Bienville Boulevard Design Handbook and Front Beach Master Plan, addressed key areas of the City and priorities post-Katrina. These documents set the stage for major revisions to the city's development regulations focused on improving neighborhood connectivity, urban design, and mixed-use development.

Ocean Springs Blueprint 2010

The "Ocean Springs Blueprint 2010" updated previous plans, integrating new goals and strategies. This plan focused on preserving the city's character, managing growth, and ensuring a high quality of life for residents.

2045 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MEETINGS:

The following meetings have been held to develop the 2045 Comprehensive Plan:

- September 20, 2023 – Open House Public Meeting at Civic Center;
- October 22, 2024 – Open House Public Meeting at Civic Center;
- November 12, 2024 – Planning Commission Public Hearing;
- April 29, 2025 - Planning Commission Work Session;

POTENTIAL MOTIONS:

To recommend **approval** of City of Ocean Springs 2045 Comprehensive Plan.

– OR –

To recommend **denial** of the City of Ocean Springs 2045 Comprehensive Plan.



CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS 2045 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**DISCOVERING FOUNDATIONS,
CHARTING THE FUTURE**



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Prepared By



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Kevin Wade, Ward 3

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Bobby Cox, Alderman at Large

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	CHAPTER 1 – PLANNING FOUNDATIONS
3	<i>What is a Comprehensive Plan?</i>
5	<i>How Will the Comprehensive Plan Be Used?</i>
6	<i>Who Will Implement the Plan?</i>
7	<i>Why Update the Comprehensive Plan</i>
8	<i>Planning History and Precedents</i>
10	<i>Plan Organization</i>
12	<i>Conclusion</i>
	CHAPTER 2 – HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY, AND NATURAL RESOURCES
15	RESOURCES
16	<i>City History</i>
18	<i>Regional Geography</i>
19	<i>Topography, Elevation, and Slope</i>
20	<i>Surface Water Resources</i>
20	<i>Groundwater</i>
21	<i>Wildlife, Threatened and Endangered Species</i>
22	<i>Development Constraints and Restrictions</i>
24	<i>Watersheds, Floodplains, and Wetlands</i>
31	<i>Conclusion</i>
33	CHAPTER 3 – POPULATION AND ECONOMY
34	<i>Population Analysis</i>
34	<i>Natural Increase and Migration</i>
35	<i>Population Pyramids</i>
37	<i>Age Cohort Analysis</i>
38	<i>Population Projections</i>
39	<i>Educational Attainment</i>
39	<i>Housing Characteristics</i>

42	<i>Income Characteristics</i>
42	<i>Conclusion</i>
	CHAPTER 4 – EXISTING LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION
43	<i>Existing Neighborhoods and Districts</i>
56	<i>Existing Land Use Inventory and Analysis</i>
57	<i>Transportation Systems</i>
65	<i>Functional Classification of Existing Streets</i>
66	<i>Traffic Counts</i>
67	<i>Active Transportation Network</i>
68	<i>Public Transportation</i>
69	<i>Transportation Challenges</i>
71	CHAPTER 5 – VISION, GUIDING PRINCIPLES, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
71	<i>Vision</i>
72	<i>Guiding Principles</i>
75	<i>Goals and Objectives</i>
83	<i>Conclusion</i>
85	CHAPTER 6 – LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT
85	<i>Development Opportunities</i>
88	<i>Future Land Use Plan</i>
88	<i>Future Land Use Categories</i>
90	<i>Future Land Use Map</i>
97	<i>Conclusion</i>
99	CHAPTER 7 – TRANSPORTATION PLAN
100	<i>Street Improvements Plan</i>
106	<i>Pedestrian Improvements Plan</i>
111	<i>Bicycle Improvements Plan</i>
116	<i>Transit Improvements Plan</i>
118	<i>Conclusion</i>

119	CHAPTER 8 – COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN
120	<i>General Government</i>
120	<i>Police Department</i>
121	<i>Fire Department</i>
122	<i>Emergency Management</i>
124	<i>Parks and Recreation</i>
126	<i>Public Works Department</i>
133	<i>Planning Department</i>
133	<i>Code Enforcement</i>
133	<i>Housing</i>
135	<i>Ocean Springs Municipal Public Library</i>
135	<i>Ocean Springs School District</i>
136	<i>Conclusion</i>
137	CHAPTER 9 – COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN
138	<i>Implementation Tools</i>
140	<i>Plan Maintenance</i>
141	<i>Conclusion</i>
143	APPENDIX

TABLE OF MAPS

2	<i>Map 1—Base Map</i>
18	<i>Map 2—Regional Geography Map</i>
25	<i>Map 3—Septic Soil Limitations</i>
26	<i>Map 4—Severe Slopes</i>
29	<i>Map 5—Wetlands</i>
30	<i>Map 6—Flood Hazard Areas (DFIRM)</i>
48	<i>Map 7—Historic Districts</i>
54	<i>Map 8—School Districts</i>
58	<i>Map 9—Existing Land Use Map</i>
59	<i>Map 10—Existing Land Use (West Zoom)</i>
60	<i>Map 11—Existing Land Use (Central Zoom)</i>
61	<i>Map 12—Existing Land Use (East Zoom)</i>
62	<i>Map 13—Functional Classification Map</i>
64	<i>Map 14—Traffic Counts</i>
91	<i>Map 15—Future Land Use Map</i>
92	<i>Map 16—Future Land Use (West Zoom)</i>
93	<i>Map 17—Future Land Use (Central Zoom)</i>
94	<i>Map 18—Future Land Use (East Zoom)</i>
107	<i>Map 19—Street Improvement Plan</i>
110	<i>Map 20—Pedestrian Improvement Plan</i>
112	<i>Map 21—Bicycle Improvement Plan</i>
123	<i>Map 22—Fire Districts, Ratings, & Stations</i>
127	<i>Map 23—Blueways Improvement Plan</i>
129	<i>Map 24—Sewer Certificated Areas</i>
130	<i>Map 25—Sewer Improvement Plan</i>
131	<i>Map 26—Water Certification Areas</i>
132	<i>Map 27—Bridge & Drainage Improvements</i>

TABLE OF FIGURES/TABLES

34	<i>Figure 1—Historical Population</i>
35	<i>Figure 2—Population Growth</i>
36	<i>Figure 3— Population Pyramid, 2010</i>
36	<i>Figure 4—Population Pyramid, 2020</i>
37	<i>Figure 5—Cohort Population, 2010 vs. 2020</i>
38	<i>Figure 6—Population Projections</i>
39	<i>Figure 7—Educational Attainment</i>
40	<i>Figure 8—Housing Units by Status</i>
40	<i>Figure 9—Housing Units by Type</i>
41	<i>Figure 10—Housing Units by Year Built</i>
41	<i>Figure 11—Housing Units by Year Moved Into</i>
63	<i>Table 1—Traffic Counts</i>
96	<i>Table 2—Future Land Use/Zoning Categories Matrix</i>
109	<i>Table 3—Proposed Sidewalk Improvements</i>
111	<i>Table 4—Proposed Intersection Improvements</i>
114	<i>Table 5—Proposed Bicycle Improvements</i>

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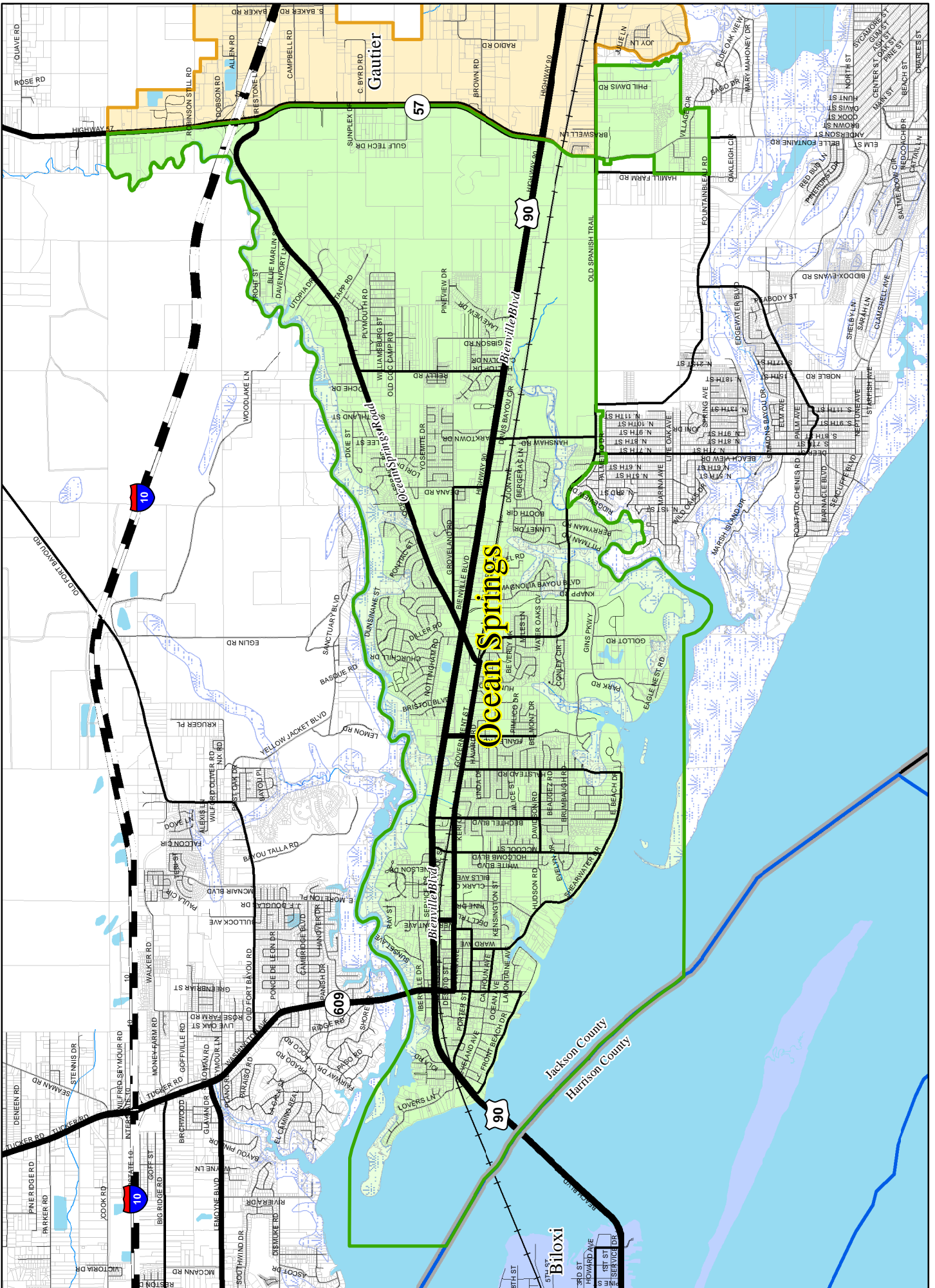


CHAPTER 1—PLANNING FOUNDATIONS

- * **WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?**
- * **HOW WILL THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN BE USED?**
- * **WHO WILL IMPLEMENT THE PLAN?**
- * **PLANNING HISTORY AND PRECEDENTS**
- * **PLAN ORGANIZATION**
- * **CONCLUSION**

The Comprehensive Plan for Ocean Springs, Mississippi, is a visionary and strategic framework designed to guide the city's sustainable growth and development over the next 20 years. This plan aims to preserve and enhance Ocean Springs' unique coastal charm, natural beauty, and cultural heritage while fostering a thriving, resilient, and inclusive community. The plan ensures balanced growth, environmental sustainability, social equity, and economic vitality by addressing the needs of current and future residents, businesses, and visitors.

Through a collaborative and participatory process, the Comprehensive Plan identifies key priorities, goals, and strategies across interconnected focus areas, including land use, housing, economic development, transportation, infrastructure, public services, environmental stewardship, and community character. This plan will act as a living document, adaptable to the evolving needs and aspirations of the community, incorporating ongoing public engage-



ment and periodic evaluations to remain relevant and responsive.

As a guiding document, city officials, planners, and community members will utilize the Comprehensive Plan to inform decision-making, policy development, and resource allocation. By aligning these decisions with the plan’s strategic priorities, Ocean Springs can ensure that its future growth is well-balanced and sustainable, promoting a high quality of life for all its residents. The successful implementation of this plan will require the commitment, cooperation, and coordination of multiple stakeholders, including local government agencies, private sector partners, non-profit organizations, and community members. Ocean Springs can confidently navigate its path toward a better future through these collective efforts.

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

The Comprehensive Plan for Ocean Springs, Mississippi, provides a long-term vision and strategic framework to guide the sustainable growth and development of the community over the next 20 years. This plan aims to preserve and enhance Ocean Springs's unique coastal charm, natural beauty, and cultural heritage while fostering a thriving, resilient, and inclusive community that meets the needs of current and future residents, businesses, and visitors alike.

Through a collaborative and participatory process, the Comprehensive Plan identifies key priorities, goals, and strategies across intercon-

nected focus areas, including land use, housing, economic development, transportation, infrastructure, public services, environmental stewardship, and community character. The plan promotes well-balanced growth, environmental sustainability, social equity, and economic vitality in Ocean Springs by aligning decision-making and resource allocation with these strategic priorities.

This Comprehensive Plan serves as a living document, adaptable to the community's changing needs and aspirations. By incorporating ongoing public engagement and periodic evaluations, the plan will ensure that Ocean Springs' vision remains relevant, responsive, and reflective of residents' and stakeholders' diverse voices and values. Together, Ocean Springs will build a future defined by opportunity, sustainability, and shared success.

Section 17-1-1 of the *Mississippi Code* defines a comprehensive plan as:

“A statement of public policy for the physical development of the entire municipality or county adopted by resolution of the governing body, consisting of the following elements at a minimum:

- (i) **Goals and objectives** for the long-range (twenty (20) to twenty-five (25) years) development of the county or municipality. Required goals and objectives shall address, at a minimum, residential, commercial and industrial development; parks, open space and recreation; street or road improvements; public schools and community facilities.



(ii) A **land use plan** which designates in map or policy form the proposed general distribution and extent of the uses of land for residences, commerce, industry, recreation and open space, public/quasi-public facilities and lands. Background information shall be provided concerning the specific meaning of land use categories depicted in the plan in terms of the following: residential densities; intensity of commercial uses; industrial and public/quasi-public uses; and any other information needed to adequately define the meaning of such land use codes. Projections of population and economic growth for the area encompassed by the plan may be the basis for quantitative

recommendations for each land use category.

(iii) A **transportation plan** depicting in map form the proposed functional classifications for all existing and proposed streets, roads and highways for the area encompassed by the land use plan and for the same time period as that covered by the land use plan. Functional classifications shall consist of arterial, collector and local streets, roads and highways, and these classifications shall be defined on the plan as to minimum right-of-way and surface width requirements; these requirements shall be based upon traffic projections. All other forms of transportation pertinent to the local jurisdiction shall be addressed as

appropriate. The transportation plan shall be a basis for a capital improvements program.

- (iv) **A community facilities plan** as a basis for a capital improvements program including, but not limited to, the following: housing; schools; parks and recreation; public buildings and facilities; and utilities and drainage.”

Section 17-1-11 also states that “The governing authority of each municipality and county may provide for the preparation, adoption, amendment, extension and carrying out of a comprehensive plan for the purpose of bringing about coordinated physical development in accordance with present and future needs and may create, independently or jointly, a local planning commission with authority to prepare and propose

- (a) a comprehensive plan of physical development of the municipality or county;
- (b) a proposed zoning ordinance and map;
- (c) regulations governing subdivisions of land;
- (d) building or set back lines on streets, roads and highways; and
- (e) recommendations to the governing authorities of each municipality or county with regard to the enforcement of and amendments to the comprehensive plan, zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations and capital improvements program.”

HOW WILL THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN BE USED?

The Comprehensive Plan is a blueprint and guiding document for Ocean Springs, Mississippi's growth, development, and future prosperity. The plan serves several vital functions, including:

Vision and Goals: The plan establishes a clear vision and goals for Ocean Springs's future, providing direction for decision-makers, stakeholders, and community members to achieve the desired outcomes.

Policy Guidance: The Comprehensive Plan outlines policies and strategies across various focus areas, such as land use, housing, transportation, infrastructure, public services, environmental stewardship, and community character. This guidance will inform local ordinances, regulations, and codes to ensure consistency with the plan's objectives.

Decision-Making: The plan serves as a reference point for city officials, planners, and community members when evaluating proposed projects, initiatives, and investments. By aligning these decisions with the plan's priorities, Ocean Springs can ensure that resources are allocated effectively and that growth is well-balanced and sustainable.

Coordination and Collaboration: The Comprehensive Plan encourages collaboration among various agencies, organizations, and stakeholders in implementing the plan's strategies. This coordinated approach will help maximize the impact of available resources and fos-



ter a sense of shared ownership in the community's future.

Public Engagement: The plan serves as a communication tool to engage residents and stakeholders in ongoing conversations about Ocean Springs' future. By incorporating diverse perspectives and providing opportunities for input and feedback, the plan helps ensure that the community's vision remains relevant and responsive to changing needs and aspirations.

Monitoring and Evaluation: The Comprehensive Plan establishes benchmarks and performance measures to track progress and assess the effectiveness of its strategies. Regular updates and revisions will ensure that the plan remains adaptive to evolving conditions and continues to provide valuable guidance for Ocean Springs' growth and development.

WHO WILL IMPLEMENT THE PLAN?

Implementing the Comprehensive Plan for Ocean Springs, Mississippi, is a collaborative effort involving multiple stakeholders, including local government agencies, private sector partners, non-profit organizations, and community members. The plan's successful implementation requires ongoing commitment, cooperation, and coordination among these stakeholders. Key players and their roles in implementing the plan include:

Local Government: City departments, such as planning, public works, and parks and recreation will play a crucial role in implementing the plan through policy development, zoning and regulatory updates, capital improvement projects, and the provision of public services.

Elected Officials: The Board of Mayor and Aldermen will be responsible for adopting and supporting the policies and strategies outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. They will also allocate resources and approve budgets to facilitate

plan implementation and advocate for support necessary to achieve desired outcomes.

Planning Commission: The planning commission will review and provide recommendations on proposed developments, zoning changes, and other land use decisions to ensure consistency with the Comprehensive Plan's goals and policies.

Private Sector: Developers, business owners, and property owners will play a significant role in implementing the plan by investing in projects and initiatives that align with the community's vision and priorities.

Non-Profit Organizations: Local non-profit organizations will contribute to plan implementation by advocating for specific policies, providing expertise, and partnering on projects that support the plan's objectives.

Community Members: Residents and stakeholders will participate in the implementation process by providing input on proposed projects and initiatives, attending public meetings, and volunteering for community projects and events that align with the plan's goals.

Regional and State Agencies: Collaboration with regional and state agencies, such as transportation and environmental agencies, will be essential for coordinating and leveraging resources to support plan implementation.

The Comprehensive Plan outlines specific action steps, timelines, and responsibilities for each policy and strategy to ensure effective implementation. Additionally, a monitoring and evaluation process tracks progress, assesses the

effectiveness of the plan's strategies, and makes necessary adjustments to respond to changing conditions and community needs.

WHY UPDATE THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

Before this comprehensive plan, Ocean Springs' Blueprint 2010 was the city's latest comprehensive plan. It was adopted several years after Hurricane Katrina and set out a new vision based on mixed-use and high standards of community design, which were codified in the Ocean Springs Unified Development Code. While the 2010 established an ambitious foundation for Ocean Springs' future, much has changed since its adoption. Several important circumstances have caused a need for the plan to be revised and updated, including:

- The release of 2020 U.S. Census data provides new information and benchmarks for the city;
- Recent expansion of the City of Ocean Springs through annexation;
- New development throughout the city; and
- Statutory requirements for a 20-25 year planning horizon.

In combination, these factors created a need for a new comprehensive plan for Ocean Springs. The plan was not constructed in a vacuum, however, and draws heavily upon the precedent studies and foundational planning work accomplished by the city in its past.

PLANNING HISTORY AND PRECEDENTS

Ocean Springs' planning history reflects a continuous effort to manage growth, enhance livability, and address emerging challenges through comprehensive and focused planning initiatives. Planning in Ocean Springs can be divided into key phases before and after Hurricane Katrina. Before Katrina, Ocean Springs' comprehensive planning focused on infrastructure (primarily automotive) and community facilities and separating land uses into distinctly different neighborhoods and districts. Post-Katrina, however, the City began incorporating traditional neighborhood design, urbanism, mixed-use, and walkability into community planning. These elements endure in today's plans for Ocean Springs' future growth and development.

PRE-HURRICANE KATRINA COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

The 1965 Comprehensive Plan

Ocean Springs began formal planning in the late 1950s, culminating in the "Evaluation of the

Economy—Long Range Land Use Plan for Ocean Springs, Mississippi" in 1965. This plan and subsequent publications, such as the Major Thoroughfare Plan (1966) and the Community Facilities Plan (1966), identified issues such as strip commercial development and the need for controlled land use.

1971 Comprehensive Plan

The 1971 Plan included reports on community goals, economic and population studies, inventory and analysis, housing, public improvements, and a comprehensive development plan. It set goals for city growth and development until 1990.

2001 Comprehensive Plan

The planning process for the 2001 Comprehensive Plan began in 1995 and aimed to guide development from 2000 to 2020. It was the city's first official land use strategy, focusing on data collection and issue identification. The plan included goals for city growth and addressed issues from previous plans.

Mississippi Renewal Forum sketches for Bienville Boulevard



POST-HURRICANE KATRINA COMMUNITY PLANNING

The Mississippi Renewal Forum

The devastation of Hurricane Katrina in 2005 led to the Mississippi Renewal Forum, which emphasized building compact, pedestrian-friendly, and mixed-use neighborhoods. The Mississippi Renewal Forum's recommendations for Ocean Springs, along with the Bienville Boulevard Design Handbook (pictured below) and Front Beach Master Plan, addressed key areas of the City and priorities post-Katrina. These documents set the stage for major revisions to the city's development regulations focused on improving neighborhood connectivity, urban design, and mixed-use development.

Ocean Springs Blueprint 2010

The "Ocean Springs Blueprint 2010" updated previous plans, integrating new goals and strategies. This plan focused on preserving the city's character, managing growth, and ensuring a high quality of life for residents.

Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan 2018

In November 2018, the Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan was developed for Jackson County, including Ocean Springs. This plan aimed to enhance walking, bicycling, and paddling infrastructure, making these activities safe and comfortable for all ages and abilities. It was driven by public and stakeholder input, emphasizing the need for dedicated and separated facilities to improve safety and increase mobility.

Gulf Coast Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2045

The 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan provides a vision for the future of transportation in the Mississippi Gulf Coast region, covering all modes of transportation. It includes strategies for roadway expansion, intersection redesigns, and biking and walking infrastructure expansion. The plan emphasizes improving transportation choices, enhancing regional connectivity, supporting economic vitality, and managing the relationship between transportation, community, and the environment.

Mississippi Gulf Coast 2045 Transit Development Plan (TDP)

The 2045 TDP serves as a guiding document for improving public transportation in the region over the next 25 years. It includes a needs analysis, plan recommendations for service, capital, technology, and marketing improvements, and a detailed financial plan. The TDP also outlines a strategy for promoting transit-oriented development (TOD), aiming to create dense, mixed-use communities with accessible public transportation.

Mississippi Gulf Coast Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) FY 2025-2028

The TIP outlines a set of transportation projects and programs aimed at enhancing the transportation system in the Gulf Coast region, including Ocean Springs. The program focuses on safety, efficiency, and resilience, aligning with national goals and regional priorities. It includes funding and project details for multi-modal infrastructure improvements, intersection upgrades, and more.

Interim Apartment Survey 2020

The Interim Apartment Survey, conducted by the Gulf Regional Planning Commission (GRPC), provides a detailed overview of the multifamily rental housing market along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. This interim survey, influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic and a record-breaking hurricane season, focused on unassisted and assisted rental units across the region, including Ocean Springs.

Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) District 9 Hazard Mitigation Plan 2024- City of Ocean Springs Mitigation Action Plan

The Ocean Springs Mitigation Action Plan, as part of the MEMA Region 9 Hazard Mitigation Plan 2024, outlines key strategies to minimize risks associated with natural and technological hazards. It includes measures such as enforcing building codes, maintaining a debris management program, and promoting public education on hazard preparedness. The plan seeks to protect critical facilities, infrastructure, and natural resources while also enhancing emergency response capabilities to ensure the safety and resilience of the Ocean Springs community.

These planning efforts collectively highlight Ocean Springs' commitment to strategic growth management, infrastructure enhancement, community well-being, and an overall integrated and coordinated approach to improving the City and region. Each plan builds on the previous ones, and the 2045 Plan honors past planning achievements while positioning the city to respond to future demands with creativity, sustainability, and purpose.

PLAN ORGANIZATION

The Comprehensive Plan lays the groundwork for informed decision-making and strategic planning, providing a detailed analysis of the city's existing conditions and past development efforts. The early chapters of the plan offer a comprehensive overview of Ocean Springs' unique characteristics and current state, which are essential for guiding future growth and development. The later chapters outline the strategic vision for Ocean Springs over the next 20 years. These chapters set forward-looking goals, objectives, and actionable steps to ensure sustainable growth, community well-being, and economic vitality. The chapters in this part emphasize the city's commitment to maintaining its unique charm while navigating future challenges and opportunities.

CHAPTER 1: PLANNING FOUNDATIONS

The introduction provides an overview of the Comprehensive Plan's purpose and scope. It explains the importance of a long-term vision and strategic framework for guiding the sustainable growth and development of Ocean Springs over the next 20 years. Key focus areas include land use, housing, economic development, transportation, infrastructure, public services, environmental stewardship, and community character.

CHAPTER 2: HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY, AND NATURAL RESOURCES

This chapter delves into Ocean Springs's rich history, regional geography, and natural resources. It provides a detailed account of the city's historical development, from its early days to its present status as an exciting coastal



community. The chapter also explores the geographical features that shape the city's landscape, including topography, elevation, watersheds, floodplains, wetlands, surface water resources, groundwater, and wildlife. Understanding these foundational elements allows the community to appreciate its unique environmental assets and address development constraints and restrictions.

CHAPTER 3: POPULATION AND ECONOMY

An in-depth analysis of the population and economic characteristics of Ocean Springs is presented in this chapter. It covers demographic trends, including natural increase and migration patterns, population projections, and educational attainment. The housing market is also examined, highlighting the diversity of housing types and the dynamics of housing occupancy.

Additionally, the chapter explores income characteristics and the city's economic landscape, providing insights into the workforce, employment sectors, and economic opportunities. This analysis is essential for planning future development that meets the needs of a growing and diverse population.

CHAPTER 4: EXISTING LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION

This chapter provides an inventory and analysis of the existing land use and transportation systems in Ocean Springs. It explores the city's neighborhoods, districts, and significant land use categories, such as residential, commercial, industrial, and public spaces. The transportation section reviews the functional classification of existing streets, traffic counts, and the active transportation network, including pedestrian

and bicycle infrastructure. Public transportation systems and transportation challenges are also addressed. Understanding the current land use and transportation framework is crucial for identifying areas for improvement and future development.

CHAPTER 5: VISION, GUIDING PRINCIPLES, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This chapter articulates the clear goals and objectives that will guide Ocean Springs' future development. These goals are informed by community input and reflect the collective aspirations of residents, businesses, and stakeholders. The major focus areas include sustainable land use, diverse and affordable housing, strong local economy, enhanced mobility and connectivity, reliable infrastructure, environmental stewardship, and preservation of community character.

CHAPTER 6: LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

The future land use plan is presented in this chapter, detailing the proposed distribution of land uses and development strategies. It includes a comprehensive land use plan that designates areas for residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational uses. The chapter also addresses development constraints and promotes mixed-use projects, infill development, and the redevelopment of underutilized properties to maximize land use efficiency.

CHAPTER 7: TRANSPORTATION PLAN

This chapter outlines the transportation improvements needed to enhance mobility and connectivity within Ocean Springs. It includes strategies for upgrading existing streets, expanding public transportation services, devel-

oping a comprehensive network of sidewalks and bike lanes, and supporting transit-oriented development. These initiatives aim to improve traffic flow, increase accessibility, and promote active transportation.

CHAPTER 8: COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN

The future needs of community facilities and public services are the focus of this chapter. Recommendations include expanding and enhancing parks and recreational facilities, modernizing public utilities, improving public safety resources, supporting educational facility development, and implementing housing initiatives. These efforts ensure that Ocean Springs can provide high-quality amenities and services to its growing population.

CHAPTER 9: IMPLEMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE

The final chapter outlines the strategies and tools necessary for effectively implementing the Comprehensive Plan. It emphasizes the importance of using zoning regulations, capital improvement programs, and development incentives to achieve the plan's goals. The chapter also establishes a framework for regular updates and evaluations of the plan, fostering ongoing public engagement to ensure responsiveness to community needs and aspirations.

CONCLUSION

The Comprehensive Plan for Ocean Springs extends decades of thoughtful planning and strategic development. It builds upon the city's rich history and previous planning efforts, integrating modern community design and infrastructure development approaches. This plan is not

merely a static document; it is a dynamic framework that guides the city's growth and evolution over the next 20 years, ensuring that Ocean Springs remains a strong and prosperous community.

As the city continues to navigate the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century, this Comprehensive Plan will serve as a crucial tool for aligning public policies, private investments, and community actions. It emphasizes the importance of balanced growth, sustainable development, and preserving the city's unique character. The plan outlines specific goals, strategies, and actions across various sectors, including land use, housing, transportation, public services, and economic development, all

aimed at enhancing the quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

The Comprehensive Plan's success will require the collaborative efforts of local government, private sector partners, non-profit organizations, and the community. Through continued public engagement and periodic evaluations, the plan will remain responsive to the changing needs and aspirations of Ocean Springs. Together, these efforts will ensure that the city can meet the demands of the present while preserving the qualities that make it a cherished home for future generations. The Comprehensive Plan thus stands as a testament to Ocean Springs' commitment to fostering a thriving, inclusive, and forward-looking community.

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CHAPTER 2—HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY, AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- * CITY HISTORY
- * REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY
- * TOPOGRAPHY AND SLOPE
- * SOILS
- * SURFACE WATER
- * GROUNDWATER
- * WILDLIFE, ENDANGERED SPECIES
- * DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS AND RESTRICTIONS
- * WATERSHEDS, FLOODPLAINS, AND WETLANDS
- * CONCLUSION

INTRODUCTION

This chapter of the Comprehensive Plan provides background and context for understanding Ocean Springs, Mississippi, by examining the city's history, regional geography, and environmental characteristics. This chapter outlines the city's evolution, from its early days as a settlement by the Biloxi and Pascagoula tribes to its current status as a beloved coastal community. The section on city history delves into the various cultural and economic shifts that have shaped Ocean Springs, including the influence of French, British, and Spanish settlers, the development of the shipbuilding and seafood industries, and the city's emergence as a popular tourist destination.

The chapter also highlights the city's unique regional geography, characterized by its coastal environment, flat topography, and significant water resources, including the Gulf of Mexico and Biloxi Bay. These geographical features play a crucial role in defining the



city's culture, economy, and lifestyle while presenting challenges such as vulnerability to flooding, hurricane and tropical storm hazards, and the need to manage natural resources carefully. Additionally, Ocean Springs' topography, watersheds, and wetlands underscores the importance of preserving critical natural areas and the city's commitment to environmental sustainability.

CITY HISTORY

Ocean Springs was named in 1854 by Dr. William Glover Austin, who believed in the healing properties of the local springs. It was incorporated on September 9, 1892, with a second incorporation on March 16, 1910, to address a technical issue in the original incorporation that was deemed invalid. At its re-

incorporation, the population was around 1,472 people and roughly doubled to just over 3,000 by 1950. However, population growth accelerated in the latter half of the 20th and early 21st centuries, with the 2020 population reaching 18,429. Territory added through a 2024 annexation increased the population of the City to just over 20,000.

In its pre-Columbian history, the area was first inhabited by the Biloxi and Pascagoula tribes, who lived along the Gulf Coast and relied on fishing and hunting for their sustenance.

In the early 1700s, French explorers arrived in the area and established settlements, including nearby Biloxi. The French ceded control of the region to the British in 1763, who later turned it over to Spanish control in 1783.

In the early 1800s, the first permanent settlers arrived in Ocean Springs. Among them were several wealthy New Orleans families who built large homes and established plantations in the surrounding areas. The town was initially known as “Old Biloxi” but later became known as Ocean Springs after the natural springs found in the area. Following a period of disputed control between the United States and Spain, the United States Congress formally claimed the land between the Pearl River and Perdido

River in 1812, incorporating it into the Mississippi Territory in 1812 and the new State of Mississippi in 1817.

Throughout the 1800s, Ocean Springs continued to grow, thanks in part to its thriving shipbuilding industry. The town became a major center for shipbuilding, with dozens of ships launched from its shores each year. The ships were used for various purposes, from trading and fishing to transportation and defense. In the late 1800s, the seafood industry began to take hold in Ocean Springs. The region's location on Biloxi Bay and proximity to the Gulf of Mexico and the Mississippi Sound made it ideal for fishing and seafood harvesting. Over the years, many businesses began to process and distribute these products, including oyster factories, shrimp and crab processing plants, canneries, and fish markets.

The natural beauty of the area, combined with its mild climate and abundant seafood, made it an ideal location for relaxation and recreation. The city's first hotel, the Ocean Springs Hotel, was built in 1853, and several others followed over the years. In the early 1900s, Ocean Springs began attracting wealthy tourists from New Orleans and nearby cities. The tourism industry in Ocean Springs continued to grow throughout the 20th century as more and more people discovered the area's charms. Over the years, the town continued to grow and expand, and today, Ocean Springs is home to more than 20,000 residents. It is known for its thriving arts community, lively downtown area, beautiful beaches, and natural surroundings.



Ocean Springs, Mississippi, has a rich history that spans centuries. From its earliest inhabitants to its thriving shipbuilding and seafood industries to its growth as a popular vacation destination, the city has undergone many changes over the years. However, its strong sense of community and dedication to preserving its unique history and culture have remained constant throughout its history.

REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY

Ocean Springs is located on the Mississippi Gulf Coast in Jackson County. The city is situated on a narrow strip of land between Biloxi Bay to the west and south and Old Fort Bayou to the north. The area is characterized by low-lying, marshy terrain and beaches and is home to various coastal plant and animal life.

The city covers an area of approximately 17.4 square miles and has a population of approximately 20,000. It is part of the Gulfport-Biloxi Metropolitan Statistical Area. The city borders Biloxi to the west and Gautier to the east. U.S. Highway 90 runs east-west through the city, connecting it to Pascagoula, Gautier, and Biloxi. Ocean Springs is approximately 75 miles east of New Orleans and 170 miles southeast of Jackson, MS, the state's capital.

Ocean Springs' landscape is dominated by its coastal environment. The city is home to several beaches, including Front Beach, located near downtown and features a pier, playground, and picnic area. The city is also home to several parks and nature reserves, including the Davis Bayou Area of the Gulf Islands National Sea-

Map 2: Regional Geography Map



shore, known for its scenic beaches, hiking trails, and wildlife viewing opportunities.

In addition to its coastal environment, Ocean Springs is home to several inland waterways, including Fort Bayou, which winds along the city's northern edge and provides kayaking, fishing, and other outdoor activities.

The city's leaders and residents take pride in their coastal heritage and are committed to preserving and protecting this important natural resource for future generations.

TOPOGRAPHY, ELEVATION, AND SLOPE

Ocean Springs has a relatively flat topography, with most of its elevation approximately 100 feet above sea level or lower. The city's elevation gradually increases northwards away from the coast towards the inland areas of Jackson County. The slope of the city is generally gentle, with a few slightly steeper inclines in some areas, such as along Old Fort Bayou. The city's relatively flat topography makes it an ideal location for residential and commercial develop-

ment and provides opportunities for outdoor recreation such as biking, hiking, and jogging.

One of Ocean Springs's topographic challenges is its location in a coastal area vulnerable to flooding and storm surges during hurricanes and other severe weather events. The city is situated along Biloxi Bay, and many areas are at or near sea level. This makes them more susceptible to flooding during heavy rainfall, tidal surges, and storm surges.

Another topographic challenge is the presence of wetlands and marshes, which can be difficult to develop and can limit the available land for development. Wetlands provide important habitats for many species of plants and animals and serve as natural buffers against flooding and storm surges. However, development in or near wetlands can negatively impact these ecosystems through habitat loss, water quality degradation, and erosion.

Overall, Ocean Springs's topographic challenges require careful planning and management to ensure that the city can continue to grow and



develop while minimizing its impact on the natural environment and reducing the risk of flooding and other hazards.

SURFACE WATER RESOURCES

Ocean Springs is bounded by and primarily defined by its surface water resources, including bayous and bays of the Gulf of Mexico. These waterways are important for the local community, providing recreation, tourism, and economic opportunities. The geography largely follows the drainage basins of the area's watersheds. Most of the study area drains to Biloxi Bay through Old Fort Bayou, Davis Bayou, or directly into the bay.

Biloxi Bay is a shallow, brackish bay along Mississippi's Gulf Coast. It is approximately 20 miles long and 10 miles wide, covering an area of approximately 90 square miles. It is connected to the Gulf of Mexico through a narrow opening at its southern end and is connected to the Back Bay of Biloxi through small channels and estuaries to the north. It is surrounded by a mix of residential, commercial, and natural areas and is an important resource for the local community. The bay is home to various fish and wildlife species, including oysters, crabs, shrimp, and numerous fish species, such as speckled trout and redfish. These species are important for commercial and recreational fishing and provide significant ecological and economic benefits to the region.

Biloxi Bay is also popular for recreational activities such as boating, kayaking, and swimming. It is surrounded by several public parks and recreational areas, including the Biloxi Bay

Bridge Walkway, which provides a pedestrian and bicycle path between Biloxi and Ocean Springs.

Like many coastal waterways, Biloxi Bay faces several environmental challenges, including pollution from stormwater runoff, nutrient runoff from agricultural and urban areas, and erosion and sedimentation from natural and human-caused disturbances. Efforts are underway to address these challenges and protect Biloxi Bay's ecological and economic value for future generations.

Ocean Springs has several smaller creeks and bayous that are important for stormwater management and provide habitat for various aquatic species. These waterways include Old Fort Bayou, Davis Bayou, and several smaller creeks and tributaries. The creeks and bayous are surrounded by environmentally sensitive landscapes that divide the city and its surroundings into areas suitable for new development and areas suitable for conservation.

Overall, the surface water resources in Ocean Springs are essential natural resources that provide a range of ecological, recreational, and economic benefits to the community. These resources must be managed and protected to ensure long-term sustainability and viability. The City of Ocean Springs has taken steps to preserve and protect these critical natural areas.

GROUNDWATER

Ocean Springs and numerous nearby public water systems draw water from groundwater wells. The city draws water from the Graham Ferry Formation. Ocean Springs relies on these



aquifers for its groundwater resources and to supply water to five public water wells. The City also purchases water from the Jackson County Utility Authority (JCUA), whose water comes from the Miocene Aquifer System of the Pascagoula Formation. Groundwater in the region is mainly used for residential, commercial, agricultural, and industrial purposes. Groundwater quality can vary depending on the depth and location of the aquifer. Water is treated and distributed for drinking and other potable uses in the city and surrounding areas.

Monitoring and managing groundwater resources is crucial to ensuring long-term sustainability, especially considering the potential impacts of population growth, urban development, and climate change on water supply and demand. Preventing groundwater contamination is vital to the City of Ocean Springs' success. Potential sources of contamination include agricultural activities, industrial operations, urban runoff, and improperly managed waste disposal sites. Local and state agencies are vital in monitoring groundwater quality and imple-

menting measures to protect and preserve these valuable resources.

As part of its comprehensive planning efforts, the City of Ocean Springs must carefully manage its groundwater resources, using policies and strategies to protect them from pollution and other threats.

WILDLIFE, THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

Ocean Springs is home to diverse wildlife and vegetation due to its location along the Gulf Coast and its proximity to wetlands, forests, and other natural habitats. The city's unique ecological features provide essential habitat for various species, including birds, reptiles, amphibians, and mammals.

The city's marshes and swamps are home to various waterfowl, including ducks, geese, and herons, as well as many species of fish, shellfish, and crustaceans. The forests and woodlands in and around Ocean Springs are also home to diverse wildlife, including deer, raccoons, opossums, and various species of birds

and reptiles. These areas provide critical habitat and nesting sites for many species.

In terms of vegetation, Ocean Springs is known for its native hardwood trees, such as oak, hickory, and magnolia. The city is also home to various other plant species, including wetland plants such as cypress, tupelo, sawgrass, and various wildflowers and grasses.

Along with the area's rich biodiversity, there are threats to the local wildlife and vegetation. Development and urbanization can disrupt natural habitats and fragment wildlife populations, while pollution and other environmental hazards can negatively impact water quality and harm wildlife. Conservation efforts and sustainable land use practices are essential for protecting Ocean Springs' natural and maintaining the local ecosystem's health.

DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS AND RESTRICTIONS

Numerous constraints may be of concern when discussing the development potential of vacant land. Not all constraints can be documented on a map or discussed within this plan. Some constraints may be purely based on the effects of human preferences or decision-making. For this analysis, constraints to development are divided into locational constraints and environmental constraints. It is important to note that not all constraints are negative; they may be restrictive but have a positive or beneficial outcome. The constraints discussed in the following pages affect growth within and outside the City of Ocean Springs; they also set parameters

for identifying a comprehensive planning area and determining future land use.

LOCATION CONSTRAINTS

Location constraints consist of areas of the City or unincorporated areas with certain rules or regulations impacting future development, such as Federal or State lands or Historic Districts. The City of Ocean Springs does have areas that are considered location constraints. There are federally designated lands to the north of the area. These lands comprise approximately 6% of the area within the city and 22% of the area within the planning area. The City also has six historic districts, which are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4. The historic districts comprise approximately 413 acres, all in the downtown core of the City.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

Environmental constraints represent specific land qualities that affect future building, such as flood zones, steep slopes, wetlands, and soil suitability for sewage disposal. The following pages will discuss these constraints in detail, along with maps displaying each constraint.

Soils

Ocean Springs is in the Coastal Flatwoods soil resource area, which reflects the generalized location of soil groups based on topographic and geological conditions. The soils in the area are silty and sandy loam, moderately susceptible to erosion, and with a low depth to the water table. These features can make the soil in the region challenging for septic tanks and sewage lagoons and for developing roads and build-



ings. The three most prevalent soil types are Bayou, Handsboro, and Harleston.

Bayou soils are poorly drained, with slow surface runoff. Permeability is moderate in the upper part of the profile and moderately slow in the lower part. They formed in loamy sediments of marine origin. Bayou soils are saturated during the wet season, primarily in winter and early spring, and have seasonal water tables that range from 0 to 1.0 feet below the surface.

The Handsboro series consists of deep, very poorly drained, moderately permeable soils that formed in thick accumulations of highly decomposed herbaceous plant remains that have thin strata of mineral soil sediments. These soils are in regularly flooded salt marshes in estuaries of the Eastern Gulf Coast Flatwoods. This soil is subject to inundation with brackish water at high tide every day. The water table is always near or above the soil surface.

The Harleston series consists of very deep, moderately well-drained, moderately permeable

soils on terraces and uplands of the Eastern Gulf Coast Flatwoods. These soils are formed in sandy and loamy marine or stream deposits. Some of the low terrace areas overflow occasionally for a very brief duration during periods of high rainfall.

Septic Tank Suitability

Ocean Springs and the planning area primarily consist of soil types where the use of septic tank absorption fields is very limited or somewhat limited. The soil survey produced by the NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) rates each soil type based on certain characteristics needed for the adequate performance of alternative sewage disposal systems. Some limitations may be overcome, but it can be costly. County Health Departments are typically the entities that inspect and regulate the construction of absorption fields. However, the best way to regulate sewage disposal is through a centralized sewer system and a requirement to connect to municipal sewer service. The limited nature of the soil in Ocean Springs should make connecting every sewage-producing entity in

the City to the sewer system a top priority. Also, when development occurs along the City fringe or within a known growth area of the City, connection to sewer service should be mandatory.

Severe Slopes

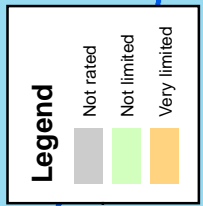
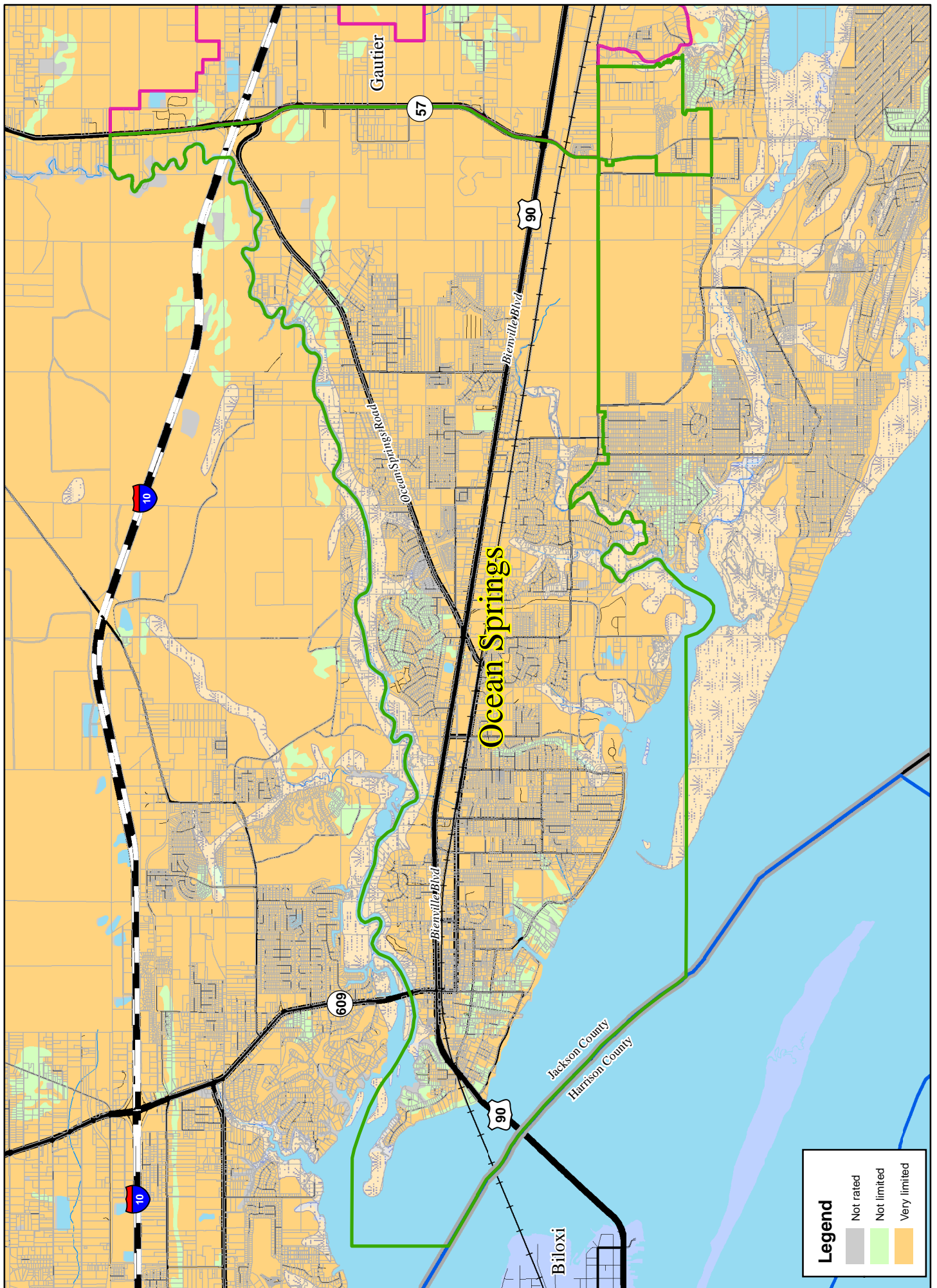
Defining severe slopes can vary depending on the community and location. For Ocean Springs, severe slopes have been defined as slopes above fifteen percent. This is based on the soil category breakdown by the NRCS. The map does not represent the exact slope of land but represent where soils with qualities that produce a specific slope range are likely to exist. A greater effective slope leads to higher costs for development, and for some projects, these costs may be prohibitive. The map shows that approximately 8% of Ocean Springs has a slope from five to fifteen percent, and none of the City has a slope greater than fifteen percent.

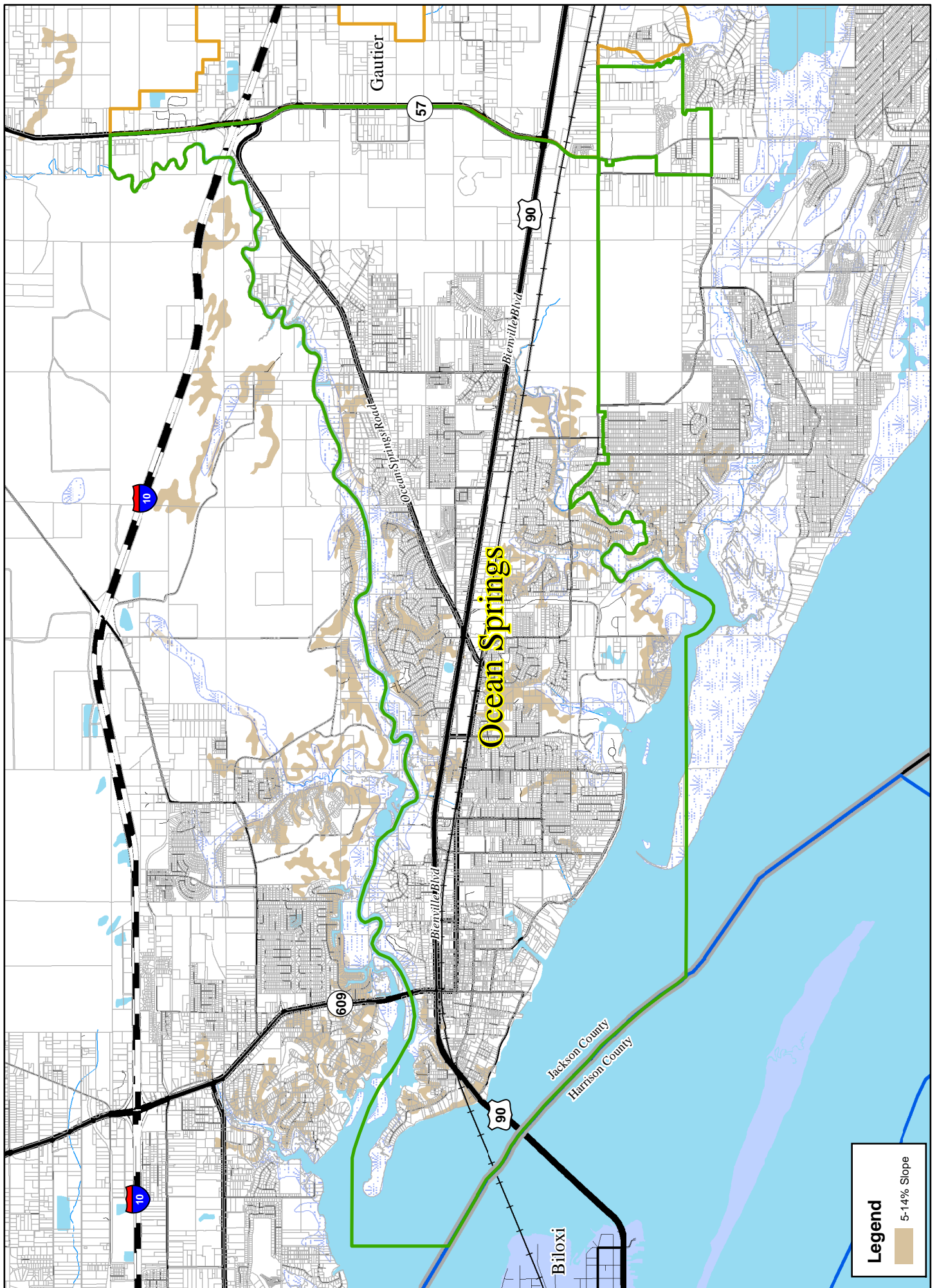
WATERSHEDS, FLOODPLAINS, AND WETLANDS

Wetlands are an essential ecological feature in Ocean Springs, and they play a vital role in maintaining the local environment's health. Wetlands are areas of land saturated with water for at least part of the year, and they are characterized by the presence of unique plant and animal communities adapted to living in these waterlogged conditions. Ocean Springs has several types of wetland habitats, including salt marshes, freshwater marshes, and cypress swamps. These wetlands provide essential habitat for various plants and animals, including

migratory birds, fish, and other aquatic species. Wetlands also help filter water pollutants, reduce erosion and sedimentation, and protect against flooding and storm surges. Development in wetland areas can damage these habitats, reducing environmental health and increasing flood hazards.

To address the flooding issues within Ocean Springs, the city has implemented several measures to reduce the risk of damage from storm surges and tidal flooding. These include the construction of levees and floodwalls, the creation of retention ponds and other storm-water management infrastructure, and implementing land use regulations that limit development in flood-prone areas and prevent damage to wetlands. Despite these efforts, however, flooding remains a significant risk in Ocean Springs because of the environmental conditions that exist near the coast and because of population growth throughout the City. As the population continues to grow, more homes and roads are built, thereby increasing the amount of impervious surface around the City. Increasing the impervious surface area puts more strain on the natural and man-made drainage systems because rainfall is forced into rivers and streams more quickly which can lead to more frequent and more devastating floods. Therefore, the city continues to explore new strategies and technologies to mitigate the impact of flooding and protect the natural environment.





Map 4: Severe Slopes

100-YEAR FLOODPLAINS

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) creates digital flood insurance rating maps (DFIRM) for the State of Mississippi. The map portrays the most current mapping of flood potential areas in Ocean Springs. These areas are delineated as floodways, floodplains, and velocity zone.

FEMA defines a floodway as “the channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than a designated height.” Approximately 3.1% of the City is within the floodway.

A floodplain is any land susceptible to being inundated by flood waters. The 100-year floodplain is the most common flood zone used for analysis purposes. The 100-year floodplain area has a 1% chance of flooding in any given year. Approximately 23.4% of the City is within the 100-year floodplain.

The velocity zone is an area along the coast that has a 1% or greater chance of flooding and is subject to high velocity wave action from storms. Approximately 29.6% of the City is within the velocity zone, with a majority of that percentage due to the City limits extending into Biloxi Bay.

The city should educate and encourage the purchase of flood insurance for the residents who live in and near these areas. The city should also work with the State NFIP (National Flood Insurance Program) Coordinator to ensure that the floodplain ordinance and permitting process

is up-to-date and documents are properly retained.

WETLANDS

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service has developed a National Wetlands Inventory mapping system. The City of Ocean Springs and planning area is significantly impacted by wetlands. Approximately 26.8% of the city is classified as Estuarine and Marine Deepwater. Estuarine and Marine Wetland and Freshwater Emergent Wetland make up 9.6% of the city. Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland makes up 15.7% of the city. Lastly, Freshwater Ponds and Lake & Riverine comprise only 0.3% of the city. These areas should remain undeveloped in order to preserve wetland functions and protect the environment and local development from pollution and flooding.

NATURAL AND COASTAL HAZARDS

The City of Ocean Springs is vulnerable to a variety of natural hazards due to risks from hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding, and other lower probability hazards, such as wildfires or winter weather.

Jackson County is part of MEMA’s District 9 Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan (RHMP) that covers unincorporated Jackson County as well as the cities of Gautier, Moss Point, Pascagoula, and Ocean Springs. It addresses the four hazards considered to have the greatest impact on Jackson County: hurricanes/tropical storms, tornados, floods/storm surges, and wildfires.

The RHMP includes risk and vulnerability assessments for these hazards based on frequency of past occurrences and exposure of land and structures to these hazard types. Based on ME-MA assessments, the most significant of these hazards include:

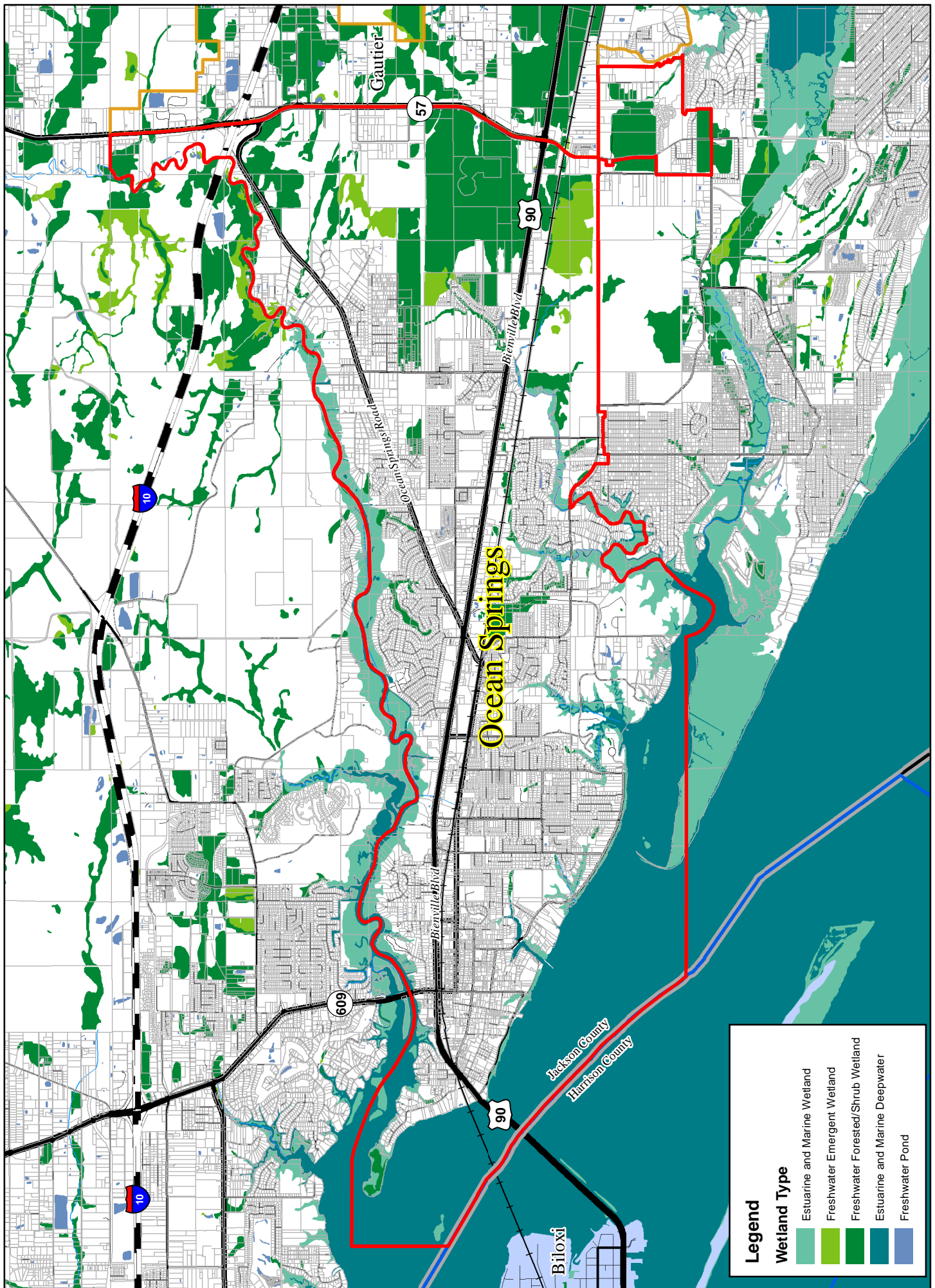
- **Flooding.** Between 1978 and 2022, flooding in Ocean Springs caused 823 instances of National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) insured losses totaling over \$86.2 million. Fifty properties have been subject to repetitive losses, resulting in 135 claims and a \$15.3 million of the total losses. Planning for this requires enforcing development standards to protect life and property, including construction codes and limitations on the location and intensity of development in floodplains and wetlands.
- **Storm Surges (Due to Hurricanes and Tropical Storms).** From 1998-2022, nine storm surges affected Jackson County, with total damages of approximately \$115.8 million. Only one came ashore in Ocean Springs, however, the risk of future surges remains considerable. There is an absolute certainty that Ocean Springs will continue to be impacted by these events. Planning for them requires identifying vulnerabilities, hardening locations that cannot be evacuated, and planning for safe evacuation from the area of impact.
- **Sea Level Rise.** Uncertainty abounds regarding the impact of sea-level rise resulting from climate change. Nevertheless, Ocean Springs' exposure is significant and increases depending on the scenario and projected level of in-

crease. At a 1-foot increase 49 buildings and \$12.7 million of improved property is exposed. At 3-feet, 118 buildings and \$24 million of property are impacts. At 6-feet, 278 buildings and \$73.4 million of property are affected. Rising sea levels are a global threat best addressed at the local level through policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through denser, missed-use development and avoiding exposure.

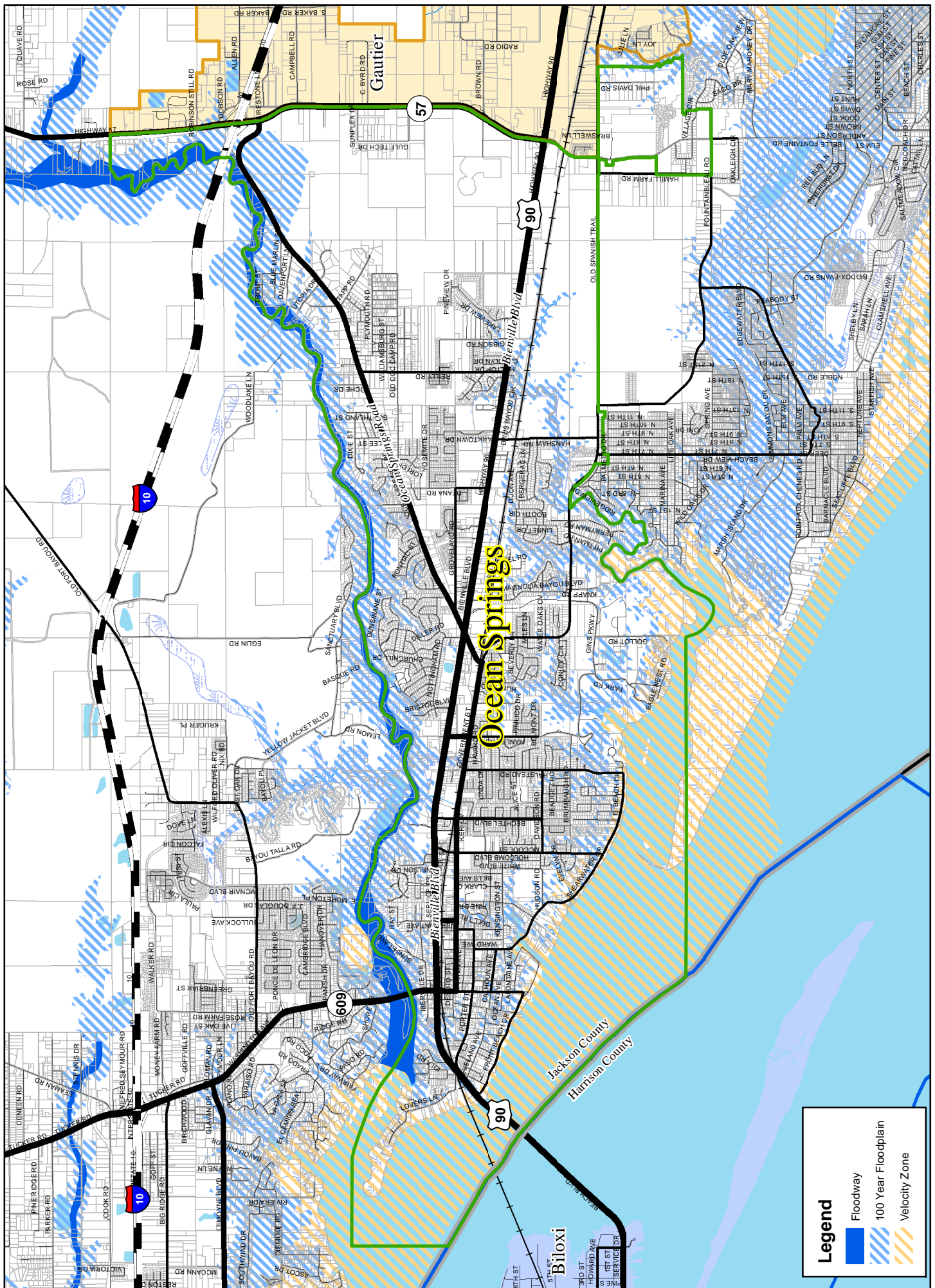
The RHMP includes mitigation goals and an action plan to minimize impacts of the above four hazards. Often action plans will include policies, community awareness programs and enforcement of current regulations.

Hazard mitigation should be incorporated in the planning and development process in Ocean Springs as a critical component of decision making. Steps toward integrating hazard mitigation in the planning and development process could include:

- Focus infrastructure investment and development in lower-risk areas.
- Implement coastal zoning codes.
- Enforce mitigation requirements and building codes on development in flood zones.
- Implement building protection techniques.
- Purchase high-risk and environmentally sensitive land.
- Remove structures on repetitive loss properties and prevent further building on those properties.



Map 5: Wetlands



- Support rigorous review of development and other projects in coastal areas.
- Develop a local coastal protection elements plan and coordinate with County and regional hazard mitigation plans.
- Develop secondary defenses against flooding, such as embankments, floodwalls or other structural/design techniques.
- Implement a plan for stormwater drainage and watershed management.
- Improve local evacuation routes to allow for a more efficient hurricane evacuation period.
- Consider additional local north/south evacuation routes to help relieve traffic throughout the City.

CONCLUSION

Ocean Springs today is a testament to its rich historical and cultural heritage. The city's natural beauty, characterized by its coastal environment, wetlands, and diverse wildlife, continues to be a defining feature. The community's efforts to manage environmental challenges, such as flooding and habitat conservation, reflect a dedication to sustainability. As Ocean Springs looks to the future, it remains focused on balancing development with preserving its historical and natural resources, ensuring that it continues to be an energetic, welcoming community for generations to come. Through careful planning and a strong sense of community, Ocean Springs will continue to honor its past while forging a bright and resilient future.

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CHAPTER 3—POPULATION AND ECONOMY

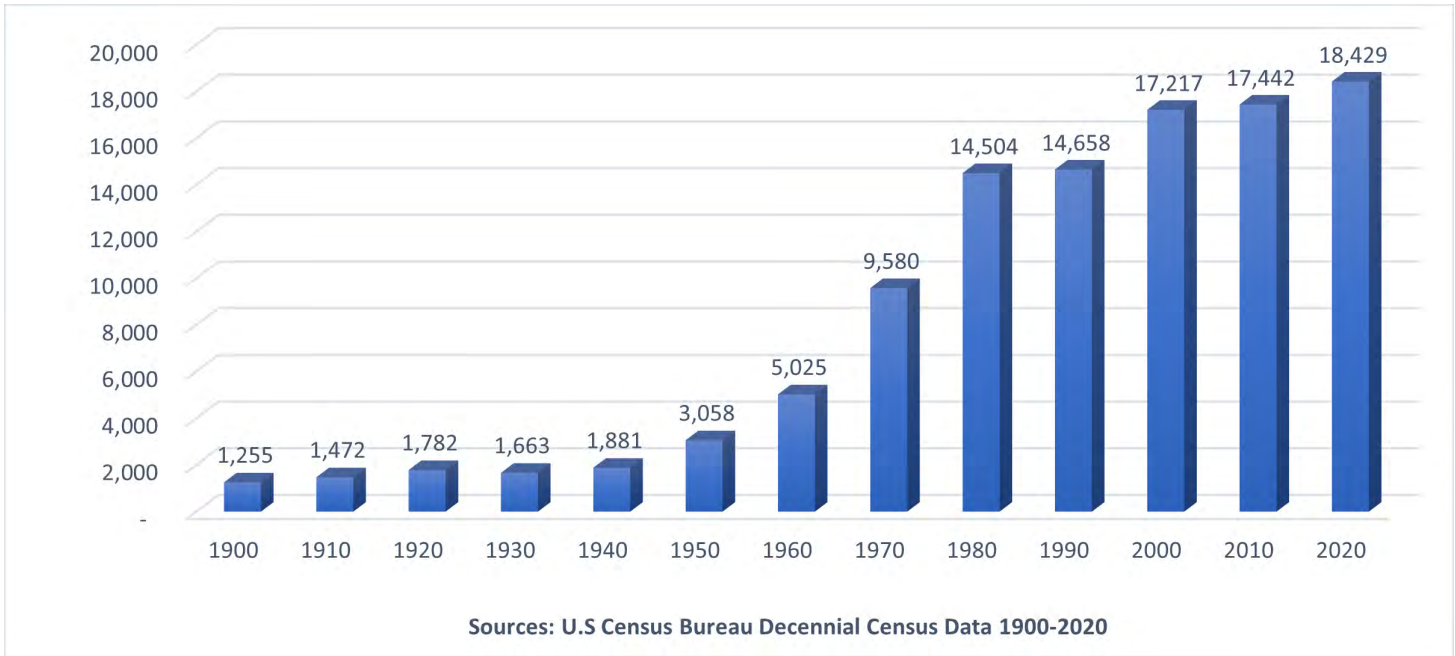
- * **POPULATION ANALYSIS**
- * **NATURAL INCREASE AND MIGRATION**
- * **POPULATION PYRAMIDS**
- * **AGE COHORT ANALYSIS**
- * **POPULATION PROJECTION**
- * **EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**
- * **HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS**
- * **INCOME CHARACTERISTICS**
- * **CONCLUSION**

INTRODUCTION

Demographic analysis in comprehensive planning provides a detailed understanding of the population, housing, and economic trends within a community. In Ocean Springs, this analysis is a foundation for informed decision-making and strategic planning. By examining various demographic factors such as population growth, age distribution, and housing characteristics, city planners and policymakers can identify current and future needs, allocate resources effectively, and develop policies that support sustainable development. A thorough demographic analysis helps to anticipate changes in the community, ensuring that infrastructure, services, and amenities are appropriately scaled and targeted to meet the evolving needs of residents.

Moreover, understanding the economic landscape is crucial for fostering a strong local economy. Economic data, including income levels, employment trends, and industry composition, pro-

Figure 1: Historical Population of Ocean Springs



vide insights into the city's economic health and potential growth areas. This information is essential for attracting new businesses, supporting existing ones, and creating job opportunities. In Ocean Springs, leveraging demographic and economic insights allows for developing comprehensive plans that enhance the quality of life, promote economic vitality, and ensure the city's long-term sustainability and resilience.

POPULATION ANALYSIS

As shown in Figure 1, Ocean Springs's population has increased over the past several decades, with decades of rapid growth followed by gradual increases leading to today's population estimates. Between 1900 and 2020, the City of Ocean Springs experienced consistent growth.

From 1970 to 1980, growth skyrocketed, increasing just over 53% in that decade before leveling off from 1980 to 1990, then growing by 17% from 1990 to 2000. Steady increases since 2000 brought the population up to 18,429 in 2020. Recently annexed territory added an estimated 1,718 people to the city. Between projected growth from 2020 and the recent annexation, the current population estimate is 20,496 residents in the City of Ocean Springs.

NATURAL INCREASE AND MIGRATION

Between 2010 and 2020, the Ocean Springs' population increased by 987 residents. In Figure 2 below, the growth is broken down by natural increase (the number of births minus the number of deaths within the city limits during the

Figure 2: Population Growth from Natural Increase and Migration

2020 Population	18,429
2010 Population	17,442
Difference	987
Growth due to natural increase (Births minus deaths)	-295
Total Births (2010-2020)	1,483
Total Deaths (2010-2020)	1,778
Gain due to in-migration (2010-2020)	1,282
Sources: U.S Census Bureau Decennial Census Data and Mississippi Department of Health - Statistics	

previous decade) and in-migration (people who moved to the City of Ocean Springs during that same time period). A majority of growth came from residents moving into the city. When comparing births to deaths using vital statistics, it shows a net decrease of 295 people, as more people died than were born in Ocean Springs. In the meantime, an estimated 1,282 people moved to Ocean Springs, making up for the population lost to mortality and providing an additional boost to the total population. Many residents coming from in-migration illustrates that Ocean Springs is seen as an attractive city, as more people are coming in than moving out. This is an important characteristic as the city continues to make plans and decisions related to growth.

POPULATION PYRAMIDS

Population pyramids show the distribution of residents in 5-year age groups, broken down the middle into male population on one side and female population on the other. Like a pyramid, the younger age groups are generally larger than the older populations and, there-

fore, should form the base of a pyramid. Bulges in a pyramid indicate a larger population in those age groups than in the ones older and younger. These bulges can help identify what age groups the city has had success attracting and then how the city can retain or attract new populations .

Figures 3 and 4 below show the 2010 and 2020 population pyramids for the City of Ocean Springs. As expected, population numbers decline in later years, creating the pyramids shape. Both pyramids show larger numbers of residents in the middle years, peaking at 45 to 49 in 2010 and 55-64 in 2020. Young adults are the smallest cohorts in each pyramid. A second peak can be seen in younger age groups, peaking at 15-19 in 2010 and 10-14 in 2020. These age distributions indicate a slightly older and family-friendly community, but one with limited opportunities for young adults. Ocean Springs is a family-oriented community, and maintaining its appeal to families will continue to be important over the next 20 years. Retaining and attracting young people to Ocean

Figure 3: Population Pyramid, 2010

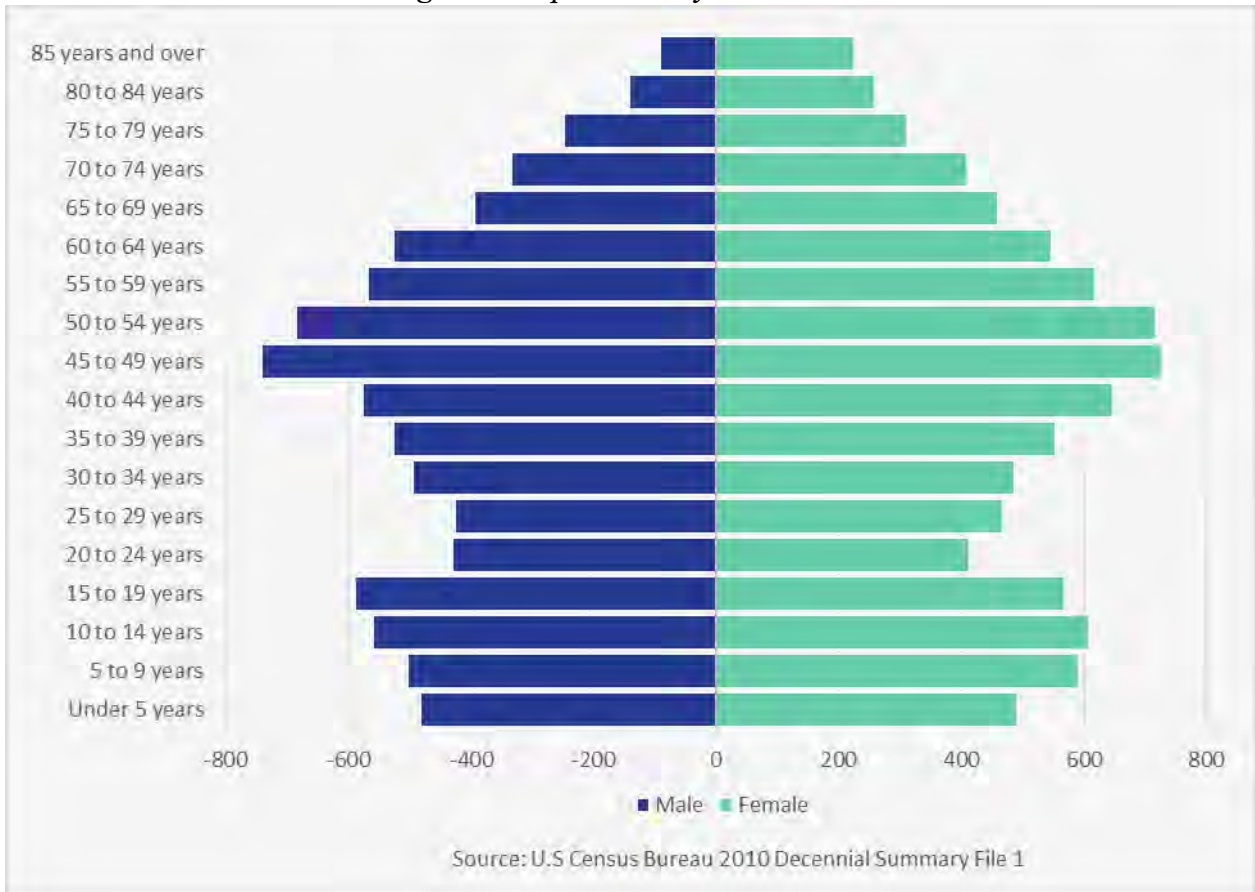


Figure 4: Population Pyramid, 2020

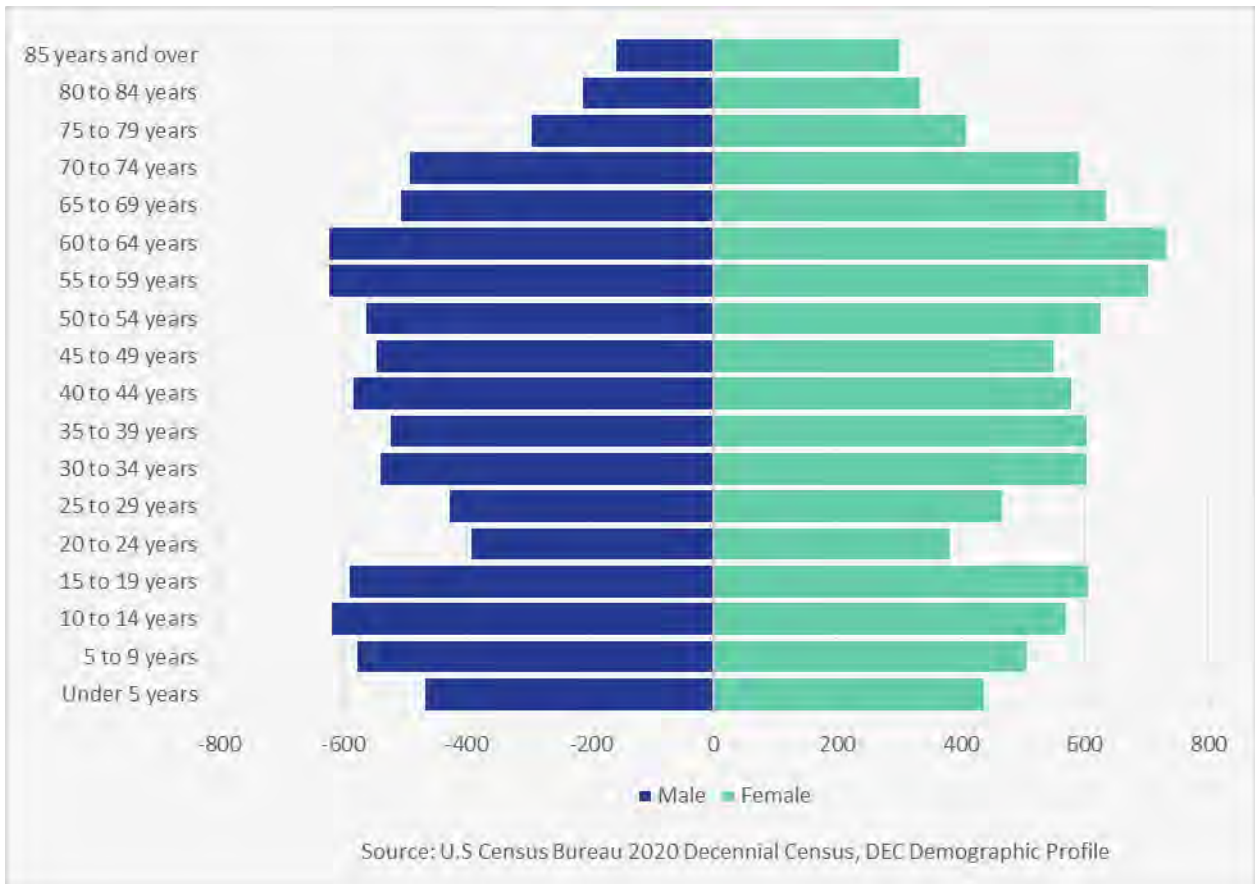
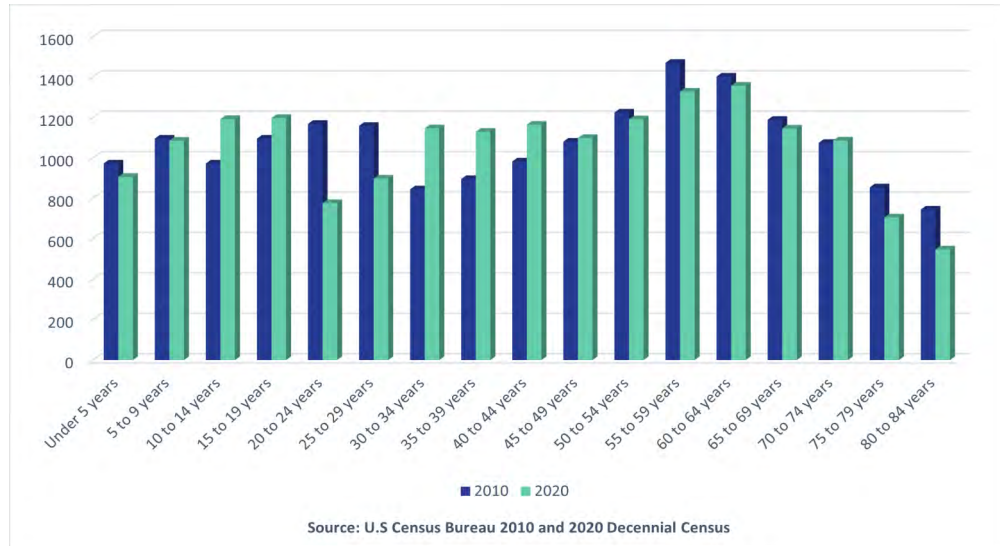


Figure 5: Cohort Population, 2010 vs 2020



Springs as they age into adulthood should be a consideration to help continue growth.

AGE COHORT ANALYSIS

Age cohort analysis is a demographic method used to examine the changes in population structure over time by focusing on specific age groups or cohorts as they progress through different stages of life. An age cohort is a grouping of people who are approximately the same age. For example, the 0- to 4-year-old age cohort in 2010 would be 10 to 14 years old ten years later in 2020. Observing changes in age cohorts allows for identifying trends, patterns, and population size, distribution, and composition shifts as cohorts age. Figure 5 shows the cohort populations for 2010 and 2020.

Age cohort analysis can provide valuable insights into the demographic processes that drive changes in a population, such as:

Fertility rates: Changes in the size of younger cohorts may indicate trends in fertility rates, which can have long-term implications for pop-

ulation growth, labor force participation, and social support systems.

Mortality rates: Differences in the sizes of older age cohorts can reveal changes in life expectancy and health conditions over time, helping to identify areas that need improvements in healthcare and social services.

Migration: If a certain age cohort experiences a significant increase or decrease, it may indicate migration patterns, such as young adults moving to urban areas for education and employment opportunities or retirees relocating to more desirable locations.

Aging population: Age cohort analysis can reveal changes in the age structure of a population, such as an increase in the proportion of older individuals, which may have impacts on healthcare, social services, and public policy.

Socioeconomic factors: Examining cohorts over time can help identify the impact of economic and social factors on population trends, such as changes in educational attainment, em-

Figure 6: Population Projection



ployment opportunities, or cultural norms around family formation.

Overall, age cohort analysis provides a nuanced understanding of how a population evolves over time and helps identify areas of focus for public policy, economic planning, and social services to address the unique needs of different age groups.

The youngest age cohorts in Ocean Springs were those between 0 and 9 years old in 2010 and 10 to 19 in 2020. These cohorts experienced significant growth in the decade between 2010 and 2020. This could be attributed to families with children migrating to Ocean Springs in the past decade.

The young adult population experienced considerable declines. This represents a loss of population among those who were 10 to 19 in 2010 and 20 to 29 in 2020. This may be due to the outmigration of young adults seeking education or job opportunities.

The cohort of people in their middle years, those who were 30 to 49 in 2020, had significant

population gains, indicating a growth in the slightly older prime working-age population. This could be related to a strong job market and economic growth that have attracted workers and new residents in the past decade.

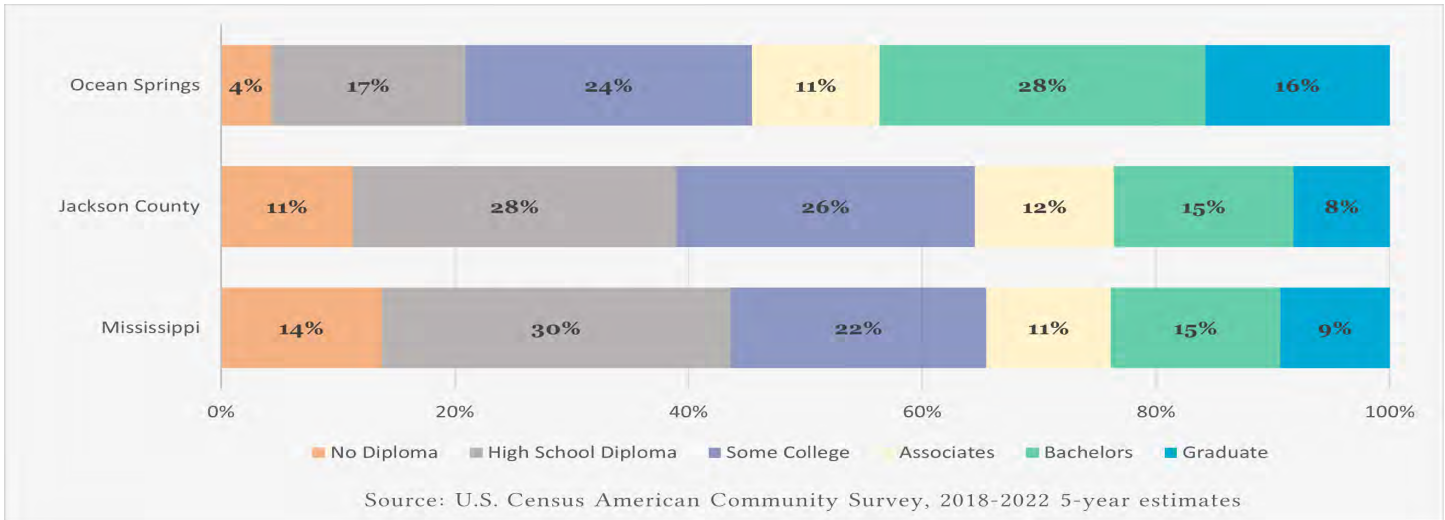
The older working age cohorts aged 50 to 64 in 2020 had a downward trend, which could indicate out-migration among people approaching retirement age.

The older age group experienced losses across all cohorts, with the most significant decline in those aged 80 to 84 in 2020. This can be expected due to the natural process of aging and mortality.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Ocean Springs has seen significant growth over the last couple of decades, from a relatively small town of 3,058 in 1950 to a sizable coastal city of 18,429 by 2020. To understand how previous growth will impact future populations, projections for the year 2050 were used to estimate growth, shown in Figure 6 above.

Figure 7: Educational Attainment



Because of Ocean Springs's rapid growth, common projections (the average growth rate and the least squared method) were used. Both methods predict consistent growth in the city through 2050. Both projections also predict 2050 population to be around 24,000 residents. Population projections do a good job using previous data to predict future populations, but are more unreliable if historic patterns of growth shift. Therefore, these figures do not predict what the future patterns will look like. Events such as hurricanes, annexations, or new commercial or industrial development could dramatically change the future population projections.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

As shown in Figure 7 above, the educational attainment for residents in Ocean Springs, ages 25 and older, is higher than in the State of Mississippi and Jackson County. Over half of Ocean Springs residents have some a degree (associate degree and higher), while only 4% have less than a high school diploma. Ocean Springs' well-educated workforce can help

bring good-paying jobs to the city and help strengthen the local economy. Attracting and keeping highly educated workers will be an important goal for the city to focus on over the next 20 years.

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

The United States Census Bureau documents housing characteristics that provide insight into the distribution of owner- and renter-occupied units, the vacancy rate, the types of units, the year units were built, etc. Understanding the trends behind Ocean Springs's housing stock is an important consideration when addressing future needs.

HOUSEHOLDS AND FAMILIES

The U.S. Census Bureau defines a household as "... all the people who occupy a housing unit." Similarly, a family is defined as "...a group of two people or more related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together." The main difference between a household and a family is that in a household, residents do not have to be related to one another. For this analysis, the fo-

Figure 8: Housing Units by Status

Housing Units	2010	2020
Total:	7,814	8,264
<i>Occupied</i>	6,984	7,609
Percent	89.4%	92.1%
<i>Vacant</i>	830	655
Percent	10.6%	7.9%

cus will be on measuring changes in households.

HOUSING OCCUPANCY, UNIT TYPE, AND AGE

According to the Census Bureau, Ocean Springs gained 450 total housing units from 2010 to 2020. More notably, the city added 625 occupied housing units in that same time frame. Of the total housing units, 655 (7.9%) were vacant in 2020, a significant (-21.1%) decrease in vacancy rates over the decade. Figure 8 above shows the change in housing units from 2010 to 2020.

The Census Bureau’s 2022 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates indicate that 77% of all residential units in Ocean Springs are single-family, detached homes. Mobile and manufactured homes represented about 1.2% of residences, and multi-family units accounted for 19.7 of all housing units. Lastly, single-family attached homes make up 2.2% of the housing stock. Figure 9 below shows the percentages for each category.

Another important characteristic of housing is the age of the housing stock in a city. Housing

Figure 9: Housing Units by Type

Housing types	Percentage
1-unit, detached	77.0%
1-unit, attached	2.2%
2 units	2.5%
3 or 4 units	2.9%
5 to 9 units	5.2%
10 to 19 units	3.2%
20 or more units	5.9%
Mobile home	1.2%

Figure 10: Housing Units by Year Built

Year Structure Built	Percentage
Built 2020 or later	0.2%
Built 2010 to 2019	9.4%
Built 2000 to 2009	16.1%
Built 1990 to 1999	10.7%
Built 1980 to 1989	11.8%
Built 1970 to 1979	21.7%
Built 1960 to 1969	16.4%
Built 1950 to 1959	7.7%
Built 1940 to 1949	1.3%
Built 1939 or earlier	4.8%

stocks that are older can indicate that growth has slowed, while lots of newer housing indicates that a city is experiencing a growth wave. According to the Census Bureau’s 2022 ACS 5-year estimates and shown in Figure 10 above, about 30% of Ocean Springs Branch's housing stock was constructed before 1970. About 45% was built between 1970 and 2000, and about 25% was constructed after 2000.

As shown in Figure 11 below, housing tenure is relatively low. Housing tenure is a measure of how long someone has lived in a housing unit,

calculated as a percentage by the year people moved into their housing unit. Housing tenure indicates a relatively high unit turnover in Ocean Springs. Only 9.5% of the householders in Ocean Springs are estimated to have moved into their homes before 1989. Almost 83% have been moved into since 2000. High unit turnover can indicate a strong housing market as people change homes due to migration into the city, or upgrading and downsizing over time to accommodate changing lifestyles and family needs.

Figure 11: Housing Unit by Year Moved Into

Year householder moved into unit	Percentage
Moved in 2021 or later	8.1%
Moved in 2018 to 2020	19.9%
Moved in 2010 to 2017	31.1%
Moved in 2000 to 2009	23.6%
Moved in 1990 to 1999	7.8%
Moved in 1989 and earlier	9.5%

The 2020 Apartment Survey by the Gulf Regional Planning Commission highlights that Ocean Springs has a total of 538 unassisted rental units, with the majority being two-bedroom apartments. The average costs for unassisted apartments in Ocean Springs are \$715 for a one-bedroom, \$779 for a two-bedroom, and \$1,062 for a three-bedroom unit. Notably, the vacancy rate for unassisted rental units in Ocean Springs reached 0.0% in 2020, reflecting an exceptionally high demand and no availability in the rental market.

INCOME CHARACTERISTICS

According to the ACS 5-year estimates, the median household income in Ocean Springs was \$72,500, compared with \$52,719 for the State of Mississippi and \$60,966 for Jackson County. An estimated 6.2% of all individuals had incomes below the poverty level, compared to 19.2% for the State of Mississippi and 15.7% for Jackson County. Even though fewer Ocean Springs residents live in poverty, Ocean Springs should

continue to strive to provide opportunities for everyone, especially those who have less financial means and may need more support.

CONCLUSION

The population analysis of Ocean Springs underscores the city's robust growth and dynamic demographic shifts. As the city continues to attract new residents and expand its housing stock, it faces both opportunities and challenges in managing this growth sustainably. The analysis highlights the importance of addressing the needs of a diverse and changing population, from young families to older adults. Sound planning and proactive policies will be essential in maintaining the city's appeal, supporting economic vitality, and ensuring that all residents have access to quality housing, education, and services. By leveraging its strengths and addressing its challenges, Ocean Springs is well-positioned to continue its trajectory as a thriving community.



CHAPTER 4—EXISTING LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION

- * **EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS AND DISTRICTS**
- * **EXISTING LAND USE INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS**
- * **TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS**
- * **FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION**
- * **TRAFFIC COUNTS**
- * **ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK**
- * **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**
- * **TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES**

EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS AND DISTRICTS

Ocean Springs is renowned for its rich history, culture, and diverse neighborhoods. This section of the land use plan explores the city's significant districts and existing neighborhoods, highlighting their unique characteristics and contributions to the community's fabric.

As one of the Gulf Coast's most cherished locales, Ocean Springs boasts a tapestry of districts that reflect its storied past and dynamic present. From the bustling Central Business District, known for its eclectic mix of shops, restaurants, and cultural venues, to the serene and picturesque residential areas that line its shores, the city's districts are varied. Each neighborhood, whether steeped in history or newly developed, offers a distinct sense of place, contributing to the overall identity of Ocean Springs.



The historic districts preserve the architectural heritage and traditional charm that has long defined the city. Well-preserved homes, tree-lined streets, and a strong sense of community characterize these areas. Meanwhile, other locations in the city are poised for future development, offering opportunities for new housing, commercial ventures, and mixed-use projects.

This section explores the defining features, historical significance, and current dynamics of Ocean Springs' significant districts and neighborhoods. These elements help to better appreciate the city's unique character and plan thoughtfully for its continued growth and prosperity.

DOWNTOWN/CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

The Downtown District of Ocean Springs serves as the cultural and economic heart of the city, renowned for its atmosphere, historic charm, and diverse local businesses. As a focal point for residents and visitors, the Downtown District is integral to the city's identity. It is crucial in the community's daily life and long-term development. The Downtown District has

several historic buildings and landmarks, reflecting the city's rich heritage. This area showcases a mix of architectural styles, from quaint Creole cottages to elegant Victorian structures, offering a visual representation of the city's evolution over time. The district also hosts numerous cultural institutions, including art galleries, museums, and theaters, contributing to Ocean Springs' reputation as an arts and cultural hub.

The Downtown District supports various uses, integrating residential spaces among commercial establishments. This mix includes apartments, lofts, and historic homes, offering diverse living options that cater to different lifestyles. The residential component enhances the district's vibrancy, ensuring activity throughout the day and night. The downtown area is a bustling commercial center featuring an eclectic mix of boutiques, specialty shops, restaurants, and cafes. This retail and dining scene attracts locals and tourists, making it a vital driver of the local economy. The district's pedestrian-friendly streets and attractive storefronts create

a welcoming atmosphere, encouraging foot traffic and supporting local businesses.

Public spaces that foster community interaction and events are central to the district's layout. Small parks, plazas, and public art installations provide residents and visitors with places to relax and socialize. Events like the annual Peter Anderson Arts & Crafts Festival and various farmers' markets further enhance the district's role as a community gathering space.

Ocean Springs' transportation network serves the district, which has ample parking, pedestrian-friendly streets, and bicycle facilities. The district's layout encourages walking and biking, promoting a sustainable and healthy lifestyle. Its accessibility makes it a convenient destination for shopping, dining, and entertainment.

In planning for the future of the Downtown District, it is essential to balance growth and preservation by ensuring that new developments respect the district's architectural heritage and scale. This includes encouraging economic development while maintaining the unique character of the local business community, expanding and improving public spaces to support community activities and events, promoting developments that integrate residential, commercial, and cultural uses, and enhancing infrastructure to support pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular access, including considerations for public transit options.

BIENVILLE BOULEVARD

Visitors to Ocean Springs are likely to first enter the city via Bienville Boulevard (U.S. Highway 90). This key thoroughfare shapes daily life and travel for residents and visitors alike. A mix of commercial and residential developments characterizes Bienville Boulevard. It functions as a major east-west artery, connecting the city with neighboring communities and providing vital access to local businesses and amenities. The boulevard is an important gate-



way into Ocean Springs and is critical in shaping visitors' first impressions of the city and residents' daily lives. The current configuration, dominated by vehicle-oriented infrastructure, presents challenges for creating a more inviting and lively streetscape.

Bienville Boulevard hosts a variety of commercial establishments, including fast food restaurants, convenience stores, strip shopping centers, and big box stores. This corridor is designed primarily for automobile access, with ample parking spaces, driveways, and a layout emphasizing vehicular traffic. The area has seen significant commercial growth, often at the expense of green spaces and architectural cohesiveness. The boulevard lacks pedestrian-friendly features in other parts of Ocean Springs, such as downtown. Large parking lots and wide setbacks detract from the potential for a more walkable, aesthetically cohesive environment.

The city has adopted commercial and multi-family design guidelines to enhance the quality and character of developments along the boulevard.

As a result, several new developments have incorporated mixed-use elements combining commercial and residential land uses within multi-story buildings along Bienville Boulevard. However, challenges remain in fully transforming the corridor into a more integrated and visually appealing space.

Bienville Boulevard currently prioritizes automobile traffic, with limited accommodation for pedestrians and cyclists. The city's plans for the area include the potential transformation into a multi-way boulevard, featuring a more balanced design with lanes for through traffic, local traffic, and dedicated spaces for pedestrians and cyclists. Significant planning initiatives are aimed at revitalizing the area, including possibly introducing more mixed-use developments and public amenities.

MIDTOWN OCEAN SPRINGS: OCEAN SPRINGS' CONNECTION FOR COMMUNITY, COMMERCE, AND OPPORTUNITY

Midtown Ocean Springs occupies a critical east-west corridor from Martin Luther King Jr. Drive to Ocean Springs Road. It includes the Bienville



Boulevard commercial corridor and surrounding neighborhoods, offering a unique opportunity to reimagine a centrally located, already developed part of the city. Positioned as a key connector between downtown, residential areas, and commercial centers along regional transportation routes, Midtown has the potential to become a model of coordinated reinvestment and thoughtful planning. As an already developed area in the city's geographic center, Midtown presents an opportunity to guide reinvestment where infrastructure, businesses, and community life already exist.

Midtown will play a central role in the long-term revitalization of Bienville Boulevard, prioritizing small, local businesses and services that reinforce Ocean Springs' creative and entrepreneurial identity. The city's plan calls for transforming the corridor from a car-focused highway into a multi-modal boulevard with improved access management, better sidewalks and bike lanes, parallel streets for local traffic, and streetscape upgrades like trees, lighting, and signage. These enhancements will reduce congestion, improve safety, and support new forms of development. Midtown is well-positioned to accommodate the city's goals for higher-density, mixed-use development that encourages walkability and creates more opportunities for local businesses, infill housing, and public gathering places.

Investing in Midtown presents both immediate and long-term advantages. By enhancing existing structures instead of expanding into undeveloped areas, Ocean Springs can bolster local

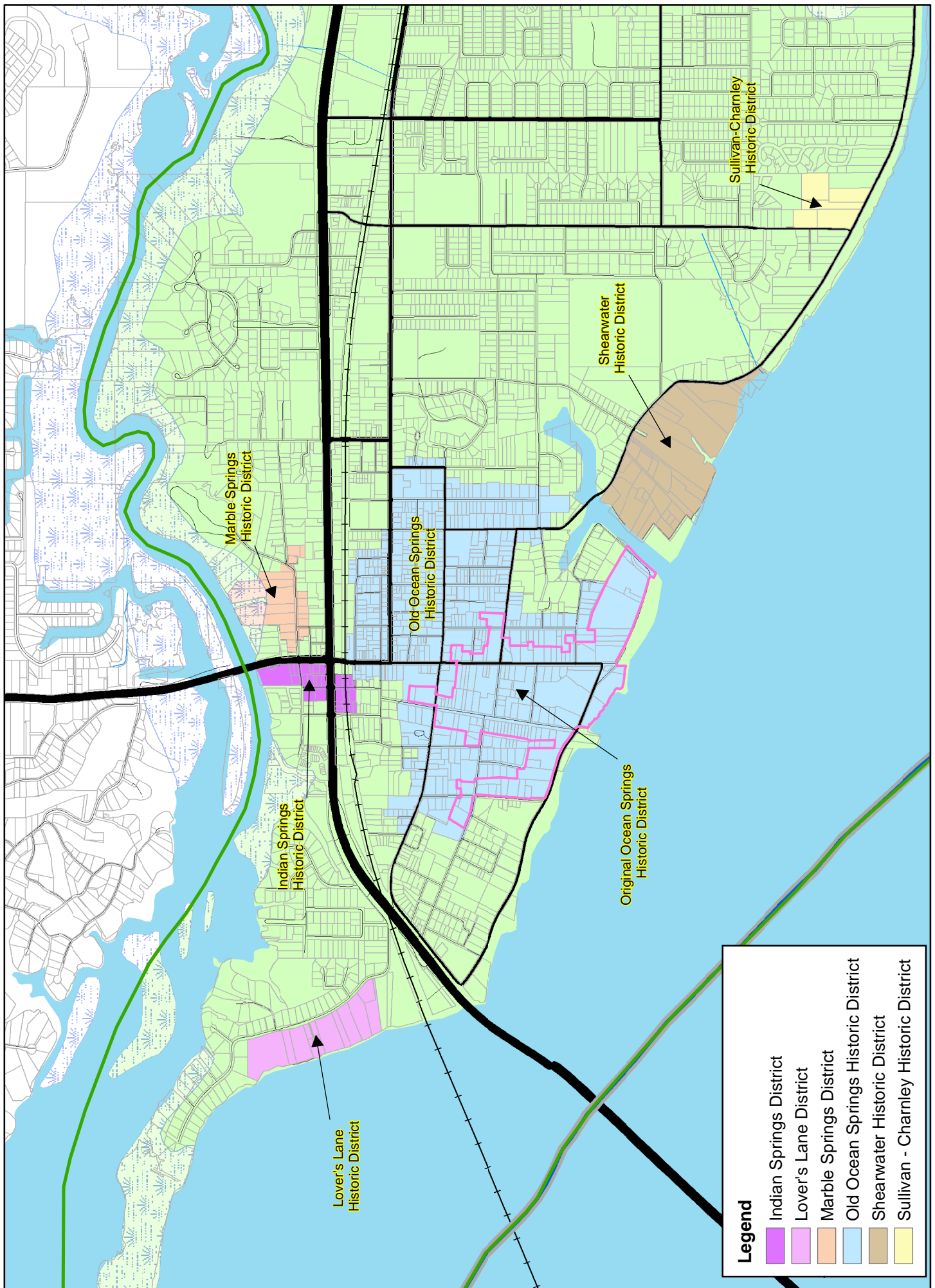
businesses, promote infill development, and improve residents' quality of life while avoiding the costs and negative impacts associated with outward expansion. Focused reinvestment supports efficient use of public resources. Ultimately, Midtown is a strategic focal point for future investment. With targeted planning, infrastructure improvements, and community input, it can grow into a distinctive district that reflects Ocean Springs' values of creativity, inclusion, and quality of life and strengthens the entire city for generations to come.

HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Ocean Springs is home to several historic districts, each with unique characteristics and architectural styles. Here is an overview of the main historic districts in the city.

Old Ocean Springs Historic District

The Old Ocean Springs Historic District encompasses the city's central business district and areas to the south and west of that area. This district is notable for its mix of residential, commercial, and professional uses, particularly along Jackson and Washington avenues. The district showcases a diverse range of architectural styles, including Greek Revival, Queen Anne, and Craftsman. These styles are often adapted to the Gulf Coast climate, with features like porches and minimal chimneys. The district's history reflects the development of Ocean Springs as a resort community, with a concentration of street-oriented properties that display a variety of building forms. Near the old railroad depot, that area was historically associated with the African-American community of



Ocean Springs, with housing and commercial structures developing near the railroad. The district expanded in 2014 to include the former Railroad Historic District and the Bowen Avenue Historic District.

Shearwater Historic District

The Shearwater Historic District is situated on bluffs overlooking the Mississippi Sound. This district is significant for its association with Shearwater Pottery and the Anderson family, including renowned artist Walter Inglis Anderson. The area includes a variety of water-oriented residential architecture, ranging from Southern farmhouse styles to Bungalows, French Provincial farmhouses, and Colonial Revival homes. The district's development spans from the early 1800s to the mid-20th century, preserving the integrity of the waterfront sites and offering a visual record of Ocean Springs' architectural evolution.



Indian Springs Historic District

Located near Old Fort Bayou, the Indian Springs Historic District is characterized by its informal layout and various residential architecture from the 1850s to the 1930s. The area has a rich history, with mineral springs attracting visitors for centuries. The district features diverse architectural styles, including Greek Revival, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, and Craftsman, often in unique and individual interpretations. Rehabilitating many residences for professional use reflects a modern appreciation for the district's historic buildings.

Marble Springs Historic District

The Marble Springs Historic District is located near Old Fort Bayou and is notable for its collection of nineteenth and early twentieth-century residential architecture. The district's name comes from the historic Marble Springs, a community social center known for its mineral waters. The area's homes vary in scale and style, with more elaborate houses on the north side and smaller, vernacular dwellings on the south side. The district also includes a replica of the historic springhouse, reflecting its historical significance.

Lover's Lane Historic District

The Lover's Lane Historic District occupies the peninsula's western shore between the Back Bay of Biloxi and Old Fort Bayou. This district is known for its grand summer estates, reflecting Ocean Springs's development as a resort community. The area is significant for its eclectic, high-style residential architecture, including Greek Revival, Queen Anne, and Spanish Colonial Revival styles. Its association with Fort

Maurepas, the original French settlement in the Louisiana colony further highlights the district's historical importance.

Sullivan-Charnley Historic District

The Sullivan-Charnley Historic District comprises contiguous waterfront estates between Weeks, Halstead, and Davis Bayous. The district is renowned for associations with architects Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright. Its buildings showcase shingle-clad structures and a strong horizontal emphasis. These late nineteenth-century cottages and their dependencies represent unique examples of architectural design in Mississippi. The district's waterfront location provides an extensive water view and significant landscape design elements.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The City of Ocean Springs has a comprehensive set of historic preservation guidelines to maintain the city's unique architectural heritage and historic character. These guidelines, managed by the Ocean Springs Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), are essential for guiding the development and preservation of the city's historic districts. Key elements of the guidelines include:

Historic Districts and Landmarks: The city recognizes multiple historic districts with distinct architectural styles and historical significance. These areas are protected under local ordinances that enforce specific preservation standards.

Design Review Process: All exterior changes to designated historic properties must be reviewed to ensure compatibility with the historic

character. This includes new construction, alterations, and demolitions. The HPC recommends approval or disapproval of Certificates of Appropriateness for these actions when they affect landmarks and buildings within historic districts. Final decisions regarding Certificates of Appropriateness are made by the Ocean Springs Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

Architectural Details and Materials: The guidelines emphasize preserving original materials and architectural details, such as windows, doors, roofs, and siding. When replacements are necessary, they must match the original in material, design, and appearance.

New Construction and Additions: New buildings and additions within historic districts must respect the scale, style, and character of the surrounding historic environment. This includes considerations for height, massing, materials, and architectural details.

Site and Setting: The guidelines address the broader context of historic properties, including landscaping, fences, and other site features. These elements contribute to the historic character and must be preserved or appropriately integrated with new development.

Public Education and Awareness: The HPC is responsible for promoting public awareness of Ocean Springs' historic resources and preservation benefits. This includes providing guidance and resources to property owners and developers.

These guidelines are designed to ensure that Ocean Springs' historic districts retain their



unique character and continue to be valued assets for the community. They balance the need for growth and development with protecting the city's architectural and cultural heritage.

RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

Ocean Springs boasts a diverse array of residential developments that cater to various lifestyles and preferences. These neighborhoods offer a mix of housing types, from modern single-family homes to townhouses and apartments, reflecting the city's growth and development over recent decades. The suburban areas of Ocean Springs are characterized by single-family homes with larger lots, often featuring contemporary architectural styles. These neighborhoods are well-connected to major roadways, providing easy access to downtown and neighboring cities. In recent years, Ocean Springs has seen the development of newer residential communities, including planned unit developments (PUDs).

The city's coastal areas feature some of the most sought-after residential properties, with

homes offering stunning views of the Biloxi Bay and access to water-based activities. The proximity to water bodies like Biloxi Bay and the Gulf Sound makes these neighborhoods highly desirable for those seeking a coastal lifestyle.

RECENT ANNEXATION

The recent annexation of territory into the City of Ocean Springs has expanded the city's boundaries to include land previously regulated under Jackson County's zoning ordinance. Much of this newly annexed area is currently developed and portions of it, particularly in the southeastern portion of the city, includes property zoned by the county as A-2 and A-3, which are agricultural and rural zoning designations.

As this land transitions into the city's jurisdiction, several issues of compatibility and non-conformity must be addressed. Certain areas have larger lots than traditionally have developed in Ocean Springs. Others have livestock, which may conflict with Ocean Springs' existing regulations. Recognizing concerns related



to these transitions, the City of Ocean Springs acknowledges the need to accommodate different development densities and rural conditions within its planning and zoning.

The primary challenge in the annexed areas involves potential conflicts between agricultural uses and the city’s zoning and livestock ordinances. As the city evaluates its zoning code and future land use designations, care must be taken to balance neighborhood compatibility, resident expectations, and the evolving development pattern—while remaining sensitive to the historical and cultural values associated with rural and agricultural living.

While existing city zoning supports suburban residential patterns that are likely to continue shaping future development in the area, there is currently limited zoning capacity to support the continued or desired use of lots for limited agricultural purposes—particularly in areas where property owners may have previously kept animals or engaged in small-scale farming activities.

Going forward, the city will explore opportunities to create or adapt zoning districts that can address the unique conditions present in the annexed territory. This may include the development of an Agricultural/Rural Residential district or similar zoning category that provides for low-density residential use with limited agricultural activity, subject to performance standards. Such an approach would help preserve the character of the annexed areas while ensuring compatibility with surrounding development and the city’s existing land use goals.

RESIDENTIAL SHORT TERM RENTALS

Due to its popularity as a visitor destination, Ocean Springs has seen an increase in demand for residential short-term rental properties (RSTRs). The Ocean Springs short-term rental ordinance was developed to regulate short-term rentals and limits the location and number of such parcels in three specified districts: The Downtown Ocean Springs Overlay District, the Short-Term Rentals Density (STRD) District, and the remainder of the city. The approved number of rentals in each district is reflected in

the ordinance. Permits are required for RSTRs throughout the city.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Industrial development is primarily located in the central part of the city, between Bienville Boulevard (U.S. Highway 90) and the CSX Railroad, and east in Sunplex Light Industrial Park on Highway 57. Transportation infrastructure has significantly shaped Ocean Springs's industrial development footprint. Highway 90 runs parallel to the Gulf of Mexico and is a central transportation corridor that has helped to facilitate commercial development and tourism along the coast. This major east-west corridor provides access to residential neighborhoods and commercial areas.

The CSX Railroad, which runs east and west through the city, also contributed significantly to development. The railroad directly connects to the Port of Gulfport and other major transportation hubs, making it an attractive location for manufacturing and distribution businesses.

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Ocean Springs School District

The Ocean Springs School District is crucial to the community, offering high-quality education and a nurturing environment for young students. The school system includes several key institutions:

Pecan Park Elementary School is located at 504 Hanley Road and it serves students in kindergarten through 3rd grade. The school is known for its strong academic programs and various extracurricular activities that support students' overall development. Pecan Park has an enroll-

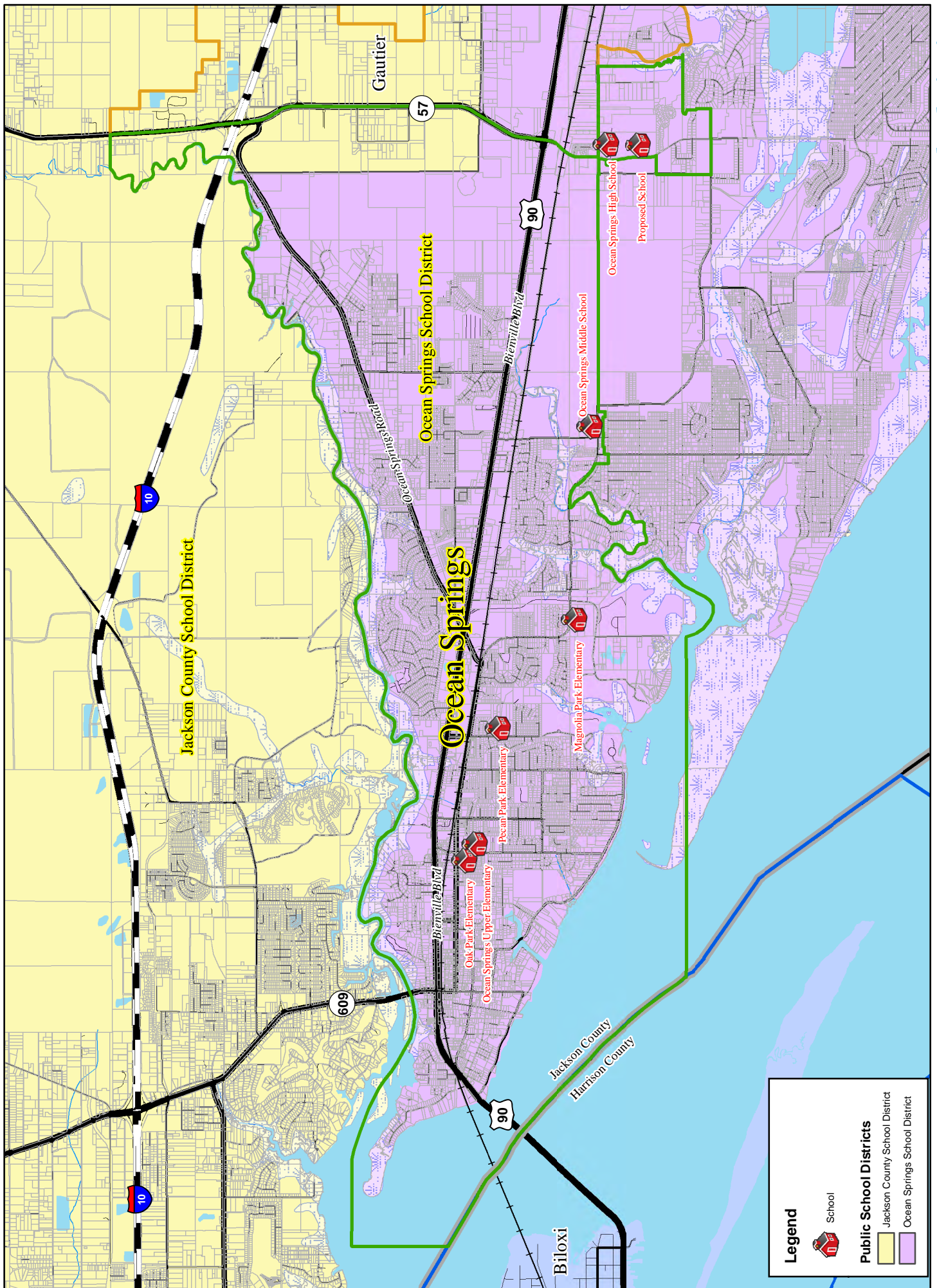
ment of approximately 500 students and is committed to fostering a love of learning from an early age.

Magnolia Park Elementary School is located at 3500 Government Street, Magnolia Park Elementary accommodates students in kindergarten through 3rd grade. The school provides a comprehensive curriculum that includes core subjects and arts and physical education. With an enrollment of around 640 students, Magnolia Park focuses on creating a supportive and inclusive environment.

Oak Park Elementary School is located at 2230 Government Street. Oak Park Elementary serves grades K-3 and has an enrollment of approximately 480 students. The school emphasizes a well-rounded education with strong parental and community involvement.

Ocean Springs Upper Elementary School is located at 2320 Government Street, this school serves 4th through 6th-grade students. With an enrollment of about 1,270 students, the Upper Elementary School offers specialized programs that prepare students for the transition to middle school.

Ocean Springs Middle School is located at 3600 Hanshaw Road, the middle school serves students in 7th and 8th grades. With an enrollment of approximately 960 students, the school offers a robust curriculum that includes advanced placement courses, fine arts, and athletics. The middle school is known for its commitment to academic excellence and for providing a supportive environment for adolescents during a critical period of their education.



Map 8: School Districts

Ocean Springs High School is located in part of the newly annexed area of Ocean Springs at 6701 Old Spanish Trail and serves students in grades 9-12. The high school is a cornerstone of the community, with an enrollment of around 1,950 students. It offers various academic programs, including Advanced Placement (AP) courses, dual enrollment opportunities, and specialized career and technical education (CTE) tracks. The school's facilities include state-of-the-art classrooms, science labs, performing arts spaces, and athletic fields. The high school is renowned for its strong extracurricular programs, including competitive sports teams, arts programs, and various student clubs.

According to the latest grades from the Mississippi Department of Education, for the 2022-2023 school year, the Ocean Springs School District was rated the #1 school district in the state. In addition, Ocean Springs High School was ranked the #2 high school in the state. These rankings reflect the quality of, and commitment to, education in Ocean Springs by elected officials, stakeholders, and residents.

Higher Education

The University of Southern Mississippi's Gulf Coast Research Laboratory (GCRL)

The University of Southern Mississippi's Gulf Coast Research Laboratory (GCRL), located in Ocean Springs, is one of the largest marine laboratories in the southeastern United States. Established by the Mississippi Legislature in 1948 and 1950, GCRL is the state's designated marine laboratory, playing a critical role in providing scientific support to Mississippi and the broader Gulf of Mexico region. With ap-

proximately 200 faculty, researchers, graduate students, and support staff, GCRL conducts applied research and higher education across its expansive 50-acre Halstead and 224-acre Cedar Point sites.

GCRL's research encompasses many marine science topics, including sustainable fisheries, marine aquaculture, coastal ecology and restoration, and aquatic health and conservation. These areas of study are vital for understanding and preserving marine and coastal ecosystems. The laboratory's facilities, which include advanced laboratories, research vessels, and field stations, enable comprehensive studies of these critical environments.

The laboratory offers extensive academic programming centered around its core research areas. This includes graduate studies, which provide advanced education and research opportunities in marine sciences. The undergraduate Summer Field Program allows students to gain hands-on experience in marine and coastal research. Additionally, GCRL engages the broader community through citizen science initiatives and K-12 educational offerings, such as the popular Sea Camp.

GCRL's role extends beyond research and education to community and regional impact. It supports sustainable management practices, conservation efforts, and policy development related to marine and coastal resources. The laboratory's outreach and educational programs foster community engagement and raise awareness about the importance of marine conservation, making GCRL a vital institution for the

State of Mississippi and the Gulf of Mexico region.

Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College (MGCCC) - Jackson County Campus

Located nearby in Gautier, the Jackson County Campus of MGCCC offers a wide array of academic and technical programs. MGCCC provides quality education and training that meets the needs of the local community and workforce. The campus offers associate degrees, certificate programs, and continuing education courses in various fields, including business, healthcare, technology, and liberal arts. Students benefit from modern facilities, experienced faculty, and a supportive learning environment that prepares them for immediate employment and further academic pursuits.

EXISTING LAND USE INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

The existing land use categories are divided into: residential, commercial, industrial, public & semi-public, parks and recreation, and vacant. This survey categorizes the land use in the City of Ocean Springs and surrounding areas and also provides a detailed analysis of the distribution of land use in both.

RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

The City of Ocean Springs is composed of four main types of residential uses: single family, multi-family, duplex, and manufactured homes.

Single-Family Residential identifies parcels of any size that contain one detached residential unit.

Manufactured or Mobile Home Residential identifies parcels of any size that contain a residential unit constructed on a chassis as defined by US Housing and Urban Development (HUD) definitions.

Duplex Residential identifies parcels that contain two attached residential units.

Multi-Family Residential identifies parcels of any size that contain three or more attached residential units, such as triplexes, quadruplexes, or apartments.

Single-family homes are the most prevalent land use in the city, composing 33.2% of the city's total area. Manufactured homes are the second most prevalent type of housing, composing 0.8% of the city's total area. Duplexes are the least frequent residential type in the city, composing approximately 0.1% of the city's total area. Lastly, multi-family is the second most prevalent residential use, utilizing 1.2% of the city's total area.

COMMERCIAL LAND USE

Commercial establishments are those that operate privately, for profit, and provide merchandise or services. This survey classifies commercial land use as either office commercial or general commercial. Examples include banks, restaurants, medical offices, law offices, and insurance offices. Approximately 5% of the city is composed of commercial land use.

INDUSTRIAL LAND USE

Industrial establishments are those that process, manufacture, store, or distribute goods to other businesses for later sale or use. They do not usually provide on-site sales of goods or services. Industrial uses account for approximately 1% of the city's land area.

PUBLIC/SEMI PUBLIC

Public and semi-public land uses comprise the second most prevalent land use in Ocean Springs. These uses include government facilities, schools and colleges, parks and recreation, churches and institutions, cemeteries, private clubs, and utilities. These uses frequently co-exist and complement land uses in residential neighborhoods, and in commercial areas. For example, religious institutions and nonprofits may lease space in the same building as commercial uses or be established on individual lots adjacent to businesses and residences throughout the city. Together, they account for 15% of the city's land area, with a majority of that percentage (10.6%) coming from parks and recreation facilities.

VACANT LAND

For this land-use study, vacant land indicates any undeveloped land or being used for agricultural purposes. Approximately 43.8% of the land inside the city. This land may be available for development, or natural features or regulations may constrain it.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

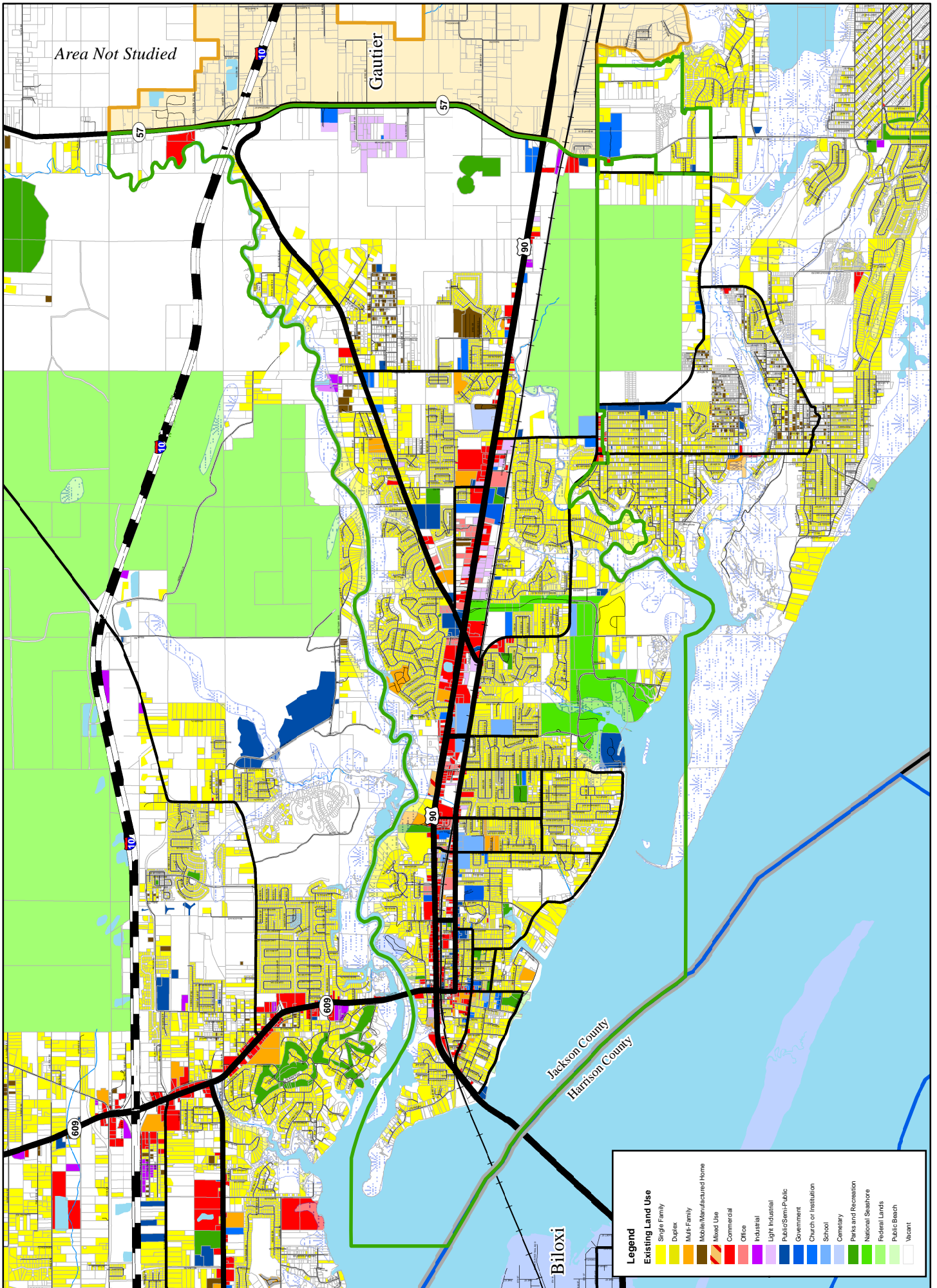
Ocean Springs has a well-developed transportation system with various options for residents and visitors to get around the city and the surrounding area. Some of the key components of the transportation system in Ocean Springs include:

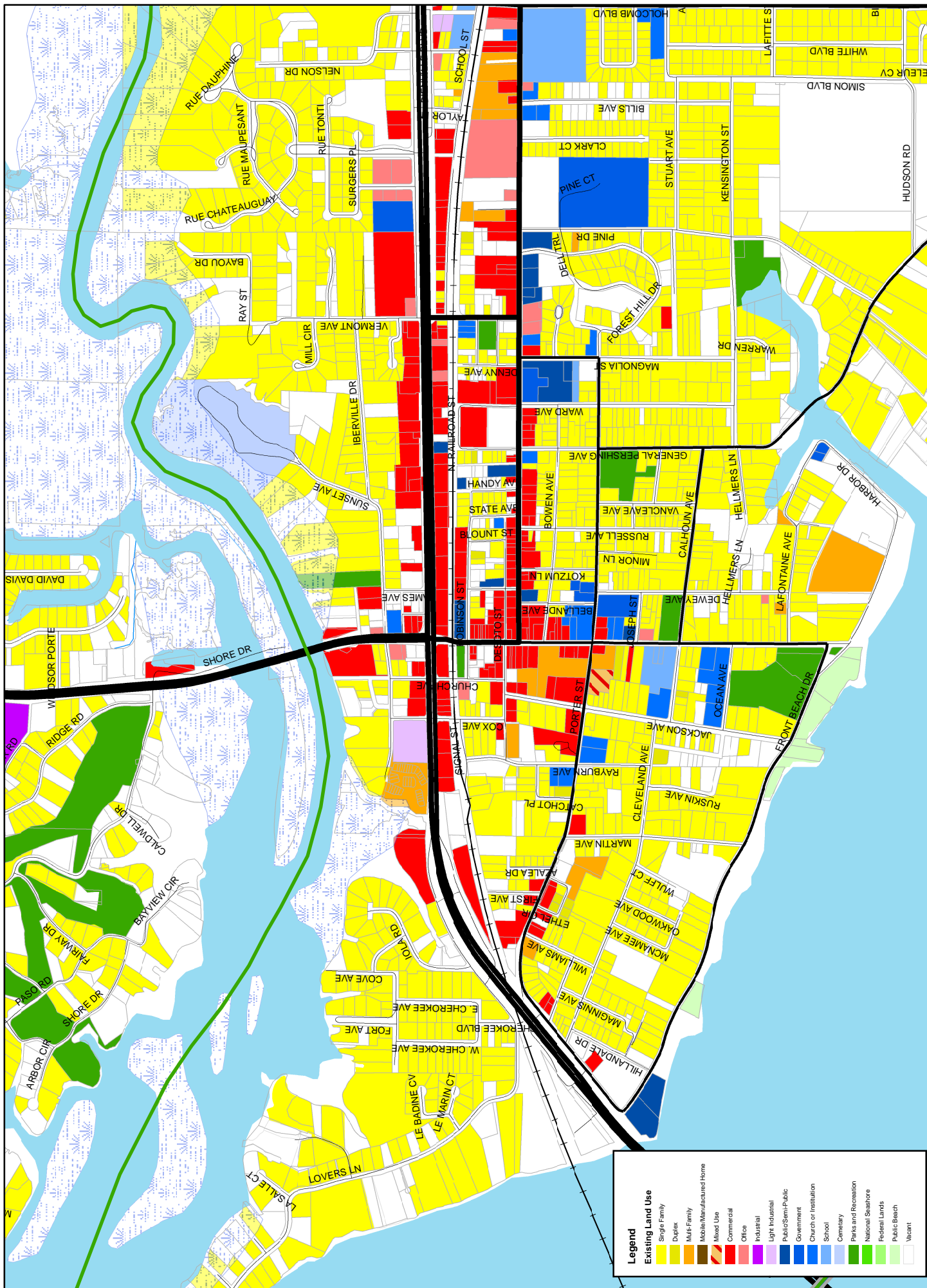
Roads and Highways: Ocean Springs is located near several major highways, including Interstate 10 and US Highway 90, which provide easy access to nearby cities and attractions. Interstate 10 is a major east-west highway that runs through the southern United States. Ocean Springs connects to Interstate 10 via State Highway 609 out of downtown and State Highway 57 to the east. I-10 provides convenient access to nearby cities such as Biloxi, Gulfport, and Mobile, Alabama and attractions such as beaches, casinos, and cultural sites. The newly annexed territory along State Highway 57 brought the I-10 and Highway 57 interchange into the city limits, creating additional development opportunities in the eastern parts of Ocean Springs.

Local Streets: The city also has a network of local roads that connect residents to businesses, schools, and other destinations within the city.

Airports: The Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport is approximately 20 miles west of Ocean Springs and offers regular flights to destinations throughout the United States.

Taxis and ride-sharing services: Several taxi companies operate in Ocean Springs, and ride-sharing services like Uber and Lyft are also available in the area.

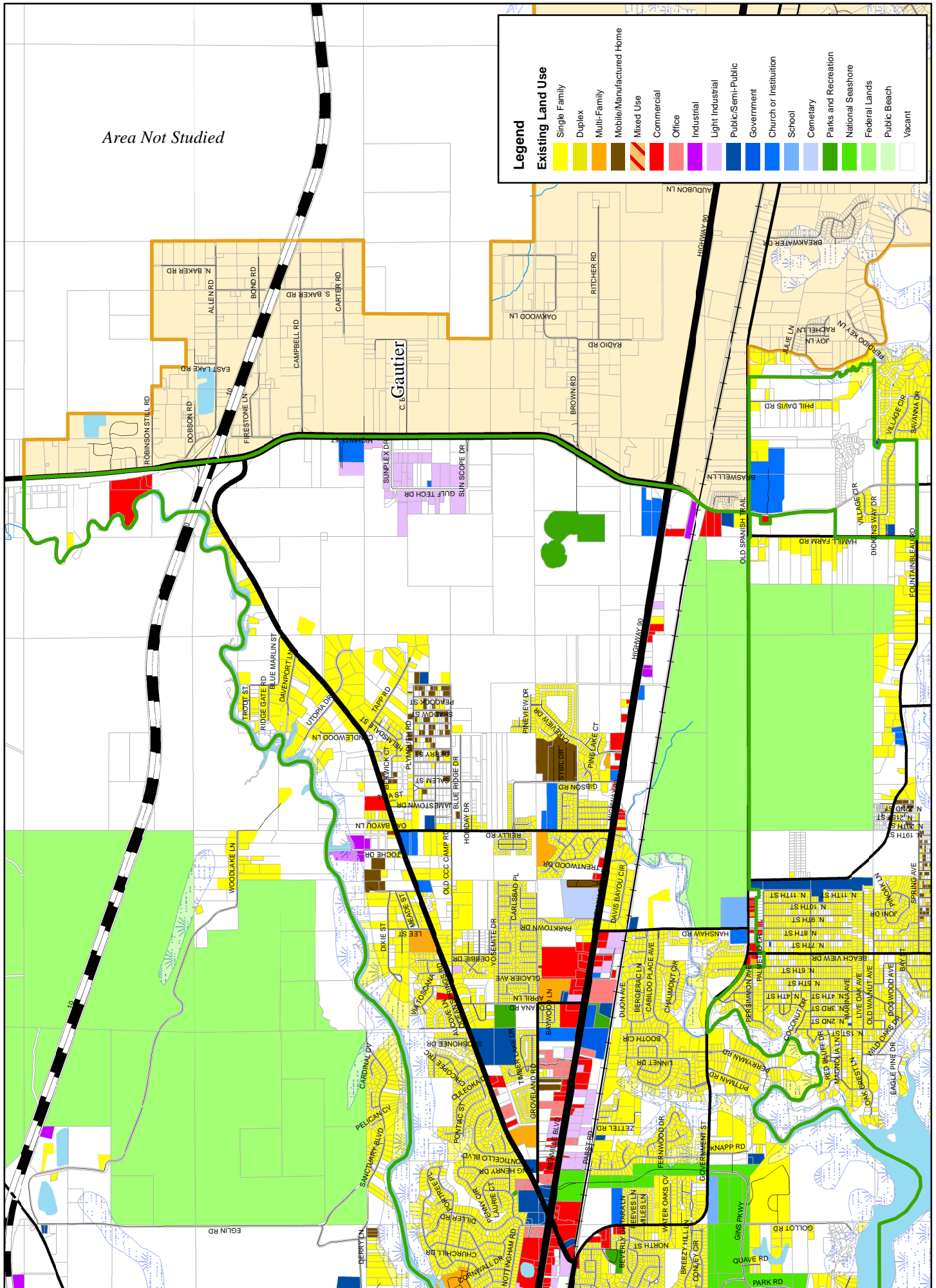




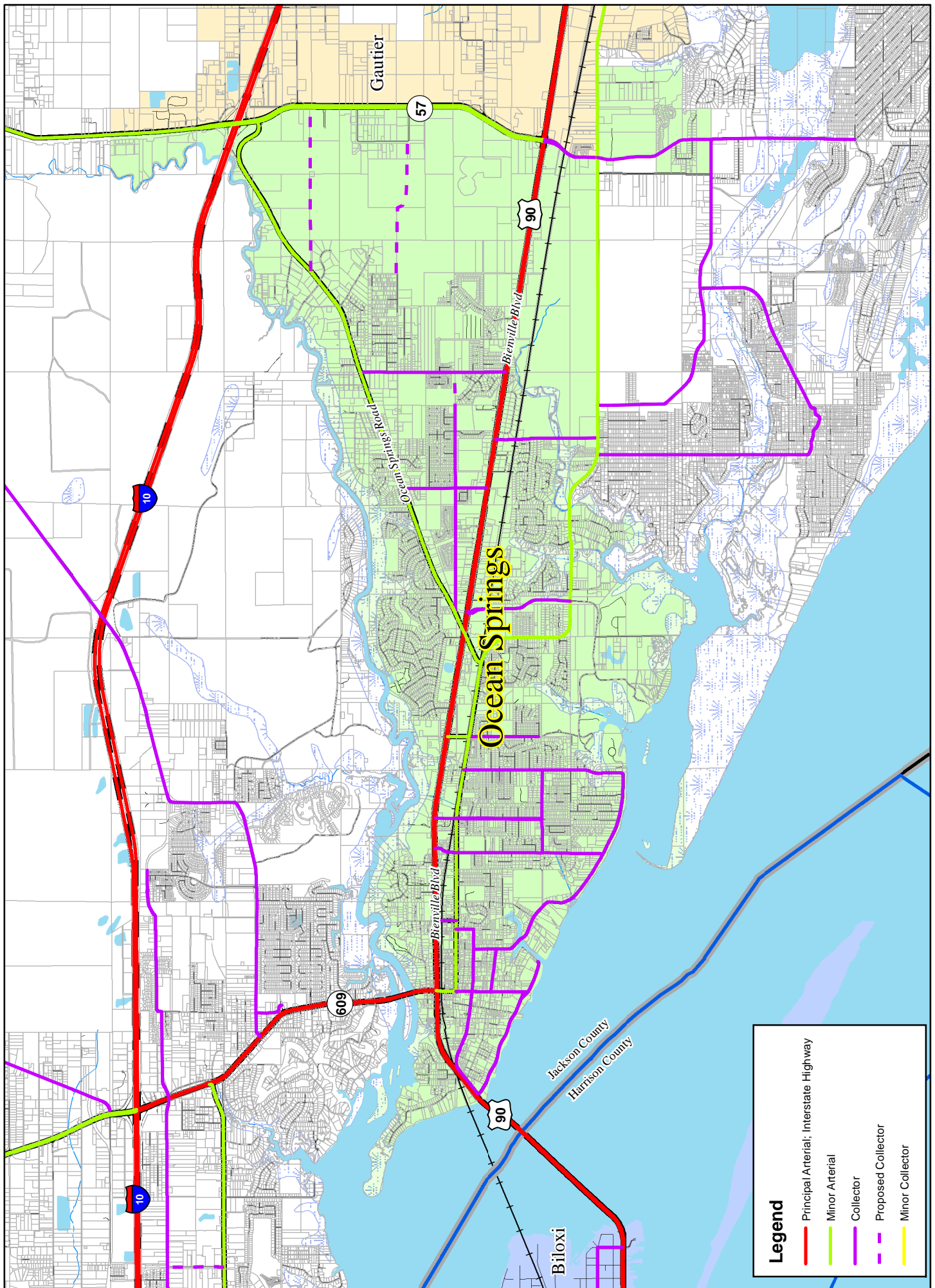
Area Not Studied

Legend
Existing Land Use

Single Family	Duplex	Multi-Family	Mobile/Manufactured Home	Mixed Use	Commercial	Office	Industrial	Light Industrial	Public/Semi-Public	Government	Church or Institution	School	Cemetery	Parks and Recreation	National Seashore	Federal Lands	Public Beach	Vacant
Yellow	Light Green	Orange	Brown	Red	Light Blue	Pink	Purple	Light Purple	Dark Blue	Blue	Light Blue	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green	Light Green



Map 12: Existing Land Use Map (East Zoom)



Map 13: Functional Classification Map

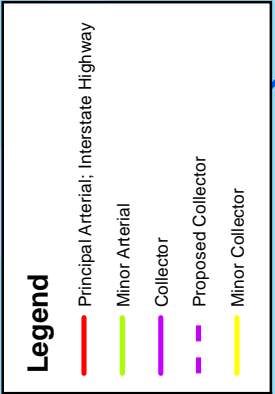


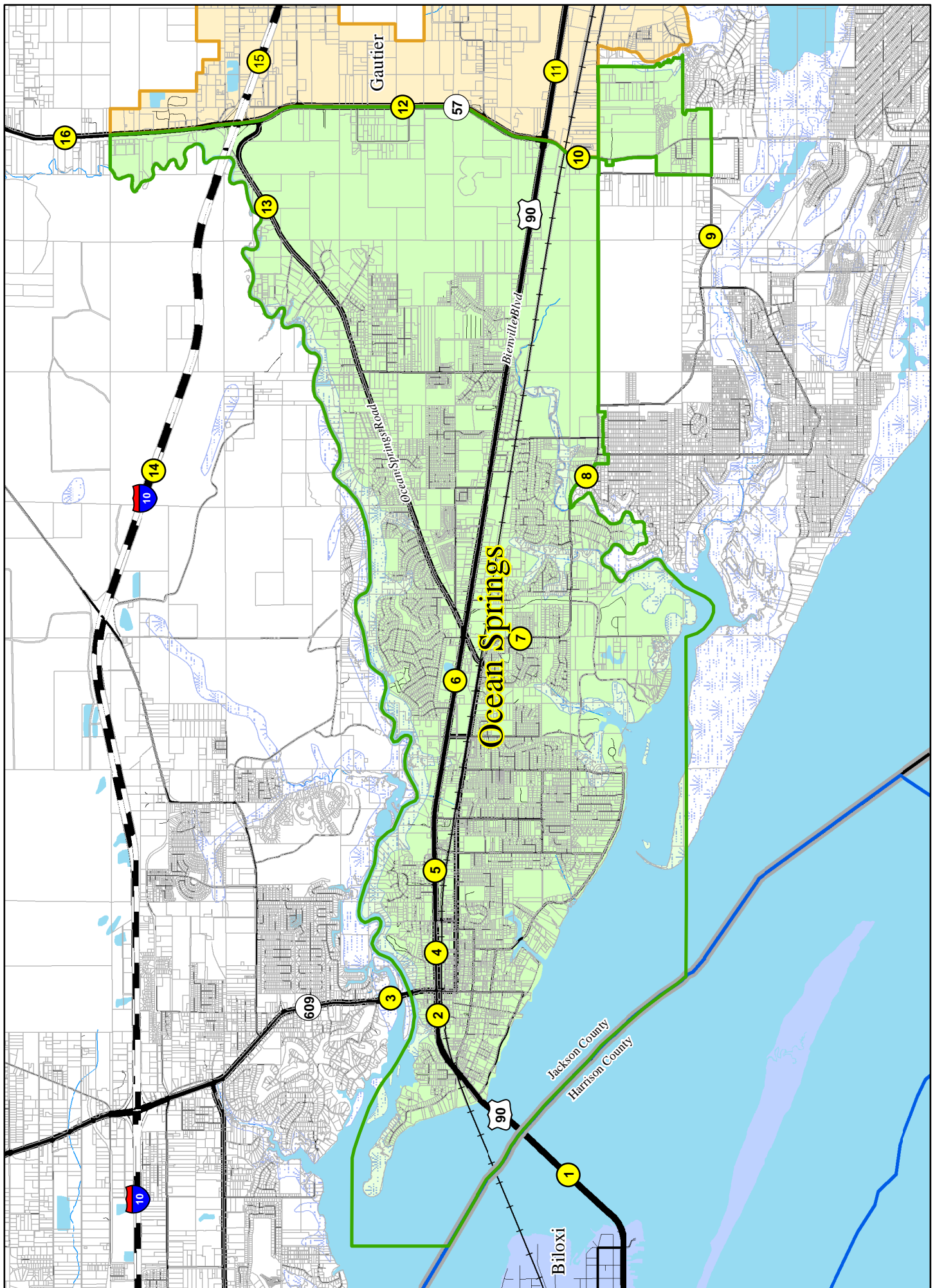
TABLE 1: TRAFFIC COUNTS

Map #	Site ID	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023	2013-2023	
												# Change	% Change
1	240410	25000	26000	26000	26000	26000	26000	26000	23000	25000	25000	0	0%
2	300050	25000	26000	26000	26000	26000	26000	26000	23000	25000	25000	0	0%
3	301010	35000	35000	35000	36000	36000	36000	36000	33000	32000	35000	0	0%
4	300060	41000	28000	28000	29000	29000	45000	45000	40000	40000	40000	-1,000	-3%
5	300070	43000	39000	40000	40000	42000	42000	42000	39000	39000	40000	-3,000	-8%
6	300090	39000	40000	40000	39000	40000	40000	38000	36000	39000	39000	0	0%
7	305070	8700	9100	9100	9200	8700	8800	8800	9500	9300	9800	1,100	11%
8	305071	8400	8400	7700	7800	8100	7600	7700	8600	8500	8600	200	2%
9	300651	1500	1300	1300	1300	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1600	100	6%
10	300655	7900	10000	10000	10000	11000	11000	11000	11000	12000	13000	5,100	39%
11	300110	24000	24000	25000	26000	26000	25000	25000	24000	24000	24000	0	0%
12	300660	11000	13000	13000	13000	15000	15000	16000	15000	15000	16000	5,000	31%
13	300650	5800	5900	5900	6800	7000	7100	7500	7200	7500	7500	1,700	23%
14	301502	48000	49000	50000	65000	66000	67000	69000	69000	63000	64000	16,000	25%
15	301505	50000	51000	54000	56000	56000	57000	59000	60000	59000	59000	9,000	15%
16	300670	6900	6400	6500	6600	6900	6900	7000	7000	6900	7900	1,000	13%

Note: Black indicates estimated traffic counts, red indicates actual traffic counts

No traffic counts were conducted or released for 2020.

Source: Mississippi Department of Transportation Traffic Count Application



Map 14: Traffic Counts

Golf Carts: One feature that sets Ocean Springs apart from many communities is the presence of golf carts operating on city streets. By ordinance, the city allows golf carts to operate on city streets and they must be registered in the City of Ocean Springs. The comprehensive plan does not place additional restrictions on these vehicles, but does call for increased monitoring and enforcement of existing regulations related to golf carts in Ocean Springs.

FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF EXISTING STREETS

A functional classification for streets categorizes roads and streets based on their purpose, capacity, and role within the overall transportation network. This system helps to organize and manage traffic flow efficiently by distinguishing between different types of roadways. The Mississippi state planning legislation, found in Section 17-1-1 of the *Mississippi Code*, requires a functional classification for transportation planning purposes and requires the classification be based on traffic projections, which are found in the following section.

The primary categories typically used in functional classification include:

Arterial Roads: These are the main roads designed for long-distance travel and high traffic volumes. They connect regional destinations such as cities, towns, and regional centers. Arterial roads are further divided into:

Principal Arterials: Major highways and interstates that handle the highest traffic volumes and provide direct routes between major urban areas.

Minor Arterials: Roads that connect smaller communities and serve as feeders to the principal arterials.

Collector Roads: These roads gather traffic from local streets and funnel it to the arterial roads. They balance the need for mobility and land access, often serving residential neighborhoods and local commercial areas.

Local Roads: These streets are primarily designed to access individual properties, including homes and businesses. They handle lower



traffic volumes and are not intended for long-distance travel.

By categorizing streets into these functional classifications, transportation planners can design and manage each type of road according to its intended use, ensuring efficient traffic flow, safety, and connectivity within the transportation network.

TRAFFIC COUNTS

US Highway 90 (Bienville Boulevard): US Highway 90 serves as the primary east-west artery through Ocean Springs, running parallel to I-10 and connecting key points from the Biloxi Bay Bridge on the western edge of town to just east of Highway 57 in Gautier (Map numbers 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, and 11). This corridor is critical for local and regional traffic, providing access to commercial areas and residential neighborhoods and serving as a main route for through traffic. The traffic counts along this stretch reflect its importance, with volumes remaining stable in some areas and slightly declining in others, particularly moving eastward. This stability underscores the highway's role as a backbone of the local transportation network. At the same time, the slight decrease in some segments may suggest shifts in traffic patterns or a redistribution of traffic due to alternate routes or changes in local development.

I-10 North of Ocean Springs: Interstate 10, located north of Ocean Springs, is a major regional highway significantly impacting the town's transportation dynamics (Map numbers 14 and 15). This section of I-10, just north of the town, has seen substantial growth in traffic

over the past decade, reflecting its vital role in facilitating long-distance travel and commercial transport and providing a swift connection to other major cities and regions. The increase in traffic volume on I-10 is indicative of regional growth and the increasing reliance on this interstate for both local commuting and regional connectivity.

Northern Approaches to Ocean Springs:

Approaching Ocean Springs from the north on the east end of town from the direction of I-10 involves routes that serve as key access points to the town's northern and downtown areas (Map number 3). The steady traffic counts on this northern approach highlight its importance for residents and visitors, providing a crucial link between the northern residential areas, downtown Ocean Springs, and the broader regional transportation network. This stability in traffic volume suggests consistent usage, likely driven by local commuting and access to the town's amenities and services.

Ocean Springs Road, near its intersection with Highway 57, and sections of Highway 57 form another critical component of the town's transportation network (Map numbers 12, 13, and 16). These routes are primary north-south connectors, linking residential areas with the town center, commercial zones, and beyond. The increasing traffic volumes along Highway 57, particularly in areas before and after I-10, point to growing usage, possibly driven by residential development and increased local traffic. Greyhound Way, near Ocean Springs High School, has seen the most significant traffic increases,

reflecting its importance as a key route for school access and local commuting (Map number 10).

Southern Routes: The southern end of Ocean Springs, particularly the routes extending from west to east toward newly annexed territory in the southeast (Map numbers 8 and 9), represents gradual growth. While traffic volumes have slightly increased, this area connects to locations experiencing steady development, with transportation infrastructure playing a role in connecting these newly annexed regions to the broader town. The modest rise in traffic suggests ongoing development and integration of these areas into the town's overall transportation network, with these routes serving as vital links for future growth.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Ocean Springs has a well-developed active transportation network supporting walking,

biking, and paddling activities. The city's infrastructure includes pedestrian facilities, trails, and blueways, providing residents and visitors with diverse active and recreational transportation options. The city has an extensive network of sidewalks, particularly in the downtown area and residential neighborhoods. These sidewalks facilitate safe and convenient walking, connecting key destinations such as schools, parks, and shopping areas.

Live Oaks Bicycle Trail: this trail is a notable bike route in Ocean Springs, designed to offer cyclists a scenic and safe path through the city. This trail is part of a broader network of bicycle and pedestrian routes in Ocean Springs to promote active transportation and enhance connectivity. The Live Oaks Bicycle Trail runs through some of the city's most picturesque areas, featuring lush greenery and live oak trees. The route connects key destinations, including neighborhoods, parks, schools, and downtown. It is a critical link in the city's efforts to provide safe and accessible routes for cyclists of all ages and abilities. The trail primarily comprises



shared-use paths, bike boulevards, and designated bike lanes. These facilities are designed to accommodate both recreational and commuter cyclists. The trail's infrastructure includes signage, pavement markings, and safety features such as traffic calming measures and crossings at major intersections.

Old Fort Bayou Blueway: this is a scenic blueway in Jackson County, Mississippi, that runs immediately adjacent to the northern city limits of Ocean Springs. The Old Fort Bayou Blueway offers a unique paddling experience through diverse natural habitats. The blueway extends for approximately 13 miles, from the headwaters in the longleaf pine savannas near Vancleave to its mouth at Biloxi Bay in Ocean Springs. The trail meanders through subtidal estuarine marshes and slash pine savannas, providing paddlers with diverse landscapes. The bayou hosts a variety of habitats, including estuarine areas where freshwater meets saltwater. Along the blueway, paddlers can explore notable sites such as the Mississippi Sandhill Crane National Wildlife Refuge, The Nature Conservancy's Old Fort Bayou mitigation property, and the Land Trust's Twelve Oaks Conservation Park. The blueway is popular for fly fishing, offering opportunities to catch various species nurtured in the bayou's inlets. The trail also provides access to picnic areas, camping sites, boat ramps, and parking facilities, making it a well-rounded destination for outdoor enthusiasts.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Ocean Springs is served by the Coast Transit Authority (CTA), which provides public transportation options that connect the city with the broader Gulf Coast region. The public transit facilities in Ocean Springs are designed to offer accessible, reliable, and convenient transportation for residents and visitors. The CTA operates fixed-route bus services that traverse key corridors in Ocean Springs and connect to nearby cities such as Biloxi and Gulfport. These routes are designed to provide access to major destinations, including shopping centers, healthcare facilities, and educational institutions. In addition to regular bus routes, CTA offers shuttle services that cater to specific needs, such as transporting passengers to special events or providing service to less densely populated areas.

Ocean Springs has several designated bus stops along the main routes, providing passengers safe and convenient boarding points. These stops are located near residential areas, commercial centers, and public facilities. Many bus stops are equipped with shelters and seating to protect passengers from the elements while they wait for the bus. These facilities enhance the comfort and convenience of using public transit.

CTA buses and facilities in Ocean Springs are designed to be accessible to individuals with disabilities. This includes low-floor buses, wheelchair ramps, and priority seating areas. The transit system is committed to providing equitable service to all passengers.

For commuters traveling to other Gulf Coast cities, CTA provides park-and-ride facilities where passengers can park their vehicles and transfer to public transit. These lots are conveniently located near major highways and bus routes, facilitating easy access to the transit network.

CTA buses have bike racks, allowing passengers to combine cycling with public transit. This integration supports multimodal transportation and encourages the use of active transportation options.

TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES

Ocean Springs confronts several challenging roadway conditions that make driving difficult, potentially hazardous, and less efficient. These conditions can significantly impact safety, travel times, and the overall effectiveness of a transportation network. Key challenges include:

Traffic Congestion: High traffic volumes, especially during peak hours, can lead to slow-moving traffic, increased travel times, and heightened frustration among drivers. Congestion occurs most frequently during morning and afternoon rush hours along major highways and collector routes, especially within school zones and at the intersections along Highway 90.

Poor Road Surface Conditions: Potholes, cracks, and uneven surfaces can damage vehicles and contribute to accidents, making driving uncomfortable and hazardous. Street maintenance is an ongoing concern in the city.

Narrow or Obstructed Lanes: Lanes that are too narrow or obstructed by parked vehicles, construction, or debris can force drivers into dangerous situations, such as sudden lane changes or reduced maneuvering space. Narrow lanes are most common in Ocean Springs' historic neighborhoods, adding to the city's historical charm but requiring increased caution to avoid collisions with other motorists, pedestrians, and parked cars.

Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety: Pedestrian and cyclist activity, especially in areas lacking adequate crosswalks, bike lanes, or sidewalks, can lead to conflicts and accidents. Ocean Springs has significantly improved safety for pedestrians and cyclists and continues to champion these improvements in its overall planning.

Weather-Related Hazards: In Ocean Springs, clearly marked evacuation routes are necessary. There are presently few options for northerly evacuation from Ocean Springs. Proper maintenance, infrastructure upgrades, and effective traffic management are essential to ensuring safe and efficient travel.

Golf Cart Operations: Ocean Springs' code of ordinances permits golf carts to operate on city streets with designated speed limits less than 30 miles per hour. Operations are limited to the outside lane of multi-lane streets and to the vehicular travel lane or cart path. To monitor golf cart use, the city may need to increase enforcement activities and improve community outreach and education related to the city's ordinances.

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CHAPTER 5—VISION, GUIDING PRINCIPLES, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- * **VISION**
- * **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**
- * **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**
- * **CONCLUSION**

INTRODUCTION

The City of Ocean Springs envisions a future where thoughtful planning and strategic growth foster a thriving community. This comprehensive plan outlines the vision, guiding principles, goals and objectives for land use, transportation, economic development, and community well-being. By maintaining a sustainable mix of land uses, enhancing transportation corridors, preserving historic and natural resources, and fostering a thriving downtown, Ocean Springs aims to create a high-quality living environment for all residents. The plan emphasizes balanced growth, interconnectivity, and cultural enrichment, ensuring that the city remains a desirable place to live, work, and visit.

VISION

Ocean Springs is a vibrant, resilient, inclusive coastal community that cherishes its rich heritage, celebrates its natural beauty, and

embraces innovative growth. As "The City of Discovery," Ocean Springs is committed to fostering a sustainable environment, a thriving local economy, and a high quality of life for all residents. Through thoughtful planning, community engagement, and strategic investment, Ocean Springs will preserve its unique character while boldly navigating future challenges, ensuring that the city remains a place where tradition and progress meet and every resident can flourish.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles outlined in this section serve as overarching value statements that will direct the actions and decisions made within the City of Ocean Springs as it grows and evolves. These principles are organized by key focus areas—land use and development, transportation, and community facilities—and provide a foundation for creating policies and strategies that align with the city’s long-term vision. They are designed to ensure that the city’s growth is balanced, sustainable, and community-focused while preserving Ocean Springs’ unique character and enhancing the quality of life for all residents. These guiding principles appear again in later chapters of the plan, where they are further expanded upon in the context of specific planning areas, providing a comprehensive framework for decision-making and implementation.

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

The Future Land Use plan helps ensure that future growth will be directed into the areas of the city that can handle different types of

growth, whether residential, commercial or industrial. The guiding principles will help make sure that land is developed efficiently, with the highest and best use for each parcel.

* *Sustainable and Compatible Land Uses*

- Maintain a balanced mix of residential and non-residential uses to meet the needs of businesses and residents.
- Promote private investment in existing neighborhoods through infrastructure improvements and code enforcement.

* *Mixed-Use Development*

- Transform auto-dominated strip commercial areas into compact, multi-modal-oriented, mixed-use places.
- Develop compatible mixed-use activity centers and infill development that reflects neighborhood character.

* *Community Character and Design*

- Ensure that commercial and residential development is designed to reflect Ocean Springs’ unique character.
- Enhance the overall design quality of new developments with improved signage, site design, architectural standards, and landscaping.

* *Interconnectivity*

- Promote interconnectivity between adjacent land uses for both pedestrians and automobiles to create more accessible and cohesive neighborhoods.

* **Environmental Stewardship**

- Protect and preserve natural resources, including marshes and wetlands, habitats, and water and air quality.

These principles guide the development and implementation of policies and strategies to ensure balanced, sustainable, and community-focused growth in Ocean Springs. These principles inform the goals and objectives found later in this chapter and Chapter 6—Land Use and Development.

TRANSPORTATION

The Transportation Plan for Ocean Springs is built upon several guiding principles designed to create a cohesive, accessible, and efficient transportation system that meets the needs of all users. These principles ensure that transportation infrastructure supports the city’s growth, enhances quality of life, and promotes sustainable development.

* **Multi-Modal Transportation**

- Develop an integrated transportation network that accommodates various modes of travel, including cars, public transit, bicycles, and pedestrians.
- Include projects that improve connectivity and accessibility for nonmotorized users, such as bike lanes, sidewalks, and public transit routes.

* **Safety and Accessibility**

- Ensure that all transportation infrastructure is safe and accessible for users of all ages and abilities.

- Implement safety enhancements such as improved crosswalks, traffic calming measures, and ADA-compliant facilities.

* **Economic Vitality**

- Support the local economy by enhancing transportation infrastructure that facilitates efficient movement of goods and people.
- Improve key commercial corridors, develop transit-oriented developments, and ensure reliable access to business districts.



*** *Connectivity***

- Enhance connectivity within Ocean Springs and to the broader region to facilitate efficient and convenient travel.
- Develop transit hubs, expand bus routes, and improve regional transportation links.

By adhering to these guiding principles, the Transportation Plan for Ocean Springs aims to create a well-connected, efficient, and sustainable transportation system that supports the city’s growth and enhances the quality of life for all its residents. These principles inform the goals and objectives found later in this chapter and Chapter 7—Transportation Plan.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The Community Facilities Plan for Ocean Springs outlines the essential services and infrastructure that support the city's growth. This plan addresses a wide range of facilities, including general government operations, police and fire departments, emergency management, parks and recreation, public utilities, public works, educational resources, and housing. The guiding principles below are designed to ensure that these facilities meet current needs and adapt to future demands, fostering a resilient and thriving community.

*** *Accessibility and Inclusivity***

- Ensure that all community facilities are accessible and serve the diverse needs of Ocean Springs' residents.
- Design public spaces and facilities to be inclusive, with ADA-compliant features and equitable access for all community segments.

*** *Community Engagement and Collaboration***

- Foster community involvement in the planning and development of facilities.
- Engage residents through public consultations, workshops, and collaborative planning sessions to ensure facilities meet community needs and preferences.

*** *Safety and Preparedness***

- Ensure that all community facilities contribute to the safety and emergency preparedness of the city.
- Equip facilities with modern safety features, maintain emergency management protocols, and ensure readiness for natural disasters and other emergencies.

*** *Fiscal Responsibility and Efficiency***

- Allocate resources efficiently and ensure the financial sustainability of community facilities.
- Plan and equitably fund public facilities through strategic budgeting, capital improvement programs, and partnerships with private and non-profit sectors.
- Invest in high-quality design and regular maintenance of community facilities to enhance their functionality and longevity.

*** *Strategic Location and Connectivity***

- Ensure that community facilities are strategically located and well-connected to maximize their accessibility and impact.



- Plan for facilities in central, easily accessible locations, and ensure connectivity through robust transportation networks.

Aligning actions with these guiding principles will allow Ocean Springs to operate effectively and efficiently, provide the highest-quality community services. These principles inform the goals and objectives found later in this chapter and Chapter 8—Community Facilities Plan.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This section provides a clear framework for achieving sustainable development, enhancing community well-being, and preserving the unique character of Ocean Springs. The goals and objectives are organized by thematic areas, with each goal followed by specific objectives that detail the approaches necessary to achieve the desired outcomes in land use, transportation, community facilities, economic development, and other key areas of focus for the city's growth and development. The comprehensive

approach outlined in this chapter ensures that every aspect of the city's growth and development is considered, focusing on creating a flourishing and healthy community for all residents.

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

Goal 1

Maintain a sustainable and compatible mix of land uses in the City of Ocean Springs through effective, coordinated growth management.

Objectives:

- 1.1. Provide a diverse yet complementary mix of residential and non-residential uses to meet the needs of the City's businesses and residences.
- 1.2. Promote private investment in existing neighborhoods through public investment in infrastructure and code enforcement to eliminate non-conforming uses and site designs that do not respect the community's historical and cultural character.

1.3. Transform auto-dominated strip commercial areas into compact, multi-modal-oriented, mixed-use places.

1.4. Develop compatible mixed-use activity centers and infill development consistent with neighborhood character.

1.5. Ensure commercial and residential development is designed to reflect Ocean Springs' unique character.

1.6. Promote interconnectivity between adjacent land uses for both pedestrians and automobiles.

1.7. Support annexation to manage growth, provide services efficiently, promote economic development, control city entryways, and encourage rational growth patterns. A fiscally responsible annexation program will include:

- Ensuring facilities in annexation areas meet city standards or have provisions for upgrades.
- Evaluating costs and benefits of proposed annexations before proceeding.
- Phasing annexation and development of contiguous land holdings.

1.8. Support future planning for Midtown Ocean Springs to develop a clear vision and master plan for revitalizing this central, connected corridor and adjacent neighborhoods.

1.9. Support neighborhood planning efforts by identifying distinct neighborhoods and developing master plans based on community interest and local needs.

1.10 Support the transition of recently annexed rural and agricultural areas into the city by developing zoning tools that accommodate existing lot sizes and limited agricultural uses, while guiding future development toward suburban patterns consistent with the city's long-range growth strategy.

TRANSPORTATION

Goal 2

Develop a comprehensive transportation system accommodating all users, modes, and purposes.

Objectives:

2.1. Develop a multi-modal transportation system serving current and future needs.

2.2. Integrate transportation planning with land use and economic development goals.

2.3. Provide safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access throughout the City.

2.4. Encourage the use of public transportation.

2.5. Promote the use of environmentally friendly transportation alternatives.

2.6. Ensure transportation infrastructure is maintained and improved to meet current and future demands.

2.7. Establish new connections to U.S. Highway 57 through newly annexed territory by extending through streets from Ocean Springs Road to U.S. Highway 57 and from Old CCC Camp Road to Sunplex Industrial Park.

2.8 Address oversight/enforcement and connectivity issues related to golf carts along City streets through residential and commercial

neighborhoods and north of Bienville Boulevard (U.S. Highway 90).

2.9. Review standards for access management on major transportation routes.

Goal 3

Enhance the Bienville Boulevard corridor to support economic development, multi-modal transportation, and high-quality community character.

Objectives:

3.1. Transform Bienville Boulevard from a highway thoroughfare to a multi-way boulevard with lanes for through traffic, frontage roads, pedestrian amenities, and street trees.

3.2. Promote regional retail businesses and higher intensity, mixed-use development along Bienville Boulevard.

3.3. Ensure new development includes pedestrian-oriented features linking residential and commercial uses.

3.4. Enhance the overall design quality along Bienville Boulevard with improved signage, site design, architectural standards, and landscaping.

3.5. Prohibit new billboards and encourage the removal of existing ones.

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

Goal 4

Foster a vibrant mixed-use downtown that retains historic character while increasing opportunities for residents to live near neighborhood amenities and workplaces.

Objectives:

4.1. Enhance Downtown and the Central Business District as destination places for residents and visitors.

4.2. Promote specialty retail, service, and entertainment businesses in the Central Business District.

4.3. Encourage mixed-use buildings with ground-level retail and upper-level offices and residences.

4.4. Limit drive-through facilities in pedestrian-oriented areas.

4.5. Establish transition areas around Downtown with a mix of residential and low-intensity commercial uses.

4.6. Support bed and breakfast lodging near the CBD and in transition zones that buffer adjacent residential neighborhoods from higher-intensity land uses.

4.7. Make Downtown more pedestrian-friendly by expanding walkways and providing amenities like green spaces, seating areas, and public art.

4.8. Ensure a multi-modal transportation system serves Downtown.

4.9. Reduce reliance on open parking areas and encourage screened parking lots behind buildings.

4.10. Coordinate shared public parking areas to encourage redevelopment.

4.11. Ensure public street designs support pedestrian movement and efficient use of public services.

4.12. Retain government offices and public services frequently visited by the public in the Downtown area.

NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

Goal 5

Provide high-quality residential neighborhoods with a variety of compatible housing types to serve the diverse needs of Ocean Springs residents.

Objectives:

5.1. Provide flexibility in housing types, including residences on the upper floors of non-residential structures and moderate-density units like patio homes and townhomes.

5.2. Ensure housing quality and design to promote long-term neighborhood stability.

5.3. Ensure land uses abutting residential development are compatible with neighborhood character.

5.4. Encourage redevelopment and infill development to provide upper-level apartments and loft units.

5.5. Plan for medium-density housing near principal employment centers.

5.6. Integrate residential and non-residential uses in community activity centers.

5.7. Support affordable and workforce housing programs.

5.8. Encourage housing alternatives for seniors, including maintenance-provided homes.

5.9. Maintain compatible transitions between different land use and housing types through effective land use and site design regulations.

5.10. Protect stable single-family neighborhoods from incompatible land uses.

5.11. Target unstable or declining neighborhoods for revitalization planning efforts that engage local residents.

5.12. Develop a rental licensing and inspections program to ensure the maintenance of rental housing stock.

5.13. Continue code enforcement to ensure high-quality housing and protect neighborhoods from blighting influences.

COMMUNITY APPEARANCE AND DESIGN

Goal 6

Establish Ocean Springs as a community showcasing high-quality design to benefit residents, businesses, and visitors.

Objectives:

6.1. Promote good site and architectural design through regulatory tools and incentives.



6.2. Protect and enhance the tree canopy with native species.

6.3. Require street trees in all new developments to establish an urban tree canopy cover.

6.4. Preserve existing trees during development projects, with on- or off-site mitigation for unavoidable damage.

6.5. Ensure pedestrian amenities to promote walkability.

6.6. Incorporate public spaces in redevelopment and new development projects.

6.7. Promote pedestrian-oriented mixed-use and commercial development near one another and residential neighborhoods.

6.8. Mitigate traffic noise and other negative impacts on development and develop an enforceable noise limit within residential neighborhoods.

6.9. Promote high-quality and environmentally sensitive landscaping.

6.10. Enhance streetscaping with capital improvements.

6.11. Enhance gateways and corridors with landscaping and design standards.

6.12. Encourage developments that exceed landscape and open space requirements.

6.13. Ensure context-sensitive architectural design standards for large commercial buildings and historic areas.

6.14. Promote high-quality signage design through regulatory tools and incentives.

6.15. Maintain neighborhood safety and integrity through effective code enforcement.

6.16. Establish and maintain attractive, well-lit, and landscaped gateways to the City of Ocean Springs.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Goal 7

Preserve and enhance historic and cultural resources reflecting Ocean Springs' heritage and character.

Objectives:

7.1. Support the Historic Preservation Commission's efforts to protect historic districts and structures.

7.2. Encourage investment in the preservation, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse of significant structures.

7.3. Ensure new development in historic districts is compatible with existing development.

7.4. Invest in historic neighborhood infrastructure to encourage private investment.

7.5. Support adaptive reuse of historic structures through flexible standards.

7.6. Promote heritage tourism by leveraging historic resources.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES

Goal 8

Efficiently provide and fund high-quality facilities and services for all businesses, residents, and visitors.

Objectives:

- 8.1. Support fair and predictable regulatory requirements.
- 8.2. Plan and equitably fund public facilities and services.
- 8.3. Coordinate with the School Board to implement long-range plans and maintain quality education services.
- 8.4. Ensure municipal services are efficient and costs for new development do not shift to existing residents and businesses.
- 8.5. Coordinate with other service providers on utility installation or replacement timing and location.
- 8.6. Ensure development meets service demands concurrently.
- 8.7. Ensure adequate public facilities are available or funded before new development approval.
- 8.8. Adopt a Capital Improvements Program addressing existing and future needs.
- 8.9. Create a citizen-engaged capital improvements process, a tool for evaluating economic, social, and environmental costs and benefits of proposed improvements, and a means of prioritizing capital improvements.
- 8.10. Maintain adequate police and fire protection response times.
- 8.11. Add a police substation and increase police patrols in downtown Ocean Springs.
- 8.12. Ensure new development funds its proportional share of capital facilities costs.

8.13. Promote and support local service providers for social services.

8.14. Promote intergovernmental cooperation and coordination with the county, adjacent municipalities, utility districts with shared service areas, state, and federal partners to improve infrastructure and public services.

8.15. Expand affordable, transitional, and supportive housing solutions and enhance collaboration with local agencies to effectively prevent and reduce homelessness in Ocean Springs.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Goal 9

Provide a parks and recreation system meeting the needs of all community segments.

Objectives:

9.1. Ensure public recreation facilities serve all residents and are accessible by developing a park and recreation master plan.

9.2. Design open space for multi-use, environmentally friendly activities.

9.3. Plan for multi-purpose recreational, cultural, educational, and leisure facilities, including new indoor venues for sports such as pickleball and volleyball and outdoor venues such as skate parks and disk golf.

9.4. Support additional public access to waterfront resources while protecting neighborhoods.

9.5. Support partnerships between the City, School District, and other service providers.



9.6. Ensure parks and recreation facilities are equitably funded by all users, including new development.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal 10

Maintain and enhance a sustainable local economy that provides employment opportunities and supports a high quality of life.

Objectives:

10.1. Support private sector economic development efforts aligned with the City's vision and goals.

10.2. Pursue a higher ratio of employment to housing, focusing on professional services jobs.

10.3. Support expanding medical services and encourage the development of tourism and the hospitality industry.

10.4. Encourage the development and expansion of homegrown businesses.

10.5. Pursue economic development opportunities serving the elderly and retirement population.

10.6. Encourage clean industry, retail, and professional office development.

10.7. Limit commercial and industrial development generating heavy truck traffic to highways and interstates.

10.8. Support incentives that result in higher wages and job creation.

10.9. Maximize sales tax revenues as a primary funding source for City services.

10.10. Enhance the City's role as a retail, restaurant, and entertainment center by promoting tourism, conferences, and events.

10.11. Provide quality municipal services as a primary contribution to economic development.

10.12. Promote new recreational facilities for tournaments.

ARTS AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Goal 11

Establish Ocean Springs as a prominent center for the arts and culture on the Gulf Coast.

Objectives:

- 11.1. Promote existing art and cultural programs.
- 11.2. Encourage public and private investment in arts and cultural amenities.
- 11.3. Develop and adopt a master plan for cultural programs and facilities.
- 11.4. Encourage partnerships with arts organizations and educational institutions.
- 11.5. Promote cultural tourism through marketing and programming.
- 11.6. Encourage the development of live/workspaces for artists.
- 11.7. Establish a new visitor and welcome center in the vicinity of I-10 and Highway 57 in the newly annexed territory.

NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

Goal 12

Protect and preserve natural resources, including marshes and wetlands, habitats, and water and air quality.

Objectives:

- 12.1. Limit development on environmentally sensitive lands.
- 12.2. Support the development of compatible public amenities in conservation areas.
- 12.3. Encourage low-impact design techniques for stormwater management.
- 12.4. Conduct an impervious surfaces audit and evaluate the impact of policies on wetlands and flooding. Consider measures to reduce the im-

part of impervious surfaces, such as planning to reduce requirements for constructing improvements in locations where lower-impact facilities will adequately serve users and setting reduction targets for benchmarking progress.

12.5. Protect viewsheds and environmental features contributing to Ocean Springs' beauty.

12.6. Promote curbside recycling and begin recycling in public areas.

12.7. Mitigate activities affecting water quality during the development process.

12.8. Reduce solid waste volume entering landfills through expanded recycling and other programs.

HAZARD MITIGATION

Goal 13

Protect life and property throughout Ocean Springs.

Objectives:

13.1. Promote strategies to protect people and property from hazards.

13.2. Ensure evacuation routes are designed and maintained for safe evacuation.

13.3. Ensure development adheres to the Fire Code and Building Codes.

13.4. Prevent inappropriate development in floodplains.

13.5. Adhere to FEMA base elevations for development.

13.6. Support the region's hazard mitigation plan.

13.7. Encourage underground placement of utility lines.

CONCLUSION

The goals and objectives outlined in this comprehensive plan reflect the City of Ocean Springs' commitment to sustainable development and community enhancement. The city aims to preserve its unique character through coordinated efforts across various sectors while

promoting economic vitality and environmental stewardship. The plan serves as a roadmap for the future, guiding decision-making processes and fostering collaboration among stakeholders. By adhering to these principles, Ocean Springs will continue to be a vigorous, inclusive community that honors its past while embracing future opportunities.

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CHAPTER 6—LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

- * **DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**
- * **FUTURE LAND USE PLAN**
- * **FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES**
- * **FUTURE LAND USE MAP**
- * **CONCLUSION**

INTRODUCTION

The Land Use and Development chapter of Ocean Springs' comprehensive plan provides a detailed framework for guiding the city's growth and development. Ocean Springs faces unique challenges and opportunities in managing land use as a coastal community with a rich historical and cultural heritage. The Future Land Use Plan provides a vision for balanced development, emphasizing the need for mixed-use areas, conservation of natural resources, and enhancing community character. Together, these components create a cohesive strategy for ensuring that Ocean Springs continues to thrive and prosper.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Ocean Springs continues to expand, with several areas earmarked for future residential development. These future growth areas are expected to include a mix of housing types catering to a growing

population and diverse demographics. The city's planning efforts focus on sustainable development, ensuring new neighborhoods are well-integrated with existing infrastructure and community amenities.

Ensuring new investment is shaped into future development in ways that extend and enlarge community wealth is vital for long-term community health. Much of a community's wealth is stored in land and buildings. Individual investments represent a large portion of the collective wealth of a community, which is drawn on to provide infrastructure, public services, and a high quality of life. Density is essential for long-term prosperity because most improved property's value is stored in the structure, not the land. Land values are a relatively small portion of property values compared to the value of the structures built upon the land. Since cities have limited resources to provide and maintain new infrastructure and public services that enable land to be developed, concentrating the most total value in the smallest geographic area while maintaining a high quality of life is key to financial success and community wealth-building.

Four primary investment types will shape Ocean Springs' future development:

** Property maintenance.*

Maintenance is essential to retaining useful and valuable properties in existing developed areas. Maintaining existing structures primarily involves repairs and upkeep. Property maintenance is one of the most significant avenues of private development capital and one of the

highest return activities. It stores community wealth already invested in land and buildings, leading to stable property values. Policies designed to stabilize property values and encourage various uses can help owners invest in maintaining property to extend the useful life and economic value of land and structures.

- Property maintenance is a priority citywide.

** Infill development.*

Infill occurs when new structures are built on undeveloped, vacant land. Infill may take the form of new development on small lots in existing neighborhoods or new buildings on vacant areas of large lots with existing development. A key feature of infill is an increase in density that can economically use existing infrastructure and public service investments. Taking advantage of existing infrastructure and services (and enhancing these as necessary) allows development to occur at a lower cost and a higher return. This also encourages density, which is essential to long-term community prosperity. Infill should be a priority in the following areas of Ocean Springs:

- Ocean Springs' historic residential districts have tremendous infill development potential. Small vacant lots between existing structures are scattered throughout these neighborhoods. The challenge will be ensuring that the new development's character fits the existing character of these neighborhoods, utilizing the city's historic preservation and design review guidelines.
- Ocean Spring's commercial districts near U.S. Highway 90 and Government Street hold sig-

nificant infill development opportunities. Large commercial properties along U.S. Highway 90 can be further divided, and individual vacant properties can be developed to create new mixed-use establishments.

* **Redevelopment.**

The redevelopment process is when structures are torn down and replaced with new ones. This happens as part of a cycle of property investment and decline, mainly because properties reach a state of disrepair or become functionally obsolete because of changes in market demand and tastes. Disrepair or dilapidation is often associated with low-quality construction or a lack of property maintenance. Functional obsolescence can happen when properties no longer meet occupants' needs or city policies limit land uses in ways that severely restrict marketability. For example, small historic homes in single-use residential districts may not be as attractive to many homebuyers, leading to less marketability. To compensate, cities need policies that ensure properties are well-maintained and a good fit with real estate markets, including mixed-use in appropriate locations.

- Redevelopment should target areas with dilapidated structures (of which there are few in Ocean Springs) and places with large commercial and industrial structures that have reached the later stages of their useful life. These locations are concentrated along U.S. Highway 90/Bienville Boulevard. Like infill sites, these offer new opportunities for mixed

-use development of commercial and residential properties.

* **New development.**

New development transforms land from an undeveloped to a developed state. It attaches to and extends existing utilities, adding to infrastructure costs and public service demand. This makes it one of the most expensive forms of development investment for both the owner and the city. New development should encourage density and mixed-use to create the most efficient long-term investment in land and structures.

- Ocean Springs' principal new development opportunities are located in the city's east end in the newly annexed areas near U.S. Highway 90, Highway 57, and Ocean Springs Road. This area has the most undeveloped, vacant tracts in the city. Much of the area is an environmentally sensitive wetland, unsuitable for intensive development, and should be developed at very low intensity. Land adjacent to Highway 90 and Highway 57 are major corridors offering attractive commercial



and industrial development locations due to their accessibility, traffic counts, and connections to Interstate 10. Ocean Springs Road and the interior parcels of this area are likely to attract residential investments, providing an opportunity to increase the housing supply and extend street connectivity between existing roadways.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Future Land Use Plan (FLU) for Ocean Springs serves as a blueprint for the city's physical growth and development, ensuring a harmonious balance between urbanization and the preservation of the city's unique character. This plan delineates various future land use categories, each specifying the general character, primary use, and desired density of development in different areas of the city. By providing a clear framework for land use, the plan aims to facilitate orderly and economical development, support diverse activities, and enhance the quality of life for all residents.

The land use categories outlined in the plan range from natural areas designed to protect environmentally sensitive lands to high-density residential and commercial centers that encourage lively, mixed-use developments. Each category aligns with specific zoning districts, guiding the appropriate placement of various land uses and densities. This alignment ensures that development coordinates with the city's long-term vision and meets community needs while preserving Ocean Springs' distinctive charm. The Future Land Use Plan is integral to the city's comprehensive plan, setting the stage for



sustainable growth and the careful stewardship of resources.

FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES

Future land use categories provide for the general character and primary use of land throughout Ocean Springs. Each category describes land uses and the general density of development desired at different locations throughout the city. The future land use categories fit into the overall plan for physical growth and development in Ocean Springs. They provide a land area for various activities while ensuring orderly and efficient development and enhancing Ocean Springs' unique community character and quality of life. The future land use categories include:

Natural: this category is intended to preserve land unsuited to urban development due to its location or environmental character. This category also includes public or private lands restricted to wildlife preservation, habitat, or agricultural use. It may include beaches, designated wetlands, floodways, floodplains, or soils not

conducive for supporting urban development. Development is limited to temporary improvements or buildings and structures that support passive recreation, conservation, and agricultural uses.

Residential Low-Density: this category provides space for low-density (1-4 dwelling units per acre), single-family residential development. Development in this area is devoted to single-family detached residences on low-density lots. Typically, these are fully improved with urban infrastructure, with frontage on a public road. In rare instances, municipal or certificated utilities such as water, sanitary sewers, natural gas, or stormwater drainage infrastructure may not reach some land in this classification. Limited small-scale mixed-use and commercial development may serve these neighborhoods. This category may also include compatible and complementary amenities such as recreational facilities, religious institutions and related facilities, golf clubs, and marinas intended to provide services to the neighborhood.

Residential Medium-Density: this category is intended for moderate-density (4-9 dwelling units per acre) suburban residential uses. These include the highest densities of single-family detached residential development and opportunities for two—to four-unit structures. The land in this classification has been improved with urban infrastructure and has frontage on a public road. This category may also include compatible and complementary mixed-use commercial and recreational uses, religious institutions

and related facilities, intended to provide services to the neighborhood.

Residential High-Density: this category is intended for residential uses of high-density (9 or more dwelling units per acre). This category includes townhomes, multi-family residential complexes, and similar structures mixed with higher-density single-family detached residential developments and two to four-unit structures. The land in this classification has been improved with urban infrastructure and has frontage on a public road. Compatible and complementary mixed uses, religious institutions and related facilities, that provide services to the neighborhood are encouraged.

Commercial Center Low-Intensity: The Commercial Center Low-Intensity category accommodates neighborhood-scale (maximum of two stories) commercial and mixed-use development alongside compatible residential land uses, religious institutions and related facilities. This category is intended to promote smaller mixed-use activity centers connected and integrated into the surrounding neighborhoods. These centers primarily have a neighborhood emphasis with limited community emphasis and include a range of retail and service uses, along with various live/work, and detached residential activities. The Porter Avenue Overlay district is an appropriate example of this category.

Commercial Center Medium-Intensity: The Commercial Center Medium-Intensity category accommodates community-scale (maximum of four stories) commercial and mixed-use devel-

opment alongside compatible residential land uses, public buildings, religious institutions and related facilities. This category is intended to promote smaller mixed-use activity centers connected to but distinct from the surrounding neighborhoods. These centers have a community or neighborhood emphasis and include a range of retail and service uses, along with various live/work, attached, and detached residential activities. The Washington Ave. and Government St. mixed use/business corridor is an example of this category.

Commercial Center High-Intensity: this category is intended for regional activity centers with the most intensive commercial, mixed-use, and high-density residential development. This category also includes the city's largest mixed-use activity centers with a community-wide or regional emphasis. This land use classification was designated to include the full range of office, retail, and service establishments, religious institutions and related facilities, and allows for residential uses (detached and attached) with the highest densities.

Industrial: this category includes land uses that produce, manufacture, or store goods and materials. This category includes manufacturing finished goods and manufacturing products used in the downstream supply chain, warehousing and storage uses, bulk storage, and retailing heavy and bulk goods.

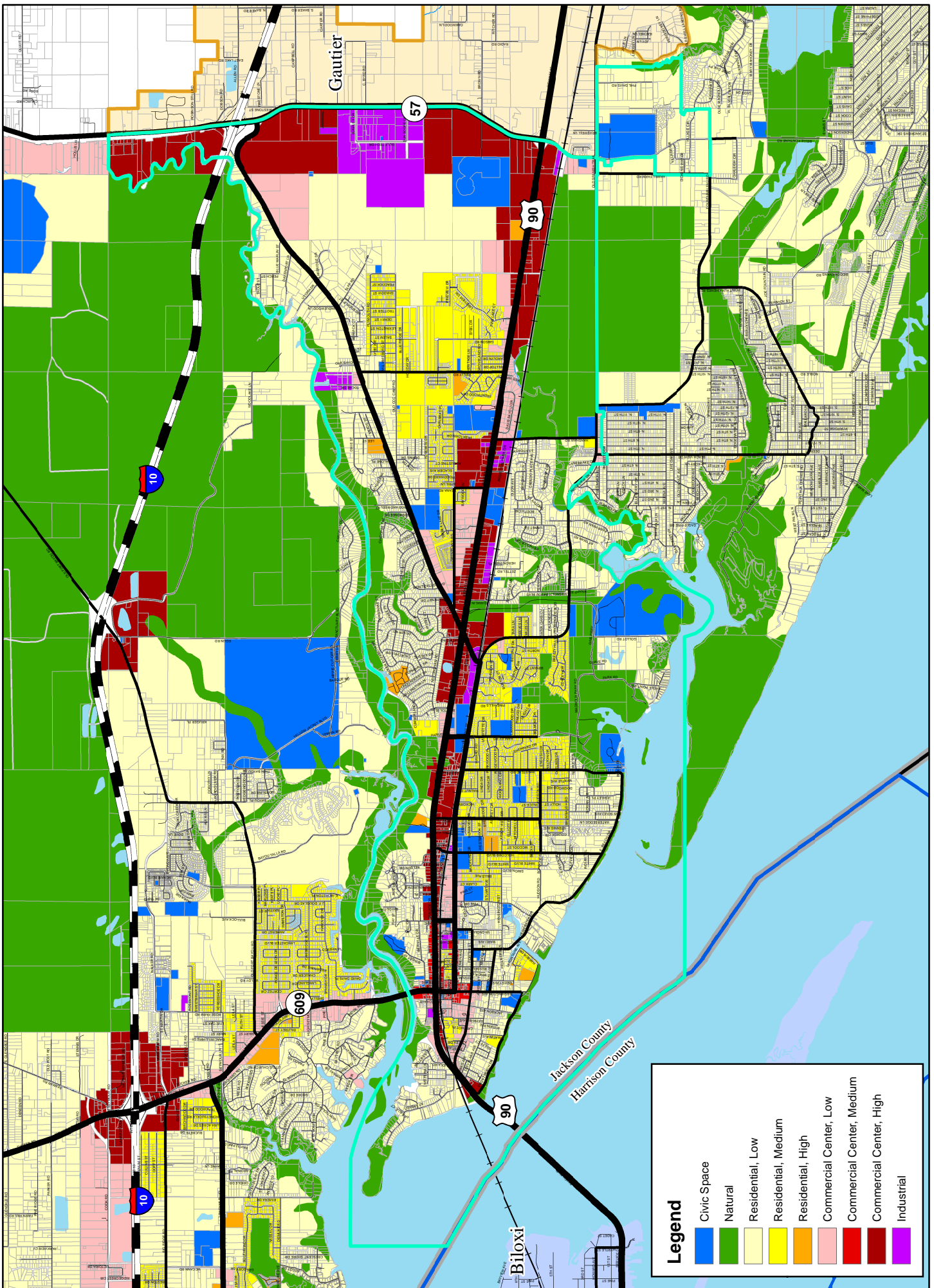
Civic Space: this land use classification includes governmental and other institutional facilities. Such land uses include existing Federal, State, and local government buildings and facil-

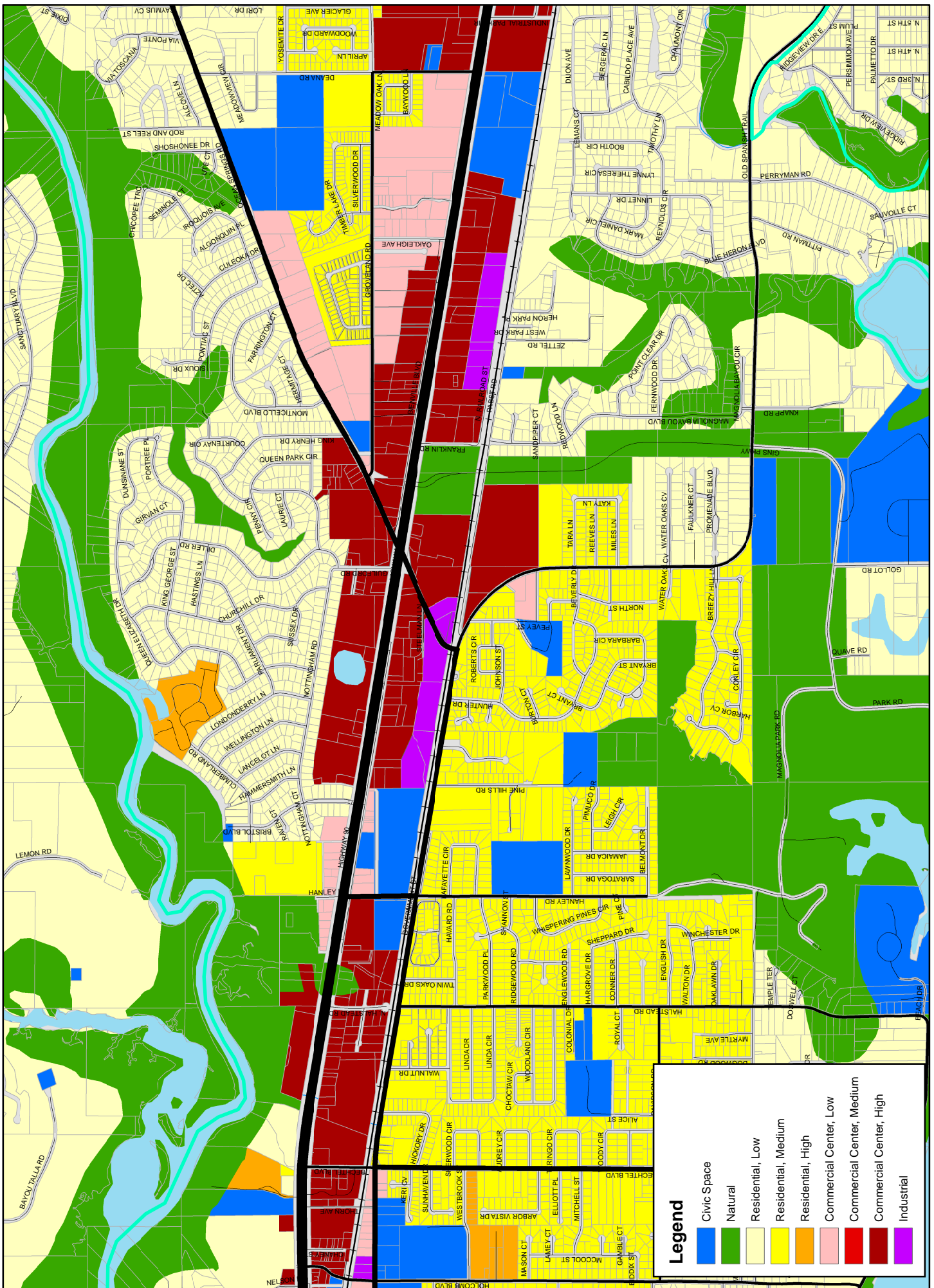
ities; utilities; schools and other educational and related facilities; research centers and laboratories; libraries, museums, and exhibit spaces for visual arts; community centers, public assembly buildings and facilities for the performing arts; sports arenas, coliseums, stadiums, and active parks and recreational facilities; cemeteries and mausoleums; and publicly accessible historic sites.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

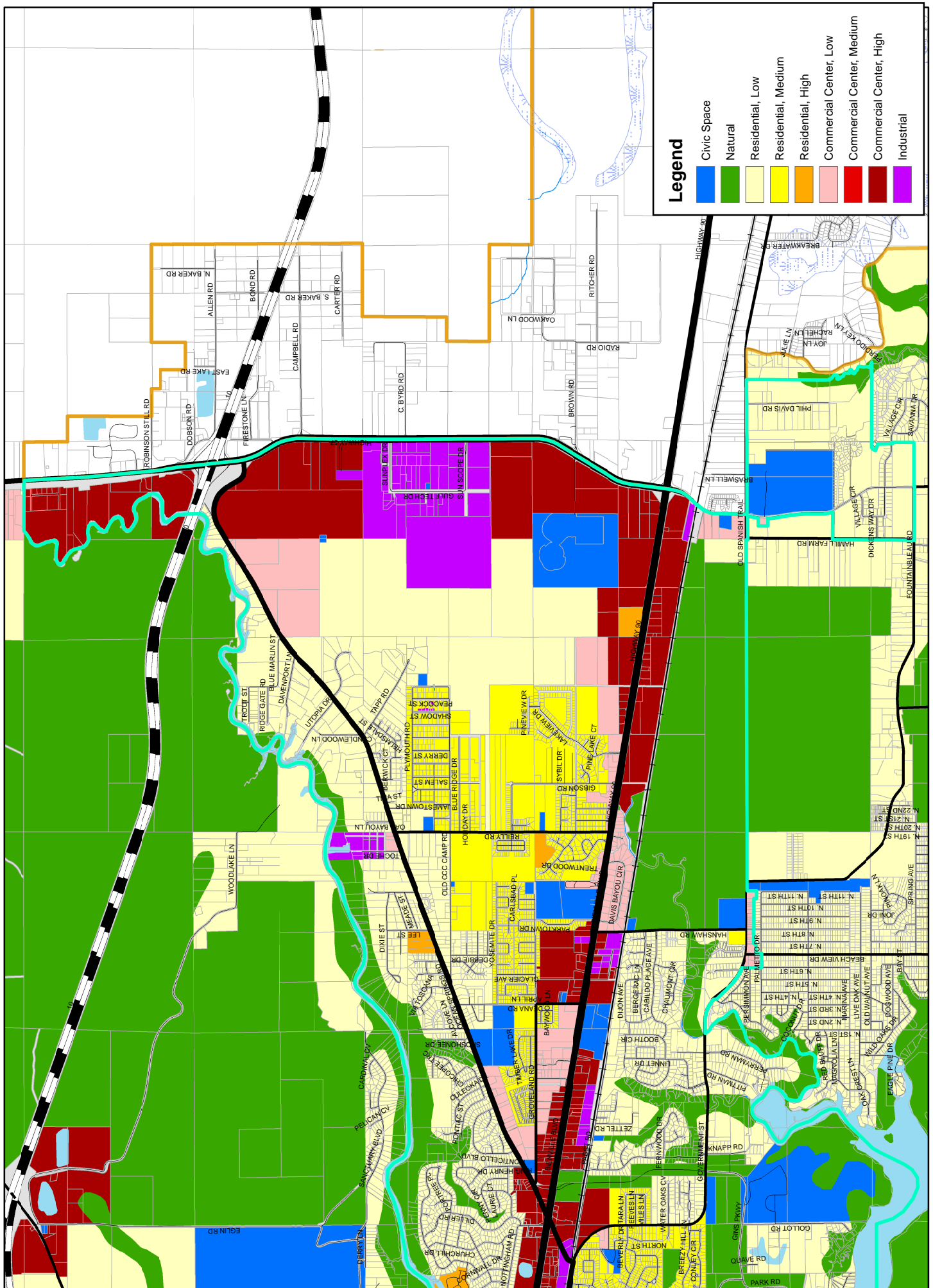
The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) is a vital component of the comprehensive plan for Ocean Springs, serving as a visual representation of the city's long-term vision for growth and development. This map delineates the designated land use categories, illustrating the planned distribution of residential, commercial, industrial, and civic spaces throughout the city. By highlighting each area's intended uses and density of development, the Future Land Use Map provides a clear and organized framework for the city's future expansion and conservation efforts.

The role of the Future Land Use Map in guiding growth is pivotal. It is a reference for city planners, developers, and the public, ensuring that land development proposals align with the city's strategic goals. When evaluating new projects, the map helps determine the suitability and compatibility of proposed land uses, maintaining consistency with the city's overall vision. This alignment is crucial for promoting orderly development, protecting environmental and cultural resources, and enhancing the quality of life for Ocean Springs' residents. By





Legend	
■	Civic Space
■	Natural
■	Residential, Low
■	Residential, Medium
■	Residential, High
■	Commercial Center, Low
■	Commercial Center, Medium
■	Commercial Center, High
■	Industrial



Map 18: Future Land Use Map (East Zoom)

providing a clear direction for land use decisions, the Future Land Use Map supports sustainable growth and helps manage the city's evolution in a balanced and thoughtful manner.

The Future Land Use Map establishes distinct future land use categories that define the general character, primary use, and desired density of development for specific areas. These categories are crucial for setting clear expectations and guidelines for development, ensuring that growth aligns with the city's long-term vision.

The future land use categories provide a structured approach to land development, guiding decisions on zoning, infrastructure investment, and community amenities. Each category serves to direct appropriate development to suitable locations. This categorization helps balance growth, maintain the character of existing neighborhoods, and protect valuable natural and cultural resources. By clearly defining the intended uses and densities for each area, the future land use categories on the map play a critical role in promoting orderly and sustainable development, facilitating effective land use planning, and ensuring a cohesive urban form for Ocean Springs.

FUTURE LAND USE AND ZONING CONSIDERATIONS

The City of Ocean Springs uses eight Future Land Use (FLU) categories to express its long-term vision for the city's physical form, development intensity, and community character. These categories help guide zoning decisions and manage growth in a way that protects

property rights while promoting public health, safety, welfare, and economic vitality.

Although the Future Land Use Map does not directly regulate land use, it plays a critical role in shaping zoning decisions. Each FLU category corresponds to a set of compatible zoning districts, including the City's 16 existing districts, the Planned Unit Development (PUD) overlay, and a proposed Agricultural (AG) district. A preferred zoning designation is identified within each FLU category to help promote desired development outcomes.

Table 2 presents a matrix showing how FLU categories relate to zoning districts. This matrix should be used to guide zoning decisions, evaluate potential zoning map amendments, and align the Unified Development Code (UDC) with the plan's vision.

Zoning Considerations

Mississippi law and the UDC require zoning changes to be consistent with the comprehensive plan. Zoning is the primary tool used to regulate land use, density, and development form. It provides stability for property owners by preventing arbitrary changes and ensuring that zoning changes are deliberative and evidence-based.

Zoning changes must follow these key requirements:

- May be initiated by the Board of Aldermen, Planning Commission, or the property owner.
- Must include public notice and hearing per state law and local regulations.

Matrix Key	
Zoning District Allowed by FLU	
Zoning District Preferred by FLU	■
Zoning District Not Allowed by FLU	

Future Land Use Categories	Future Land Use Categories									
	Natural	Residential, Low-Density	Residential, Medium-Density	Residential, High-Density	Commercial, Low-Intensity	Commercial, Medium-Intensity	Commercial, High-Intensity	Industrial	Civic Space	
Residential Zoning Districts										
R-1 Low Density Single-Family										
R-2 Low-Medium Density Single-Family										
R-10 Medium Density Single-Family										
R-3 Medium Density										
R-6 Residential										
R-D										
RMH Mobile Home Parks										
R-1A Special Apartment Use District										
RM-2 Multi-Family Dwellings										
Non-Residential and Mixed-Use Zoning Districts										
CMX-1 Neighborhood Commercial/Mixed-Use					■					
CMX-2 Community Commercial/Mixed-Use						■		■		
C-H Regional Commercial										
M-1 Manufacturing/Warehousing										
P Public District										
C-P Commercial-Public and Civic Facilities										
C-M Commercial Marina										
PD - Planned Unit Development										
AG - Agricultural (new district, TBD)										

TABLE 2: MATRIX OF FLU CATEGORIES AND ZONING DISTRICTS

- Require a majority vote by the Board of Aldermen—or a 3/5 majority if sufficient opposition is present.

To approve a rezoning, applicants must demonstrate clear and convincing evidence of either (1) a mistake in the original zoning, or (2) a significant change in neighborhood character along with a public need for the change.

Applying the FLU and Zoning Matrix to Zoning Decisions

- Incompatible zoning is not supported and may be rezoned to a compatible district, but not expanded.
- Allowed zoning may remain in place unless a change is proposed.
- In commercial areas, a wider range of zoning districts is allowed to accommodate mixed-use development and market conditions. Preferred zoning carries greater weight during rezoning evaluations in commercial districts as it best aligns with the city's land use vision.

This approach provides a clear, consistent framework for future development, ensuring that land use decisions remain responsive, predictable, and aligned with the goals of Ocean Springs' comprehensive plan.

CONCLUSION

The Land Use Plan of Ocean Springs' comprehensive plan provides a strategic framework for guiding the city's growth and development in a balanced and sustainable manner. By defining future land use categories and illustrating them on the Future Land Use Map, the plan sets clear expectations for how different areas of the city should evolve. Careful planning ensures that new developments are compatible with existing neighborhoods, respect environmental constraints, and contribute to the overall quality of life.

As Ocean Springs grows, the Future Land Use will be instrumental in managing change and preserving the city's unique character. It serves as a blueprint for decision-makers, developers, and residents, offering a cohesive vision for the future. By adhering to the principles and guidelines outlined in this plan, Ocean Springs can foster growth that meets the diverse needs of its residents while safeguarding its rich heritage and natural beauty. The Future Land Use Plan is not just a static document but a dynamic tool that will evolve with the city's needs, guiding its development toward a prosperous and sustainable future.

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CHAPTER 7—TRANSPORTATION PLAN

- * **STREET IMPROVEMENT PLAN**
- * **PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENT PLAN**
- * **BICYCLE IMPROVEMENT PLAN**
- * **TRANSIT IMPROVEMENT PLAN**
- * **CONCLUSION**

INTRODUCTION

Transportation and land use are intricately connected, shaping how a city grows, functions, and prospers. Effective transportation planning is essential to accommodate the demand for trips generated by residents, businesses, and visitors while ensuring that infrastructure investments are efficient and sustainable. The Transportation Plan for Ocean Springs recognizes the importance of this relationship and outlines strategies to create a cohesive, and accessible, urban environment that embraces multi-modal transportation.

Land use planning plays a pivotal role in transportation planning. The location and intensity of different land uses—such as residential, commercial, and industrial areas—directly influence the demand for transportation services. Conversely, transportation infrastructure availability and quality can significantly affect land use patterns. In Ocean Springs, a well-integrated approach to land use

and transportation planning ensures that development is strategically aligned with transportation capabilities and goals, including vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit routes.

Understanding the demand for trips is crucial for effective transportation planning. Different land uses generate varying traffic levels, necessitating a functional classification system that categorizes roads based on their intended use and capacity. For example, major highways and arterial roads facilitate long-distance travel and high traffic volumes, while local roads and collectors support shorter, generally intra-city trips. Additionally, traffic counts help identify high-demand areas for future improvements. The city's transportation network also emphasizes the importance of public transit stations and routes, ensuring accessibility and convenience for all residents.

Land use planning can alleviate many transportation problems by reducing congestion, minimizing travel times, and enhancing accessibility. Ocean Springs is committed to fostering mixed-use developments along main transportation corridors and in commercial districts. These areas will combine residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, encouraging shorter trips and reducing reliance on automobiles. Higher-density residential development in key locations will support public transportation and make more efficient use of infrastructure. Furthermore, the city plans to enhance bicycle and pedestrian facilities, including dedicated bike lanes, safe pedestrian crossings, and

greenways, promoting active transportation options.

The Transportation Plan for Ocean Springs is designed to create a well-connected, efficient, and sustainable transportation system that supports the city's growth and enhances the quality of life for its residents. Through careful planning and strategic investments in multi-modal transportation, Ocean Springs aims to build a transportation network that meets the community's evolving needs and promotes positive growth.

STREET IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

The Street Improvements Plan for Ocean Springs sets forth comprehensive standards for developing new streets in subdivisions and enhancing connectivity between major roadways. As the city continues to grow, it is crucial to establish a cohesive and efficient street network that supports safe and convenient transportation for all users. This plan outlines the guidelines for constructing new streets in residential subdivisions, ensuring they meet modern design standards and integrate seamlessly with the existing infrastructure. Additionally, the plan emphasizes the importance of improving connectivity between major roadways, facilitating smoother traffic flow and better access to key destinations.

A significant component of this plan is the redevelopment of Bienville Boulevard, a major commercial corridor in Ocean Springs. The redevelopment initiative aims to transform Bienville Boulevard into a more pedestrian-friendly and visually appealing thoroughfare, support-

ing local businesses and enhancing the overall experience for residents and visitors. By implementing these improvements, Ocean Springs aims to create a well-connected, and accessible urban environment that meets the needs of its growing population.

DESIGN STANDARDS FOR NEW STREETS

The following design standards guide the development of new streets in Ocean Springs' subdivisions and ensure a consistent, safe, and functional street network. These standards address various aspects of street design, including layout, materials, safety features, and accommodations for different modes of transportation.

STREET LAYOUT AND HIERARCHY

Classification: Streets should be classified into local, collector, and arterial categories, based on their function and expected traffic volumes. Each classification will have specific design criteria to ensure proper flow and safety.

Connectivity: New streets should be designed to enhance connectivity within subdivisions and between major roadways, minimizing dead-end streets and promoting a grid or modified grid pattern where feasible.

Right-of-Way Width: The right-of-way width should be appropriate to the street classification, allowing for sufficient space for travel lanes, sidewalks, utilities, and landscaping.

TRAVEL LANES AND ROADWAY DESIGN

Lane Width: Travel lanes should generally be 10-12 feet wide, depending on the street classi-

fication and anticipated traffic. Wider lanes may be considered for arterial streets.

Pavement Materials: Streets should be constructed with durable, low-maintenance materials suitable for the local climate and soil conditions. Asphalt and concrete are the preferred materials.

Curbs and Gutters: Curbs and gutters are required on all streets to facilitate drainage and protect the roadway edge. Rolled curbs are preferred in residential areas, while vertical curbs may be used on higher-volume streets.

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE FACILITIES

Sidewalks: Sidewalks are mandatory on both sides of most new streets, with exceptions in locations with environmentally sensitive features. Sidewalks should be ADA-compliant, include curb ramps at intersections, and be a minimum width of 5 feet for local streets and 6 feet for collector and arterial streets.

Bicycle Lanes: Dedicated bicycle lanes should be provided on collector and arterial streets, with a minimum width of 5 feet. Shared-use



paths may be considered in areas with high pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

Crosswalks and Pedestrian Safety: Marked crosswalks should be provided at all major intersections and mid-block crossings at collector and arterial streets and on local streets where adjacent land uses such as parks and recreation facilities, churches, and schools create higher pedestrian volume. Pedestrian safety features should be incorporated appropriately, such as raised crosswalks and pedestrian refuge islands.

LANDSCAPING AND AESTHETICS

Street Trees: Trees should be planted along all new streets, spaced appropriately to provide shade and enhance the streetscape. Native and low-maintenance species are preferred.

Lighting: Street lighting should be installed to ensure adequate visibility and safety for all users. Energy-efficient lighting options, such as LED, are encouraged.

Signage and Wayfinding: Appropriate street signs and wayfinding signage should be installed to facilitate navigation and ensure compliance with traffic regulations.

SAFETY AND TRAFFIC CALMING

Speed Limits: Speed limits should be set based on street classification and surrounding land use, with lower limits in residential areas.

Traffic Calming Measures: Consider the inclusion of traffic calming measures, such as speed tables, roundabouts, and narrow travel lanes, to reduce vehicle speeds and enhance safety in residential neighborhoods.

Access Management Standards: Access points to streets should minimize conflicts and improve traffic flow and safety. Driveway spacing, shared access, and limits on the number of curb cuts should be based on street classification, with more restrictive standards applied to higher-volume roadways. Consolidating access points can reduce turning conflicts and support the effectiveness of traffic calming measures.

UTILITIES AND DRAINAGE

Utility Placement: Utilities should be placed underground to enhance aesthetics, reduce maintenance, and protect from natural hazards. Utility easements should be clearly defined.

Stormwater Management: Streets should include appropriate stormwater management systems, such as storm drains and detention basins, to prevent flooding and manage runoff.

These design standards aim to create a cohesive, functional, and attractive street network that accommodates all modes of transportation while promoting safety and accessibility. They serve as a guideline for developers, planners, and engineers in the planning and constructing new streets in Ocean Springs.

BIENVILLE BOULEVARD

Bienville Boulevard (Highway 90) is a major artery through Ocean Springs, connecting residential, commercial, and recreational areas. It is the principal east-west route along the Gulf Coast through Ocean Springs; however, rapid growth, increasing traffic congestion, and a desire for more sustainable urban development have created conditions that necessitate signifi-

cant changes to this corridor. The need for better traffic management, enhanced connectivity, and more pedestrian-friendly environments highlights the importance of developing a comprehensive plan to transform Bienville Boulevard into a more functional and attractive thoroughfare.

Existing Conditions

Traffic Congestion: High traffic volumes on Bienville Boulevard lead to frequent congestion, especially during peak hours, resulting in longer travel times, increased emissions, and frustration among drivers.

Safety Concerns: The high number of access points, frequent turning movements, and lack of controlled intersections contribute to safety hazards for motorists and pedestrians.



Urban Sprawl: Uncontrolled development along the corridor has led to inefficient land use and a lack of cohesive community planning.

Lack of Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure: The existing infrastructure does not adequately support non-motorized transportation, limiting the options for residents and visitors who prefer walking or cycling.

Economic Development Needs: There is a growing demand for mixed-use developments that combine residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, fostering economic growth and community vitality.

Transforming Bienville Boulevard

To address these conditions, Ocean Springs has identified an improvement zone for Bienville Boulevard that extends from Vermont Avenue to Highway 57. Within this zone, the plan for Bienville Boulevard involves a multi-faceted approach to enhance connectivity, improve safety, and support sustainable growth through strategic infrastructure improvements. Key elements of this transformation include:

Establishment of Parallel Streets: Two-way parallel streets should be developed on both sides of Bienville Boulevard to provide alternative routes for local traffic. As connectivity evolves with new mixed-use neighborhoods, these will transition to one-way streets to optimize traffic flow and reduce conflicts.

Access Management Enhancements: Implementing controlled intersections, consolidating driveways, and constructing medians with designated turn lanes will streamline traffic movements, reduce congestion, and improve safety.



Development of Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure: Building continuous sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike lanes along parallel streets will create a more pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly environment, promoting alternative modes of transportation and enhancing overall accessibility.

Streetscape Enhancements: Beautifying the corridor with landscaping, street lighting, and amenities like benches and bus shelters will create a more inviting public space.

Support for Mixed-Use Development: By creating a well-connected and accessible transportation network, the plan supports the development of mixed-use neighborhoods along the corridor, fostering economic growth and enhancing the quality of life for residents.

Through these strategic improvements, Bienville Boulevard will be transformed into a dynamic, efficient, and safe corridor that supports the needs of a growing community, encourages sustainable development, and enhances the overall urban environment.

Performance Improvements and Key Benefits:

Reduced Traffic Congestion: The parallel street network provides alternative routes for local traffic, alleviating congestion on Bienville Boulevard and improving overall traffic flow.

Improved Safety: Access management enhancements, such as controlled intersections, medians, and consolidated driveways, reduce conflict points and the likelihood of accidents.

Enhanced Connectivity: The transition to one-way streets and improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure creates a more connected and accessible environment for all users, encouraging multi-modal transportation.

Support for Mixed-Use Development: These improvements facilitate the development of mixed-use neighborhoods by providing the necessary infrastructure for residents, businesses, and visitors to access and navigate the area safely and efficiently.

Economic Growth: Enhanced access and improved streetscapes attract businesses and resi-

dents, boosting economic activity and increasing property values in the area.

Overall, the proposed improvements to Bienville Boulevard aim to create a balanced, and efficient transportation network that supports mixed-use development and enhances the community's quality of life.

STREET IMPROVEMENTS PLAN MAP

The Street Improvements Plan Map provides a visual representation of proposed upgrades and enhancements to Ocean Springs' roadway network. This map highlights key projects aimed at improving traffic flow, safety, and connectivity across the city. It identifies specific areas for new road construction, widening, resurfacing, and intersection improvements, serving as a guide for the planned infrastructure developments. The map is an essential tool for visualizing the future layout and priorities of the city's street network, ensuring a well-organized and efficient transportation system. The street improvements plan includes the following important projects:

1. Improve Front Beach Drive from Porter Avenue to Harbor Road. This project will improve the beachfront corridor, drainage, and access to Ocean Springs' beaches.
2. Elevate Washington Avenue from LaFontaine Avenue to Front Beach Drive. The project will raise the elevation of Washington Avenue to address frequent tidal flooding and improve evacuation routes. The project also includes replacement of water and storm drainage infrastructure. Initial funding has been approved through Mississippi's Tidelands Trust Fund Program, with additional funding pending.
3. New connection from Martin Luther King Avenue to Robinson Street. Extend Railroad Street to Martin Luther King Avenue. Extend Robinson Street to General Pershing Street. This project will provide an additional east-west route to accommodate local traffic during peak traffic hours and events that may otherwise block access to the neighborhood between the railroad and Government Street.
4. New north-to-south connection linking Government Street to US Highway 90. This project will meet the need for additional connections from south of the railroad tracks to US Highway 90, providing another access point for general circulation, entrance, and exit from downtown to the city's main transportation corridor.
5. Improve East Beach Drive from Halstead Road to Holcomb Boulevard. This project will improve the beachfront corridor, drainage, and access to Ocean Springs' beaches.
6. Widen Government Street from Bechtel Boulevard to Ocean Springs Road. This project will improve the flow of traffic east to west along this significant corridor, which connects downtown and southern residential neighborhoods, commercial districts, and regional transportation corridors.
7. Widen and improve Bienville Boulevard. Establish parallel streets, multi-modal facilities, and access management standards. This pro-

ject is described in the “Transforming Bienville Boulevard” section of the Transportation Plan.

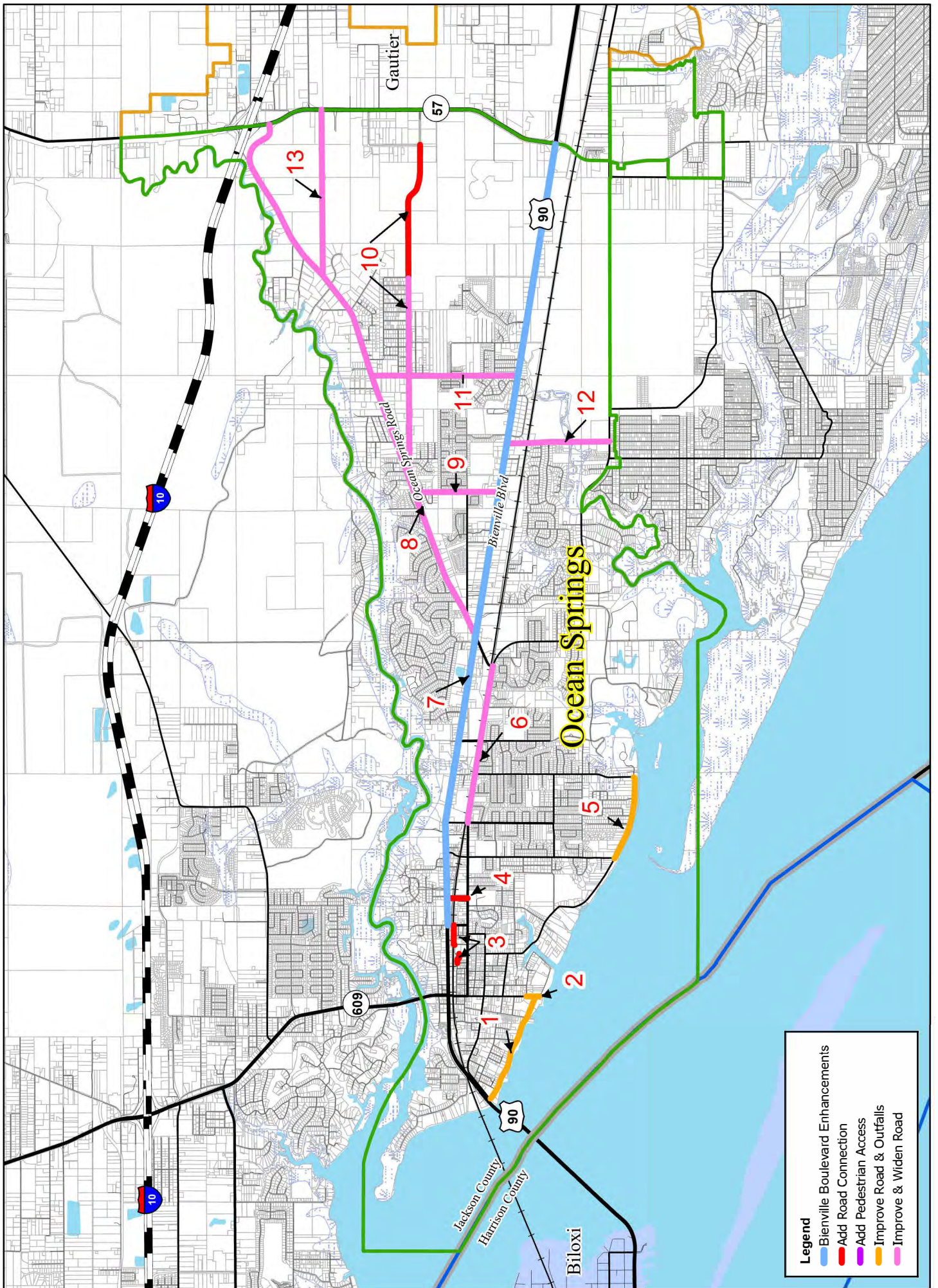
8. Add a center lane to Ocean Springs Road from Highway 90 to Highway 57. This project will help with congestion on a busy route connecting Ocean Springs to I-10.
9. Improve and widen Old CCC Camp Road and extend to Sunplex Industrial Park and Highway 57. This project will bring Old CCC Camp Road up to minimum standards.
10. Widen and improve Riley Road from Ocean Springs Road to Highway 90. This project will focus on roadway improvements and utilities. The project will also widen the roads and add a pathway for pedestrians to increase public safety in the area.
11. Add a new roadway connecting Ocean Springs Road north of Lakeridge Drive to Highway 57 near Campbell Road. This project will allow better east-west access from the interior of Ocean Springs to Highway 57, alleviating some traffic congestion and safety issues along Ocean Springs Road and Highway 90.
12. Replace the Davis Bayou Bridge on Hanshaw Road. The bridge was closed in March 2025 due to deterioration and damage to its wooden support pilings, causing traffic disruptions along a key corridor used by nearly 10,000 vehicles daily, including school traffic and emergency services. Jackson County has completed preliminary engineering and will temporarily stabilize the bridge while

funds are sought for its replacement. The new bridge is expected to cost over \$3 million, underscoring the need for strong inter-governmental coordination to secure funding and deliver a permanent solution.

13. Widen Deana Road from Bienville Boulevard to Ocean Springs Road. This project includes roadway widening, the addition of a public safety pathway, and the replacement or relocation of stormwater, water, and sewer infrastructure.

PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

The planned pedestrian improvements in Ocean Springs aim to create a safer, more accessible, and enjoyable walking environment for residents and visitors. Key initiatives were identified in the Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan (2018) completed by Jackson County, in cooperation with Gresham Smith and Alta Planning & Design. They include the expansion of sidewalks and pedestrian paths, particularly in high-traffic areas and along major corridors. The city plans to enhance crosswalk safety with improved signage, lighting, and signal timing to protect pedestrians at busy intersections. Additionally, there are plans to develop pedestrian-friendly zones in commercial districts, encouraging foot traffic and supporting local businesses. The integration of greenways and walking trails into the city's infrastructure will provide recreational opportunities and promote a healthier lifestyle. These improvements are designed to foster a more walkable community,





reduce reliance on automobiles, and enhance the overall quality of life in Ocean Springs.

The location and prioritization of these improvements was generally developed with reference to traffic volumes, street and roadway speeds, and connections to existing facilities in order to improve safety and connectivity for pedestrians.

PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS MAP

As part of Ocean Springs' commitment to enhancing walkability and promoting a pedestrian-friendly environment, the following Pedestrian Improvements Map, derived from the Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan (2018), outlines a comprehensive plan for pedestrian improvements throughout the city. This plan includes a detailed pedestrian improvements map, which identifies key areas for new sidewalks, crosswalks, and other pedestrian infrastructure enhancements. The map serves as a visual guide for planned projects and priority areas, aiming to create a safe and accessible network for pedestrians of all ages and abilities. Focusing on

connectivity, safety, and accessibility, these improvements are designed to encourage walking as a viable and enjoyable mode of transportation in Ocean Springs. The map includes both intersection improvements and sidewalk enhancements as core improvements to pedestrian facilities in Ocean Springs. Table 3 lists the proposed sidewalk improvements.

INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

The planned intersection improvements in Ocean Springs are focused on enhancing pedestrian safety and accessibility. Key locations targeted for these upgrades include major intersections along busy corridors such as Bienville Boulevard, Washington Avenue, and Government Street.

These improvements feature high-visibility crosswalks with ladder-style markings, making pedestrian crossings more noticeable to drivers. Additionally, pedestrian countdown signals will be added to inform walkers of the remaining time to cross the street safely. Curb extensions, or bulb-outs, will be implemented at select in-

tersections to shorten crossing distances and improve sightlines for pedestrians and drivers. Other safety measures include upgrading signal timing to ensure ample time for pedestrians to cross, especially in areas with high foot traffic or where older adults and children frequently cross. Installing pedestrian refuge islands in the middle of wide streets will provide a safe space for pedestrians who may not be able to cross the entire intersection in one signal cycle. Furthermore, the city plans to implement tactile

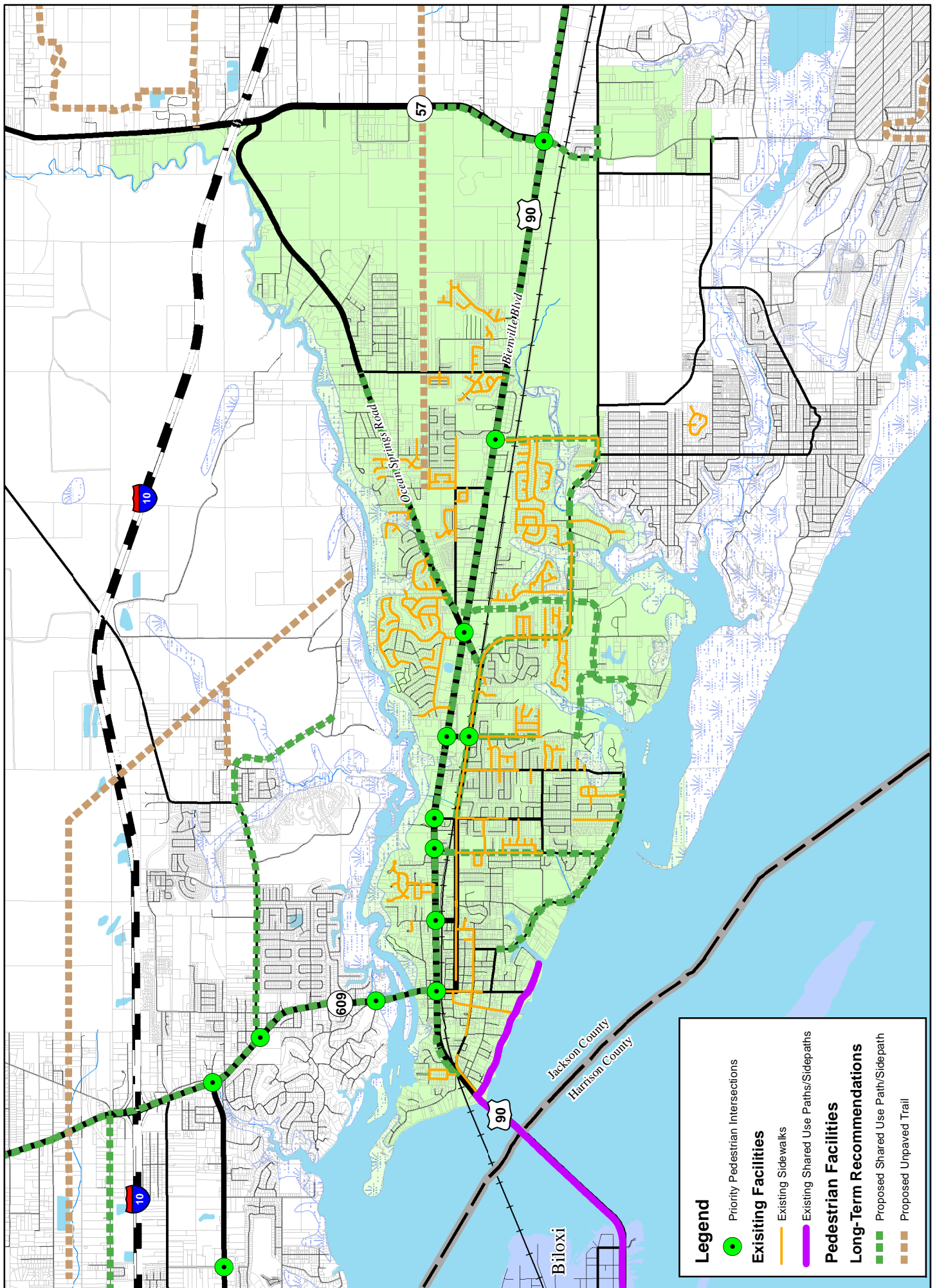
paving at crosswalks to aid visually impaired pedestrians. These comprehensive intersection improvements aim to create a safer, more pedestrian-friendly environment throughout Ocean Springs. Table 4 lists the proposed intersection improvements.

SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS

The proposed pedestrian sidewalk improvements in Ocean Springs aim to enhance connectivity, safety, and accessibility throughout

Table 3: Proposed Sidewalk Improvements

Road	From	To	Linear Feet	Facility Type
Porter Avenue	Williams Avenue	Martin Street	370	Sidewalk
Washington Avenue	US-90	Robinson Street	370	Sidewalk
Cash Alley	Robinson Street	DeSoto Street	370	Sidewalk
Bowen Avenue	Washington Avenue	Bellande Avenue	317	Sidewalk
Martin Luther King Jr. Ave	US-90	Government Street	950	Sidewalk
Bowen Avenue	Kotzum Avenue	Ward Avenue	1,426	Sidewalk
Washington Avenue	Joseph Street	Front Beach Drive	2,112	Sidewalk
Calhoun Street	Washington Avenue	General Pershing Avenue	1,742	Sidewalk
General Pershing Avenue	Government Street	Kensington Avenue	2,169	Sidewalk
Shearwater Drive	Kensington Avenue	~ 0.2 mile south of Hudson Road	3,766	Sidewalk
Bechtel Boulevard	US-90	Government Street	1,003	Sidewalk
Bechtel Boulevard	Arbor Vista Drive	Davidson Road	1,637	Sidewalk
Davidson Road	Holcomb Boulevard	Halstead Road	3,326	Sidewalk
Halstead Road	Colonial Drive	E. Beach Drive	4,752	Sidewalk
Deana Road	Ocean Springs Road	Yosemite Drive	1,214	Sidewalk
Ocean Springs Road	US-90	Groveland Road	1,003	Sidewalk
Groveland Road	Ocean Springs Road	Oakleigh Road	2,957	Sidewalk
Groveland Road	Timber Lake Drive	Deana Road	739	Sidewalk
Deana Road	Baywood Lane	US-90	950	Sidewalk
Groveland Road	Chalmette Avenue	Niagara Street	898	Sidewalk
Parktown Drive	Groveland Road	US-90	1,954	Sidewalk
Reilly Road	Groveland Road	US-90	1,109	Sidewalk
Kensington Avenue	Pershing Avenue	Simon Avenue	3,222	Sidewalk



Legend

- Priority Pedestrian Intersections
- Existing Facilities**
- Existing Sidewalks
- Existing Shared Use Paths/Sidepaths
- Pedestrian Facilities Long-Term Recommendations**
- - - Proposed Shared Use Path/Sidepath
- - - Proposed Unpaved Trail

the city. These improvements will focus on expanding and upgrading sidewalks in key areas, including downtown districts, school zones, and high-traffic residential neighborhoods. Table 4 on the following page lists the proposed projects for sidewalk improvements, derived from the Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan (2018).

Major corridors such as Government Street, Washington Avenue, and Bienville Boulevard are targeted for these improvements. Additionally, sidewalks will be extended around public facilities like parks, libraries, and community centers to encourage more foot traffic and provide safe walking routes for residents.

General features of these sidewalk improvements include the construction of wider sidewalks to accommodate higher pedestrian volumes and ensure comfort for all users, including those with strollers or mobility devices. Installing ADA-compliant ramps at intersections will improve accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Sidewalks will also be built with smooth, durable surfaces to reduce tripping hazards and enhance the overall walking experience.

In addition to these basic features, the improvements will include incorporating street furniture, such as benches and trash receptacles, to create a more pleasant walking environment. The addition of pedestrian-scale lighting will improve visibility and safety during nighttime hours. Landscaping elements, such as street trees and planters, will beautify the streetscape and provide shade and environmental benefits.

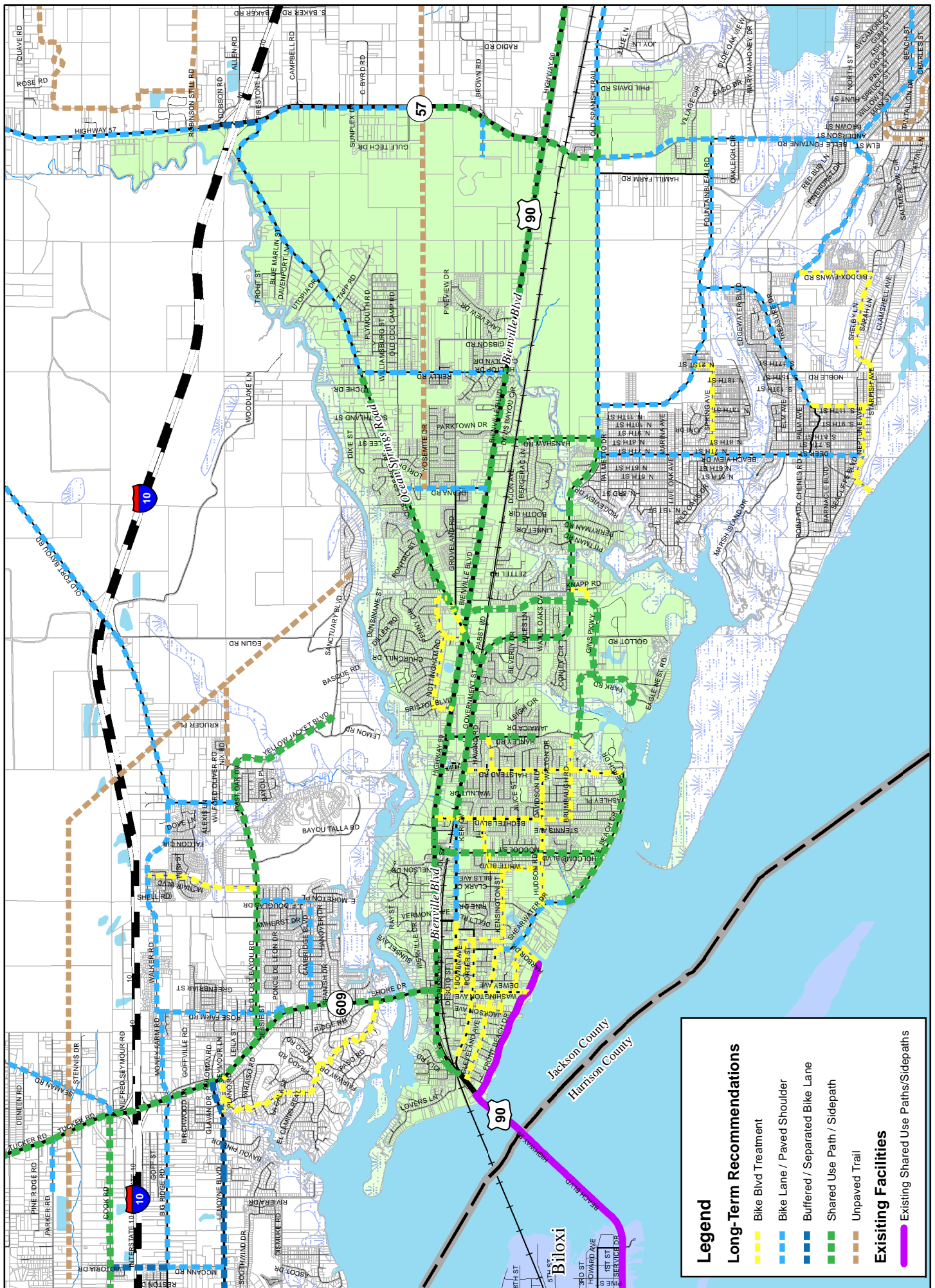
Table 4: Proposed Intersection Improvements

N/S Cross Street	E/W Cross Street
MS-609/Washington Avenue	US-90
Vermont Avenue	US-90
Holcomb Blvd	US-90
Bechtel Boulevard	US-90
Hanley Road	Government Street
Hanley Road	US-90
Ocean Springs Road	US-90
Deana Drive	US-90

These comprehensive sidewalk enhancements are designed to promote a more walkable, active community in Ocean Springs.

BICYCLE IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

Bicycle facilities are a vital part of Ocean Springs' transportation network, providing numerous benefits that align with the city's goals for sustainable development and community well-being. By offering safe and convenient options for cyclists, these facilities help reduce traffic congestion and parking demand, making the city's transportation system more efficient and enjoyable for all residents. Incorporating bike lanes and greenways into the city's landscape also preserves natural areas and adds to the city's charm. Additionally, cycling as a regular mode of transportation can help reduce chronic diseases and improve mental well-being, so investing in bike infrastructure supports healthier lifestyles and enhances the quality of life for its residents. Bike-friendly areas often see increased business activity, as cyclists are more likely to frequent local shops and restaurants and a robust bicycle network can



Legend

Long-Term Recommendations

- Bike Blvd Treatment
- Bike Lane / Paved Shoulder
- Buffered / Separated Bike Lane
- Shared Use Path / Sidepath
- Unpaved Trail

Existing Facilities

- Existing Shared Use Paths/Sidepaths

attract tourists, boosting the city's economic potential. For these reasons, developing a comprehensive bicycle network is crucial for Ocean Springs' future growth and prosperity.

The proposed bicycle improvements in Ocean Springs are designed to create a safer and more connected network for cyclists, while also considering the needs of pedestrians. These enhancements will focus on developing dedicated bicycle lanes, shared-use paths, and supporting infrastructure in key areas throughout the city.

Major corridors such as Bienville Boulevard, Government Street, and Washington Avenue will be the locations for these bicycle improvements. These areas are critical for connecting residential neighborhoods with commercial districts, schools, and recreational areas. Additionally, bike lanes will be integrated into existing and newly developed roadways to ensure a comprehensive network covering the entire city.

General features of the proposed bicycle improvements include the installation of dedicated bike lanes, marked with clear signage and road markings to distinguish them from vehicular traffic. In certain areas, separated bike lanes will be implemented, providing physical barriers such as curbs or bollards to enhance safety for cyclists. Shared-use paths, which accommodate both cyclists and pedestrians, will be developed along scenic routes and greenways, offering a recreational option for residents and visitors.

To further support cyclists, the city plans to install bicycle racks and repair stations at key lo-

cations, including downtown areas, parks, and transit hubs. These facilities will encourage biking as a viable transportation option and provide necessary amenities for cyclists. Additionally, intersections will be upgraded with bike boxes and dedicated bike signal phases to improve safety at crossings and intersections.

Overall, these bicycle improvements aim to create a more bicycle-friendly environment in Ocean Springs, promoting cycling as a sustainable and healthy mode of transportation while ensuring harmonious coexistence with pedestrian traffic.

Table 5 on the following pages lists the proposed bicycle improvements. Proposed improvements are of the following general types:

- Bike Lanes are dedicated, paved, operating spaces for cyclists provided alongside urban streets with moderate traffic volumes and speeds, creating a physical separation and buffer between cyclists and motorists.
- Bike Boulevards are appropriate for lower traffic areas where cycling can be encouraged alongside vehicular traffic through shared-use signage, lane markings (e.g., “sharrows”) in residential neighborhoods, away from high traffic-volume corridors.
- Shared Use Paths or Side Paths accommodate longer trips and serve both pedestrians and cyclists within the existing right-of-way or physically separated from vehicular traffic in their own right-of-way.
- Paved Shoulders provide spaces for pedestrians and cyclists adjacent to higher-speed (40

Table 5: Proposed Bicycle Improvements

Road	From	To	Linear Feet	Facility Type
Beach Drive	Holcomb Boulevard	Halsted Road	3,482	Shared Use Path/Sidepath
Bechtel Boulevard	US-90	Davidson Road	4,967	Bike Blvd Treatment
Bellande Avenue	Government Street	Bowen Avenue	303	Bike Blvd Treatment
Bike/Ped Connection	Lovers Lane	Porter Street	231	Bike Blvd Treatment
Bowen Avenue	Bellande Avenue	Ward Avenue	1,738	Bike Blvd Treatment
Bristol Boulevard	Nottingham Road	US-90	859	Bike Blvd Treatment
Brumbaugh Road	Eastland Boulevard	Robert McGhee Road	3,394	Bike Blvd Treatment
Calhoun Street	Jackson Avenue	General Pershing Avenue	2,393	Bike Blvd Treatment
Cleveland Avenue	Porter Avenue	Jackson Avenue	3,049	Bike Blvd Treatment
Davidson Road	Holcomb Boulevard	Halsted Road	3,326	Bike Blvd Treatment
Deana Drive	Ocean Springs Road	US-90	3,911	Paved Shoulder
Eastland Boulevard	Davidson Road	Brumbaugh Road	1,312	Bike Blvd Treatment
Government Street	Bechtel Boulevard	Old Spanish Trail	15,825	Shared Use Path/Sidepath
Government Street	Martin Luther King Jr Ave-	Bechtel Boulevard	4,072	Bike Lane
Government Street	Washington Avenue	Martin Luther King Jr Avenue	2,848	Bike Lane
Guilford Road	Nottingham Road	US-90	782	Bike Blvd Treatment
Halsted Road	Government Street	Beach Drive	7,321	Bike Blvd Treatment
Hanley Road	US-90	Belmont Drive	4,248	Shared Use Path/Sidepath
Hanshaw Road	US-90	Old Spanish Trail	4,709	Shared Use Path/Sidepath
Harbor Road	Front Beach Drive	La Fontaine Street	988	Bike Blvd Treatment
Holcomb Boulevard	US-90	Government Street	1,045	Bike Blvd Treatment
Holcomb Boulevard	Railroad Tracks	Shearwater Drive	7,817	Shared Use Path/Sidepath
Hudson Road	Shearwater Drive	Holcomb Boulevard	2,195	Bike Blvd Treatment
US-90	Lovers Lane	MS-57	36,180	Shared Use Path/Sidepath
Jackson Avenue	Cleveland Avenue	Porter Avenue	1,400	Bike Blvd Treatment
Kensington Avenue	Pershing Avenue	Simon Boulevard	3,237	Bike Blvd Treatment
King Henry Drive	Princess Ann Drive	Ocean Springs Road	478	Bike Blvd Treatment
Knapp Road	Government Street	VFW Road	769	Bike Blvd Treatment
La Fontaine Street	Washington Avenue	Harbor Road	1,939	Bike Blvd Treatment
Lovers Lane	Cherokee Boulevard	US-90	2,044	Shared Use Path/Sidepath
Nottingham Road	Bristol Boulevard	Princess Ann Drive	4,071	Bike Blvd Treatment
Ocean Avenue	Jackson Avenue	Washington Avenue	754	Bike Blvd Treatment
Ocean Springs-to-Gautier ROW Trail	Deana Drive	Gautier-Vancleave Road	36,064	Unpaved Trail
Ocean Springs Road	Park Road	Reilly Road	10,244	Shared Use Path/Sidepath

Ocean Springs 2045 Comprehensive Plan

Ocean Springs Road	Reilly Road	MS-57	12,503	Paved Shoulder
Ocean Springs Road	Government Street	US-90	1,496	Shared Use Path/Sidepath
Ocean Springs Road	US-90	Park Road	1,246	Bike Blvd Treatment
Ogden Avenue	Simon Boulevard	Holcomb Boulevard	615	Bike Blvd Treatment
Old Spanish Trail	Hanshaw Road	Greyhound Way	11,234	Bike Lane
Old Spanish Trail	Government Street	Hanshaw Road	3,305	Shared Use Path/Sidepath
Park Road	Ocean Springs Road	Southern Terminus	12,762	Shared Use Path/Sidepath
Parkwood Place	Hanley Road	Halstead Road	1,344	Bike Blvd Treatment
Pershing Avenue	Kensington Avenue	Shearwater Drive	835	Paved Shoulder
Pershing Avenue	Calhoun Street	Kensington Avenue	326	Bike Blvd Treatment
Porter Avenue	Williams Street	Ward Avenue	4,788	Bike Blvd Treatment
Princess Ann Drive	Nottingham Road	King Henry Drive	721	Bike Blvd Treatment
Reilly Road	Ocean Springs Road	US-90	6,749	Paved Shoulder
Robert McGhee Road	Brumbaugh Road	Park Road	3,442	Shared Use Path/Sidepath
Shearwater Drive	Weeks Bayou	Holcomb Boulevard	2,600	Shared Use Path/Sidepath
Shearwater Drive	Pershing Avenue	Weeks Bayou	2,919	Paved Shoulder
Simon Boulevard	Ogden Avenue	Hudson Road	2,390	Bike Blvd Treatment
VFW Road	Park Road	Knapp Road	510	Bike Blvd Treatment
Ward Avenue	Bowen Avenue	Kensington Avenue	1,769	Bike Blvd Treatment
Washington Avenue	US-90	Front Beach Drive	4,173	Bike Blvd Treatment
Washington Avenue (MS-609)	Shore Drive	US-90	2,806	Shared Use Path/Sidepath
Westbrook Street	Holcomb Boulevard	Bechtel Boulevard	1,361	Bike Blvd Treatment
Shearwater Drive	Weeks Bayou	Holcomb Boulevard	2,600	Shared Use Path/Sidepath
Shearwater Drive	Pershing Avenue	Weeks Bayou	2,919	Paved Shoulder
Simon Boulevard	Ogden Avenue	Hudson Road	2,390	Bike Blvd Treatment
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Washington Avenue (MS-609)	Shore Drive	US-90	2,806	Shared Use Path/Sidepath
Westbrook Street	Holcomb Boulevard	Bechtel Boulevard	1,361	Bike Blvd Treatment

mph+) routes through less densely developed and rural areas. They are not separate facilities but they do improve safety by providing additional operating space for users.

- Unpaved Trails are improved, hard-surfaced routes crossing largely undeveloped, rural, and scenic routes that are provided for recreational and limited regional transportation.

The location and prioritization of these improvements was generally developed with reference to traffic volumes, street and roadway speeds, and connections to existing facilities in order to improve safety and connectivity for cyclists.

TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

The Transit Improvements Plan for Ocean Springs, in partnership with the Coast Transit Authority (CTA), aims to enhance public trans-



portation by expanding fixed-route services, developing transit hubs, and promoting transit-oriented developments (TOD). Key recommendations include increasing bus frequency and service hours, especially along major corridors like Bienville Boulevard, and establishing strategically located transit hubs with essential amenities. The plan also calls for revising zoning codes to encourage mixed-use developments around transit hubs and improving pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. These initiatives aim to create a more efficient and sustainable transportation system, fostering accessible communities centered around transit access.

EXPANDING FIXED ROUTE AND SHARED PASSENGER SERVICE

In partnership with the Coast Transit Authority (CTA), Ocean Springs should conduct a demand analysis to identify peak travel times and high-demand routes, including routes to major employment centers in adjacent cities. The city can then work with CTA to allocate additional buses during these periods, especially along major corridors like Bienville Boulevard and Washington Avenue. Extended service hours should also be considered to support nighttime economic activities, particularly downtown and other commercial areas.

Given the commuter population and service sector economy prevalent in Ocean Springs, the city should work with the CTA to identify underserved areas for new routes into the city. This may include additional fixed route service as well as ride-sharing opportunities for employees commuting into Ocean Springs and for

those commuting to employment centers outside of the city. This will improve workforce access to locations in Ocean Springs. The city can collaborate with the CTA to map out these new routes and ensure they connect with key destinations, including schools, shopping centers, and healthcare facilities.

DEVELOPING TRANSIT HUBS AND TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENTS

Ocean Springs can work with CTA to develop transit hubs at strategic locations, such as the intersection of Bienville Boulevard and Washington Avenue, near the Ocean Springs Hospital, and the downtown area. These locations offer high visibility and accessibility and serve as central points for multiple transit routes.

Ocean Springs can also collaborate with CTA to design and build transit hubs with essential amenities, including covered seating, restrooms, bike racks, and information kiosks. The city should explore public-private partnerships to include retail options, such as cafes or convenience stores, within the hub areas.

In addition to collaborating with CTA, the city can partner with Amtrak as it resumes service between New Orleans and Mobile. Currently, the route will not stop in Ocean Springs, but growth over the next 20 years could create demand for a stop. Such a stop would be an ideal location for transit-oriented development in the area surrounding the depot station.

Designing hubs to facilitate easy transfers between buses, bicycles, and potential future rail services includes providing secure bicycle parking and integrating bike-sharing stations. The

city can work with local cycling groups and CTA to promote multimodal transportation options.

The city must ensure adequate public safety measures, such as enhanced lighting, surveillance cameras, and emergency call stations, at all transit hubs. Regular maintenance and cleanliness should be a joint effort between the city and CTA, ensuring a safe and pleasant environment for passengers.

Local zoning codes should encourage higher density, mixed-use developments around transit hubs, focused on areas near the downtown core and along significant routes like Bienville Boulevard. The city can offer incentives, such as density bonuses to developers who include affordable housing and other community benefits in their projects. The city can partner with developers and CTA to ensure these projects align with the broader transportation and housing goals.

The city can improve pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in TOD areas, including wider sidewalks, protected bike lanes, and well-marked crosswalks. In addition, focus initial improvements on the downtown area and the corridors leading to major transit hubs. The city can also work with CTA to provide secure bike parking at these locations.

Community outreach programs to educate residents about the benefits of TOD and public transit will help explain a different style of development that is possible in Ocean Springs. This includes hosting public meetings, providing informational materials, and utilizing social

media platforms. Engaging with local businesses and community organizations will be crucial in gathering feedback and building support for transit initiatives.

By implementing these recommendations in cooperation with CTA, Ocean Springs can significantly improve its public transportation system, and enhance connectivity.

CONCLUSION

The Transportation Plan for Ocean Springs represents a comprehensive and forward-thinking approach to addressing the city's diverse mobility needs. By prioritizing a balanced and multimodal transportation network, the plan aims to accommodate all users—drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists—ensuring that the city's infrastructure evolves to meet the demands of its growing population.

The plan outlines strategic upgrades to roadways and intersections for automotive traffic, enhancing safety and efficiency. These improvements will reduce congestion, optimize traffic flow, and provide residents, businesses, and visitors with a reliable transportation network. The focus on maintaining and expanding the road infrastructure underscores the importance of efficient vehicular mobility as a cornerstone of the city's economic and social vitality.

The plan's pedestrian elements emphasize creating a walkable and accessible urban environment. By expanding and upgrading sidewalks, improving crosswalks, and enhancing pedestrian safety features, Ocean Springs is committed to fostering a more inclusive and connected community. These efforts not only improve daily life for residents but also encourage walking as a sustainable and health-promoting mode of transportation.

Cyclist considerations are integral to the plan, with dedicated bicycle lanes, shared-use paths, and supporting infrastructure to promote cycling as a practical and safe transportation option. The plan's emphasis on creating a connected and accessible network for cyclists aligns with broader goals of environmental sustainability, public health, and active transportation.

The Transportation Plan is a blueprint for a well-rounded, resilient transportation system that serves all community members. By integrating automotive, pedestrian, and cyclist needs, the plan seeks to create a cohesive and efficient network that supports the city's growth, enhances quality of life, and prepares for a sustainable future. Through thoughtful planning and strategic investments, Ocean Springs is poised to become a model of modern, multimodal urban mobility.



CHAPTER 8—COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN

- * **GENERAL GOVERNMENT**
- * **POLICE**
- * **FIRE**
- * **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**
- * **PARKS AND REC**
- * **PUBLIC WORKS**
- * **PLANNING**
- * **HOUSING**
- * **SCHOOL DISTRICT**
- * **CONCLUSION**

INTRODUCTION

The Community Facilities Plan for Ocean Springs outlines the essential services and infrastructure that support the city's growth. From general government operations to specialized departments such as police, fire, and emergency management, each sector plays a crucial role in ensuring the well-being and quality of life for residents. This plan also highlights the diverse recreational facilities managed by the Parks and Recreation Department, which provide ample opportunities for outdoor activities and community engagement. Additionally, the educational resources available in Ocean Springs, including K-12 schools and higher education institutions, underscore the city's commitment to fostering a well-rounded and educated populace.

By carefully evaluating the current status and planning for future improvements, Ocean Springs aims to create a network of community facilities that not only meet the present needs but also antici-

pate and adapt to future challenges and opportunities. This approach ensures that shared spaces remain inviting, functional, and inclusive, reflecting the spirit of "The City of Discovery."

OCEAN SPRINGS' COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Ocean Springs is committed to providing high-quality community facilities that support the well-being, safety, and enrichment of its residents. This section of the Comprehensive Plan focuses on the essential services and infrastructure that form the backbone of a well-planned community. Each section of the Community Facilities Plan provides a detailed overview of the existing community facilities, including their locations and current conditions and outlines specific plans for improvements and expansions. These plans are designed to address the growing needs of the city's population, enhance the quality and accessibility of services, and ensure that facilities are equipped to meet future demands.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Ocean Springs' general government operations are housed in City Hall, located at 1018 Porter Avenue in the heart of downtown Ocean Springs. This central hub serves as the administrative center for the city, encompassing key services such as the Mayor's office, City Clerk, Finance Department, and Human Resources. Additionally, Ocean Springs Water's administrative offices are located here. As growth occurs, the city can ensure that all aspects of city government operate transparently, efficiently, and that all municipal services are delivered

effectively to meet the community's needs. Improvements to general government operations are all-encompassing and apply to each City department equally.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT NEEDS

- Maintain City Hall and related civic and municipal service headquarters in downtown Ocean Springs.
- Regularly review personnel and equipment needs.
- Maintain existing facilities and equipment.
- Evaluate and implement technology and training to improve the ability to support general government operations and city departments and to provide high-quality and efficient customer service.
- Develop a Capital Improvements Plan for Ocean Springs.
- Develop new tools and processes to engage citizens in planning for capital improvements and better understand economic, social, and environmental costs and benefits.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Ocean Springs Police Department, headquartered at 3810 Bienville Boulevard, is pivotal in maintaining public safety and law enforcement throughout the city. The main station is centrally located, providing easy access to major thoroughfares and neighborhoods. The department also operates a substation in downtown Ocean Springs, which serves as a convenient point of contact for community members and enhances the department's presence in the

area. With a strong focus on community policing, the department collaborates closely with residents to prevent crime and ensure a safe environment. The department's facilities, including its dispatch center and training rooms, as well as its fleet and equipment, are regularly evaluated to meet the community's evolving needs.

POLICE DEPARTMENT NEEDS

- Expand the main police station to accommodate growth.
- Add a police substation and increase police patrols in downtown Ocean Springs.
- Upgrade technology and communication systems.

- Increase the number of officers to serve the city's growing population effectively.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Ocean Springs Fire Department operates from multiple stations strategically located throughout the city to ensure rapid response times and comprehensive fire protection coverage. The main fire station, located at 3820 Bienville Boulevard, serves as the central hub for the department's operations, including administrative offices, training facilities, and emergency response units. Additional stations, such as Station 2 (Beauguez) on Government Street and Station 3 (Murray) on East Bienville Boulevard, enhance the department's ability to respond quickly to incidents across different parts of the city. The department's responsibilities extend



beyond fire suppression to include fire prevention education, emergency medical response, and hazardous materials management. Equipment is in good condition but must be regularly maintained and replaced. The city has recently ordered two new fire trucks with a rated useful life of 20 years. The department's greatest need is to recruit more personnel.

FIRE DEPARTMENT NEEDS

- Recruit new firefighting personnel.
- Construct a new fire station to serve areas farther south and east of the current city limits, near the newly annexed areas. The station's location should be determined through a site-suitability analysis in the next several years.
- Acquire equipment and personnel to support a new fire station, which will require a new pumper and nine new personnel.
- Upgrade and maintain existing facilities with state-of-the-art equipment and technology.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

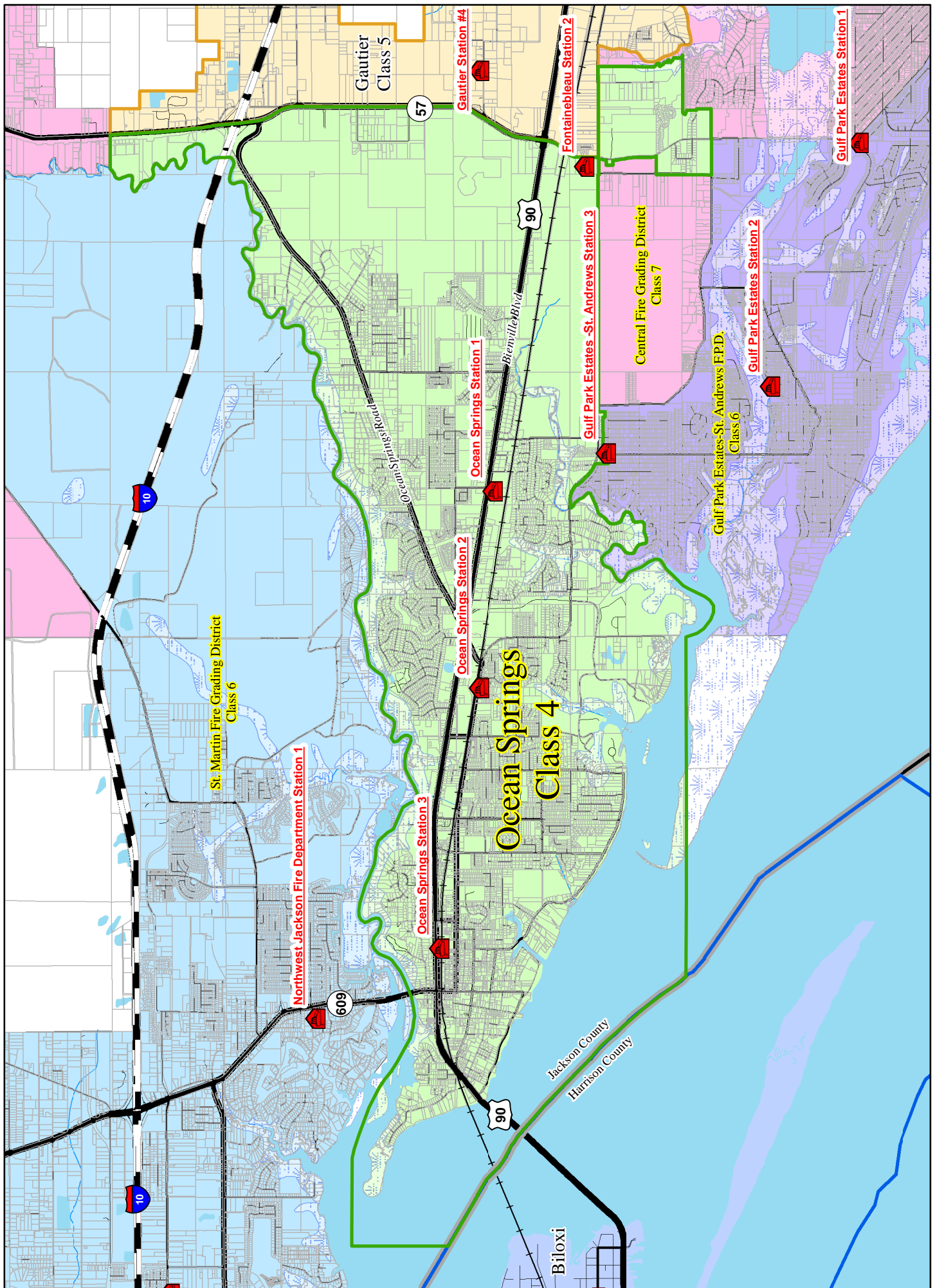
The Emergency Management Department in Ocean Springs is critical in safeguarding the city's residents' health, safety, and welfare during declared emergencies. The department operates from the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at the main fire station, located at 3820 Bienville Boulevard. In addition to the EOC, the city utilizes the West Jackson County shelter, located at 13000 Walker Road, Ocean Springs, MS 39564, which has a maximum capacity of 375 individuals. This facility provides a safe refuge for residents during emergencies.

The department's success in managing emergencies stems from comprehensive contingency planning, coordinated response efforts with local and state agencies, and a commitment to public education on all-hazards preparedness. The Emergency Management Department adheres to the four phases of emergency management: 1) Preparedness, 2) Response, 3) Recovery, and 4) Mitigation. These phases guide the department's efforts to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the impact of disasters. The department also conducts regular disaster training and exercises for emergency responders to ensure a swift and efficient response to crises. The Emergency Management Department strives to protect the community and enhance the city's resilience to emergencies through these comprehensive efforts.

The City of Ocean Springs actively participates in the region's hazard mitigation plan, collaborating with neighboring jurisdictions to develop strategies that reduce the risk of disasters.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT NEEDS

- Prepare lift stations for storm events by raising electrical components above flood elevations.
- Ensure adequate buffers from streams, wetlands, and the wildland-urban interface.
- Mitigate the most at-risk repetitive loss properties in the V and AE zones through acquisition.
- Update the city's hazard Mitigation and Emergency Response Plan and its Hurricane Response Plan regularly to ensure emergency



Map 22: Fire Districts, Ratings, & Stations

service and evacuation routes are adequate for demand, well-marked, and accessible to individuals with special needs.

- Increase the number of fire and police response personnel trained to respond to hazardous waste releases on the railroad, highways, hospitals, and other critical facilities.
- Implement an early warning network to alert citizens to upcoming hazards.
- Establish a high-ground staging area for emergency vehicles that provides added protection from wind-blown debris.

PARKS AND RECREATION

The Ocean Springs Parks and Recreation Department offers many recreational facilities, parks, and sports complexes, providing ample



outdoor activities and community engagement opportunities. The department manages various locations, each offering unique amenities to cater to residents' and visitors' diverse interests and needs.

Alice Street Park, located at 400 Alice Street, is a community hub featuring playground equipment, swings, a T-ball field, and restrooms. The park's central location and amenities make it a popular destination for families and children.

Clay Boyd Park, situated at 214 Morris Noble Road, offers a mix of playground equipment and a splash pad, providing a fun and refreshing environment for children during the warmer months. The park also includes restrooms, ensuring convenience for visitors.

John Gill Park, located at 3318 Nottingham Drive, offers a quieter setting with playground equipment and a pavilion. This park is ideal for family picnics and community gatherings, providing a serene environment.

Fort Maurepas Park, located at 499 Front Beach, is a scenic beachfront park featuring playground equipment, a splash pad, a pavilion, a stage, and restrooms. The park's beachfront location and stage make it an excellent venue for community events and performances.

Hanley Road Toddler Park, located at 504 Hanley Road, caters specifically to younger children, offering a safe play area with appropriate playground equipment.

Inner Harbor Park, situated at 127 Pine Drive, includes playground equipment, restrooms, and

two lighted tennis courts. This park provides a comprehensive recreational experience, ideal for sports enthusiasts and families alike.

Keys Park, located at 800 Cash Alley, offers a peaceful setting with public parking, scenic views, and benches, providing a quiet retreat for relaxation and contemplation.

Lemoine Park, 4116 Groveland Road, includes playground equipment, swings, a pavilion, and lighted basketball courts for public use.

Little Children's Park, located at 400 Washington Avenue, is a beloved community space featuring playground equipment, swings, a pavilion, and restrooms. The park's amenities make it a popular spot for family outings and children's activities.

Marble Springs Park, at 1109 Iberville Drive, offers a unique experience with its scenic views and historical significance, providing a tranquil and educational space for visitors.

Martin Luther King Jr. Park, located at 811 Martin Luther King Boulevard, features a playground, swings, a lighted basketball court, a pavilion, and restrooms. This park serves as an important community gathering space, offering various recreational opportunities.

Shearwater Park, located on Shearwater Drive, offers scenic views and benches, making it a perfect spot for those seeking a peaceful outdoor experience.

Trentwood Park, situated at 3105 Shadow Wood Drive, provides a playground and a basketball court, catering to both younger children

and older youth looking for recreational sports opportunities.

Alice Street Ball Fields, located at 400 Alice Street, includes two ball fields, concessions, and restrooms, making it a suitable venue for sports events and local leagues.

Clay Boyd Ball Fields, at 214 Morris Noble Road, features two ball fields and restrooms, supporting the city's youth and adult baseball and softball programs.

Freedom Field, at 1425 Porter Avenue, offers a walking track and restrooms, providing a space for exercise and community events.

Gay-Lemon Complex, located at 1493 Deana Road, includes two 275-ft softball fields, two football fields, concessions, and restrooms, offering a comprehensive sports facility for various athletic activities.

Steven Parker Ball Fields, situated on Pine Drive, includes two ball fields and restrooms, supporting local baseball and softball leagues.

Highway 57 Sports Complex, located at 4515 Hwy 57, is a premier sports facility featuring four 300-ft softball fields, three 225-ft baseball fields, two 275-ft baseball fields, four regulation-size soccer fields, and two football fields. The complex also includes pavilions, concessions, a meeting room, and restrooms, making it a versatile venue for sports events and community gatherings.

These facilities provide residents and visitors with diverse recreational options, enhancing the quality of life in Ocean Springs. The Parks and Recreation Department is committed to



maintaining and improving these spaces to meet the community's evolving needs and promote a healthy and active lifestyle.

PARK AND RECREATION NEEDS

- Develop a comprehensive park and recreation master plan for Ocean Springs.
- Quantify and plan for demand of indoor recreation, e.g., pickleball, volleyball, and basketball.
- Quantify and plan for demand of outdoor recreation, e.g., disk golf, skate parks, splash pads, and new ballfields.
- Implement proposed Blueways expansions including new launches and routes to complement the Old Fort Bayou Blueway.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

The Public Works Department, headquartered at 712 Pine Drive, houses the city's street, drainage, water, sewer, and beautification divisions. Key challenges include hiring sufficient numbers of qualified personnel and expanding

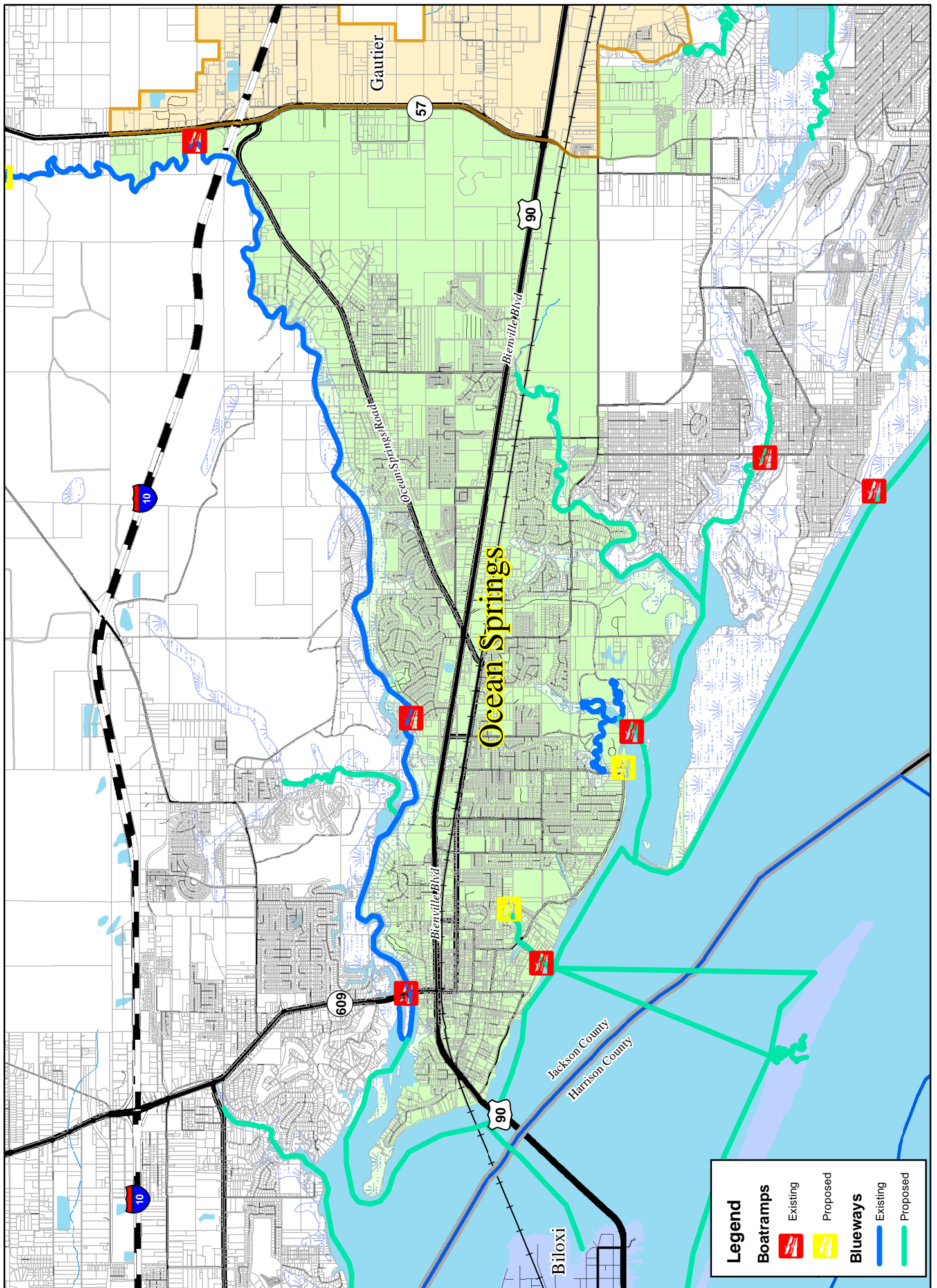
water and wastewater capacity to meet demands from new growth.

STREETS AND DRAINAGE

The Street division maintains the city's streets, sidewalks, and public infrastructure. It oversees street maintenance, drainage systems, and public property upkeep. While the county performs pavement maintenance and resurfacing, the public works department provides key services, including pothole repair, debris removal, and trash collection. Key priorities include improvements to bridges, drainage systems, pavement management, and resurfacing city streets. A new drainage outfall is needed south of Bienville Boulevard.

WATER

The Ocean Springs Public Works Department manages the city's water supply and distribution. It oversees water wells, water treatment, and a comprehensive network of water mains and service lines. Ocean Springs holds the legal authority to provide water service for commercial, residential, and industrial uses throughout



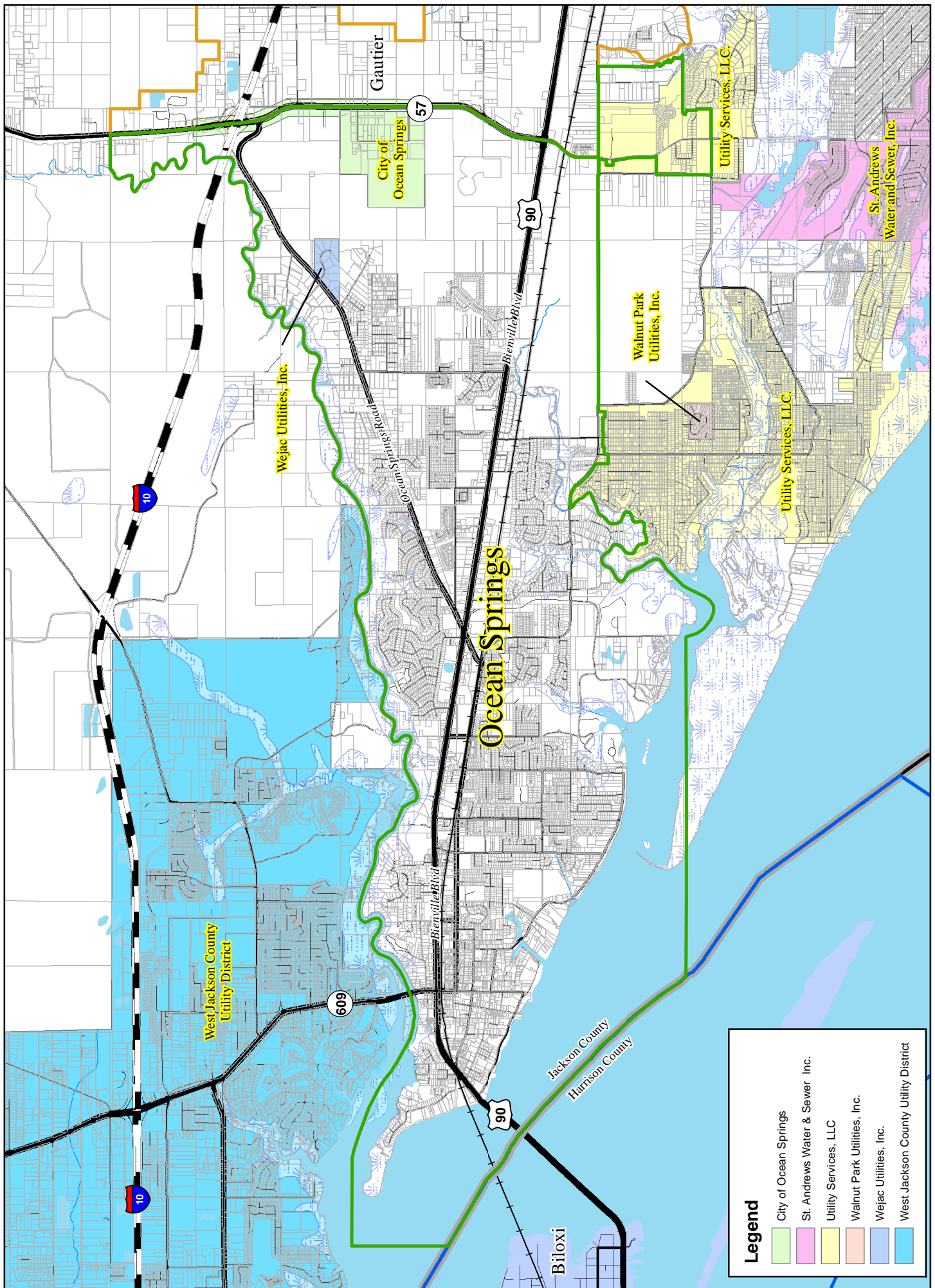


most of the city. Exceptions include portions of newly annexed areas along Old Spanish Trail and Greyhound Way that are served by the Jackson County Utility Authority (JCUA) or certificated to Utility Services, LLC. In these areas, the City must coordinate future development with existing utility providers and ensure the extension of water service and the installation of hydrants to meet fire protection requirements.

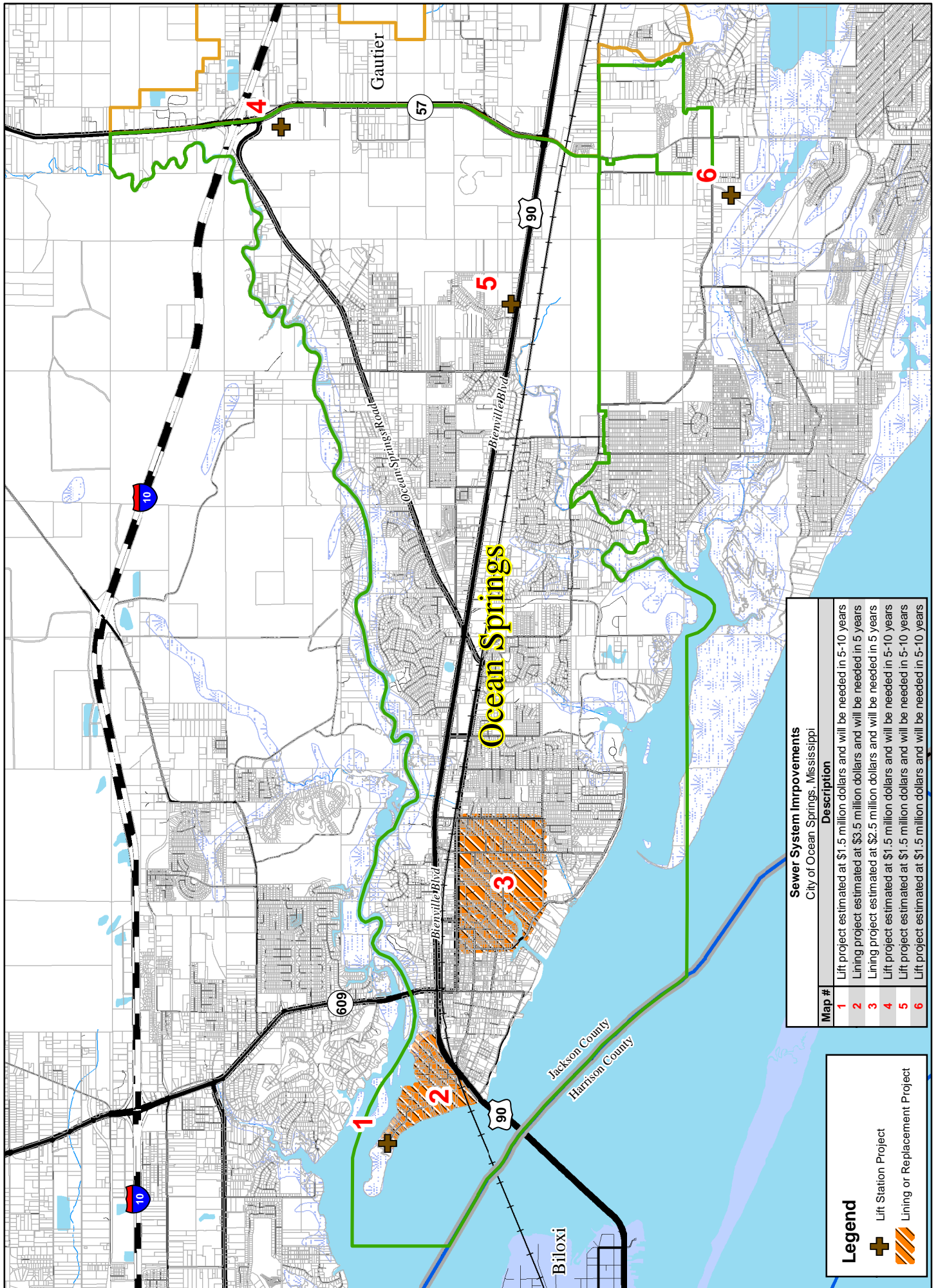
SEWER

The city's wastewater treatment facilities, managed by the Ocean Springs Public Works Department, are crucial for treating and managing sewage and wastewater. Ocean Springs has the legal authority to provide sewer service throughout the city, except in portions of newly annexed areas along Old Spanish Trail and Greyhound Way that are certificated to Utility Services, LLC. In these areas, the City must coordinate future development with existing utility providers to ensure adequate sewer infrastructure is available to support growth.

- Relocate the public works facility to a location with better access and a lower impact on downtown development. The new public works facility should include new administrative offices and drive-through facilities for payments.
- Expand water and sewer infrastructure, including fire protection and adequately spaced fire hydrants and sewer services, to newly annexed parts of the city.
- A new well will be needed in the next 10 years to accommodate growth on the east side of Ocean Springs.
- New lift stations will be required in the next 5 to 10 years to accommodate growth in the vicinity of Highway 57 and Old Spanish Trail in the newly annexed territory of Ocean Springs.
- Repairs and maintain existing water and sewer mains.



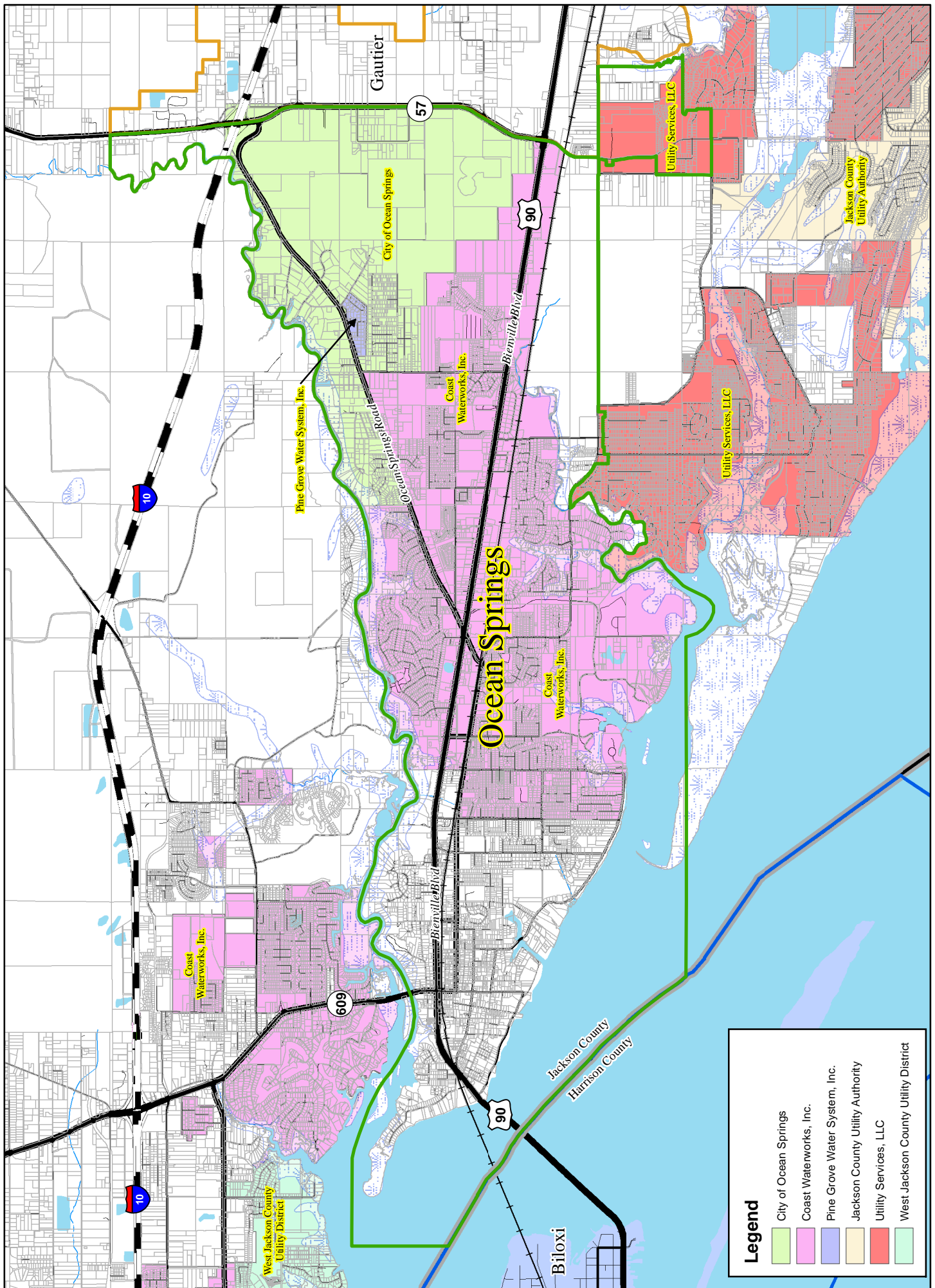
Map 24: Sewer Certificated Areas



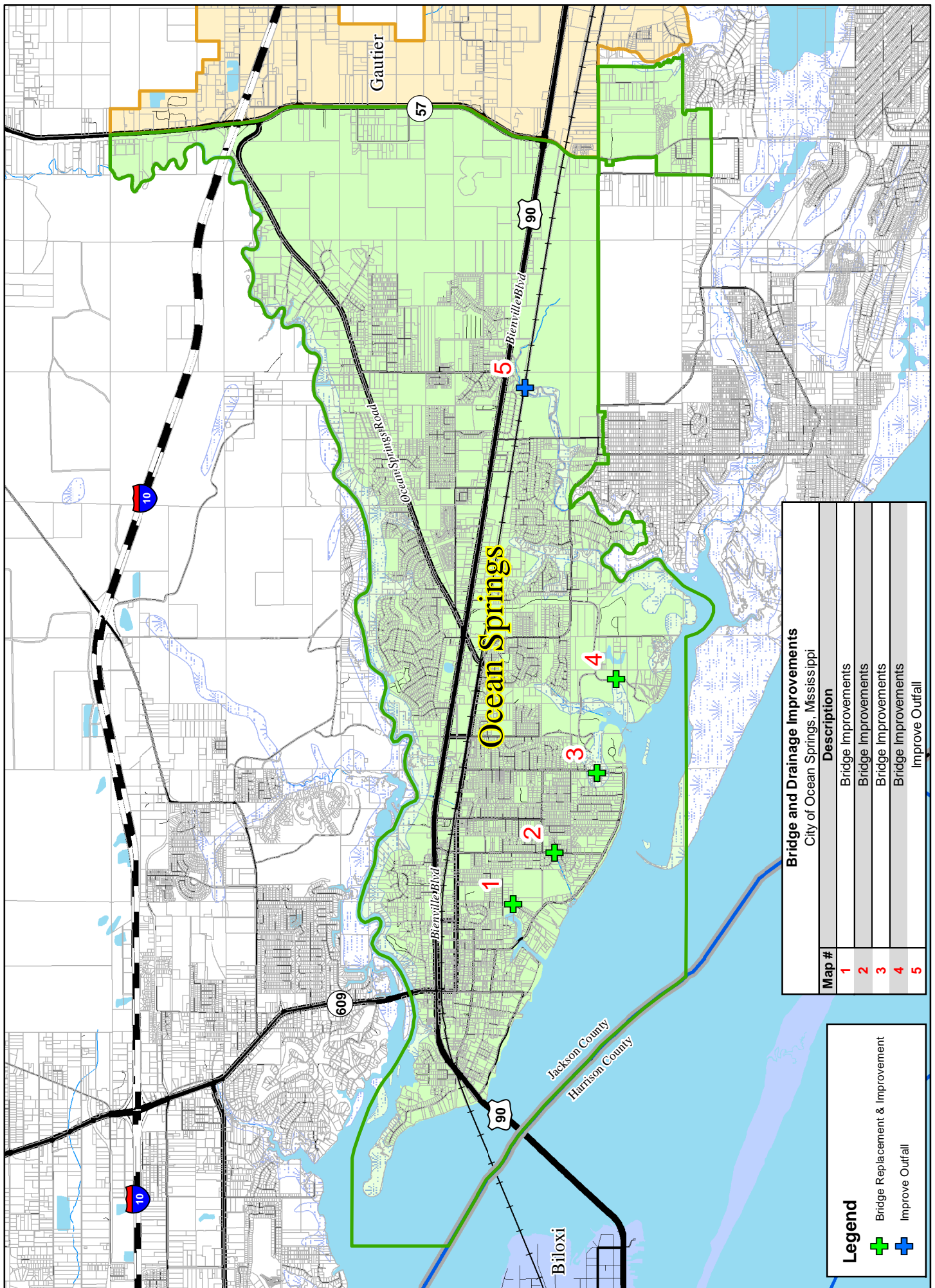
Sewer System Improvements	
City of Ocean Springs, Mississippi	
Map #	Description
1	Lift project estimated at \$1.5 million dollars and will be needed in 5-10 years
2	Lining project estimated at \$3.5 million dollars and will be needed in 5 years
3	Lining project estimated at \$2.5 million dollars and will be needed in 5 years
4	Lift project estimated at \$1.5 million dollars and will be needed in 5-10 years
5	Lift project estimated at \$1.5 million dollars and will be needed in 5-10 years
6	Lift project estimated at \$1.5 million dollars and will be needed in 5-10 years

Legend

- Lift Station Project
- Lining or Replacement Project



Map 26: Water Certificated Areas



Map #	Description
1	Bridge Improvements
2	Bridge Improvements
3	Bridge Improvements
4	Bridge Improvements
5	Improve Outfall

Legend	
	Bridge Replacement & Improvement
	Improve Outfall

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

The Planning Department, located at City Hall, manages land use, zoning, land development, and historic preservation in Ocean Springs. The department ensures that development projects align with the city's comprehensive plan and zoning regulations. Key duties include reviewing development proposals, facilitating public hearings, and guiding the city's growth. The department administers the City's Planning Commission, Historic Commission, and Zoning Adjustment Board and implements regulations adopted by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT NEEDS

- Update the city's Unified Development Code (UDC) to implement zoning in newly annexed territory.
- Review personnel and facilities requirements to keep pace with growth and development.
- Establish processes and committed resources to support ongoing efforts and future planning for Midtown and other neighborhoods.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

Code Enforcement in Ocean Springs is dedicated to ensuring compliance with city ordinances and maintaining the quality of the built environment. This department handles the issuance of building permits, ensuring that all construction projects meet local codes and standards. Additionally, Code Enforcement is responsible for enforcing property maintenance codes, addressing violations, and ensuring buildings and properties meet health and safety standards. The team conducts regular inspections, re-

sponds to complaints, and works with property owners to resolve issues.

CODE ENFORCEMENT NEEDS

- Review personnel and facilities requirements to keep pace with growth and development.
- Increase public awareness of code requirements.
- Enhance collaboration with other city departments to maintain a clean and safe community.

HOUSING

Ocean Springs boasts a diverse and evolving housing market, characterized by a mix of single-family homes, multi-family units, and various types of rental properties. The city's residential landscape includes historic homes, modern subdivisions, and new developments, re-



flecting a blend of architectural styles and community growth.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Ocean Springs saw a net gain of 450 housing units from 2010 to 2020, with a total of 8,264 housing units recorded in the latter year. Of these, 92.1% were occupied, with a significant decrease in vacancy rates over the decade, dropping to 7.9%. The housing stock in Ocean Springs is primarily composed of single-family detached homes, which account for approximately 77% of all residential units. Multi-family units make up 16.5% of total units, and mobile homes represent about 1.2%. Notably, approximately 30% of the city's housing was built before 1970, with a substantial portion constructed between 1970 and 2000.

APARTMENT MARKET AND RENTAL PROPERTIES

The 2020 Apartment Survey by the Gulf Regional Planning Commission highlights that Ocean Springs has a total of 538 unassisted rental units, with the majority being two-bedroom apartments. The average costs for unassisted apartments in Ocean Springs are \$715 for a one-bedroom, \$779 for a two-bedroom, and \$1,062 for a three-bedroom unit. Notably, the vacancy rate for unassisted rental units in Ocean Springs reached 0.0% in 2020, reflecting an exceptionally high demand and no availability in the rental market.

HOMELESSNESS CHALLENGES

Homelessness presents a challenge to be addressed to achieve Ocean Springs' vision for housing. The City should focus on increasing

the availability of affordable housing, transitional housing, emergency shelters, and supportive housing programs. Collaborating with local and regional organizations and agencies will be vital to providing comprehensive support services, including mental health care, job placement assistance, and emergency aid. Additionally, proactive planning efforts, such as adopting housing-first approaches, will help ensure stable housing for all residents.

HOUSING TRENDS AND FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

As Ocean Springs grows, the city must consider expanding its housing stock to meet increasing demand, particularly for affordable housing options. Future development plans will focus on creating mixed-use neighborhoods, enhancing infrastructure, and promoting sustainable living environments. The city will also seek to preserve its unique architectural heritage while accommodating new construction, ensuring a harmonious blend of old and new within its community fabric.

HOUSING NEEDS

- Evaluate zoning restrictions on the location of accessory dwelling units.
- Monitor the impact of short-term rentals on the availability of permanent housing.
- Encourage density and mixed-use development in the vicinity of transportation and transit infrastructure. Consider minimum mixed-use development standards that require housing in all significant commercial developments.



OCEAN SPRINGS MUNICIPAL PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Ocean Springs Municipal Public Library, located at 525 Dewey Avenue, is part of the Jackson-George Regional Library System. The library system is consistently one of the best-rated in Mississippi. Its headquarters is in Pascagoula, with eight branches across two counties. The Ocean Springs Municipal Library provides free access to books and other media, technology access and printing, literacy initiatives, and hosts various community events in the heart of Ocean Springs. The City of Ocean Springs owns and maintains the building and provides it for the library's use. The city pays utilities and the cost of building upkeep and maintenance. In addition, the City provides financial support for library operations through a local property tax.

OCEAN SPRINGS MUNICIPAL PUBLIC LIBRARY NEEDS

- Upgrade building with new kitchen, new entry door, sound baffling, and updated light switches.
- Expand parking facilities, as well as ADA accessible options, to keep up with community growth.
- Evaluate putting a new facility in East Ocean Springs and increase signage throughout the City to make residents aware of library's location.

OCEAN SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Ocean Springs School District is a vital part of the community, providing high-quality education and a supportive environment for students from kindergarten through 12th grade. The district comprises several key institutions, each contributing to the academic and personal growth of its students.

According to the latest grades from the Mississippi Department of Education, for the 2022-2023 school year, the Ocean Springs School District was rated the #1 school district in the state. In addition, Ocean Springs High School was ranked the #2 high school in the state. These rankings reflect the quality of, and commitment to, education in Ocean Springs by elected officials, stakeholders, and residents.

Pecan Park Elementary School: Located at 504 Hanley Road, this school serves approximately 500 students in kindergarten through 3rd grade.

Magnolia Park Elementary School: Situated at 3500 Government Street, Magnolia Park accommodates around 640 students in grades K-3.

Oak Park Elementary School: Located at 2230 Government Street, Oak Park serves approximately 480 students in grades K-3.

Ocean Springs Upper Elementary School: Located at 2320 Government Street, this school serves about 1,270 students in grades 4-6.

Ocean Springs Middle School: Located at 3600 Hanshaw Road, the middle school serves around 960 students in grades 7-8.

Ocean Springs High School: Located at 6701 Old Spanish Trail, the high school serves approximately 1,950 students in grades 9-12.

OCEAN SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT NEEDS

- Monitor enrollment in concert with growth management and planning for new housing in the City of Ocean Springs.
- Expand campus facilities to support a growing student body.
- Enhance career and technical education programs and promote college and career readiness initiatives.
- A new elementary school will soon be needed to support growth in student enrollment and is being explored in the vicinity of the High School.

CONCLUSION

Ocean Springs is dedicated to maintaining and enhancing its community facilities to meet the evolving needs of its residents. The city's strategic planning and ongoing investments in public services, infrastructure, and recreational amenities are designed to promote a high quality of life and ensure sustainable growth. By focusing on key areas such as public safety, education, and recreational opportunities, Ocean Springs aims to create a resilient and thriving community. As the city continues to develop, these comprehensive efforts will support the long-term vision of a inclusive and well-served Ocean Springs.



CHAPTER 9—IMPLEMENTATION & MAINTENANCE

- * **IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS**
- * **PLAN MAINTENANCE**
- * **CONCLUSION**

INTRODUCTION

This chapter of Ocean Springs' comprehensive plan outlines the essential mechanisms and strategies for translating the city's vision and goals into actionable outcomes. This chapter provides a detailed overview of various tools, including the annual budget, Capital Improvements Program (CIP), zoning codes, and other regulatory measures that guide the city's development and ensure the consistent application of planning principles. By leveraging these tools, the city can prioritize projects, allocate resources effectively, and maintain a cohesive community character. Additionally, the chapter discusses the importance of intergovernmental agreements, design standards, and day-to-day policy enforcement in achieving the plan's objectives. These tools serve as a critical foundation for managing growth, preserving public safety, and enhancing Ocean Springs residents' overall quality of life.

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

ANNUAL BUDGET

The annual budget is a process in which the City of Ocean Springs reviews various needs in the community and makes decisions to fund certain services, programs, capital expenditures, etc. Many local governments incorporate recommendations or policies from the comprehensive plan into the budgetary process. Including the comprehensive plan in the budget, discussions can ensure that the needs or goals previously outlined are being reviewed annually and considered for implementation. Because a comprehensive plan is a guide for the future, using it during the budgetary process can help direct funds to the goals already laid out during the planning process.

BUILDING, CONSTRUCTION, AND FIRE CODES

Construction, building, and fire codes, including electrical, mechanical, plumbing, etc., provide a standard upon which to build safe structures. Adoption of up-to-date versions of the International Building Code, International Property Maintenance Code, and other codes from the International Code Council will greatly assist Ocean Springs in efforts to ensure safe housing and buildings. However, with the adoption of such codes comes the responsibility of the city to make inspections to ensure compliance with the codes.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

A capital improvement program (CIP) is also a budgeting process that plans and projects costs and expenditures for major public investments

over five years. This is an effective way to concentrate on major investments such as wastewater plants, sewer lines, water lines, fire trucks, etc. It clearly identifies investment goals and helps the city focus on specific needs and objectives. A CIP can also alleviate monetary stresses if projects are spaced over time. Spreading costs over several years can also reduce dramatic changes in the city's tax structure.

The capital improvements planning process should be improved in Ocean Springs with the addition of a citizen-engaged framework for evaluating and prioritizing projects. The process should involve stakeholders in planning and evaluating all proposed improvements using techniques such as walkability audits, planning workshops, and community meetings. The City of Ocean Springs should create an assessment tool to accompany its capital planning process, which will assist to understand and prioritize projects based on their economic, social, and environmental impacts.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

Intergovernmental cooperation between government entities can help to spread the burden of particular services by sharing some responsibility to benefit the community. The city currently utilizes this tool for various services. Examples include:

- Mutual aid agreements for emergency management and policing. The city and surrounding municipalities support one another through mutual aid agreements to provide

disaster response and recovery and emergency management in a coordinated manner.

- The city is a member of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) coordinated by the Gulf Regional Planning Commission (GRPC), which develops and maintains the long-range transportation planning process required to maintain their jurisdictions' eligibility for federal funding for transportation improvements. Based on that planning process, transportation improvement projects are identified and prioritized for funding allocation.
- The city and Jackson County work closely together to identify and address transportation needs that affect Ocean Springs and a wider constituency, such as recent cooperation in emergency stabilization and repairs to Davis Bayou Bridge and various roadway maintenance projects.

The City of Ocean Springs should continue to embrace intergovernmental coordination not only as a means of sharing resources but as a critical strategy for delivering high-quality pub-

lic services, addressing cross-jurisdictional issues, and implementing this comprehensive plan. Establishing formal mechanisms for regular dialogue, such as joint planning committees, memoranda of understanding (MOUs), and project-specific interlocal agreements, will help institutionalize collaboration and ensure consistency in planning efforts over time.

UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE (UDC)

Ocean Springs' Unified Development Code (UDC) consolidates land development regulations and provides for streamlined review and approval processes. The UDC covers a broad range of public nuisance, environmental and land use regulation. The UDC includes the City's zoning regulations, procedures for subdividing and improving property, historic preservation guidelines, landscaping, and tree protection regulations, among others. These are designed to provide standards to protect from adverse public nuisance or land use effects and



impacts resulting from public or private development within the City.

Zoning is a standard implementation tool for carrying out the future land use portion of the comprehensive plan. It regulates land uses and is intended to guide development into compatible land use patterns. It protects individual landowners and preserves and establishes a community's character. Updating and strictly enforcing the current UDC for the City of Ocean Springs is an effective way to implement elements of this comprehensive plan.

The Comprehensive Plan's future land use categories correspond with the current zoning districts. Connecting the future land use categories to the zoning districts helps ensure that the future land use is taken into account when making future zoning decisions. A table showing how the future land use categories relate to current zoning districts can be found on Table 2 in Chapter 6. The city should use that table to guide zoning decisions, evaluate any amendments required for better alignment with this plan, and codify the table within the text of the UDC. This will help ensure that zoning decisions are made with respect to Future Land Use considerations.

The UDC controls the process of land division and establish design standards for property improvements. These regulations ensure that property owners have adequate public utilities and roadways. They can also further the goals of the comprehensive plan, such as transportation improvements or water and sewer facilities. Implementation requires coordination be-

tween governmental entities and utility districts to ensure adequate public infrastructure and services extend to new development.

COMMUNITY DESIGN AND APPEARANCE

In the future, the city should consider adopting design standards that establish consistent commercial, industrial, and downtown appearance guidelines. These standards or guidelines often include structural elements, exterior facades, exterior materials, etc.

Sign regulations, unkempt property ordinances, and landscaping guidelines are other ordinances that can help to create a desired appearance throughout the community. These can be separate ordinances or are often included in the zoning ordinance. Amended landscaping standards and stronger unkempt property ordinances may be of interest.

DAY-TO-DAY POLICY ENFORCEMENT

Many of Ocean Springs's goals and strategies involve setting or updating policies and then enforcing said policies. This usually involves city staff processing complaints that have been raised with or identified by elected officials. The city will need to continue to strengthen day-to-day policy enforcement to raise the level of service.

PLAN MAINTENANCE

Maintaining the Comprehensive Plan is as important as implementing it. Many factors, including new developments, emerging economic factors, or population shifts, can lead to the need for revisions.

AMENDMENTS

This plan, along with all its elements, is designed to be a guide for the long-term development of Ocean Springs. Significant investments (both local and outside the city) and market conditions (local, national, and international) can significantly shift growth patterns and influence land use in ways that cannot be foreseen. To adapt to these changes, the city should set up a process for amending elements in this document. While multiple amendments can unintentionally alter the policies that this plan was based on, amendments that are well-justified due to changing circumstances should be approved on a limited basis.

PLAN REVIEW AND FUTURE UPDATES

The Comprehensive Plan is a dynamic document. Periodic review and update of the Comprehensive Plan is essential to reflect the city's changes accurately. A yearly review is crucial to keep the Plan current on any special topics or influences affecting the city. Every three to five years is the minimum time frame for a review of significant land use changes, but if drastic changes occur in the city, a plan review and update may be needed sooner than that.

During a review process, the Board of Alderman, Planning Commission, or Comprehensive Planning Committee should examine the ongoing success in implementing the current plan before making any changes. After all elements, goals, and objectives have been updated as necessary, a draft of the revised Plan must be viewed at a public hearing before being adopted and incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan.

CONCLUSION

This chapter serves as a comprehensive guide for Ocean Springs to systematically and effectively realize the goals outlined in the comprehensive plan. By integrating the annual budget and CIP with land use and zoning regulations, the city can direct growth in a manner consistent with its long-term vision. This chapter also emphasizes the importance of ongoing plan maintenance, including regular reviews and updates to accommodate changing circumstances and emerging trends. This proactive approach ensures that the city's policies remain relevant and responsive to the needs of its residents. Through careful implementation and periodic adjustments, Ocean Springs can continue to grow and thrive.

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APPENDIX

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IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX
Land Use and Development

Goal 1

Objective	Responsibility	Timeline	Related Actions
1.1. Provide a diverse yet complementary mix of residential and non-residential uses to meet the needs of the City's businesses and residences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards Monitor land use and compatibility of new development
1.2. Promote private investment in existing neighborhoods through public investment in infrastructure and code enforcement to eliminate non-conforming uses and site designs that do not respect the community's historical and cultural character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Historic Preservation Commission Planning Department Building Department Public Works GRPC MPO 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rezone property as appropriate Develop a Capital Improvements Plan and engagement process (Objective 8.8, 8.9) Enforce building codes and property maintenance codes Enforce UDC provisions for landscaping and historic preservation Review standards for access management on major transportation routes (Objective 2.9)
1.3. Transform auto-dominated strip commercial areas into compact, multi-modal-oriented, mixed-use places.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 		
1.4. Develop compatible mixed-use activity centers and infill development consistent with neighborhood character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Historic Preservation Commission Planning Department 		
1.5. Ensure commercial and residential development is designed to reflect Ocean Springs' unique character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Historic Preservation Commission Planning Department 		
1.6. Promote interconnectivity between adjacent land uses for both pedestrians and automobiles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department Public Works GRPC MPO 		
1.7. Support annexation to manage growth, provide services efficiently, promote economic development, control city entryways, and encourage rational growth patterns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor rates of land consumption due to infill and new development Monitor spillover growth adjacent to city limits
1.8. Support future planning for Midtown Ocean Springs to develop a clear vision and master plan for revitalizing this central, connected corridor and adjacent neighborhoods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 	Short term (0-3 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Midtown Planning Advisory Group to guide the visioning and planning process. Launch a community engagement campaign to gather input from residents,

			<p>business owners, and stakeholders about the future of Midtown.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a corridor and neighborhood conditions assessment, including infrastructure, land use, and market conditions. Identify and map key opportunity sites for redevelopment or reinvestment. • Develop design guidelines tailored to Midtown's character and revitalization goals. • Coordinate with transportation and utility departments to align infrastructure upgrades with the master planning process. • Prepare and adopt a Midtown Master Plan to supplement the comprehensive plan.
<p>1.9. Support neighborhood planning efforts by identifying distinct neighborhoods and developing master plans based on community interest and local needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 	<p>Mid-Term (3-10 years)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold initial community engagement workshops to assess conditions, identify neighborhood needs, and understand community interest. • Establish a Neighborhood Planning Advisory Group to help guide the planning process. • Engage residents, businesses, and stakeholders to gather input on priorities and goals. • Assess neighborhood conditions, including infrastructure, land use, housing, and economic factors. • Identify and map key opportunity sites for improvement or reinvestment. • Develop planning recommendations or design guidelines that reflect each neighborhood's character and goals. • Coordinate with city departments to align infrastructure and service improvements with neighborhood plans. • Prepare and adopt neighborhood master plans to supplement the city's comprehensive plan.
<p>1.10 Support the transition of recently annexed rural and agricultural areas into the city by developing zoning tools that accommodate existing lot sizes and limited agricultural uses, while guiding future development toward suburban patterns consistent with the city's long-range growth strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 	<p>Immediate (0-6 months)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct zoning audit of annexed areas • Hold public meetings to gather input • Apply new zoning where appropriate • Update zoning map and code

Transportation			
<i>Goal 2</i>			
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor for ongoing compatibility and make adjustments as needed
2.1. Develop a multi-modal transportation system serving current and future needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department Public Works GRPC MPO 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards Monitor land use and compatibility of new development Rezone property as appropriate Develop a Capital Improvements Plan and engagement process (Objective 8.8, 8.9) Enforce building codes and property maintenance codes Enforce UDC provisions for landscaping and historic preservation Review standards for access management on major transportation routes (Objective 2.9)
2.2. Integrate transportation planning with land use and economic development goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department GRPC MPO 		
2.3. Provide safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access throughout the City.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department Public Works GRPC MPO 		
2.4. Encourage the use of public transportation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department Public Works GRPC MPO Coast Transit Authority 		
2.5. Promote the use of environmentally friendly transportation alternatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department Public Works GRPC MPO Coast Transit Authority 		
2.6. Ensure transportation infrastructure is maintained and improved to meet current and future demands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department Public Works GRPC MPO Coast Transit Authority 		
2.7. Establish new connections to U.S. Highway 57 through newly annexed territory.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department Public Works GRPC MPO 	Long term (10+ years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence preliminary engineering, feasibility analysis, cost estimate Conduct environmental due diligence and analyze the feasibility of alternate routes Select preferred alternative Develop a Capital Improvements Plan and engagement process (Objective 8.8, 8.9)

<p>2.8. Address oversight/enforcement and connectivity issues related to golf carts along City streets through residential and commercial neighborhoods and north of Bienville Boulevard (U.S. Highway 90).</p> <p>2.9. Review standards for access management on major transportation routes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • OS Police Department • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Short term (0-3 years)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce city ordinances related to permitting and golf cart operations • Monitor compliance, issues, and conflicts • Convene key stakeholders, including city, county, GRPC MPO, and State officials • Examine and document existing policies for access management, safety, and crash prevention • Revise UDC standards to complement policies designed to enhance safety
<i>Goal 3</i>			
<p>3.1. Transform Bienville Boulevard from a highway thoroughfare to a multi-way boulevard with lanes for through traffic, frontage roads, pedestrian amenities, and street trees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department • GRPC MPO • MDOJ 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards • Monitor land use and compatibility of new development • Rezone property as appropriate • Enforce building codes and property maintenance codes • Enforce UDC provisions for landscaping and historic preservation • Enforce UDC sign and outdoor advertising standards • Develop a Capital Improvements Plan and engagement process (Objective 8.8, 8.9) • Review standards for access management on major transportation routes (Objective 2.9)
<p>3.2. Promote regional retail businesses and higher intensity, mixed-use development along Bienville Boulevard.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		
<p>3.3. Ensure new development includes pedestrian-oriented features linking residential and commercial uses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		
<p>3.4. Enhance the overall design quality along Bienville Boulevard with improved signage, site design, architectural standards, and landscaping.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		
<p>3.5. Prohibit new billboards and encourage the removal of existing ones.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department • Building Department 		
Downtown Development			
<i>Goal 4</i>			
<p>4.1. Enhance Downtown and the Central Business District as destination places for residents and visitors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards • Monitor land use and compatibility of new development • Rezone property as appropriate • Develop a Capital Improvements Plan and engagement process (Objective 8.8, 8.9)
<p>4.2. Promote specialty retail, service, and entertainment businesses in the Central Business District.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		
<p>4.3. Encourage mixed-use buildings with ground-level retail and upper-level offices and residences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		
<p>4.4. Limit drive-through facilities in pedestrian-oriented areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		

<p>4.5. Establish transition areas around Downtown with a mix of residential and low-intensity commercial uses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		
<p>4.6. Support bed and breakfast lodging near the CBD and in transition zones that buffer adjacent residential neighborhoods from higher-intensity land uses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		
<p>4.7. Make Downtown more pedestrian-friendly by expanding walkways and providing amenities like green spaces, seating areas, and public art.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		
<p>4.8. Ensure a multi-modal transportation system serves Downtown.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		
<p>4.9. Reduce reliance on open parking areas and encourage screened parking lots behind buildings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		
<p>4.10. Coordinate shared public parking areas to encourage redevelopment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		
<p>4.11. Ensure public street designs support pedestrian movement and efficient use of public services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department • Public Works 		
<p>4.12. Retain government offices and public services frequently visited by the public in the Downtown area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen 	Ongoing	
<p>Neighborhoods and Housing</p> <p><i>Goal 5</i></p>			
<p>5.1. Provide flexibility in housing types, including residences on the upper floors of non-residential structures and moderate-density units like patio homes and townhomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards • Monitor land use and compatibility of new development • Rezone property as appropriate
<p>5.2. Ensure housing quality and design to promote long-term neighborhood stability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		
<p>5.3. Ensure land uses abutting residential development are compatible with neighborhood character.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		
<p>5.4. Encourage redevelopment and infill development to provide upper-level apartments and loft units.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		
<p>5.5. Plan for medium-density housing near principal employment centers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		
<p>5.6. Integrate residential and non-residential uses in community activity centers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		
5.7. Support affordable and workforce housing programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		
5.8. Encourage housing alternatives for seniors, including maintenance-provided homes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		
5.9. Maintain compatible transitions between different land use and housing types through effective land use and site design regulations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		
5.10. Protect stable single-family neighborhoods from incompatible land uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		
5.11. Target unstable or declining neighborhoods for revitalization planning efforts that engage local residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 		
5.12. Develop a rental licensing and inspections program to maintain rental housing stock.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Department 	Short term (0-3 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine rental licensing and inspection programs in similar cities, convene stakeholders, and examine additional resource requirements
5.13. Continue code enforcement to ensure high-quality housing and protect neighborhoods from blighting influences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Building Department • Planning Department 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce building codes and property maintenance codes
Community Appearance and Design			
<i>Goal 6</i>			
6.1. Promote good site and architectural design through regulatory tools and incentives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards • Monitor land use and compatibility of new development • Rezone property as appropriate
6.2. Protect and enhance the tree canopy with native species.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Building Department • Planning Department 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce UDC tree preservation requirements
6.3. Require street trees in all new developments to establish an urban tree canopy cover.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 	Ongoing	
6.4. Preserve existing trees during development projects, with on- or off-site mitigation for unavoidable damage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Building Department • Planning Department 	Ongoing	
6.5. Ensure pedestrian amenities to promote walkability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen 	Ongoing	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Commission Planning Department Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission OS Historic Preservation Commission Planning Department Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department Planning Department Building Department Mayor & Board of Aldermen Public Works Planning Department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards Develop a Capital Improvements Plan and engagement process (Objective 8.8, 8.9) Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards Examine noise ordinances in similar cities, convene stakeholders, and examine additional resource requirements Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards Develop a Capital Improvements Plan and engagement process (Objective 8.8, 8.9) Review UDC landscaping provisions and incentives for higher landscaping and open space improvements Enforce UDC Design Review provisions Enforce UDC Historic Preservation Guidelines Enforce UDC sign and outdoor advertising standards Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards Enforce building codes and property maintenance codes Develop a Capital Improvements Plan and engagement process (Objective 8.8, 8.9) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Commission Planning Department Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission OS Historic Preservation Commission Planning Department Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department Planning Department Building Department Mayor & Board of Aldermen Public Works Planning Department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Ongoing Short term (0-3 years) Ongoing Ongoing Short term (0-3 years) Short term (0-3 years) Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Short term (0-3 years) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards Develop a Capital Improvements Plan and engagement process (Objective 8.8, 8.9) Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards Examine noise ordinances in similar cities, convene stakeholders, and examine additional resource requirements Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards Develop a Capital Improvements Plan and engagement process (Objective 8.8, 8.9) Review UDC landscaping provisions and incentives for higher landscaping and open space improvements Enforce UDC Design Review provisions Enforce UDC Historic Preservation Guidelines Enforce UDC sign and outdoor advertising standards Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards Enforce building codes and property maintenance codes Develop a Capital Improvements Plan and engagement process (Objective 8.8, 8.9) 	
Historic Preservation							
<i>Goal 7</i>							
7.1. Support the Historic Preservation Commission's efforts to protect historic districts and structures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Building Department Planning Department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce UDC Historic Preservation Guidelines 				

7.2. Encourage investment in the preservation, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse of significant structures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Building Department Planning Department 	Ongoing	
7.3. Ensure new development in historic districts is compatible with existing development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Building Department Planning Department 	Ongoing	
7.4. Invest in historic neighborhood infrastructure to encourage private investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Public Works Planning Department 	Ongoing	
7.5. Support adaptive reuse of historic structures through flexible standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Building Department Planning Department 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Capital Improvements Plan and engagement process (Objective 8.8, 8.9)
7.6. Promote heritage tourism by leveraging historic resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce UDC Historic Preservation Guidelines
Community Facilities and Services			
<i>Goal 8</i>			
8.1. Support fair and predictable regulatory requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards Enforce building codes and property maintenance codes Enforce UDC Historic Preservation Guidelines Examine noise ordinances in similar cities, convene stakeholders, and examine additional resource requirements Monitor land use and compatibility of new development Rezone property as appropriate Develop a Capital Improvements Plan and engagement process (Objective 8.8, 8.9) Monitor enrollment and new construction against class size and facility constraints Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards
8.2. Plan and equitably fund public facilities and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen 	Ongoing	
8.3. Coordinate with the School Board to implement long-range plans and maintain quality education services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 	Ongoing	
8.4. Ensure municipal services are efficient and costs for new development do not shift to existing residents and businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 	Ongoing	
8.5. Coordinate with other service providers on utility installation or replacement timing and location.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 	Ongoing	
8.6. Ensure development meets service demands concurrently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen 	Ongoing	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Commission • Planning Department 	
8.7. Ensure adequate public facilities are available or funded before new development approval.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 	Ongoing
8.8. Adopt a Capital Improvements Program addressing existing and future needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 	Short term (0-3 years)
8.9. Create a citizen-engaged capital improvements process, a tool for evaluating economic, social, and environmental costs and benefits of proposed improvements, and a means of prioritizing capital improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 	Short term (0-3 years)
8.10. Maintain adequate police and fire protection response times.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 	Ongoing
8.11. Add a police substation and increase police patrols in downtown Ocean Springs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 	Short term (0-3 years)
8.12. Ensure new development funds its proportional share of capital facilities costs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 	Ongoing
8.13. Promote and support local service providers for social services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Department 	Ongoing
8.14. Promote intergovernmental cooperation and coordination with the county, adjacent municipalities, utility districts with shared service areas, state, and federal partners to improve infrastructure and public services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 	Ongoing
8.15. Expand affordable, transitional, and supportive housing solutions and enhance collaboration with local agencies to effectively prevent and reduce homelessness in Ocean Springs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department 	Ongoing

				programs as needed to meet community needs.
Parks and Recreation				
<i>Goal 9</i>				
9.1. Ensure public recreation facilities serve all residents and are accessible by developing a park and recreation master plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Parks and Recreation Planning Department 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a park and recreation master plan (Objective 9.1). 	
9.2. Design open space for multi-use, environmentally friendly activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 	Ongoing		
9.3. Plan for multi-purpose recreational, cultural, educational, and leisure facilities, including new indoor venues for sports such as pickleball and volleyball and outdoor venues such as skate parks and disk golf.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Parks and Recreation 	Short term (0-3 years)		
9.4. Support additional public access to waterfront resources while protecting neighborhoods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Parks and Recreation Planning Commission Planning Department 	Mid-Term (3-10 years)		
9.5. Support partnerships between the City, School District, and other service providers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Parks and Recreation 	Ongoing		
9.6. Ensure parks and recreation facilities are equitably funded by all users, including new development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Parks and Recreation Planning Commission Planning Department 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards 	
Economic Development				
<i>Goal 10</i>				
10.1. Support private sector economic development efforts aligned with the City's vision and goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor land use and compatibility of new development Rezone property as appropriate 	
10.2. Pursue a higher ratio of employment to housing, focusing on professional services jobs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen 	Ongoing		
10.3. Support expanding medical services and encourage the development of tourism and the hospitality industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 	Ongoing		
10.4. Encourage the development and expansion of homegrown businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 	Ongoing		
10.5. Pursue economic development opportunities serving the elderly and retirement population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen 	Ongoing		
10.6. Encourage clean industry, retail, and professional office development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 	Ongoing		
10.7. Limit commercial and industrial development, generating heavy truck traffic to highways and interstates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Department Mayor & Board of Aldermen 		
10.8. Support incentives that result in higher wages and job creation.		Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current incentive policies and adjust them to promote job quality
10.9. Maximize sales tax revenues as a primary funding source for City services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor land use and compatibility of new development Rezone property as appropriate
10.10. Enhance the City's role as a retail, restaurant, and entertainment center by promoting tourism, conferences, and events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 	Ongoing	
10.11. Provide quality municipal services as a primary contribution to economic development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen 	Ongoing	
10.12. Promote new recreational facilities for tournaments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Parks and Recreation 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a park and recreation master plan (Objective 9.1).
Arts and Cultural Resources			
<i>Goal 11</i>			
11.1. Promote existing art and cultural programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop arts and cultural master plan (Objective 11.3)
11.2. Encourage public and private investment in arts and cultural amenities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen 	Ongoing	
11.3. Develop and adopt a master plan for cultural programs and facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen 	Short term (0-3 years)	
11.4. Encourage partnerships with arts organizations and educational institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen 	Ongoing	
11.5. Promote cultural tourism through marketing and programming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor land use and compatibility of new development Rezone property as appropriate
11.6. Encourage the development of live/work spaces for artists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Capital Improvements Plan and engagement process (Objective 8.8, 8.9)
11.7. Establish a new visitor and welcome center in the vicinity of I-10 and Highway 57 in the newly annexed territory.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen 	Mid-Term (3-10 years)	
Natural and Environmental Resources			
<i>Goal 12</i>			
12.1. Limit development on environmentally sensitive lands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards
12.2. Support the development of compatible public amenities in conservation areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Department 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Capital Improvements Plan and engagement process (Objective 8.8, 8.9) Develop a park and recreation master plan (Objective 9.1).
12.3. Encourage low-impact design techniques for stormwater management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards
12.4. Conduct an impervious surfaces audit and evaluate the impact of policies on wetlands and flooding. Consider measures to reduce the impact of impervious surfaces, such as planning to reduce requirements for constructing improvements in locations where lower-impact facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 	Short term (0-3 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop comprehensive GIS inventory of impervious surfaces

will adequately serve users and setting reduction targets for benchmarking progress.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a policy audit to evaluate green infrastructure, parking minimums, roadway standards Develop reduction targets tied to impervious surface standards and green infrastructure mitigation Update UDC to require calculations relative to benchmarks Update UDC with development incentives relative to benchmarks
12.5. Protect watersheds and environmental features contributing to Ocean Springs' beauty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards
12.6. Promote curbside recycling and begin recycling in public areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 	Short term (0-3 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Capital Improvements Plan and engagement process (Objective 8.8, 8.9)
12.7. Mitigate activities affecting water quality during the development process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards
12.8. Reduce solid waste volume entering landfills through expanded recycling and other programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Public Works 	Short term (0-3 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Capital Improvements Plan and engagement process (Objective 8.8, 8.9)
Hazard Mitigation			
<i>Goal 13</i>			
13.1. Promote strategies to protect people and property from hazards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Jackson County EMA 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards
13.2. Ensure evacuation routes are designed and maintained for safe evacuation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Jackson County EMA GRPC MPO MDOT 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate routes and plans Provide public education to promote safe evacuation
13.3. Ensure development adheres to the Fire Code and Building Codes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Building Department 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards
13.4. Prevent inappropriate development in floodplains.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department Building Department 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce UDC zoning and land development standard Enforce UDC zoning and land development standards
13.5. Adhere to FEMA base elevations for development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen Planning Commission Planning Department 	Ongoing	
13.6. Support the region's hazard mitigation plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor & Board of Aldermen 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in planning

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide public education and increase public awareness of hazard mitigation plans 		
13.7. Encourage underground placement of utility lines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review development standards and incentives for underground utilities 	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Department • Mayor & Board of Aldermen • Planning Commission • Planning Department

