



CITY OF SPANISH FORT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2010-2025

Prepared for:
City of Spanish Fort
Spanish Fort, Alabama



MACTEC Engineering and Consulting, Inc.
Kennesaw, Georgia

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the City of Spanish Fort Comprehensive Plan is to provide a vision of the kind of place that Spanish Fort's residents, businesses, and institutions would like it to be in the future and provide a course of action that strengthens and encourages the process of building the community envisioned. The main function of the plan is to provide a guide to assist in making the decisions and taking actions that will shape the community.

1.2 Scope

Prepared with the involvement of community leaders, stakeholders, business owners and the general public, the Comprehensive Land Use Plan includes the community's vision for the future, identifies key issues and opportunities to be addressed during the planning period, and plans the implementation of programs for achieving the vision and addressing the identified issues and opportunities. The Comprehensive Land Use Plan is intended to foster local pride about the future of the community, thereby encouraging citizen participation to ensure that the plan is implemented.

MACTEC Engineering and Consulting, Inc. (MACTEC), partnered with the City of Spanish Fort, Alabama, to conduct a Planning Charrette and prepare a Comprehensive Plan. This report is organized into the following sections:

- Community Assessment
- Community Vision
- Community Plan
- Community Design Concepts
- Implementation

Figure 1-1: New Spanish Fort High School



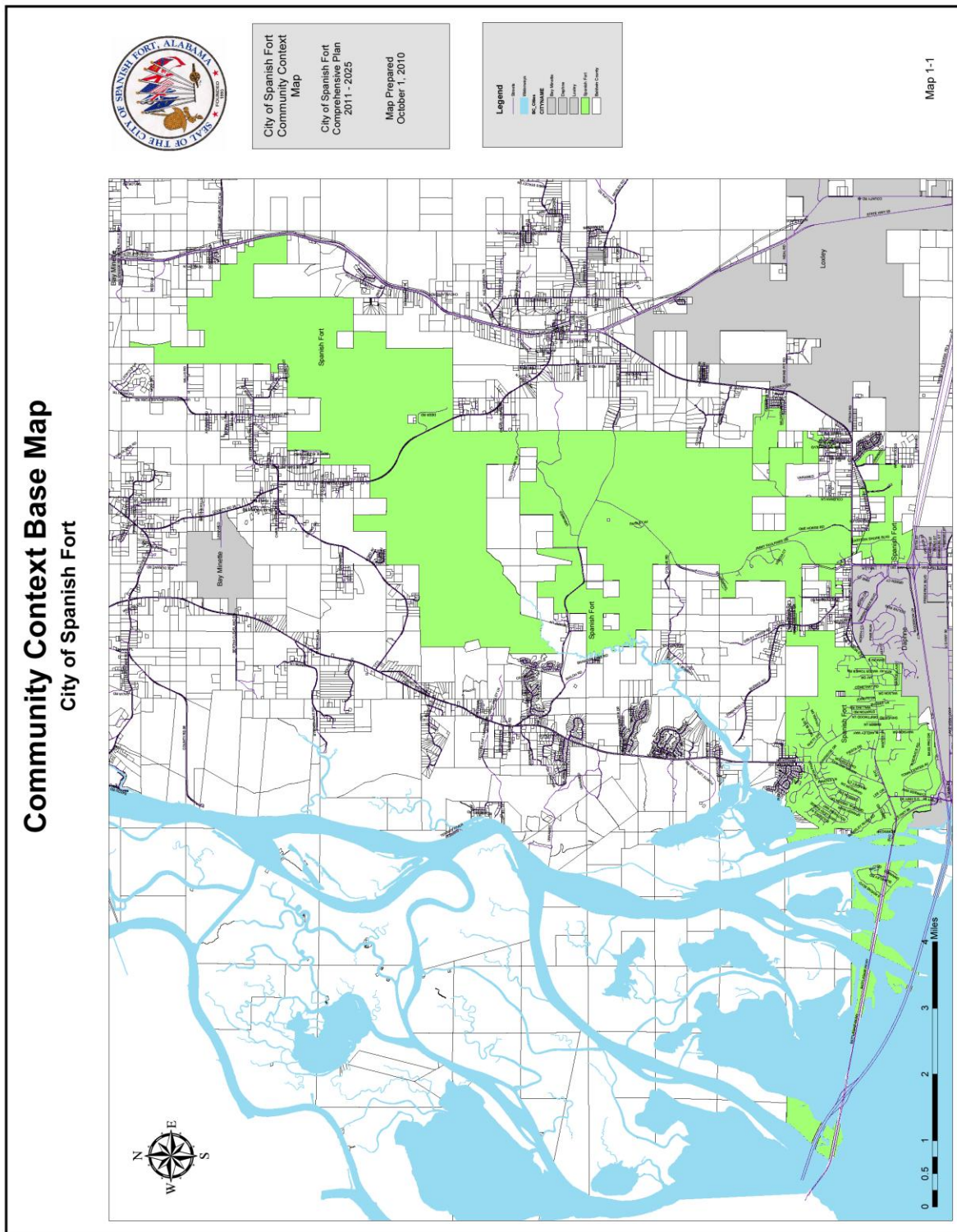
1.3 Community Context

The City of Spanish Fort consists of roughly 27 square miles in Baldwin County, Alabama. It is bound by Mobile Bay and the Mobile-Tensaw River Delta to the west and the cities of Daphne, Loxley, and Bay Minette to the South, East, and North, respectively. Although Spanish Fort is a relatively new city, being incorporated in 1993, it has grown quickly from roughly 1,542 acres in 1995 to approximately 17,561 acres today.

Spanish Fort has grown economically since its incorporation as well. Once just a small community along I-10 and across the bay from the City of Mobile, Spanish Fort has grown its own economic base with commercial centers at the Eastern Shore Centre and the Spanish Fort Town Center.

Several recent annexations of land around Spanish Fort, particularly the Highlands of Spanish Fort, have greatly expanded the City boundaries and more than doubled its size. The Highlands of Spanish Fort is part of a regional master planned community, envisioned for land previously owned by International Paper Realty. Governed by a Large Scale Planned Unit Development (L.S.P.U.D.), approved by the City of Spanish Fort, and planned by International Paper Realty with smart growth principals, the approximately 11,000 acre area will incorporate residential development with nodes of commercial and retail development. Additionally, several elementary, middle, and high school sites have also been incorporated into the master plan.

Map 1-1 City of Spanish Fort Community Context Map



2 Community Assessment

The Community Assessment section provides an overview of existing conditions in and around the City of Spanish Fort. It includes an analysis of available data, as well as information collected from community surveys related to issues and opportunities facing the community. With some of the data analysis, information related to Baldwin County generally is used in place of the City of Spanish Fort. The reason for the differing geographic study areas is to capture the new or possible annexation areas and to provide more current data than the 2000 U.S. Census. The data and survey are used to prepare the Goals and Objectives, Community Plan, and Implementation Sections of this Plan.

2.1 Key Issues and Opportunities

A number of community issues and opportunities were identified by Spanish Fort citizens and stakeholders through public dialogue. Additional issues have been identified through the process of community analysis. The lists of issues and opportunities provide a concise indication of the type of objectives that Spanish Fort should strive to achieve through planning and implementation.

Figure 2-1: Identifying issues and opportunities at a public meeting



2.1.1 Key Issues

Certain key issues have been identified with respect to planning for the future of Spanish Fort. These issues include development on the Causeway, the potential expansion (widening) of Highway 31, and future development of several large parcels in the City which have remained undeveloped for many years.

Table 2-1 Key Issues

Issue	Description
The Causeway	The character of the Causeway must be defined, and appropriate guidelines must be established for evaluating future development proposals that will impact the Causeway.
Highway 31	The proposed widening of Highway 31 through the heart of Spanish Fort poses the risk of an undesirable change to the fabric of the City, but it is also an opportunity to shape the character of the roadway which can help define and further connect the City's physical form.
City Center Future Development	The inevitable future development of several large undeveloped parcels in the City will result in significant changes that can be very positive if properly planned and designed.
The Highlands of Spanish Fort	The need for orderly and advanced planning to address needed infrastructure and services for the proposed development.

2.1.2 Key Opportunities

The City of Spanish Fort has two key opportunities to realize significant changes and improvements to the City's civic space. These opportunities include new civic use developments and additional or enhanced park and public access uses around the Causeway.

Table 2-2 Key Opportunities

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Description</i>
Defined Civic Center	The opportunity to create a civic center for the City can bring together multiple uses and reinforce the sense of place. While the development of a true town center will require a partnership with businesses, residents, and institutions, the City of Spanish Fort must take a strong leadership role and commit resources for new public facilities and greenspace.
Major Park/Preserve	An equally significant key opportunity is the establishment of a major park/preserve in the Mobile Bay environment on the Causeway. Building on the land areas that are currently public-owned and partially accessible, the complete preservation of a Coastal Preserve District and provision of facilities for passive recreation, eco-tourism and environmental education will result in an amenity that will become a focal point of the Gulf Coast area.

2.2 Population

The following section presents a summary of population characteristics and trends. The summary was prepared using data obtained from the 2000 Census from the United States Census Bureau (Census). The data includes demographic information for the City of Spanish Fort, and in some cases, data is provided for several surrounding cities and counties as well as the State of Alabama for comparison. Where statements are made about surrounding communities or jurisdictions, the jurisdictions included are the City of Mobile, Baldwin County, and the State of Alabama.

2.2.1 Population Projections

With the recent annexation of The Highlands of Spanish Fort (The Highlands), the City of Spanish Fort is in a position to experience tremendous growth over the next 40 years. Additionally, because The Highlands will have phased development, it is difficult to project future population growth as it will be tied to market trends and other development driven factors. With these facts in mind, two scenarios have been developed to capture the range of potential future growth scenarios.

The first range of Spanish Fort's projected population for 2015 and 2025 is 8,065 and 9,758, respectively. These projections are based on two assumptions. The first assumption is that Spanish Fort will share a portion of Baldwin County's projected population growth. Baldwin County's projections have been generated by the University of Alabama's Center for Business and Economic Research. The second assumption is that The Highlands of Spanish Fort will experience no growth through 2025.

The second range of Spanish Fort's projected population for 2015 and 2025 is 21,751 and 42,995, respectively. This range of projections represents an even greater rate of development with the

assumption that The Highlands will reach build out, or 78,000 residents, in 2050. The number of residents at build out is estimated using the estimated maximum number of dwelling units (29,964 dwelling units) and multiplied by the average household size for Spanish Fort in 2000 of 2.61 persons per household. While this estimate may be higher than actual population growth, it does capture the maximum number of residents that could be a part of Spanish Fort over the next 20 years.

Most likely, Spanish Fort's future population will fall somewhere between the no Highlands growth scenario and the maximum build out scenario with The Highlands. Spanish Fort should manage its capital investments appropriately to accommodate this future growth. Accordingly, Spanish Fort's municipal service delivery should be evaluated regularly to ensure that both the current and future needs of its residents are and will be met.

Table 2-3 Population Projections

Projection Type	1990 Population	2000 Population	2015 Projected Population	2025 Projected Population
Spanish Fort – No Highlands	3,732	5,423	8,065	9,758
Spanish Fort – Highlands Complete Build Out at 2050	3,732	5,423	21,751	42,995
Baldwin County	98,280	140,415	184,375	227,727

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (1990 and 2000 Data), Estimates prepared by University of Alabama Center for Business and Economic Research and MACTEC

2.2.2 Historic Population

Table 2-4 below highlights the historical population trends for Spanish Fort and the surrounding jurisdictions. Both Spanish Fort and Baldwin County experienced significant population growth that exceeded that of neighboring Mobile and the State over the period from 1990-2000. For the period from 2000-2006, the population estimates indicate that Spanish Fort has a similar growth rate to that of the state. However, given the recent annexations of areas surrounding Spanish Fort, the population and growth rate should fall between that of Spanish Fort (estimated by U.S. Census based on historical population and growth rates) and Baldwin County.

Table 2-4 Historic Population

Area	1990	2000	2006	% Change 1990-2000	% Change 2000-2006
Spanish Fort	3,732	5,423	5,601	45%	3%
Mobile (City)	196,278	198,915	192,830	1%	-3%
Baldwin County	98,280	140,415	169,162	43%	20%
State of Alabama	4,040,587	4,447,100	4,599,030	10%	3%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

2.2.3 Race

The majority of Spanish Fort's population (approximately 94%) is white. This proportion is higher than Baldwin County, Mobile, and the State as a whole. Approximately 5% of Spanish Fort's population is African American with the remaining 1% composed of other races.

Table 2-5 Population by Race

Area	White	% of Total	African American	% of Total	Other Races	% of Total
Spanish Fort	5,109	94%	247	5%	104	1%
Mobile (City)	101,736	51%	92,888	46%	6,476	3%
Baldwin County	123,709	87%	14,722	10%	3,498	3%
State of Alabama	3,199,953	71%	1,168,998	26%	125,277	3%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000)

2.2.4 Age

Spanish Fort has a similar age distribution in general to that of the surrounding jurisdictions as well as the State of Alabama (See Table 2-6 below). One particular difference, however, is associated with the age group 20-34 years old. Compared with other jurisdictions and the state, this age group as a percentage of the total population is much lower. This may indicate that Spanish Fort is not retaining a sufficient number of residents after high school graduation and may present an opportunity to adopt policies which would help attract residents in this age group.

Table 2-6 Population by Age

Category	Spanish Fort	% of Total	Baldwin County	% of Total	Mobile (City)	% of Total	State of Alabama	% of Total
Under 5 years	314	5.8	14,480	7.3	8,621	6.1	295,992	6.7
5 to 9 years	393	7.2	15,100	7.6	9,486	6.8	315,345	7.1
10 to 14 years	459	8.5	14,495	7.3	10,144	7.2	320,252	7.2
15 to 19 years	367	6.8	14,754	7.4	9,463	6.7	324,580	7.3
20 to 24 years	169	3.1	15,387	7.7	7,092	5.1	306,865	6.9
25 to 34 years	456	8.4	27,076	13.6	17,020	12.1	603,015	13.6
35 to 44 years	966	17.8	28,613	14.4	21,908	15.6	685,512	15.4
45 to 54 years	846	15.6	25,207	12.7	19,609	14	600,209	13.5
55 to 59 years	272	5	8,830	4.4	8,276	5.9	225,450	5.1
60 to 64 years	221	4.1	7,700	3.9	7,093	5.1	190,082	4.3
65 to 74 years	403	7.4	13,778	6.9	12,355	8.8	316,748	7.1
75 to 84 years	343	6.3	9,968	5	7,184	5.1	195,749	4.4
85 years and over	214	3.9	3,527	1.8	2,164	1.5	67,301	1.5
Total	5423	100	198,915	100	140,415	100	4,447,100	100

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000)

2.2.5 Household Size

The average household size in Spanish Fort is 2.61 persons, which is higher than other jurisdictions in the region as well as the State of Alabama. The household size in the region ranges from 2.46 persons per household in Mobile to 2.5 persons per household in Baldwin County, as shown in Table 2-7.

Table 2-7 Average Household Size

Area	Avg. Household Size
Spanish Fort	2.61
Mobile (City)	2.46
Baldwin County	2.5
State of Alabama	2.49

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000)

2.2.6 Summary

The data summarized above indicates that Spanish Fort is generally consistent with its surrounding area and the State as a whole. The two main differences are identified in the racial distribution and certain age groups. Some of the differences may be due to historical racial or age demographics for the area.

2.3 Economic Development

This section presents economic and employment data for the City, with information from surrounding jurisdictions used for comparison in some cases. Data collected for this section is a combination of estimates for 2006 created by the U.S. Census, and where 2006 estimates were not available, the 2000 U.S. Census was used. In addition, the smallest geographic unit for which the 2006 estimates are provided is at the county level. Given this fact, Baldwin County estimates are used in place of Spanish Fort. While this does not provide a precise analysis, it does allow for general trends to be identified for the City as well as the surrounding area.

2.3.1 Educational Attainment

Educational attainment for Spanish Fort and surrounding areas is shown in Table 2-8. Spanish Fort has a higher percentage (92% compared to 75% at the State level) of those residents with more than a high school diploma than surrounding areas and the State. In addition, Spanish Fort has a higher percentage (39% compared to 19% at the State level) of residents with a Bachelors Degree or higher. Both of these facts indicate that Spanish Fort has a higher level of educational attainment when compared to the State.

Table 2-8 Educational Attainment

Area	Total Pop ¹	Less than High School Diploma		High School Graduate		Some College		Associate Degree		Bachelors Degree or Higher	
		Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Spanish Fort	3,620	294	8%	850	23%	824	23%	237	7%	1,415	39%
Mobile City	124,672	24,301	19%	34,022	27%	28,092	23%	7,160	6%	31,097	25%
Baldwin County	96,010	17,258	18%	28,428	30%	22,456	23%	5,722	6%	22,146	23%
State of Alabama	2,887,400	714,081	25%	877,216	30%	591,055	20%	155,440	5%	549,608	19%

1. For population over 25 years

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000)

2.3.2 Income

Table 2-9 shows the household income distribution in Baldwin County (2006) compared with other area jurisdictions. In general, Baldwin County has a greater percentage of its population with higher household incomes than those of Mobile and the State of Alabama. On the opposite end of the income range, Baldwin County has a lower percentage of low income households than Mobile and the state. Both of these facts are highlighted by the higher median household income for Baldwin County (\$44,878) when compared to Mobile (\$37,439) and Alabama (\$38,783) as a whole.

Table 2-9 Household Income Distribution

Category	Baldwin County	% of Total	Mobile (City)	% of Total	State of Alabama	% of Total
Less than \$10,000	3,858	5%	11,344	16%	250,526	14%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	3,591	5%	4,836	7%	140,880	8%
\$15,000 to \$19,999	4,133	6%	4,567	6%	129,167	7%
\$20,000 to \$24,999	4,062	6%	4,319	6%	128,226	7%
\$25,000 to \$29,999	4,592	7%	5,108	7%	120,871	7%
\$30,000 to \$34,999	6,048	9%	4,198	6%	115,861	6%
\$35,000 to \$39,999	5,028	7%	3,666	5%	106,812	6%
\$40,000 to \$44,999	3,980	6%	3,688	5%	96,188	5%
\$45,000 to \$49,999	3,894	6%	3,405	5%	83,612	5%
\$50,000 to \$59,999	5,956	8%	5,515	8%	144,454	8%
\$60,000 to \$74,999	7,473	11%	7,030	10%	153,893	9%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	7,456	11%	5,912	8%	134,135	7%
\$100,000 to \$124,999	4,739	7%	4,038	6%	59,526	3%
\$125,000 to \$149,999	2,045	3%	1,530	2%	26,461	1%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1,889	3%	1,084	1%	22,171	1%
\$200,000 or more	1,683	2%	2,817	4%	24,602	1%
Total Households	70,427	100%	73,057	100%	1,796,058	100%
Median Household Income 1999	44,878	N/A	37,439	N/A	38,783	N/A

*Spanish Fort data for this category and year not available
 Source: U.S. Bureau of Census (2000)

Poverty and poverty rates is another way to look at the economic picture and health of an area. In Table 2-10, poverty rates are shown for Spanish Fort, Mobile, Baldwin County, and the State of Alabama. Spanish Fort has a significantly lower portion of its population below the poverty level when compared with surrounding jurisdictions. Additionally, Baldwin County has a relatively low poverty rate when compared to neighboring Mobile and the State of Alabama. These rates could indicate more job opportunities as well as higher paying jobs than the surrounding areas.

Table 2-10 Poverty

Category	Spanish Fort	Mobile City	Baldwin County	State of Alabama
2000 Total Population ¹	5,147	193,195	138,148	4,334,919
1999 Income Below the Poverty Level	145	40,864	14,018	698,097
Percent Below Poverty Level	3%	21%	10%	16%
1. Total Population for which poverty is determined				

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census (2000)

2.3.3 Labor Force and Employment

Table 2-11 illustrates the percentage of the population in the labor force and employed, compared to that of other nearby jurisdictions. These numbers provide additional insight beyond the unemployment rate since the unemployment rate reflects only those people who report that they are actively seeking work. For this portion of the assessment, Baldwin County is used to provide a more current estimate of the labor force distribution.

The percentage of males in the labor force in 2006 for Baldwin County was 69%, compared to rates of 63% and 67% respectively for Mobile and the state. Three percent of the males in the workforce in Baldwin County were unemployed, compared to 4% for Mobile and the state.

For women, 50% of women were in the labor force in Baldwin County, compared to 54% and 53% respectively for the surrounding areas. The 2% unemployment rate for women in Baldwin County is also lower than Mobile (5%) and the state (4%).

Table 2-11 Labor Force Participation

Category	Baldwin County	Mobile City	State of Alabama
Total Male Population	65,914	68,611	1,722,543
Males in Labor Force	45,372	43,208	1,157,233
% of Total Male Pop	69%	63%	67%
Unemployed Males	1816	2565	70,888
% of Total male Pop	3%	4%	4%
Males Not in Labor Force	20,542	25,403	503,360
% of Total Male Pop	31%	37%	29%
Total Female Population	70,462	80,787	1,890,963
Females in Labor Force	35,250	43,501	995,958
% of Total Female Pop	50%	54%	53%
Employed Females	33,517	39,685	936,731
% of Total Female Pop	48%	49%	50%
Unemployed Females	1,733	3,746	78,335
% of Total Female Pop	2%	5%	4%
Females Not In Labor Force	35,212	37,286	874,678
% of Total Female Pop	50%	46%	46%

Note: Population 16 years and older, Military Labor Force not included; Less than 1% of population in all categories

*Spanish Fort data for this category and year not available

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2006)

2.3.4 Work Experience

Table 2-12 illustrates work experience for Baldwin County residents. The table is broken down by income level and by gender and shows the number of citizens who work full-time at each income level versus the number who are either part-time employees or not employed. This data reveals information not suggested by Table 2-11 above; namely that although 69% of Baldwin County men are in the labor force, only 50% are employed on a full-time, year-round basis. The comparable numbers for women are 50% and 26%, respectively. Based on this information, even many employed Baldwin County residents are likely under-employed.

Table 2-12 Work Experience – Baldwin County

Category	Total		Male		Female	
	Worked Full-Time (1)	Other	Worked Full-Time (1)	Other	Worked Full-Time (1)	Other
Total	51,289	87,331	32,836	34,365	18,453	52,966
No Earnings	0	16,685	0	4,462	0	12,223
With Earnings	51,289	70,646	32,836	29,903	18,453	40,743
\$1 to \$2,499 or loss	113	7,317	55	3,091	58	4,226
\$2,500 to \$4,999	0	5,842	0	1,494	0	4,348
\$5,000 to \$7,499	437	8,942	129	1,895	308	7,047
\$7,500 to \$9,999	55	5,147	55	1,825	0	3,322
\$10,000 to \$12,499	1,572	5,862	496	1,659	1,076	4,203
\$12,500 to \$14,999	802	3,813	578	1,332	224	2,481
\$15,000 to \$17,499	2,373	4,303	1,344	1,876	1,029	2,427
\$17,500 to \$19,999	1,737	2,444	1,024	1,084	713	1,360
\$20,000 to \$22,499	3,424	3,590	1,909	1,849	1,515	1,741
\$22,500 to \$24,999	1,492	2,337	723	1,071	769	1,266
\$25,000 to \$29,999	6,231	4,165	3,191	2,432	3,040	1,733
\$30,000 to \$34,999	7,126	3,011	4,856	1,529	2,270	1,482
\$35,000 to \$39,999	3,245	3,422	2,105	1,320	1,140	2,102
\$40,000 to \$44,999	2,978	2,121	1,978	1,313	1,000	808
\$45,000 to \$49,999	3,022	1,418	1,797	805	1,225	613
\$50,000 to \$54,999	3,362	975	2,228	711	1,134	264
\$55,000 to \$64,999	3,481	2,020	2,365	1,694	1,116	326
\$65,000 to \$74,999	2,652	883	1,957	697	695	186
\$75,000 to \$99,999	3,390	954	2,749	775	641	179
\$100,000 or more	3,797	2,080	3,297	1,451	500	629

(1) Worked Full-Time, year round

*Spanish Fort data for this category and year not available
 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2006)

2.3.5 Occupations

The types of occupations for Baldwin County workers are shown in Table 2-13. Overall, Baldwin County's occupation distribution is even among most sectors. The largest employment sector overall is Management, Professional, and related occupations, making up close to 32% of the occupations. Looking at gender, the Management, Professional, and related occupations is the largest occupation for both males and females. In addition to the Management/Professional occupations, the other job sectors are evenly distributed among the different categories overall.

Table 2-13 Occupations in Baldwin County

<i>Category</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Total	76,947	43,430	33,517
Management, professional, and related occupations:	24,938	11,576	13,362
Service occupations:	13,329	6,203	7,126
Healthcare support occupations	565	251	314
Protective service occupations:	1,989	1,839	150
Fire fighting and prevention, and other protective service workers including supervisors	1,143	993	150
Law enforcement workers including supervisors	846	846	0
Food preparation and serving related occupations	6,279	1,521	4,758
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations	3,320	2,453	867
Personal care and service occupations	1,176	139	1,037
Sales and office occupations:	18,062	7,376	10,686
Sales and related occupations	9,095	5,057	4,038
Office and administrative support occupations	8,967	2,319	6,648
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	733	733	0
Construction, extraction, maintenance, and repair occupations:	11,161	10,526	635
Construction and extraction occupations	6,858	6,268	590
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	4,303	4,258	45
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations:	8,724	7,016	1,708
Production occupations	4,997	3,705	1,292
Transportation and material moving occupations:	3,727	3,311	416

*Spanish Fort data for this category and year not available
 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2006)

2.3.6 Business Types

Table 2-14 includes data obtained from the 2002 Economic Census conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. The table summarizes the types of businesses in Baldwin County, including the number of establishments, number of jobs, payroll, and revenues. In some cases, information is not provided in order to avoid revealing information of individual businesses.

For Baldwin County, the largest business type is retail, both in terms of the number of establishments and the number of employees. Below retail trade, business types are evenly distributed between real estate, health care, professional services, and accommodations industries. While this does not pinpoint the exact distribution for Spanish Fort, it does highlight the balanced business base within Baldwin County.

Table 2-14 Types of Businesses in Baldwin County (2002)

NAICS Code	Industry Description	Number of Establishments	Sales, shipments, receipts, or revenue	Annual Payroll (Thousands)	Number of Employees
31-33	Manufacturing	145	1,171,949	153,866	4,957
42	Wholesale trade	179	979,646	59,276	1,553
44-45	Retail trade	946	1,820,932	175,379	9,504
51	Information	69	N/A	58,676	1,064
53	Real estate, rental and leasing	244	165,018	37,321	1,466
54	Professional, scientific, and technical services	339	132,431	49,108	1,577
56	Administrative, support, waste management and remediation service	172	84,051	34,437	2,418
61	Educational services	17	2,187	419	47
62	Health care and social assistance	329	302,962	130,493	4,556
71	Arts, entertainment, and recreation	56	64,933	15,990	1,064
72	Accommodation and food services	319	274,788	77,917	6,010
81	Other services (except public administration)	263	77,488	21,825	1,169

*Spanish Fort data for this category and year not available
 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2002)

2.3.7 Summary

In general, the economic data for Spanish Fort and Baldwin County indicates an area with a high level of educational attainment and a balanced economic base of jobs and businesses. Income is generally higher compared to the surrounding areas and the State, with only a minor indication of underemployment. For future economic development, Spanish Fort should continue to develop a balance of jobs and business types while also paying attention to job opportunities in neighboring areas, especially Mobile. Additionally, Spanish Fort should continue to concentrate on having a high level of educational attainment with all age groups. While the development of quality elementary, middle, and high schools is part of the equation, additional educational opportunities such as access to higher education and vocational schools should be looked at further.

2.3.8 Issues and Opportunities

Issues

- Large undeveloped properties in key locations near the center of the City and the potential environmental and social impacts of development of those land areas.

Opportunities

- Develop a town square and civic gathering place, including a municipal complex, a community/senior center, a full-service post office, and locations for various retail commercial and service-oriented businesses, to develop an attractive, pedestrian-oriented downtown environment;
- Change and shape the character of the City through carefully planned development of the several large properties that remain undeveloped in key locations in the City;
- Potentially expand City limits into large areas of unincorporated land to the east and north of the City;
- Establish strong commercial tax base, building on the two recent large commercial developments and good access from Interstate 10;
- Build on reputation of strong institutions and great schools; and
- Develop local professional facilities, including medical facilities and services.

2.4 Housing

The following section is a brief summary of publicly available housing data obtained from the United States Census Bureau (Census). The data includes information for Baldwin County, City of Mobile, and the State of Alabama. As in previous sections, Baldwin County is used to identify trends that are more current than the 2000 Census as well as to capture the new or future areas of annexation.

2.4.1 Housing Units

Baldwin County had a reported total of 96,349 housing units as estimated by the Census Bureau in 2006. Additionally, Baldwin County experienced a 30% increase in the number of housing units between 2000-2006. This pace of development greatly exceeded that of the City of Mobile and the State.

Table 2-15 Housing Units

Area	Total Housing Units		% Increase
	2000	2006	
Baldwin County	74,285	96,349	30%
Mobile City	86,152	87,297	1%
State of Alabama	1,963,711	2,110,139	7%

*Spanish Fort data for this category and year not available
 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Table 2-16 below shows the distribution of owner occupied compared to renter occupied housing units. When compared to Mobile and the State, Baldwin County has a slightly higher owner occupied percentage and slightly lower renter occupied percentage.

Table 2-16 Housing Units: Owner/Renter Occupied (2006)

Area	Total Occupied	Owner Occupied	% of Occupied Units	Renter Occupied	% of Occupied Units
Baldwin County	167,905	126,817	76%	41,088	24%
Mobile City	189,201	122,780	65%	66,421	35%
State of Alabama	4,483,875	3,313,673	74%	1,170,202	26%

*Spanish Fort data for this category and year not available
 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2006)

In terms of the age of the housing stock for Baldwin County, the majority of the housing stock was built after 1970. Additionally, the median year for year built in Baldwin County is 1991. Both of these facts are in line with the historical growth trends for the area and highlight the fact that Baldwin County has been an area of significant growth over the past 30 years.

Table 2-17 Age of Housing Units

Category	Baldwin County	% of Total	Mobile City	% of Total	State of Alabama	% of Total
Built 2005 or later	2,281	2%	586	1%	30,753	1%
Built 2000 to 2004	19,489	20%	2,648	3%	180,359	9%
Built 1990 to 1999	30,225	31%	6,241	7%	400,648	19%
Built 1980 to 1989	18,723	19%	11,635	13%	334,836	16%
Built 1970 to 1979	11,969	12%	19,506	22%	408,149	19%
Built 1960 to 1969	5,485	6%	16,775	19%	277,070	13%
Built 1950 to 1959	4,003	4%	14,686	17%	218,348	10%
Built 1940 to 1949	1,852	2%	8,412	10%	115,218	5%
Built 1939 or earlier	2,322	2%	6,808	8%	144,758	7%
Total Housing Units	96,349	N/A	87,297	N/A	2,110,139	N/A
Median Year Built	1991	N/A	1968	N/A	1977	N/A

*Spanish Fort data for this category and year not available
 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2006)

A component to consider when examining the housing market is the distribution of households by type. While it might be surprising to note that Baldwin County has a lower percentage of single-unit housing structures compared to the City of Mobile, the difference is off-set by the large percentage of mobile homes. While a more detailed analysis and distribution is not available for 2006, the general trends can be extrapolated. Given the high rate of mobile homes and the geographic location to Mobile Bay and the Gulf of Mexico, Spanish Fort should provide special attention to the number of mobile homes. Additionally, the percentage of single-family to multi-family units should be monitored to ensure affordability and transportation options are paired well with housing options.

Table 2-18 Distribution of Housing Type

Structure Type	Baldwin County		Mobile (City)		State of Alabama	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Single Unit Structure	48,934	69%	55,730	76%	1,293,801	72%
In Multi-Unit Structure	8,574	12%	16,540	23%	251,620	14%
Mobile Homes	12,919	18%	787	1%	250,637	14%
Total	70,427	100%	73,057	100%	1,796,058	100%

*Spanish Fort data for this category and year not available
 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2006)

2.4.2 Housing Cost

Table 2-19 below summarizes some of the costs associated with renting and home ownership. According to the 2006 U.S. Census estimates, Baldwin County has the highest median gross rent and the lowest median gross rent as a percentage of household income when compared to the City of Mobile and the State. This fact indicates higher incomes with a greater ability to pay and a lower percentage of one's income going to housing costs. Likewise, Baldwin County has a higher median home value than the City of Mobile and the State by almost 60%. This fact also indicates higher income levels and ability to pay for housing costs compared to surrounding areas and the state as a whole.

Table 2-19 Rental and Owner Costs

Category	Baldwin County	Mobile City	State of Alabama
Median Gross Rent	\$771	\$614	\$573
Median Gross Rent As Percentage of Household Income	27.5%	31.4%	29.1%
Median Home Value	\$167,200	\$105,300	\$107,000
Owner Occupied Housing Costs as Percentage of Household Income (w/ mortgages)	23.2%	21.7%	21.7%

*Spanish Fort data for this category and year not available
 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2006)

To have a more detailed account of housing cost for homeowners, Table 2-20 shows the distribution of home values for Baldwin County in 2006. A majority of the housing values are clustered between \$100,000 and \$250,000. Given that Baldwin County has a normal and even distribution of home values, Spanish Fort should continue to support this trend by implementing policies that help to maintain affordable levels of homes that match corresponding income levels for its residents.

Table 2-20 Home Values – Baldwin County 2006

<i>Value of Owner-Occupied Properties</i>	<i>Number of Units</i>	<i>% of Total</i>
Less than \$10,000	399	1%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	979	2%
\$15,000 to \$19,999	140	0%
\$20,000 to \$24,999	563	1%
\$25,000 to \$29,999	955	2%
\$30,000 to \$34,999	307	1%
\$35,000 to \$39,999	475	1%
\$40,000 to \$49,999	507	1%
\$50,000 to \$59,999	1,775	3%
\$60,000 to \$69,999	550	1%
\$70,000 to \$79,999	1,517	3%
\$80,000 to \$89,999	1,599	3%
\$90,000 to \$99,999	2,300	4%
\$100,000 to \$124,999	5,754	11%
\$125,000 to \$149,999	4,567	9%
\$150,000 to \$174,999	5,548	11%
\$175,000 to \$199,999	3,198	6%
\$200,000 to \$249,999	7,297	14%
\$250,000 to \$299,999	2,599	5%
\$300,000 to \$399,999	4,662	9%
\$400,000 to \$499,999	2,893	6%
\$500,000 to \$749,999	2,267	4%
\$750,000 to \$999,999	836	2%
\$1,000,000 or more	731	1%
Total:	52,418	100%
Median Value: Owner-Occupied	167,200	N/A

*Spanish Fort data for this category and year not available
 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2006)

2.4.3 Housing Conditions

Looking at housing units lacking facilities is a way to assess the health of the available housing stock for an area. Compared to the City of Mobile and the State, Baldwin County has a lower percentage of facilities lacking plumbing or kitchen facilities. Given this fact, Spanish Fort should continue to support quality building code enforcement to ensure adequate and healthy living conditions for its residents.

Table 2-21 Housing Units Lacking Facilities

Category	Baldwin County	Mobile (City)	State of Alabama
Total Housing Units	96,349	87,297	2,110,139
Lacking Complete Plumbing Facilities	1,720	4,467	58,382
% Lacking Complete Plumbing Facilities	2%	5%	3%
Lacking Complete Kitchen Facilities	2,510	5,164	77,279
% Lacking Complete Kitchen Facilities	3%	6%	4%

**Spanish Fort data for this category and year not available
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2006)*

2.4.4 Summary

Spanish Fort and Baldwin County as a whole have a balanced distribution of rental and owner-occupied housing units that are matched well with the income levels of the area. While Spanish Fort will not be able to continue the housing growth rates experienced over the last thirty years, and in particular the last ten years, the City should continue to be strategic not only with the amount and type of housing to be built, but also with the location of the housing. In addition, Spanish Fort should continue to create an affordable housing market where income levels and the available housing stock are well paired.

2.4.5 Issues and Opportunities

Issues

- Persistent eyesores in the City, including dilapidated residential and commercial structures that result from poor property maintenance.

Opportunities

- Take necessary actions to address dilapidated structures and encourage maintenance of existing structures; and
- Integrate future development of The Highlands and other potential areas of annexation into neighborhood fabric of the City.

2.5 Historical and Cultural Resources

2.5.1 Community History

While only incorporated since 1993, the Spanish Fort area has a history that dates back before the American Revolutionary War. Originally founded as a French trading post, the Spanish built a fort in 1780 in present day Spanish Fort. While the fort experienced several stages of destruction and rebuilding between Spanish, British, and American forces over the years, its use peaked during the Civil War when Confederate forces built up the fort to defend Mobile and Mobile Bay. After the Civil War, the area lost population and remained largely undeveloped until the 1970s when development began to increase.

2.5.2 Historical and Cultural Resources

Meaher Park

Located along the Spanish Fort Causeway, Meaher Park is a State park situated in the wetlands of Mobile Bay. In addition to the camping and fishing amenities that the park provides, it also provides access to natural areas with nature trails.

Five Rivers Delta Resource Center

The State of Alabama owns and operates the Five Rivers Delta Resource Center ("Five Rivers") as part of the Gateway to the Delta Project. Five Rivers has wonderful facilities, including kayak launch, docks, meeting rooms, kitchen and a small theater, among other amenities. In addition, the Alabama Department of Conservation and other departments maintain facilities on the property. Among numerous programs offered at the facility, the City sponsors the Delta Woods & Water Expo program at this facility.

Figure 2-2: New boat docks at Five Rivers Delta Resource Center



Blakeley State Park

The current site of the park was originally established as the Town of Blakeley in 1814 as part of the Mississippi Territory. After reaching a maximum population of 4,000 in the 1820s, the town slowly dwindled with only a slight resurrection during the Civil War. During the Civil War, Fort Blakeley was established and housed up to 4,000 soldiers. Of special note is that the last major battle of the Civil War was actually fought on the grounds of the park. Today, the area that encompasses historical Blakeley is the largest site on the National Register of Historic Places east of the Mississippi River. In addition, the park is a part of the Civil War Discovery Trail which includes 300 sites throughout 16 states.

2.5.3 Issues and Opportunities

Issues

- Lack of emphasis on historic and cultural resources which are unique to the Spanish Fort area; and
- The lack of a town center or central place which could reinforce the civic identity of Spanish Fort.

Opportunities

- Build recognition for local cultural and historic resources (i.e. Blakeley State Park and other public facilities) and enhance tourism through development of local history museum and recognition of scenic and historic corridors; and
- Develop existing publicly-owned lands to encourage environmentally friendly use and access to the Mobile-Tensaw River Delta and Mobile Bay.

2.6 Environmental and Natural Resources

Spanish Fort is largely defined by its orientation to Mobile Bay (the Bay) and the surrounding natural features associated with it. Below is a summary of the main natural features.

2.6.1 Mobile Bay

The Bay is the fourth largest estuary in the United States and encompasses approximately 413 square miles. Additionally, Mobile Bay drains the fourth largest watershed in the United States in terms of flow volume and is the receiving basin for the sixth largest river system in the United States. Sixty-five percent of Alabama's land area drains into Mobile Bay. The Bay, along with the Tensaw and Mobile Rivers and several smaller tributaries, is a major estuary supporting both fresh and salt water species as well as providing nursery habitat for many commercial species. With varying widths (32 miles at its greatest), Mobile Bay is approximately 10 miles in width at Spanish Fort. With such an important natural feature adjacent to Spanish Fort, the City should take extra steps to mitigate its impact on natural resources as well as provide proper protection for both the plants and animals.

2.6.2 Bay Minette Creek

Bay Minette Creek is the main fresh water stream running through Spanish Fort. Predominately within the area of the Highlands of Spanish Fort development, the creek serves as the drainage basin for the area with regards to stormwater and run-off. Additionally, the area along both sides of the creek is designated as a greenway to help preserve its health and natural beauty.

2.6.3 Mobile Bay Causeway and Delta

Several sections of the Causeway are located on sensitive marshland. Some of the land is developed while other portions are preserved through designation as a State park (Meaher State Park) or undeveloped. As part of the overall ecosystem, the marshland associated with the Causeway should be treated with sensitivity and preserved where possible to reduce the environmental damage and ensure the health of the natural systems is preserved.

2.6.4 Summary

With Spanish Fort's ready access to the Mobile Bay shoreline and the Mobile-Tensaw Delta, the City has a unique resource upon which to build its economy and recreational opportunities. With access to boating, fishing and other recreational activities associated with Meaher State Park and other areas along the Bay and rivers, Spanish Fort has the opportunity to build its economy off of eco-tourism and other businesses associated with servicing the use of Mobile Bay. Coupled with the access and use of the Bay, the City must also take measures to preserve and enhance the natural features and wildlife. Some of these measures include preservation of land as well as mitigation policies to help limit the impacts of pollution. With both a strong preservation goal and the orientation of the City towards the Bay as both an economic and recreational resource, Mobile Bay will serve the City of Spanish Fort economically, socially, and environmentally.

2.6.5 Issues and Opportunities

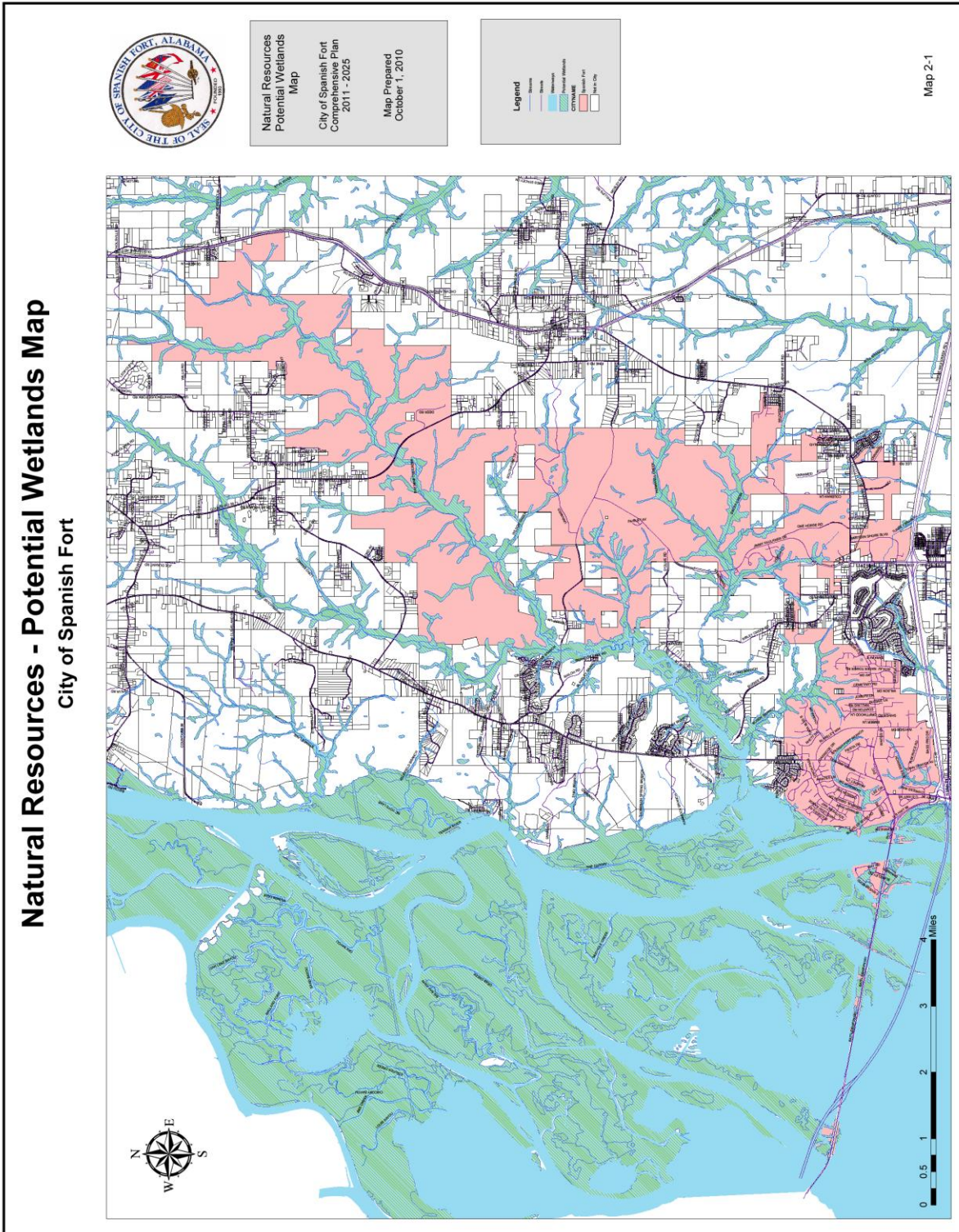
Issues

- The potential for storm or flood damage to properties and structures in the City, particularly along the Causeway; and
- The presence of numerous wetlands and creeks throughout the City.

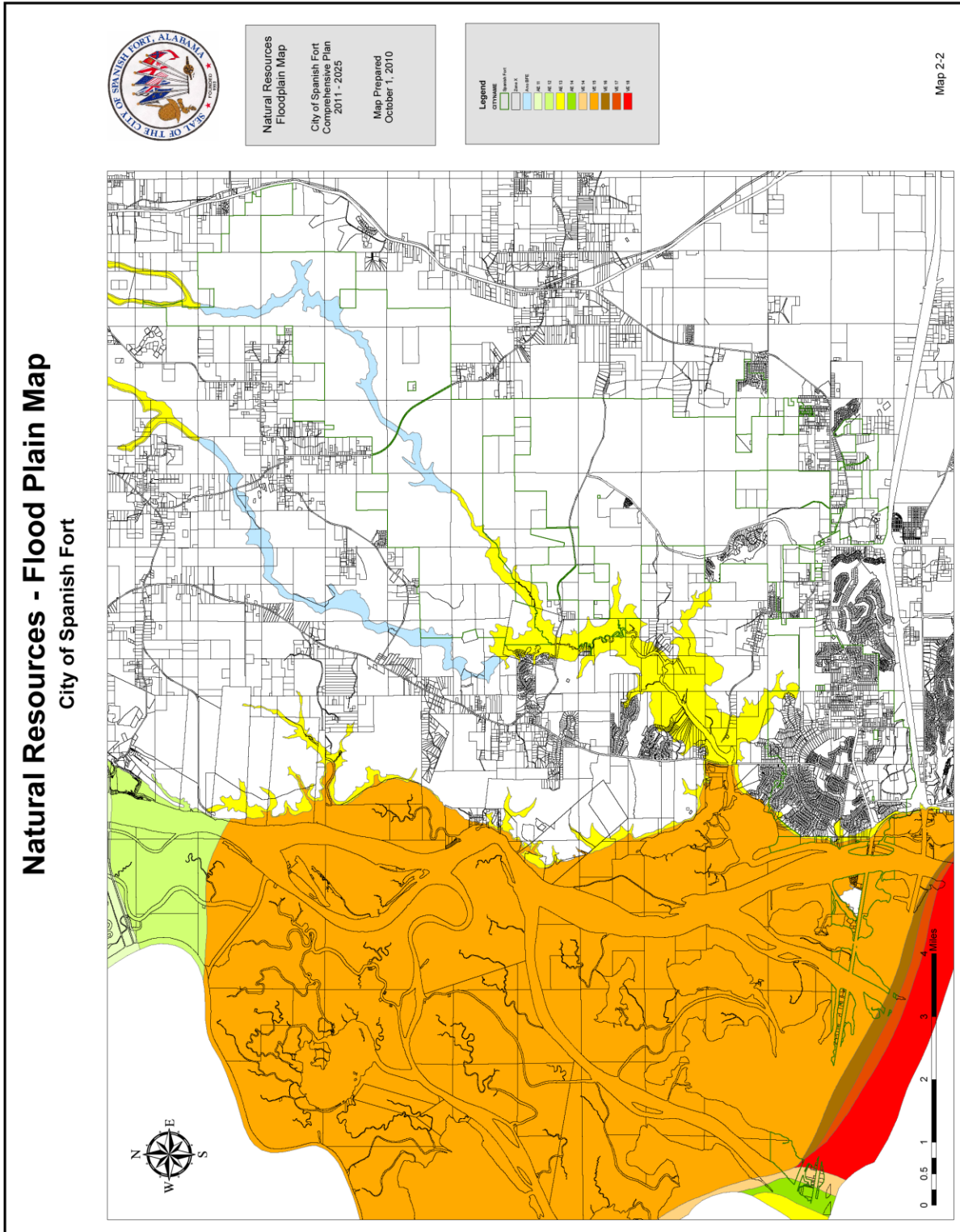
Opportunities

- Enhance access to publicly-owned land and the unique Mobile Bay environment within Spanish Fort, including public recreation opportunities such as boating access, eco-tourism opportunities, and improved non-motorized access with trails and boardwalks connecting mainland Spanish Fort to the Bay area;
- Preserve wetlands in undeveloped areas and establish greenway corridors across the City to form connections from neighborhoods to parks, investigate "green street" designs which minimize the run-off impact of streets and promote alternative design techniques that infiltrate run-off immediately at the roadway edges. Green street designs have been successfully employed even in urban settings;
- Promote native vegetation as a mechanism to reduce irrigation needs and a way to increase the infiltration performance of soils and landscape areas;
- Incorporate open spaces – including natural areas and more civic-oriented or constructed open spaces – into functional components of an overall watershed-based system;
- Minimize crossings or disruptions of sensitive areas, in exchange for greater connectivity in less sensitive areas. Where connections are essential to the overall development pattern, use low-impact design techniques that minimize disruptions;
- Implement conservation subdivision program as an available alternative to traditional subdivision developments; and
- Investigate ownership programs, either public, non-profit, or private, that ensure long-term management and maintenance of open spaces associated with conservation subdivisions.

Map 2-1 Natural Resources – Potential Wetlands Map



Map 2-2 Natural Resources – Floodplain Map



2.7 Infrastructure, Facilities and Services

2.7.1 Water Supply and Treatment

Spanish Fort's water supply and treatment is provided as part of a coordinated system between Spanish Fort Water System, North Baldwin Utilities, Daphne Utilities and Mobile Area Water and Sewer System. Spanish Fort will have to continue coordination with adjacent municipalities and service providers to ensure adequate water supply and treatment service. For a map of the current service area, see associated maps at the end of this Section 2.7.

2.7.2 Sanitary and Wastewater Treatment

Sanitary and wastewater treatment for Spanish Fort is currently handled by Daphne Utilities and Baldwin County Sewer Service (BCSS). Daphne Utilities primarily handles the west side of the City with BCSS handling the east side of the City. Additionally, the City of Spanish Fort has authorized BCSS to expand service into the City to help service new developments as well as provide service to current residents in need of sewer service. With both services, treatment is handled outside of the Spanish Fort City limits. For a map of the current service area, see associated maps at the end of this Section 2.7.

2.7.3 Public Safety

Currently, Spanish Fort has both a police and a volunteer fire department serving the community. The police department has one station and well staffed department serving the City. The fire department has two fire stations and approximately 32 volunteer members serving the City. As Spanish Fort continues to grow, the City should evaluate these services to ensure adequate response times and safety. For a map of the current service delivery, see associated maps at the end of this Section 2.7.

2.7.4 Solid Waste Management

Currently, solid waste disposal is handled by both public and private providers in Spanish Fort. Trash disposal, both commercial and residential, is handled by various private providers. Recycling is available door-to-door by private providers, and Baldwin County Solid Waste provides two recycling drop-off locations within the City, one at the Five Rivers Delta Resource Center and the other at the Spanish Fort Kids Park.

2.7.5 Stormwater Management

The City of Spanish Fort has entered into an interjurisdictional agreement with Baldwin County, the City of Daphne and the City of Fairhope for the purpose of obtaining a new NPDES permit for the management and regulation of storm water.

2.7.6 Public Works

The Public Works department of Spanish Fort is currently located at City Hall and is primarily responsible for maintenance activities. Most of the activities are associated with public property and City owned right-of-way.

2.7.7 Public Facilities

Spanish Fort's public facilities include a City Hall and Police Station. Primarily used for administration, most of the City services and departments are located and administered at City Hall.

2.7.8 Parks and Recreation

The City has two parks that it owns and services at this time. Spirit Park is a new park which features three ball fields, eight tennis courts, a concession stand and walking trail, among other amenities. The Kid's Park is located behind City Hall and includes a large playground for children. The City provides funding for local athletic associations, and the City has made a significant investment in baseball fields, softball fields, football fields and soccer fields at Spanish Fort High School. The City has the right to use these facilities through a user agreement with the Baldwin County Board of Education. In addition, there are several state and county parks in or near the City.

Figure 2-3: Spirit Park



2.7.9 Issues and Opportunities

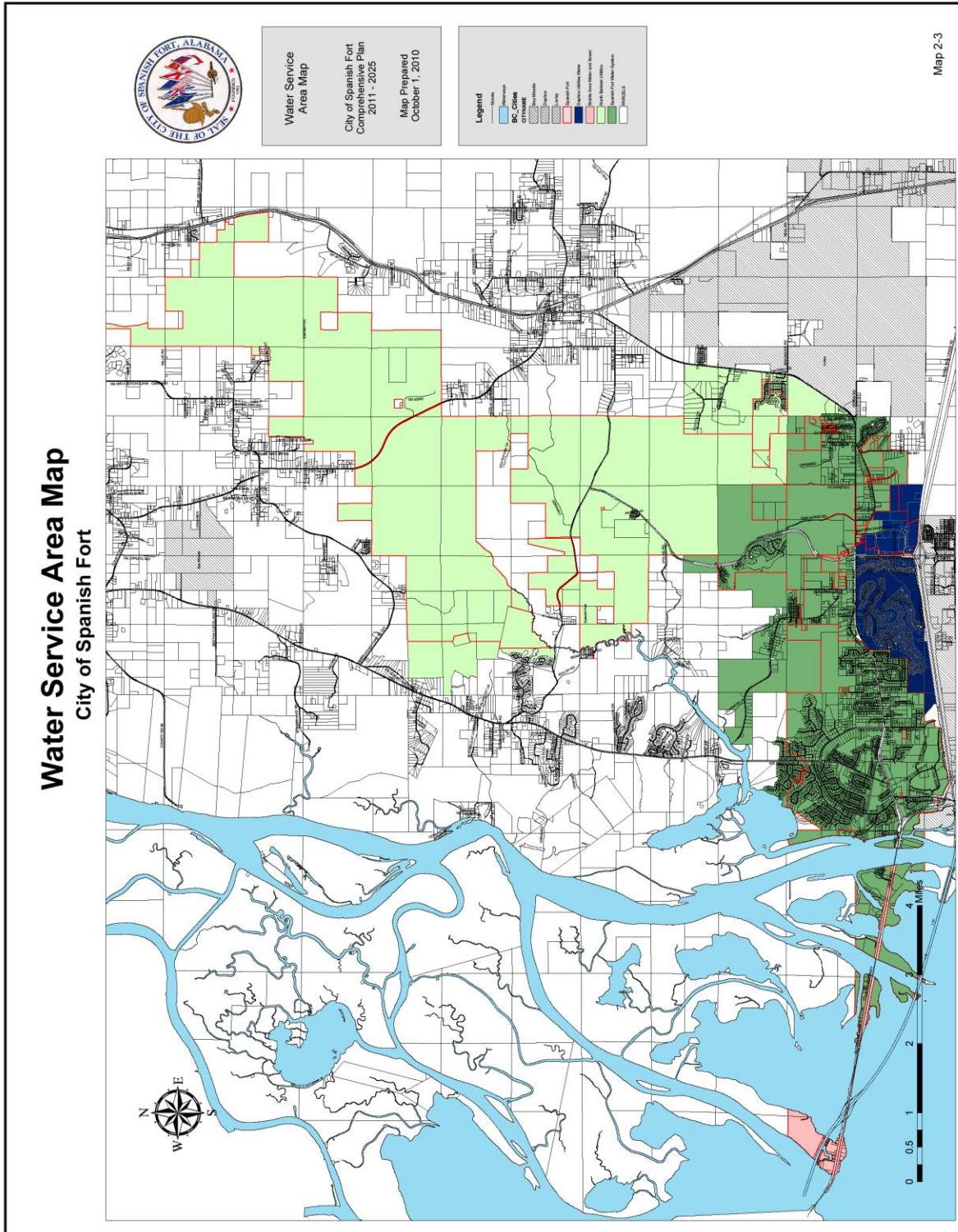
Issues

- The need to expand infrastructure, especially roads and sewers; and
- Challenges with intergovernmental coordination, including coordination with other municipalities, Baldwin County and the State of Alabama.

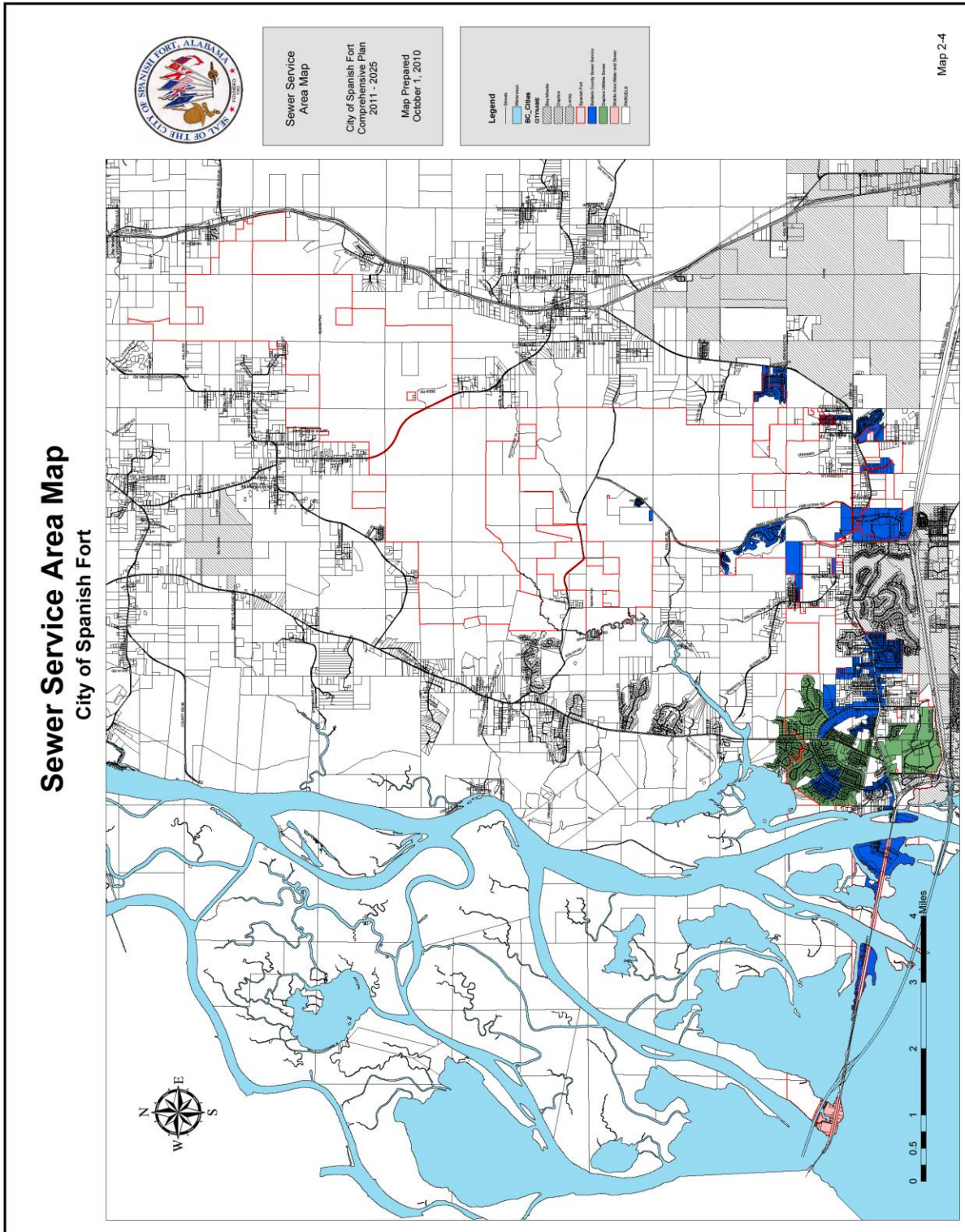
Opportunities

- Provide excellent local recreation opportunities by enhancing the City parks system with facilities such as a community center and other recreational amenities; and
- Expand infrastructure using utility easement corridors which currently exist throughout the City.

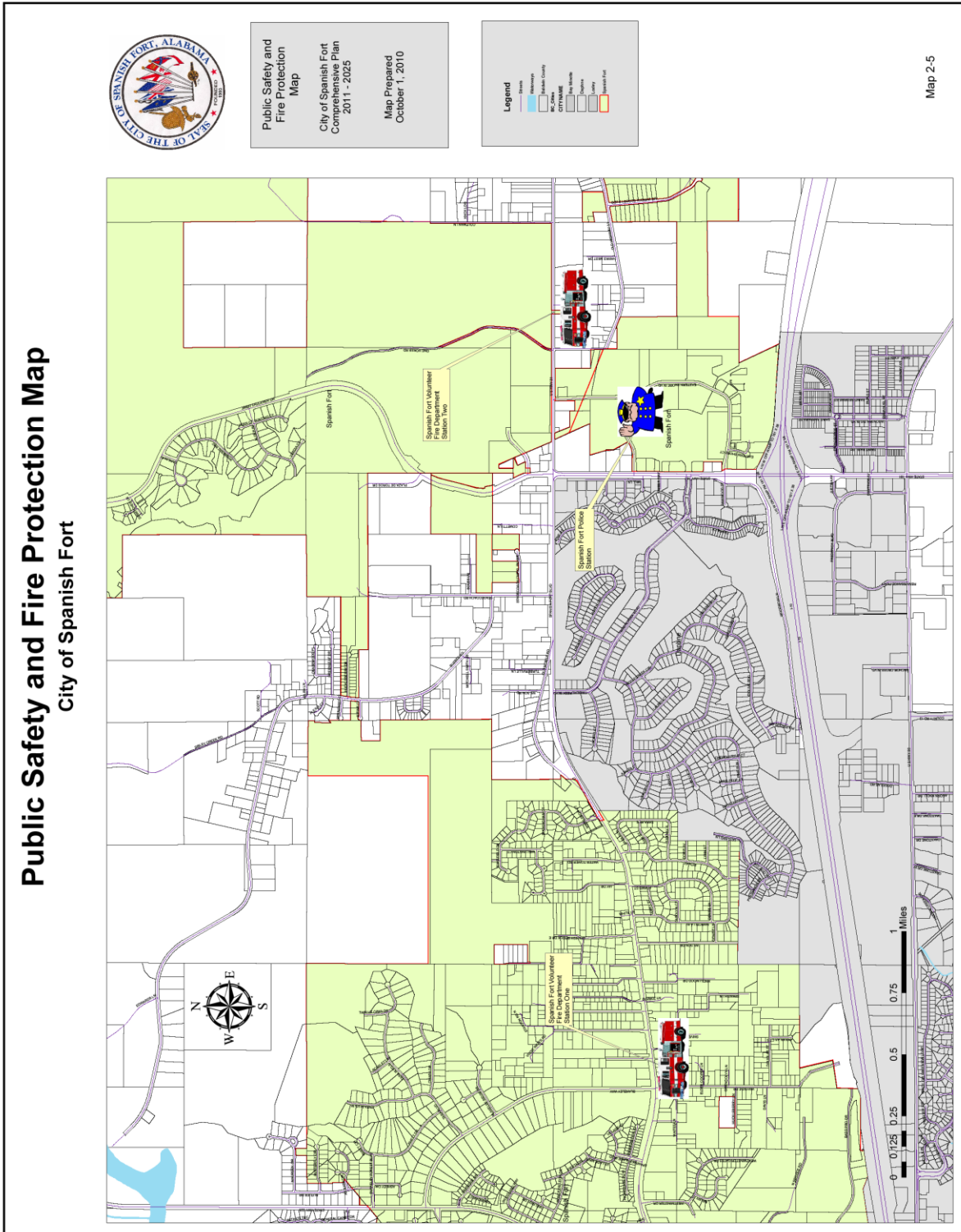
Map 2-3 Water Supply and Treatment



Map 2-4 Sewerage System and Wastewater



Map 2-5 Public Safety and Fire Protection



2.8 Transportation

The following subsections describe the transportation system in the City of Spanish Fort.

2.8.1 Road network

Map 2-6, Existing Transportation System, shows the transportation network including streets, highways and public transportation.

Interstate 10

Within the City of Spanish Fort, Interstate 10 runs along the southern edge of the City and extends across Mobile Bay to Mobile.

U.S. Highway 31

Highway 31 is a major transportation corridor within Spanish Fort and bisects the City from east to west. In addition to Interstate 10, Highway 31 connects Spanish Fort to Mobile across the Bay and the City of Bay Minette to the north. While Highway 31 is a major transportation corridor in the City, it also serves as a major economic corridor with commercial uses established along the road.

U.S. Highway 90/98

Highway 90 intersects with U.S. Highway 31 and runs along Mobile Bay. Highway 90/98 is also the main corridor which connects Spanish Fort to the City of Daphne and the City of Fairhope.

State Highway 225

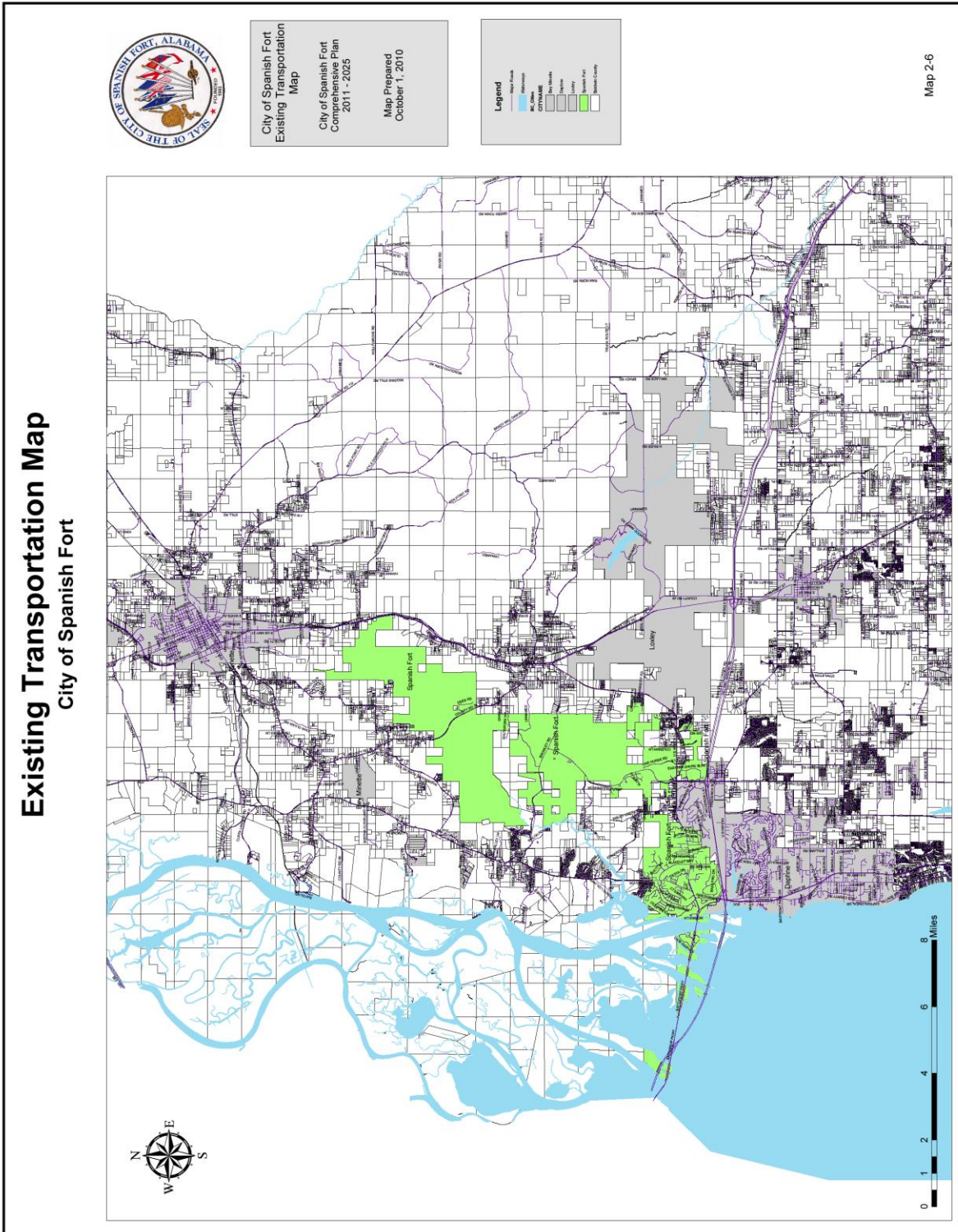
Highway 225 runs north and south through the western edge of the City, terminating at the intersection of Highway 225 and Highway 31. Highway 225 is the major connector to Blakeley and other areas to the north.

Traffic Considerations

Traffic signals should be considered at certain intersections to control major access points while encouraging good internal site circulation for other access points. Additional roads to create a better grid network within the City should also be considered. This concept will accomplish two objectives. First, the additional roadways will help alleviate traffic volumes along Highway 31 by providing trip alternatives to other areas of Spanish Fort. Second, the new grid network will help create connectivity and reduce trip distances for residents in some instances. The City should consider the realignment of roads and intersections when possible to aid in traffic control on Highway 31 and other transportation corridors.

With the new commercial developments and the projected future growth within Spanish Fort, it is clear that roadway improvements would be beneficial. Future development and land use decisions should be made with reference to this Comprehensive Plan to ensure that development is served appropriately by the transportation network in Spanish Fort.

Map 2-6 Existing Transportation System



2.8.2 Issues and Opportunities

Issues

- Major roadways in the center of the community (Highway 31) which carry through traffic across Mobile Bay;
- Traffic problems associated with congested intersections, Interstate 10, the Causeway and the tendency for congestion at bottleneck locations where tunnels are required for access into Mobile; and
- Traffic from south of the City including Interstate 10 along the southern border of the City.

Opportunities

- Improve community appeal and quality of life by enhancing highway corridors which serve as gateways to the City. Enhancements may include connected sidewalks, improvements for bicycle safety, improved street lighting, and extensive landscaping at gateway locations and along corridors;
- Enhance the local road system by making strategic connections to form a more complete distributed network of streets;
- Develop public transportation and other services in coordination with City growth;
- Determine the feasibility as well as the desirability of either public or private transit within the City; determine preferable routes and destinations for the system;
- Work proactively with the County and State DOT regarding transportation facility designs that achieve the City's planning goals;
- Review all site development plans for pedestrian circulation that integrates with the neighborhood-scale circulation system; and
- Consider appropriate alternate connectivity for bicycle and pedestrian connections in any circumstance where disconnections of the street system are proposed.

2.9 Land Use and Zoning

A key element in the planning process is an inventory of existing land uses and current development patterns in the City. An analysis of the zoning district regulations which govern the use of the property within the City also provides key information for the City. The sections that follow provide an outline of the existing land use and the existing zoning for the City. Identification and location of existing land uses within the City was assisted by the existing land use and zoning map records from the City.

2.9.1 Existing Land Use

An existing land use map displays the development on the ground categorized into groups of similar types of use at a given point in time. For purposes of this analysis, the City of Spanish Fort Existing Land Use map, shown in Map 2-7 and Map 2-8, depicts land uses as of July 2009. Table 2-22 provides the acreage of existing land uses. The categories are defined in the following paragraphs.

Table 2-22 Existing Land Use

Existing Land Use	Acreage	Percentage
Commercial	712	3.7%
Forest/Unused	15,489	81.6%
Professional Office	28	0.1%
Parks and Recreation	403	2.1%
Public / Institutional	233	1.2%
Residential High Density	52	0.3%
Residential Medium Density	28	0.1%
Residential Single Family	1,571	8.3%
Transportation / Communication / Utilities	461	2.4%
Unknown	4	0.0%
Total	18,982	100%

Source: City of Spanish Fort

Commercial

The Commercial land use includes land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, services, restaurants and entertainment facilities. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center. Approximately 4% of the property within the City limits, 712 acres, is currently represented by this classification. Commercial land uses are primarily located along commercial corridors of the City such as:

- Spanish Fort Boulevard/Highway 31 – Beginning in the eastern portion of the City and extending to the intersection with Highway 90/98;
- The Causeway – Beginning at the eastern edge of Mobile Bay and extending across the Bay.
- Eastern Shore Centre – Located at the intersection of State Highway 181 and Interstate 10.
- Spanish Fort Town Center – Located at the intersection of U.S. Highway 90/98 and Interstate 10.

Forest-Unused

The Forest-Unused land use includes properties devoted predominately to forestry land or undeveloped lands. Most of the land associated with this classification is a part of the Highlands of Spanish Fort development area. Other major areas of forest-unused land include the northern edge of the City core, the eastern edge of the Blakeley River and Bay Minette Basin and preserved areas along the Causeway. Close to 82% of the property within the City limits (approximately 15,489 acres) is currently represented by this land use.

Office-Business

The Office-Business land use includes land dedicated to professional offices, office parks and other uses associated with professional business services. This land use encompasses less than 1% of the property within the City limits or approximately 28 acres. Most of the Office-Business land use is located along Spanish Fort Boulevard.

Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation land use includes City, County, and State parks and recreation areas. Close to 2.1% of the property within the City limits, approximately 403 acres, is currently represented by the Parks and Recreation land use.

Public-Institutional

The Public-Institutional land use includes state and local government uses and institutional land uses. Government uses include uses such as schools and institutional uses include such uses as churches. 1.2% of the property within the City limits, or 233 acres, is currently represented by this land use.

Residential High Density

The Residential High Density land use includes apartments and condominiums. This land use encompasses less than 1% of the property within the City limits or approximately 52 acres.

Residential Medium Density

The Residential Medium Density land use includes single family homes on smaller lots. This land use encompasses less than 1% of the property within the City limits or approximately 28 acres.

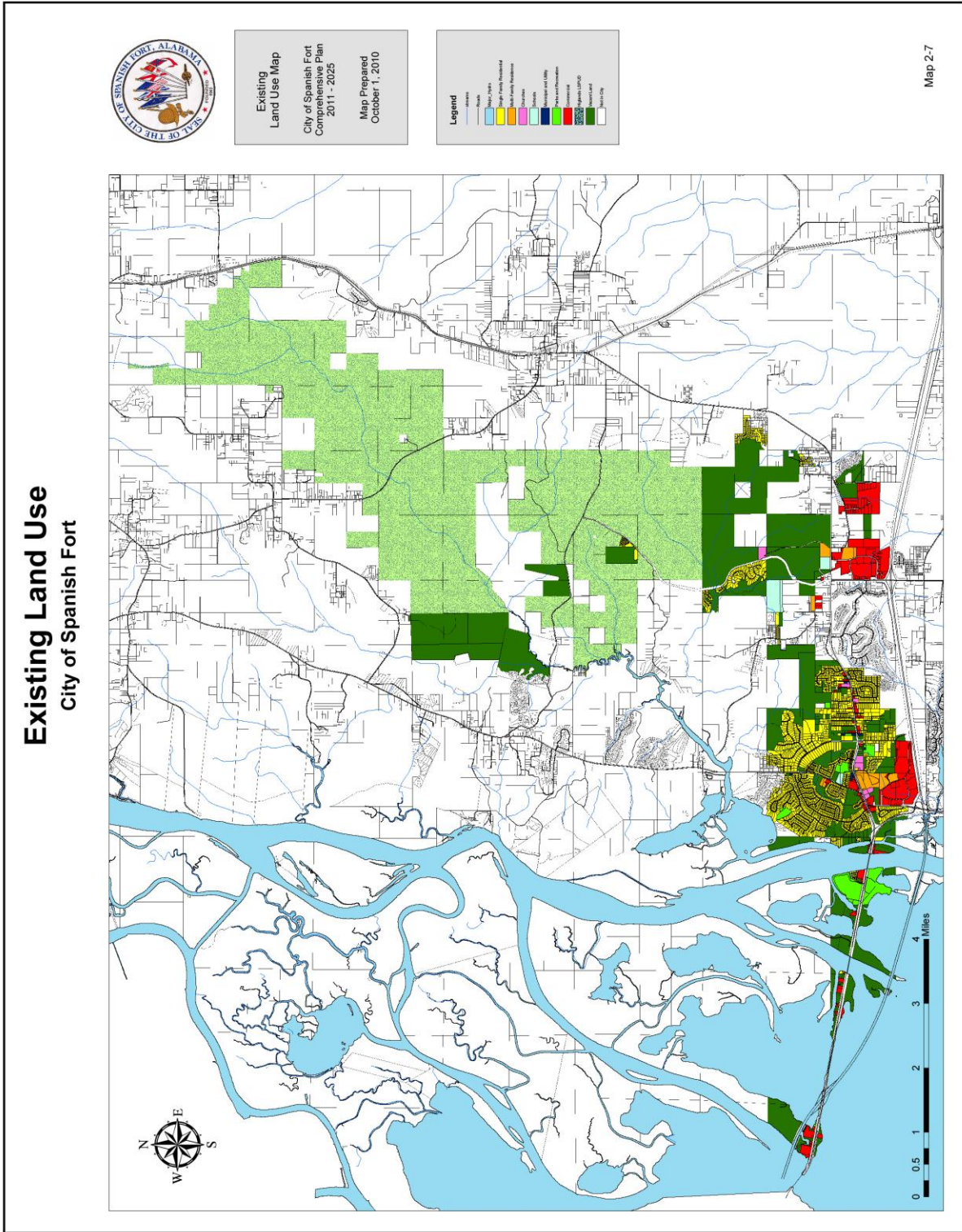
Residential Single Family

The Residential Single Family land use includes single family homes on larger lots. This land use encompasses approximately 8.3% of the property within the City limits or approximately 1,571 acres.

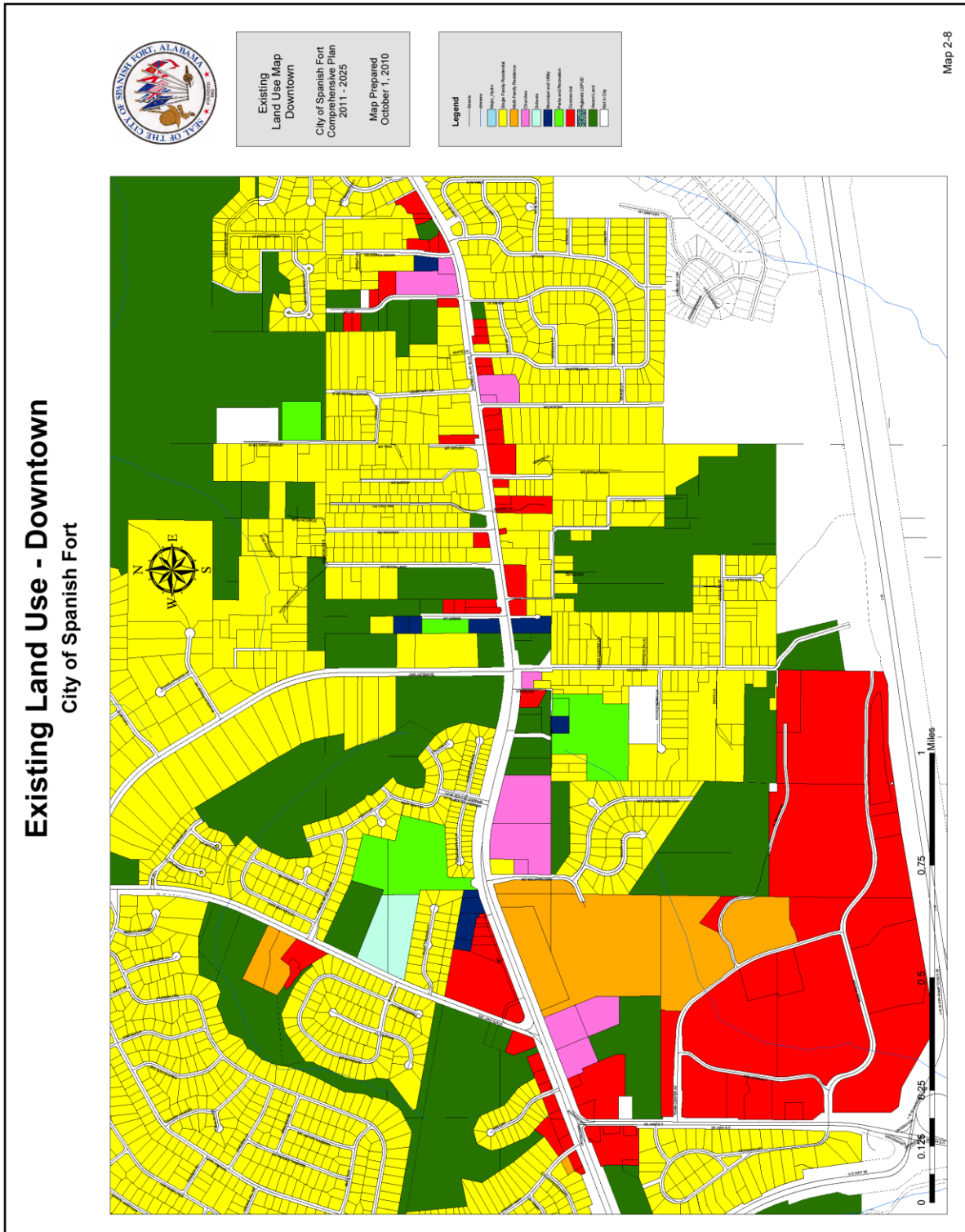
Transportation/Communication/Utilities

The Transportation/Communication/Utilities land use includes roads and other related utility property. This land use encompasses approximately 2.4% of the property within the City limits or 461 acres.

Map 2-7 Existing Land Use



Map 2-8 Existing Land Use - Downtown

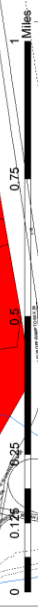


Existing Land Use Map Downtown
City of Spanish Fort Comprehensive Plan 2011 - 2025
Map Prepared October 1, 2010

Legend
Streets
High-Density Residential
Medium-Density Residential
Single-Family Residential
Office
Industrial
Public Use
Recreation
Agriculture
Forestland
Unincorporated

Map 2-8

Existing Land Use - Downtown City of Spanish Fort



Existing Zoning

The City of Spanish Fort Zoning Ordinance currently includes 15 zoning districts. Five districts (B-1, B-2, B-3, B-4, and B-5) focus on commercial uses, one district (M-1) focuses on industrial uses, one district (T-1) focuses on telecommunication towers, seven districts (R-1, R-2, R-3A, R-3B, R-3C, R-3D and R-4) focus on residential uses, and one district (Highlands LSPUD) focuses on the area which encompasses the Highlands of Spanish Fort. The paragraphs below provide a brief summary of the regulations for each district as well as the prevalence of each district in the City. Map 2-9 shows the existing zoning for the City.

B-1 – Professional Business

This district is established to provide opportunity for business establishments of a professional nature and is restricted to offices and businesses which provide specific corporate functions or professional services to the general public, but not the sale of goods or services at retail or wholesale. At this time, the zoning ordinance outlines a minimum lot area of 12,000 square feet and includes a maximum building height of 40 feet.

B-2 – Local Business

This district is intended to provide for limited retail convenience goods and personal service establishments near residential neighborhoods and to encourage the concentration of these uses in one location for residential neighborhoods rather than in scattered sites occupied by individual shops throughout a neighborhood. At this time, the zoning ordinance outlines a minimum lot area of 12,000 square feet and includes a maximum building height of 40 feet.

B-3 – General Business

This district is intended to provide opportunity for activities causing noise and heavy traffic, not considered compatible in the more restrictive business districts. These uses also serve a regional as well as a local market and require location in proximity to major transportation routes. Very light production and processing activities are included. At this time, the zoning ordinance outlines a minimum lot area of 12,000 square feet and includes a maximum building height of 40 feet.

B-4 – Major Commercial Business

This district is intended to provide opportunity for activities causing noise, bright lights, and heavy traffic, not considered compatible in the more restrictive general business district. These uses also serve a regional and interstate market and require location in proximity to major transportation routes. Auto dealerships, large scale retail developments and light production work are included. At this time, the zoning ordinance outlines a minimum lot area of 1 acre and includes a maximum building height of 40 feet.

B-5 – Hotel/Motel

This district is intended to provide opportunity for development of hotels and motels normally associated with regional and interstate business districts. At this time, the zoning ordinance outlines a minimum lot area of 1 acre and includes a maximum building height of 70 feet.

M-1 – Light Industrial

The purpose of this Light Industrial District is to provide a suitable protected environment for manufacturing, research and wholesale establishments which are clean, quiet and free of hazardous or objectionable emissions, and generate little industrial traffic. Locations should be

in accordance with the City's Comprehensive Plan. At this time, the zoning ordinance outlines a minimum lot area of 1 acre and includes a maximum building height of 40 feet.

T-1 – Telecommunication Tower

The purpose of this District is to provide a suitable environment for construction of telecommunication towers. Locations should be in accordance with the City's Comprehensive Plan and the Telecommunication Tower Ordinance.

R-1 –Single-Family Low Density Residential

This district is provided to afford the opportunity for the choice of a low density residential environment consisting of single family homes on large lots. At this time, the zoning ordinance outlines a minimum lot area of 20,000 square feet and includes a maximum building height for residential development of 40 feet.

R-2 –Single-Family Medium Density Residential

The purpose of this district is to provide for medium density residential developments in single family structures on medium sized lots. At this time, the zoning ordinance outlines a minimum lot area of 15,000 square feet and includes a maximum building height for residential development of 40 feet.

R-3A –Single-Family High Density Residential

The purpose of this district is to provide for medium density residential developments in single family structures on smaller sized lots. At this time, the zoning ordinance outlines a minimum lot area of 10,000 square feet and includes a maximum building height for residential development of 40 feet.

R-3B –Single-Family Patio or Garden Home Residential

The purpose of this district is to provide for high density residential developments in single family structures on small patio or garden home sized lots. At this time, the zoning ordinance outlines a minimum lot area of 4,000 square feet and includes a maximum building height for residential development of 40 feet.

R-3C – Low Density Multi-Family Residential

The purpose of this district is to provide for lower density residential developments in single family, duplex and multi-family structures, on large sized lots. At this time, the zoning ordinance outlines a minimum lot area of 20,000 square feet and includes a maximum building height for residential development of 40 feet.

R-3D – Medium Density Multi-Family Residential

The purpose of this district is to provide for medium density residential developments of multi-family apartment or condominium structures on parcels no smaller than 3 acres. At this time, the zoning ordinance outlines a minimum lot area of 3 acres and includes a maximum building height for residential development of 40 feet.

R-4 – Manufactured/Mobile Home Residential

The intent of this district is to provide space at appropriate locations consistent with community objectives for the location of individual Manufactured/Mobile Homes on single lots and the establishment of Manufactured/Mobile Home parks which provide for the establishment of permanent manufactured/mobile homes and for the amenities conducive to an adequate

living environment. Public or private community water and sewer facilities are required except where lots are equal to Health Department requirements for private wells and septic systems. At this time, the zoning ordinance outlines a minimum lot area of 20,000 square feet and includes a maximum building height for residential development of 40 feet.

Highlands LSPUD

The Highlands LSPUD district is a master planned community that provides for a mixture of compatible uses. The intent is to provide a creatively designed community which is sensitive to natural features and provide an integrated development pattern through the use of pedestrian friendly design, connectivity, public open space, schools, and compatible land uses. Within the Highlands LSPUD District, there are several sub-districts which allow for different levels of density and combinations of uses. These districts include Residential, Village Center, Commercial, Multi-family, Institutional, School, Public Park, and Municipal Service. With all of these sub-districts, the minimum lot sizes, height and bulk of buildings all vary according to their respective land uses.

2.9.2 Issues and Opportunities

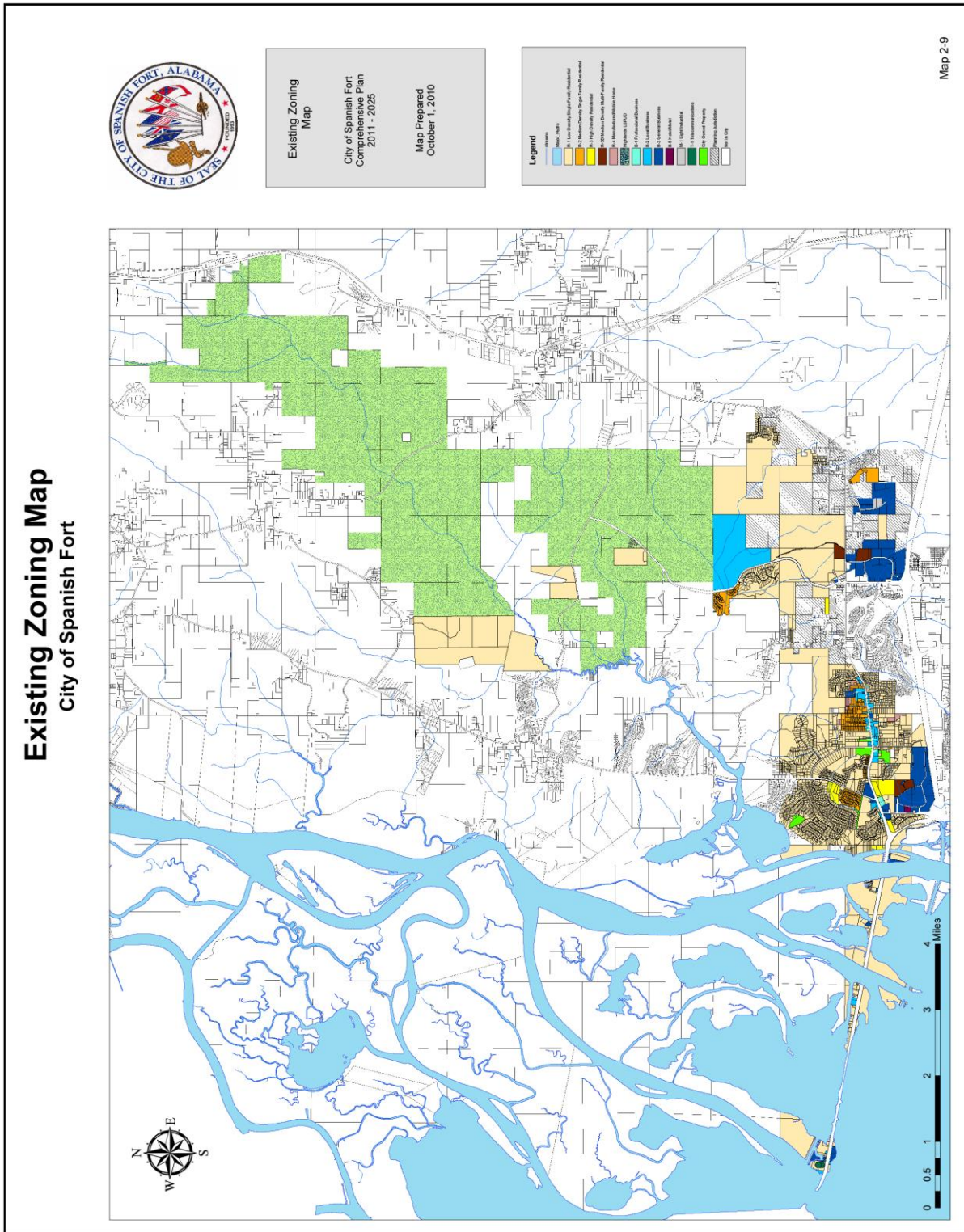
Issues

- Uneven City boundaries and unincorporated parcels which are largely surrounded by the City;

Opportunity

- Create zoning regulations which are supportive of positive new development trends such as mixed use development;
- Develop an annexation plan and policies including zoning strategy for any newly annexed areas;
- Investigate and implement methods to ensure that new development shares financial responsibility for impact on City services and facilities;
- Require that new development in and around the City (within extraterritorial jurisdiction) adhere to City standards for infrastructure development; and
- Maintain an on-going dialogue with the County on planning, zoning, regulatory and design issues impacting potential development, and seek cooperative planning policies at the County level.

Map 2-9 Existing Zoning



3 Community Vision

3.1 Vision Statement

Spanish Fort will continue to be a friendly community with an excellent quality of life in a unique natural setting. The City will maintain a sustainable level of planned growth with an emphasis on high quality new development. The stable neighborhood residential character will be complemented by community-supporting institutions and environmentally friendly businesses that serve local needs and provide jobs for residents. As growth occurs, the integrity of existing natural resources will be protected while public access and recreational opportunities are enhanced.

To ensure that future development is consistent with the values of our community, below is a list of the most important values that should be incorporated into future development.

- Natural Beauty;
- Friendly, small town atmosphere;
- A multigenerational population;
- Rich history;
- Strong schools;
- Easy access to highways and the City of Mobile;
- Strong local businesses, good shopping, and great restaurants;
- Low taxes;
- Public safety; and
- Preserving the integrity of neighborhoods.

3.2 Visioning Process

Community stakeholders worked together to prepare a community vision through a collaborative charrette process that included City government officials, City staff, the business community, and citizens. The information gathering process began in 2005 and included two Community Vision Workshops, a Community Visual Preference Survey, a Community Vision Open House, and several public discussions involving the Spanish Fort Planning Commission. Through the collaborative process, several objectives were accomplished in developing the community vision statement that included the following:

- Identify the values which define the City and community;
- Conduct a Community Preference Survey to evaluate community opinions about the design character of the City;
- Identify opportunities and constraints with respect to meeting the City's goals;
- Define the conceptual character of the City as a whole, as well as of individual areas of the City; and
- Identify a Vision Statement for the City.

Immediately following completion of the Community Charrette process, a report was prepared and issued to the City. The Community Charrette report included a summary of the public comments and input received during the charrette, as well as the results of the surveys concerning community vision and preferences and recommendations for planning concepts to guide the future development of the City. The report elements used to define and identify the Community Vision have also been used to form other elements of this Comprehensive Plan.

3.3 Community Preference Results

A Community Visual Preference Survey was conducted several times during the course of the Community Planning Charrette. The survey provides anecdotal data, not statistical data, which is interesting and significant to the planning process. Analysis of the survey results indicated several broad trends which describe the general preferences of survey participants.

Characteristics of general community preferences include the following:

- High quality landscaping, including large landscaped areas and mature trees;
- Traditional revival architectural styles with brick facades;
- Spanish-influenced architectural styles featuring stucco or adobe exterior surfaces and tile roofs;
- Narrow streets with on-street parking, including some environments with relatively dense development; and
- Small park areas surrounded by mixed-use style development.

Characteristics of images not favored include the following:

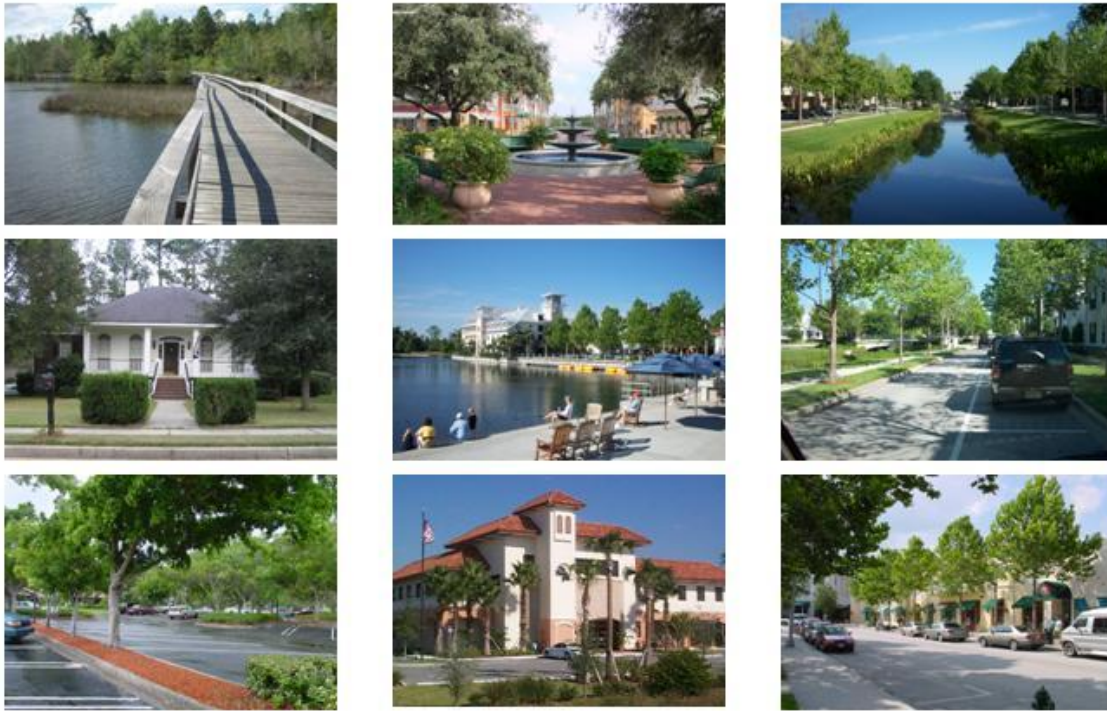
- Unbroken large parking lots or paved expanses;
- Wide road intersections with above ground utility wires;
- Structures or developments with a lack of landscaping;
- Dense "urban-style" development including high-rise buildings;
- Large urban parking decks;
- Apartment structures lacking in landscaping; and
- Poorly maintained landscapes or building facades and grounds.

It is evident from the indications of preference or dislikes that one of the most significant factors in the City environment is attractive landscaping. In almost every circumstance, images of preserved natural environmental conditions and lush planned landscaping were preferred. Thus, it is apparent that the community desires that streetscapes, parking lots and the yards around buildings be richly landscaped.

Some preferences for architectural style can also be inferred from the preference survey results, specifically a preference for traditional architecture. Perhaps more significant is the apparent preference for traditional urban design of streets and mixed-used environments. This includes elements such as on-street parking and zero lot line development as is found in many historic small town downtowns in the Southeast.

Figure 3-1: Visual Preference Survey Results

SAMPLE PREFERRED IMAGES



SAMPLE DISLIKED IMAGES



3.4 Community Planning Goals

In addition to the collective vision statement, specific planning goals have been identified and separated by topic. Below is the summary.

3.4.1 Economic Development

- **Goal ED-1:** Foster a local economy that is conducive to the unique environmental character and quality of life of Spanish Fort. Economic development efforts should strive to attract and retain a diversity of businesses that will provide employment opportunities for the community, adequate revenue to meet the fiscal needs of the City, and facilitate the desired balance between growth and preservation.
- **Goal ED-2:** Encourage the development of local medical facilities and other professional services that can serve the local population and also provide local employment opportunities.

3.4.2 Housing

- **Goal H-1:** Strengthen Spanish Fort's multigenerational character by encouraging development of a range of owner-occupied housing types to meet the housing needs of citizens of all age groups.
- **Goal H-2:** Ensure the availability of quality rental housing or home ownership opportunities that will make quality housing accessible to Spanish Fort residents of all income levels.

3.4.3 Historic and Cultural Resources

- **Goal HCR-1:** Promote the use of historic and cultural resources within and adjacent to the City.

3.4.4 Environmental and Natural Resources

- **Goal ENR-1:** Maintain clean, beautiful and accessible water resources. The City of Spanish Fort is a steward of the Mobile Bay environment, a valuable natural resource. The rivers and streams that feed into the Bay, and the marshes and bay itself, should be protected from pollution and preserved for responsible recreation and enjoyment of Spanish Fort residents and visitors.
- **Goal ENR-2:** Maintain the natural landscape in a manner that is consistent with the quality of environment and culture in Spanish Fort. The City's natural features define the character of the environment and should not be compromised. Preservation of trees and natural landscape is important to maintaining the character of Spanish Fort.

3.4.5 Infrastructure, Facilities, and Services

- **Goal IFS-1:** Provide public services that are community oriented and that serve to enhance the community while remaining within the fiscal constraints of a responsible local government budget.
- **Goal IFS-2:** Ensure that Spanish Fort residents have access to high quality educational opportunities.
- **Goal IFS-3:** Establish outstanding and efficient public utilities by improving and expanding infrastructure, including establishment of an interconnected network of streets and improvements in water and sewer service.
- **Goal IFS-4:** Maintain excellent public health and safety services, including fast response for emergency situations.
- **Goal IFS-5:** Develop and maintain a high quality network of parks, open spaces and public recreation facilities and programs.
- **Goal IFS-6:** Encourage the availability of public transportation, including, but not limited to, enhancing available service by the Baldwin Rural Area Transit System (BRATS).

3.4.6 Transportation

- **Goal T-1:** Maintain an efficient and environmentally sensitive transportation system. The City of Spanish Fort is the Gateway to the Delta, and there are also historic and scenic routes that are an important element of the City fabric. Transportation system planning, design, and engineering must consider both the quantity of traffic to be moved and the quality of the environment that is impacted by roadways.

3.4.7 Land Use and Zoning

- **Goal LUZ-1:** Establish, adopt, and use appropriate planning procedures and tools to guide growth, development and redevelopment. Such tools include a comprehensive plan, updated zoning ordinances and development regulations that are supportive of the preservation, development, and urban design goals of the community.
- **Goal LUZ-2:** Promote orderly, planned growth, development and redevelopment based on physical, social, and economic needs, environmental considerations, and the ability of the Spanish Fort tax base to support growth with services and infrastructure.
- **Goal LUZ-3:** Preserve and improve residential neighborhoods with policies that encourage maintenance and rehabilitation in Spanish Fort's established neighborhoods and redevelopment of blighted areas.
- **Goal LUZ-4:** Maintain balance between growth and preservation. Although the community understands that growth will continue in Spanish Fort, a balance must be maintained with preservation. The City is in a strong position to control the style, quality, and quantity of development to ensure that growth contributes to the goals of the City and does not compromise the natural setting which draws both residents and visitors to the City.
- **Goal LUZ-5:** Maintain a small-town atmosphere and density while accommodating growth and development of different types of housing and mixed use environments.
- **Goal LUZ-6:** Contain "sprawl" development, both by demanding high quality development and by encouraging infill development within the existing City limits.

- **Goal LUZ-7:** Develop a town center area to support the civic character of Spanish Fort. The town center should include elements such as a community center, senior center, a full-service post office, a municipal government complex, parks and recreation spaces, and a library.

4 Community Plan – Land Use

4.1 Introduction

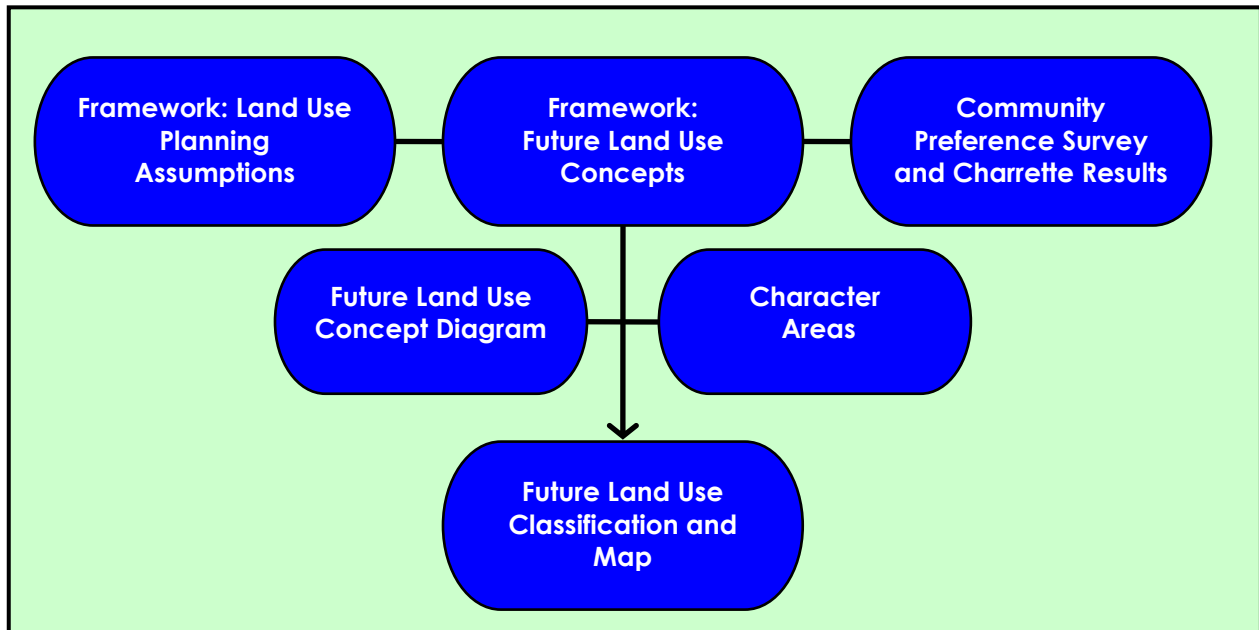
The Community Plan provides both a conceptual framework with unique character areas as well as a specific future land use classification that is intended to provide clarification of the intent and policy of the Future Land Use and Development Plan. The framework concept incorporates findings from the community charrettes to identify areas with unique and definable character. The intent of using character areas is to preserve, enhance, or expand on the City's current character.

The Future Land Use Map included in this chapter presents a representation of the City of Spanish Fort's Comprehensive Plan goals and policies. The Future Land Use Map and associated policy descriptions serve as a blueprint for the City of Spanish Fort to follow when making long-range development decisions by presenting the land use policy for the community. It provides parcel-specific information about the type of development envisioned on the property. The boundaries consist mainly of lot and property lines, centerlines of public right-of-way or other identifiable features. The Future Land Use Plan is generally implemented by the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision Regulations.

4.2 Framework Concept

The Future Land Use Concept Plan served as the first step in the creation of the Future Land Use Classification Map. The original concept plan was drafted during the Charrette and has been updated to include the defined character area of the Highlands of Spanish Fort which has been annexed into the City. Additionally, below is a diagram identifying the major pieces of the process in creating the Future Land Use Plan.

Figure 4-1: Future Land Use Process Diagram



4.2.1 Planning Assumptions

Planning assumptions concern the past, current, and future trends of land use which have been derived from analysis of physical and socioeconomic conditions. Additionally, the public participation process and development of goals and policies has been incorporated. The following assumptions relate directly to concepts, plans, and recommendations for future land use and development.

Continued but Slower City Expansion

In 1995, the corporate limits of Spanish Fort included a total of 1,542 acres and in 2005 approximately 4,751 acres. Today, the corporate limits of Spanish Fort include approximately 18,982 acres. This dramatic increase in a short time is due to major annexations such as the Causeway, the Eastern Shore Centre area, and the Highlands of Spanish Fort development area. While it is assumed that Spanish Fort will likely continue to expand its corporate limits, the rate and extent of expansion in the future is expected to be less than what has occurred over the past ten years.

Environmental and Cultural Preservation

The environmental resources of Spanish Fort are of primary importance and resource preservation must be given the utmost consideration in planning for the future. These resources also help to define the culture and history of the place. Therefore, it is recognized that the concepts, goals, policies, and strategies concerning future land use and development in Spanish Fort should all serve to bolster environmental and cultural resource preservation.

Residential Growth

Population statistics suggest that Spanish Fort and the broader Baldwin County area will continue to experience residential growth into the foreseeable future. This projected growth will have a significant impact on housing supply, infrastructure and services.

Business Growth and Economic Diversification

Spanish Fort's economy should experience increased diversification in the future due to changes in the economy and the maturing process of the community as a city. With active economic development and recruitment efforts, Spanish Fort can attract industries in the fields of services, medical, technology, communications, and similar professions. Land use and development policies should support this economic diversification within Spanish Fort.

Commercial Growth

Growth in the retail commercial sector is closely tied to population growth and accessibility to the transportation network. Spanish Fort is strong in both areas and as a result is experiencing dramatic development of new retail commercial centers. While it is unlikely that another development of the scale of the Eastern Shore Centre or Spanish Fort Town Center will be proposed in the near future, the development of these two major retail centers will certainly precipitate additional retail development, particularly where there is access from I-10. Planning for future land use and development must accommodate a diversity of continued retail development in Spanish Fort.

Figure 4-2: Eastern Shore Centre



Strategic Areas for Redevelopment and Open Space Preservation

The City of Spanish Fort has a unique resource in its land areas along the Causeway between the Eastern Shore and the City of Mobile. This area includes both publicly-owned lands for conservation use and land in private ownership which has experienced development in the past. In the future, the Causeway should serve both as a unique preserve of environmental resources and as a unique environment for commercial developments which enhance the quality and character of the corridor.

Civic Enhancement

The City of Spanish Fort will take intentional steps to enhance its civic character by developing new City facilities and fostering the development of a municipal center.

Figure 4-3: Enhanced CivicSpace



Infrastructure Development

While Spanish Fort currently has basic infrastructure to support residential and commercial functions, it is anticipated that there will be significant and ongoing upgrades to these infrastructure systems and expansions to support growth and development.

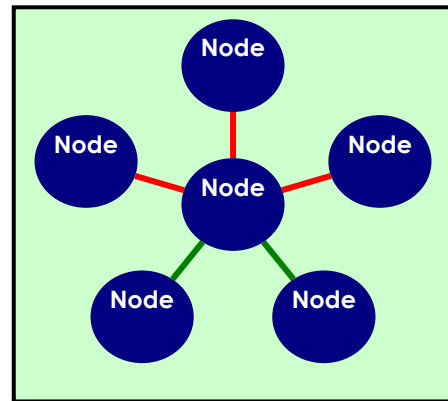
4.2.2 Framework Future Land Use Concepts

In addition to the planning assumptions that formed the development of the Future Land Use Plan, several key future land use concepts were identified.

Nodes of Development Concentration

The future land use concept for Spanish Fort identifies nodes of concentration of development which are interconnected by roadways and greenway corridors. These nodes are characterized by a relatively high intensity of development of commercial, residential, and mixed-use character. Nodes include the two Regional Commercial Centers adjacent to I-10, the proposed new Municipal Center District at the intersection of Highway 31 and Blakeley Way, the Causeway District, and the Highlands of Spanish Fort.

Figure 4-4: Node Concept Diagram



Neighborhood Preservation

Spanish Fort's established neighborhoods should be preserved as residential communities with an environment which is conducive to family lifestyles. These neighborhoods should be protected from encroachment of undesirable land uses and should be buffered at their edges with transitional land uses. Neighborhood parks and greenways will enhance existing neighborhoods and better connect them to other parts of the City.

Commercial Redevelopment and Revitalization

The redevelopment of commercial areas in Spanish Fort is needed both to revitalize existing commercial areas and to create areas with a new dynamic of mixed-use commercial activity. Commercial redevelopment in the Highway 31 area, for example, should be focused on revitalization of the neighborhood commercial centers with businesses capable of serving the needs of adjacent neighborhoods. Commercial development in the proposed new Municipal Center District should more resemble a traditional downtown and encourage mixed-use development.

Pedestrian Circulation System

The need for pedestrian and bicycle oriented transportation system to increase connectivity among the different parts of Spanish Fort is a key component of the concept. In the future, a system of sidewalks, trails, and bicycle lanes should be augmented by additional parks and open spaces.

Parks and Open Spaces

The future land use concept includes new community parks and greenspace which should be linked together by greenways and pedestrian connections. In addition to opportunities to develop new parks, there are opportunities to preserve open space for buffering purposes. To the extent possible, open space preservation has been recommended along the shoreline of Mobile Bay and along the Causeway. Finally, in the areas to the north and east of the existing City limits, referred to as Emerging Neighborhood Areas, conservation subdivision design is encouraged for new residential development as a means to preserve meaningful greenspace within new subdivisions.

Figure 4-5: Integrated Open Space



New Municipal Center District: Mixed Use Institutional, Commercial and Residential

A mixed use civic center with institutional, commercial, and residential uses is recommended for the area surrounding the intersection of Highway 31 and Blakeley Way. Flexible standards for commercial and residential development should be applied in this area. Flexible zoning will be required to allow for the needed mixture of uses to occur on a single parcel or in a single building, in a traditional "main street" arrangement. Zoning should allow for upper level office or residential use in commercial buildings, townhouses, or row houses, as well as reduced setbacks and on-street parking. City-sponsored and developed facilities are anticipated to include City administrative offices, community center, library, emergency storm shelter, BRATS station with commuter parking, and potentially, a new post office. The emphasis on private development in this area should be a variety of commercial and service oriented businesses in a pedestrian friendly environment. Rear service areas and flexible parking requirements are necessary in this type of area, and reduced off-street parking requirements should also be enacted.

Office/Professional Development

The development of a planned office/professional mixed use center in Spanish Fort is needed for economic and social purposes.

Unique Redevelopment Opportunities

The Causeway is a unique area to Spanish Fort and Alabama. Historically, the developed portions of the Causeway road frontage have included uses such as restaurants, hotels, service stations, and similar small commercial uses. As a result of hurricanes in recent years, much of the older Causeway development has been severely damaged and many remaining structures are in need of demolition. The concept for redevelopment of the Causeway corridor land in the Causeway District specifies a unique environment of destination restaurants and other commercial/office uses which meet construction standards appropriate for the flood and wind prone environment.

Gateway Improvements

Gateway visual improvements are recommended for the major entry and exit points along highways and other routes into the City. The purpose of these improvements is to enhance the identity of Spanish Fort with attractive landscaping, monuments, signage, and lighting. Partnerships with community service organizations and local businesses have proven to be a successful tool for implementation of gateway improvements in many similar communities.

4.2.3 Character Area Definition, Description, and Recommendations

The term “Character Area” is used to describe a definable region of the City in terms of a distinct character of land use and development. Spanish Fort can be described in terms of existing character areas relative to existing land uses in the City. These existing character areas generally include low density residential neighborhoods (Spanish Fort Estates, etc.), commercial corridor areas (Highways 31, 90/98), regional commercial centers (Eastern Shore Centre and Spanish Fort Town Center), and several areas of unplanned development. There are also several large undeveloped areas of land within the core of the City which do not presently have a definable character other than landscape descriptions such as tree covered, flat, or hilly.

For future land use and development planning purposes, a diagram has been prepared which describes the key components of the City and a vision for future character areas. These future character areas are defined and described below, along with key general recommendations for each character area which pertain to land use, infrastructure and community design.

Spanish Fort Causeway District

The Causeway is an area of unique character, not only in the context of the City of Spanish Fort, but to all of Alabama. A major transportation corridor across Mobile Bay, the Causeway includes bridges across the Blakeley, Tensaw, and Apalachee Rivers and some land areas, essentially islands, which are wider than the roadway. For planning purposes, the land areas of the Causeway within the City limits of Spanish Fort are considered one district.

The recommended character description for this area is the Spanish Fort Causeway District. Below is a brief description of the Causeway, moving east to west.

- Immediately west of the Spanish Fort mainland are several land areas which are both publicly and privately owned. State owned land includes Meaher State Park and 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center.

The character description for this area is “Coastal Preserve” which is consistent with a natural landscape of greenspace with passive parks and recreation facilities and access to Mobile Bay for boating and fishing. It is recommended that private land in this area be restricted from intense development or be acquired for greenspace when possible. Key character area priorities include:

- Preservation of natural landscape;

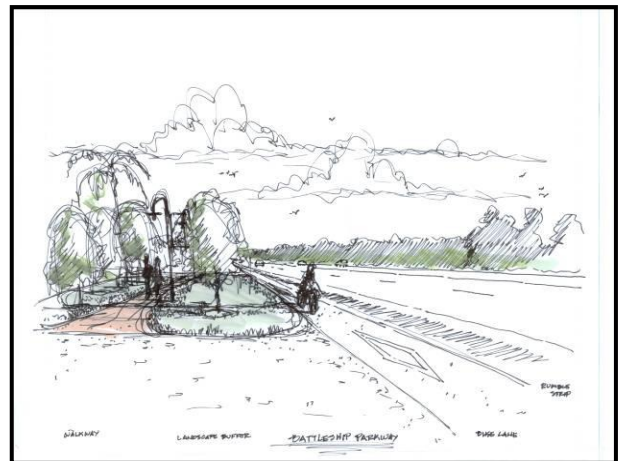


Figure 4-6: Concept Sketch: Battleship Parkway

- Facilities for public access, recreation, and eco-tourism;
 - Parkway road design;
 - Pedestrian, biking and automotive access (parking); and
 - Protection of wetlands and natural features.
- West of the Apalachee River Bridge is a linear strip of Causeway land with a combination of restaurants and marshland vegetation in wetlands. The character description for this area is a commercial environment which emphasizes the unique environment of the Causeway and its attractiveness for commercial destinations such as family restaurants. Boardwalks should facilitate the experience of the environment at the edge of the land. Key character elements:
 - Emphasis on restaurants;
 - Buildings in bay/riverfront character and scale of the Delta area; and
 - Pedestrian paths and biking access to the waterfront and views of the Delta.

With the heightened awareness of tropical storms and living in a coastal environment, there are several goals for development that have been identified to help mitigate the impacts of developing the Causeway. These goals include the following:

- Development should be limited to commercial uses and new residential development should not be allowed where residential development does not currently exist;
- The maximum building height should be 40 feet above the Base Flood Elevation as established by the National Flood Insurance Rate maps;
- Buildings should have no enclosed structures on the ground level to mitigate flood impacts;
- No fuel storage or filling stations should be built on the Causeway; and
- No development should take place at ground level in areas with a FIRM designation of VE or AE.

Spanish Fort Municipal Center District

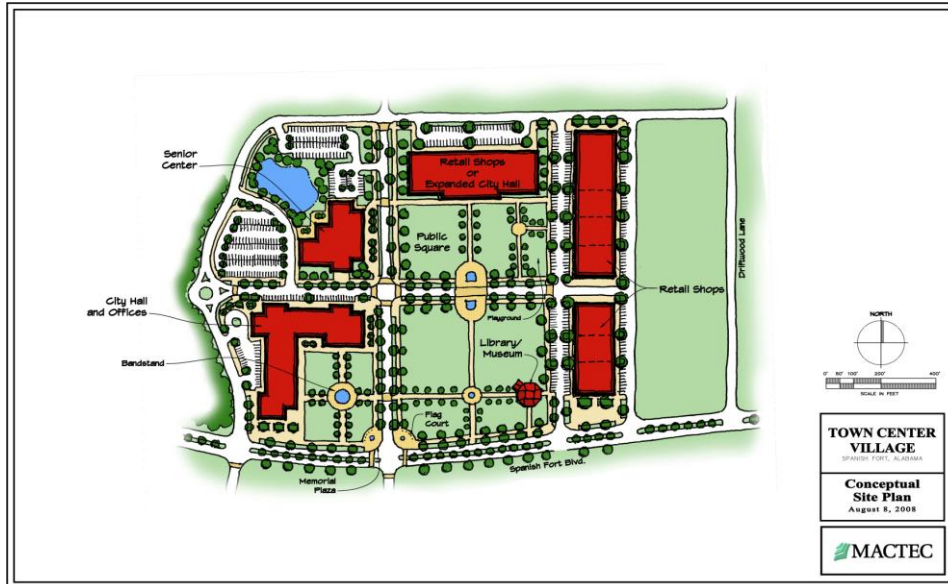
Currently surrounding the intersection of Spanish Fort Boulevard (Highway 31) and Blakeley Way is a large area of undeveloped land. Some of the land is owned by the City of Spanish Fort including a City Hall and park. The area is amenable to development due to relatively low level topography and easy accessibility from major roadways.

The recommended character area description is "Municipal Center District" consistent with a traditional town square and surrounding mixture of uses including civic/institutional, commercial, and residential. The northwest corner of the Highway 31/Blakeley Way intersection (City-owned property) is recommended for a town square, including greenspace with a formal landscape design. Municipal and civic buildings should front on one side of the square with "main street" style civic or commercial development. As part of the City-sponsored and developed facilities, the anticipated uses include City administrative offices, community center, library, emergency storm shelter, BRATS station with commuter parking, and potentially a new Post Office. Key recommended character elements include:

- New town square at northwest corner of Highway 31 and Blakeley Way bordered by civic and main street commercial development;
- Adjacent residential village of medium density and traditional neighborhoods; and

- Grid network of pedestrian-friendly streets with on-street parking, sidewalks and alleys for auto access to homes/garages.

Figure 4-7: Concept Plan Sketch: Town Center Village



Regional Commercial Center District

The Eastern Shore Centre and the developing Spanish Fort Town Center are major regional commercial centers in two locations adjacent to I-10. The area includes an overall high intensity of commercial use spread across large areas which are primarily auto-accessible, though there are internal pedestrian systems. There is a mixture of sizes of commercial buildings and residential uses. Due to the proximity of these centers to I-10, the expected customer draw is regional as well as local, and the centers are planned and designed accordingly.

Figure 4-8: New Bass Pro Shop



It is likely that a frontage road will be constructed to extend east from the Spanish Fort Town Center along I-10. The recommended character of future development along this frontage road is also regional commercial, though the intensity of development should decline farther away from the I-10 interchange. As this will be a highly visible location (essentially the view of Spanish Fort that thousands of motorists will have each day), standards for design and landscaping should be set high.

Emerging Neighborhood Areas

Bordering Spanish Fort to the south is the City of Daphne and to the west, Mobile Bay, limiting expansion of the City of Spanish Fort to the north and east. There is undeveloped property to the north and east of Spanish Fort's current City limits, though much of this property is not ideal for development due to topographic conditions and wetlands. However, it is certain that residential

Figure 4-9: Clustered development in a Conservation Subdivision



development will be demanded in these areas extending out from the City into the county, with some major neighborhoods having already been developed on more suitable land in unincorporated areas.

To the extent possible, new streets should be interconnected with consideration of natural features a high priority. Neighborhoods should include passive open space parks as ways of preserving wetlands and managing stormwater runoff. A conservation approach to subdivision design is encouraged where the net density of a neighborhood is consistent with low density but lot sizes can be reduced in exchange for the preservation of large tracts of undeveloped open space. The conservation subdivision approach also reduces the amount of infrastructure development needed to support development as the lots are clustered rather than spread across an entire property. Key recommended Emerging Neighborhood Area character elements include:

- Low net density residential use;
- Interconnected residential streets with multiple points of access to the City street network;
- Neighborhood park lands used for stormwater management and passive recreation; and
- Conservation subdivision design principles that allow clustering of development on smaller lots due to preservation of large undeveloped tracts.

Major Corridor Character

Several major highway corridors significantly impact the City of Spanish Fort. These corridors serve local trip purposes, provide access to the greater Mobile region, and bring many vehicles through the City each day. The accessibility and high levels of traffic volume are an opportunity from the standpoint of economic development, but can be a detriment to quality of life factors without proper design to accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.



Figure 4-10: Concept Sketch: Spanish Fort Blvd

An “urban boulevard” character is recommended for the City’s major corridors. Key components of an urban boulevard are landscaped medians, relatively narrow travel lanes, dedicated bicycle lanes, on-street parking (where appropriate from a traffic engineering standpoint), landscape/streetscape amenities, and wide sidewalks. The term “context sensitive design” is often used to describe the different roadway designs for a state highway in an urban context. When future road widening is required for Highways 31, 225, and 90/98 or when redevelopment presents opportunities to reconfigure the streetscape, context sensitive design should be used.

The Highlands of Spanish Fort

The Highlands of Spanish Fort has been annexed into the City and is a major component to the City’s future growth. Located to the north of Spanish Fort proper, this mixed-use development has more than doubled the City’s size. Designed with traditional neighborhood principles, the

area will largely be comprised of residential development. However, several areas have been identified for mixed-use hubs of commercial activity. The development has also set aside areas for new schools and will have greenway corridors along Bay Minette Creek to preserve one of the important natural features of the area.

Of all the traditional neighborhood development principles, the three main principles for The Highlands of Spanish Fort include conservation of natural features, compact residential and commercial development patterns, and walkability. With buffers required along Bay Minette Creek and a proposed trail system, land which would normally be built on is conserved as well as preserved for active uses like walking and biking. The concentrated commercial and residential development is intended to preserve the small community feel while also preserving land which would otherwise be developed. Lastly, walkability is a defining component to traditional neighborhood development and part of an active neighborhood.











4.3 Future Land Use Classification

The following descriptions of future land use classifications correspond directly with the Future Land Use Map and are intended to provide clarification of the intent and policy of the Future Land Use and Development Plan. In addition to text descriptions, images of development which were rated highly in the Community Visual Preference Survey have been included to provide clarification of the desired type of development associated with each classification.

With the annexation of The Highlands of Spanish Fort, the Master Plan for the community has been incorporated in to the Future Land Use classifications. In order to do this, slight adjustments have been made to the residential classifications to ensure that the requirements for the City, as a whole, and The Highlands of Spanish Fort are aligned. With the adjustments, the Master Plan land uses were paired with the Future Land Use Classifications to ensure that there are no conflicts with this document and future development proposals.

Figure 4-62: Future Land Use Classification

City of Spanish Fort Land Use Plan – Recommended Future Land Use Plan Classifications

	<p>Low Density Residential: includes single-family, detached-unit residential development at a net density of zero (0) to two (2) dwelling units per acre. This land use category includes large areas of the city which are already developed as single-family residential subdivisions, and it includes new areas for low density or conservation neighborhoods.</p>		<p>Mixed Use Office/Residential: allows for a mixture of office and residential uses in such a way as to foster a live-work environment. Professional offices (finance, insurance, real estate, medical) may locate at ground level with residential units above.</p>
	<p>Medium Density Residential: includes single family detached and duplex residential development at a net density of zero (0) to six (6) dwelling units per acre.</p>		<p>Neighborhood Commercial/Office: includes commercial uses such as grocery, small hardware stores, cafes and restaurants, etc. and office and professional uses such as finance, insurance, real estate and medical offices. Developments can be stand along buildings and/or complexes of buildings.</p>
	<p>High Density Residential: includes single family attached, duplex, triplex, townhouse, condominiums and multi-family apartments at a net density of zero (0) to twelve (12) dwelling units per acre.</p>		<p>Highway/Regional Commercial: includes regional commercial centers, retail or strip malls, auto-related businesses, funeral homes and restaurants located in areas visible and accessible from I-10.</p>
	<p>Mixed Use Commercial/Office/Residential: allows for a mixture of commercial, office and residential uses in a "traditional urban" or "main street" fashion. Neighborhood-friendly retail commercial uses such as drugstores, flower shops, small clothing stores, etc. may front on commercial streets with residential/office use above.</p>		<p>Public/Institutional: includes churches, lodges, hospitals, clubs and community service buildings. This classification also includes public schools and buildings, fire stations, police stations, City buildings, and cemeteries.</p>
	<p>Light Industrial: allows for uses that do not create excessive noise, odor, or smoke and that do not produce, handle, or store hazardous wastes. Acceptable uses for this classification include warehousing, assembly, storage, and commercial services</p>		<p>Parks/Open Space: includes land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses that are either publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, golf courses, reservations, recreation centers, and similar uses.</p>

Note: Images are for illustrative use only and are not intended to promote any specific property or developer.



4.4 Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use Map for the City of Spanish Fort divides the City into ten Future Land Use categories. Table 4-1 provides the acreage of future land use by land use classification.

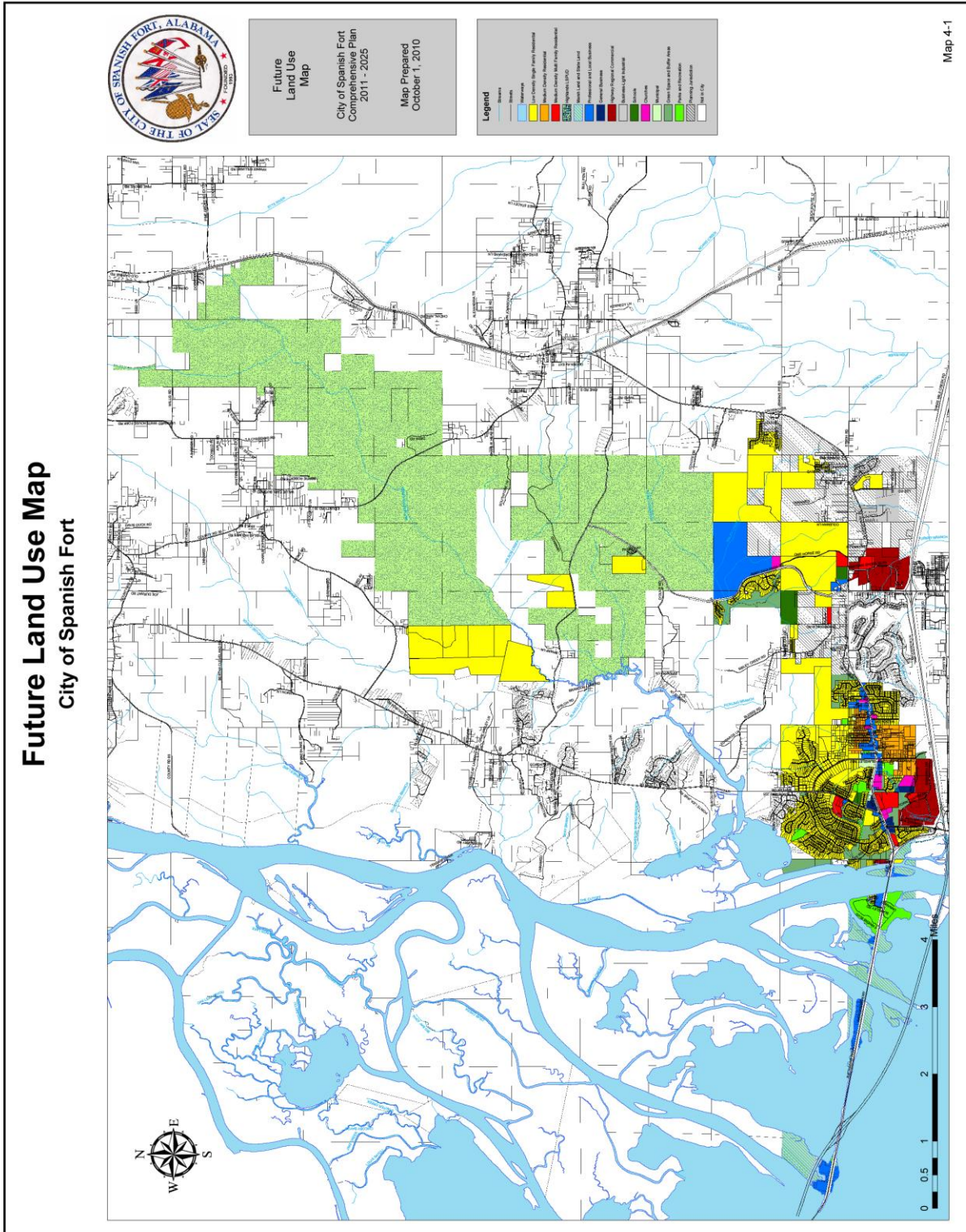
Table 4-1 Future Land Use

<i>Future Land Use</i>	<i>Acreage</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Highway Regional Commercial	563	3.0%
Parks / Open Space	1,041	5.5%
Mixed Use Commercial/Office/Residential	277	1.5%
Mixed Use Office/Residential	106	0.6%
Neighborhood Commercial/Office	206	1.1%
Business / Light Industrial	2	0.0%
Public / Institutional	483	2.5%
Residential High Density	319	1.7%
Residential Medium Density	258	1.4%
Residential Single Family	15,255	80.4%
Transportation / Communication / Utilities	470	2.5%
Unknown	4	0.0%
Total	18,982	100.0%

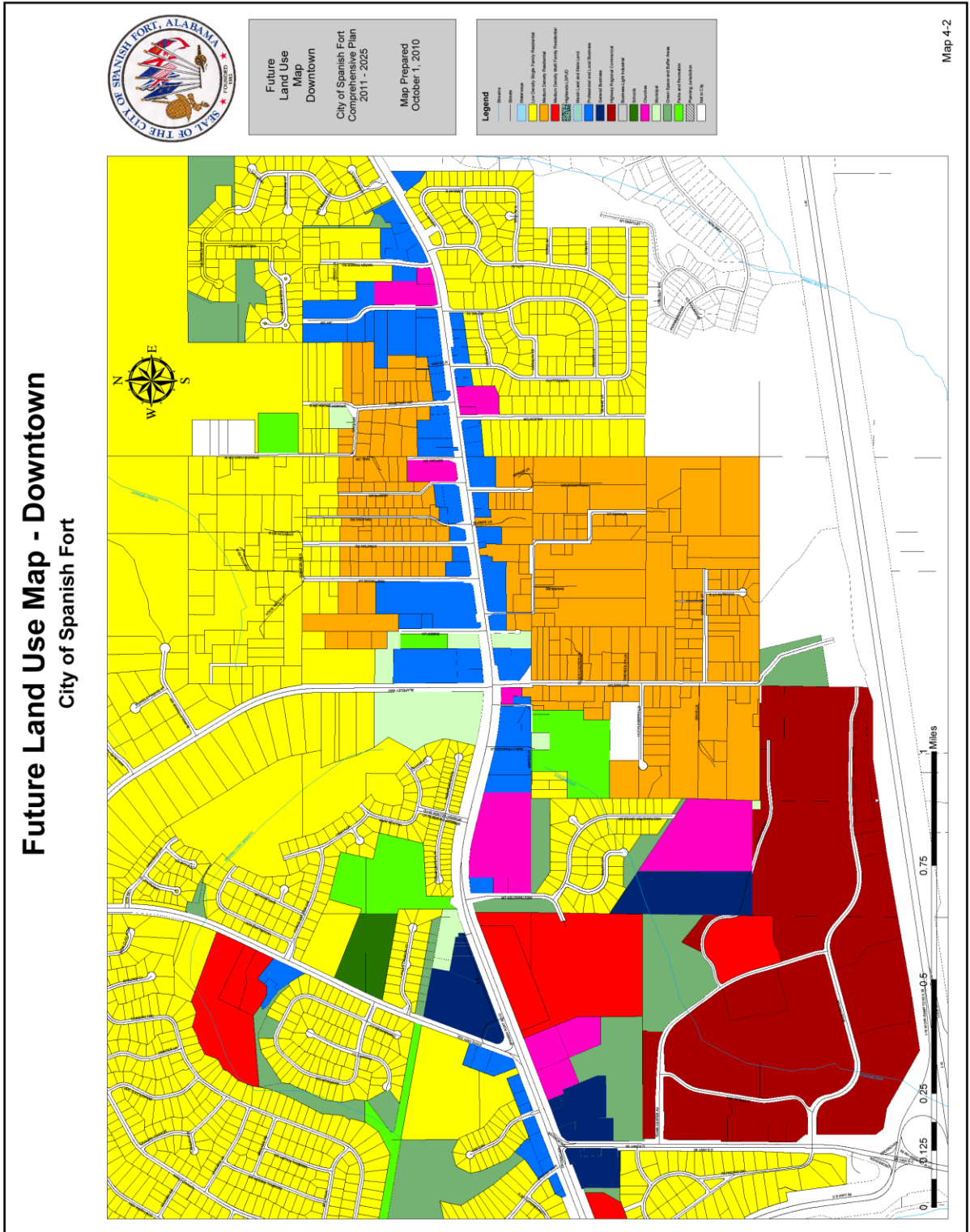
Source: City of Spanish Fort

In addition to the Future Land Use map, a Future Land Use-Zoning Matrix has been created to help link land use and zoning decisions. While the matrix ties specific Future Land Uses to zoning categories, the matrix should not be used as a fixed implementation tool but rather as a decision guide to help identify potential zoning/land use matches. Additionally, the zoning-land use matching is not fixed, as some Future Land Use categories call for mixed-use even though there are no current zoning categories which allow a mixture of residential and commercial uses within the same structure. Likewise, zoning regulations can be amended from time to time and may shift their application from one land use category to another.

Map 4-1 Future Land Use Map



Map 4-2 Future Land Use Map – Downtown



5 Community Design Concepts

Community Design Concepts provide graphic design concepts and general strategy outlines for the high priority goals and objectives listed in Chapter 4. The concepts shown below provide a wide range of Smart Growth solutions to the issues identified by the City of Spanish Fort.

5.1 Coastal Management

Coastal Management, in the broadest sense, is the coordination and implementation of development practices to mitigate human impacts on coastal ecosystems. In most cases, aquatic ecosystems and the land which supports them are very sensitive to the impacts of human development. Pollution can have many negative impacts on both plant and animal life associated with coastal habitat. Additionally, increased stormwater can change nutrient and sediment levels in coastal and freshwater systems, causing a negative impact on the habitats associated with these bodies of water. To assist in managing human impacts, there are several design concepts which can help including:

- Conservation Site Design
- Establishing and Maintaining Riparian Buffers
- Effective Stormwater Management
- Urban Nutrient Management
- Minimizing Shoreline Disturbances

In addition to the design concepts themselves, these concepts should also be integrated into compliance with any federal, state, or local regulations for mitigating coastal impacts.

Figure 5-1: Coastal Management Examples



Shorelines can be preserved and enjoyed with low impact boardwalks and preservation of shoreline habitat.



Stormwater mitigation can be integrated into current infrastructure. Here is an example of a bioswale used for streetscaping.

5.2 Conservation Subdivisions

Conservation subdivisions (also called cluster subdivisions) are an alternative to conventional residential lot designs. Designers identify land resources (e.g. scenic views, steep slopes, riparian areas, etc.) worthy of conservation, then design the development in a way which respects and preserves the resources identified. Conservation subdivisions make development in greenfield areas much more sustainable since open space is protected. By clustering homes, future households are accommodated more efficiently on less-developed land. A chief component of

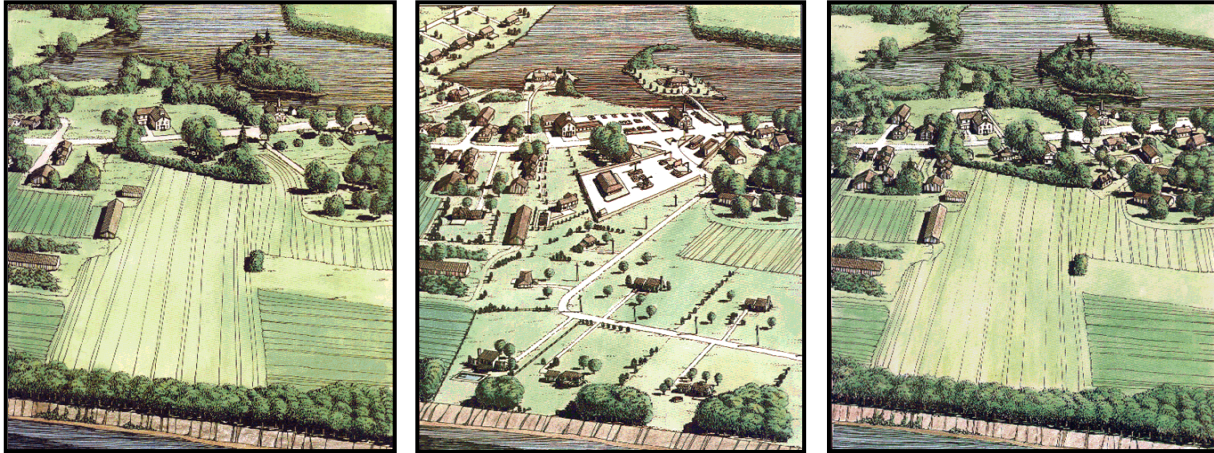


Figure 5-2: Conservation Subdivisions

The images above show development alternatives for a rural area (left) with equal residential and commercial square footage developed with conventional large-lot rural zoning regulations (center) and with conservation subdivision regulations (right).

© Copyright 1995 - 1996 Center for Rural Massachusetts

the conservation subdivision is that the developer can develop the same number of lots with conservation subdivisions as he can with conventional subdivisions. The difference is that conservation subdivisions allow the development to occur with much smaller lots in order to preserve the areas for open space.

Conservation subdivisions are residential or mixed-use developments in which a significant portion of overall acreage is set aside as undivided, permanently protected open space, while houses or other buildings are clustered on the remainder of the property. They are similar in many respects to golf course communities, but instead of a manicured golf course, they feature natural forests, meadows, wetlands, community gardens, or farmland. They contrast with conventional subdivisions in which nearly the entire parcel is subdivided into house lots and streets. Conventional subdivisions provide few green spaces for walking, little habitat for wildlife and few opportunities for residents to interact with their neighbors. Conservation subdivisions, on the other hand, provide all of these. Figure 5-2 shows the difference between a conventional and conservation subdivision.

5.3 Traditional Neighborhood Development

The term traditional neighborhood development ("TND") describes the planning and urban design of pre- and early 20th Century urban form built prior to the nation's fascination with the private automobile. The early forms of these neighborhoods are primarily streetcar and

commuter rail suburbs. On a smaller scale, they resemble traditional American small towns of the early 20th Century. More recent forms are primarily large master planned communities.



Figure 5-5: TND form: (1) Lower-density residential, (2) urban residential, (3) Mixed-Use center, (4) Open Space and Civic Site, and (5) Linear Park.

In general, TNDs consist of the following characteristics:

- Compact defined urban neighborhoods composed of compatible mix of uses and housing types;
- Network of connected streets with sidewalks and trees for convenient and safe movement throughout the neighborhoods for all modes of transportation;
- Focus on the pedestrian over the automobile, while retaining automobile convenience;
- Integrate parks and public spaces into each neighborhood; and
- Placement of important civic buildings and key sites to create landmarks and a strong sense of place.

Instead of isolating uses from one another, traditional neighborhood developments place emphasis on creating quality environments. TNDs accommodate growth for a diverse array of lifestyles, incomes, and needs. They provide marketable and viable choices which will retain a sense of belonging and identity. The TND philosophy contends that an appropriate mix of uses, housing types, and strong design provide the backbone of livable and sustainable neighborhoods.

TNDs built over the last 20 years in the United States have been developed using form-based zoning regulations which prescribe traditional neighborhood form. The form-based TND ordinance is distinguished from conventional zoning in that it places more emphasis on the arrangement of buildings and spaces than on how the buildings will be used.

Several examples of historic neighborhoods may be found in the surrounding areas which have many of the components of traditional neighborhoods. These neighborhoods include The Oakleigh Garden District, The Leinkauf Historic District, Old Dauphin Way and Historic Malbis.

Traditional neighborhood development concepts are key to Spanish Fort's future of development and redevelopment of its neighborhoods. While some TNDs are redeveloped, TNDs may also be created on greenfield sites, such as The Highlands of Spanish Fort.

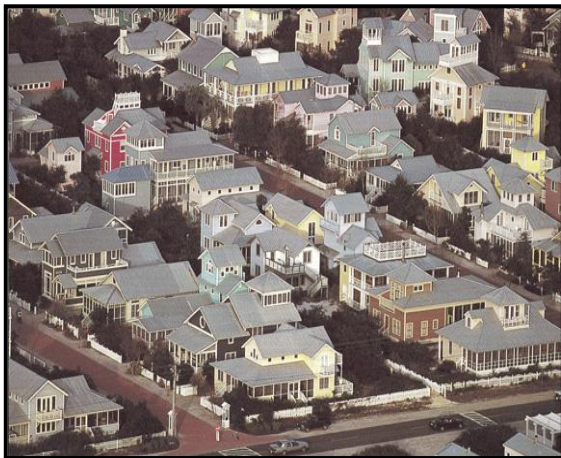


Figure 5-5: TND residential area of Seaside, Florida
Source: Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company



Figure 5-5: Single Family Street in the Village of Tannin TND, Orange Beach, Alabama
Source: Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company

5.4 Mixed- Use

Mixed-use development combines numerous uses on one site in a strategic way, including office, retail, residential, hotel, services, and public transportation. Historically, mixed use was a common form of development in America, and today it is returning in response to land use segregation and the desire for an improved sense of community.

Developing with a mixed-use approach can alleviate traffic and help reduce pollution, while providing residents a cherished place to call downtown. Accessibility becomes a major benefit, as various stores, restaurants, and homes are located in one vicinity. Parking needs of the different uses vary throughout the day, and may be skillfully shared and placed in the backs of buildings or on-street to encourage pedestrian movement. Also, “pocket parks”, parks which are tucked within the urban fabric of a downtown, balance with density to create an enjoyable, livable atmosphere.

Mixed land uses can create convenient places to live for people of various ages and income levels, enhancing the vitality of a community and its streets. Substantial fiscal and economic benefits may also be generated out of mixed-use development as the area becomes more attractive to residents and to businesses which acknowledge the benefits related to areas which are able to appeal to more people.



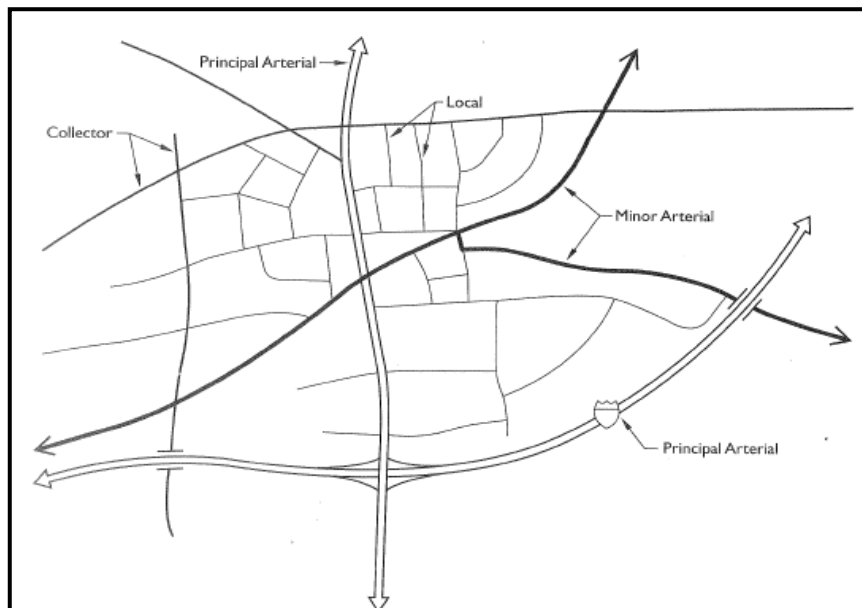
Figure 5-7: Mixed use building type

5.5 Roads and Streetscapes

Streets form the structure of urban communities. Their sizes and arrangements influence the form of growth in an area, affecting the amount of activity afforded to a region. Smaller streets and a dense street network encourage smaller lots and walkability, while larger streets and large blocks encourage larger lots, bigger developments, and increased use of the automobile as a means of transportation. Streets also shape how people relate to one another and their community, whether traveling in a vehicle or pedestrian traffic.

A hierarchy of roads becomes important to the centralization of an urban core and its surrounding vicinity, organizing patterns of density and focusing attention on one or many centers. Figure 5-8 is a diagram of how roads can be classified based on the level of service. By prioritizing streets, Spanish Fort can manage and match road levels of service to appropriate land uses and density patterns. Principal arterials are primarily freeways with high speeds and traffic levels. Principal and minor arterials are the main roads of most cities. Most state and U.S. highways are classified as principal or minor arterials. Additionally, most retail, office, and other commercial land uses are associated with these street types. Collectors are in-between streets and are often associated with both residential and commercial uses. Local roads are the smallest level of service road and are predominately residential in character and land use.

Figure 5-8: Functional Classification of Streets

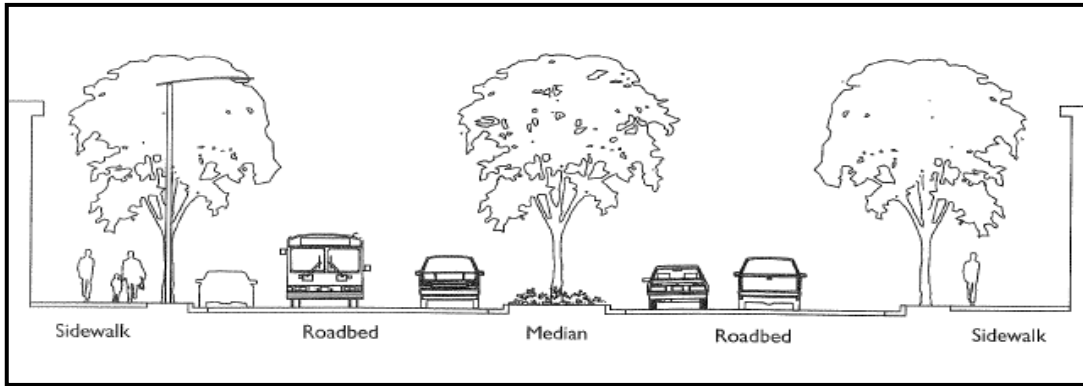


Source: *Planning and Urban Design Standards (2006)*

5.5.1 Boulevards

A boulevard indicates a wide, multi-lane thoroughfare, often planted with rows of trees. The boulevard may be perceived as three distinct routes: two sidewalks and the roadway itself, trees separating each of these components. Boulevards can affect the structure and comprehension of a City's layout, linking important localities, and may also become popular destinations themselves. The boulevard can accommodate and even promote residential, business, and retail purposes, and, as in traditional use, often exists as a special place of promenade. In addition to the movement of vehicles and goods, the design purpose of a boulevard is about pedestrian traffic. Boulevards become a way for people to enjoy a city, and help to create a city's identity. Figure 5-9 is one example of a boulevard and its elements.

Figure 5-9: Example Section of Boulevard Street Type

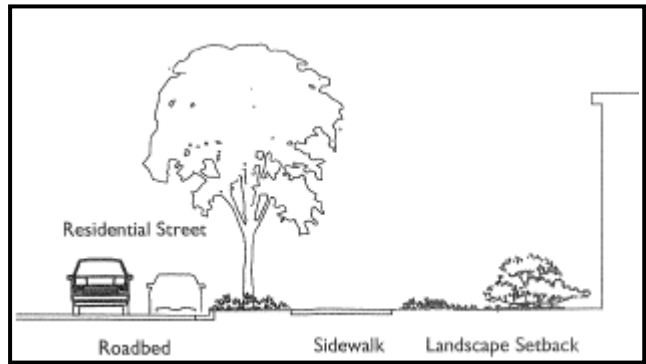


Source: Planning and Urban Design Standards (2006)

5.5.2 Residential Streets

Residential streets are designed to create a quiet, traffic-protected area. The feeling throughout is pedestrian friendly. Often the curb-to-curb width of the street is wide enough to allow some on-street parking. Residential streets can be emphasized by the planting of trees and shrubs. Figure 5-10 is a typical residential street section.

Figure 5-10: Example Section of Residential Street Type

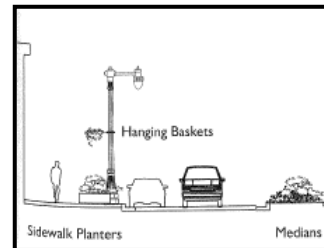
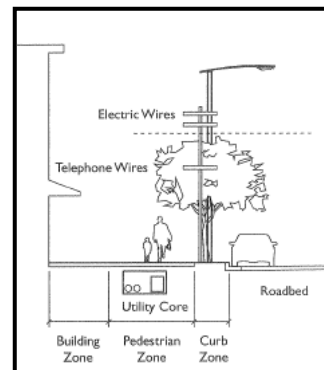


Source: Planning and Urban Design Standards (2006)

5.5.3 Streetscapes

Streetscape design is the design of a street as a whole rather than considering a street as separate elements, such as the sidewalk and roadway. When all of the elements are designed together and at the right scale, streets can be comfortable and enhance the quality and usability of a place. When the elements of a street are constructed and designed separately, the street can lose its function and identity. In most cases, designing a street requires the coordination and cooperation of several government agencies (e.g. planning and zoning, public works, etc.) and different levels of government (e.g. local, state, and federal). By ensuring and promoting appropriate street standards for the different elements of a street, streetscape design can greatly enhance community appeal and quality. Figure 5-11 includes a pair of diagrams which highlight some of the elements of streets and streetscapes.

Figure 5-11: Streetscape Elements



Source: Planning and Urban Design Standards (2006)

5.6 Housing Infill

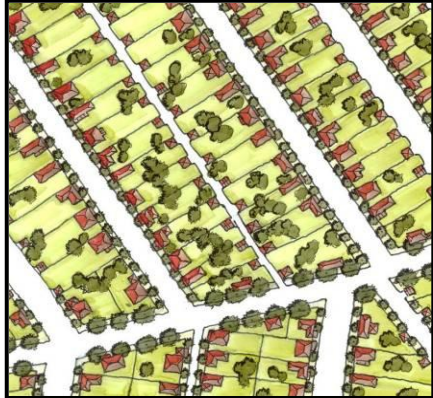


Figure 5-12: Infill Housing

Infill development is construction on vacant parcels of land which are usually served by utilities and surrounded by older urban growth. This description could also include development or re-use of all vacant or underutilized land. Infill development occurs in a variety of forms, though typically it is small-scale residential or commercial development. Infill development can reduce consumption of forest and agricultural land, increase access of people to jobs and jobs to the labor force. In addition, infill development can make better use of existing infrastructure and lower costs of public services such as transit, sidewalks, water and sewer, school, and public safety (fire, police, ambulance) and reduce the time, money, energy and air pollution associated with a community.

Because the overall pattern of development in Spanish Fort is generally low-density, there are many opportunities where vacant and underutilized land exists. Infill construction should maintain the urban design and character of the surrounding neighborhood with the City paying careful attention to the scale of new buildings, location of parking spaces and garages and the use of design elements (such as front porches, stoops or other common finishing touches) to ensure that the new buildings contribute to the architectural quality of the area rather than drain them of their historic value.



Figure 5-13: Successful infill housing on narrow lots

Narrow lots can require home designs which are deep on the lot as opposed to wide. Excessive side yard setbacks may make the lot unbuildable. Figure 5-13 shows a collage of narrow-lots with recently-constructed homes in other parts of the country, which are examples of what could happen in some of Spanish Fort's neighborhoods.

5.7 Municipal Center Development Plan

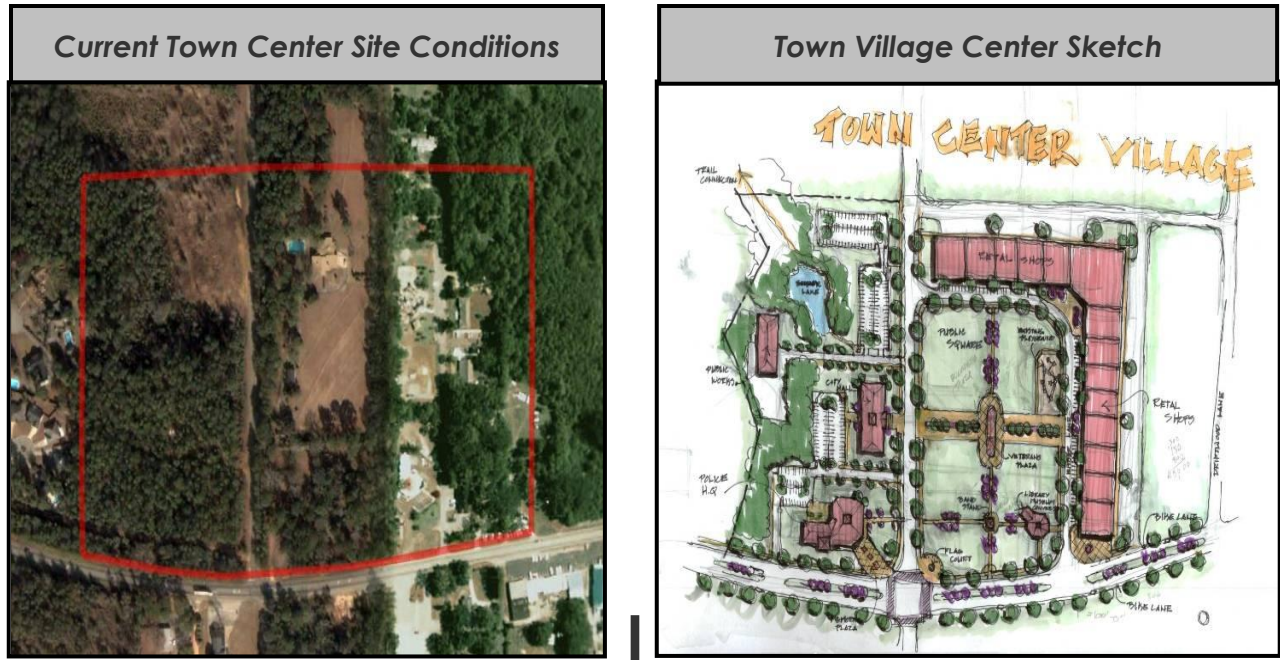
Renewed interest in the health and livability of downtowns and town centers across the country has occurred over the last 15 years. Many towns and cities are improving their central cores in an effort to create an appealing and more walkable environment. Spanish Fort has a unique opportunity to create a town center largely from scratch. The area currently identified for the new Municipal Center is largely vacant, undeveloped land. While creating a unique town center might be complicated, there are several steps which can be taken to assist in the design and coordination of downtown development.

Downtown or town center development is different from normal development. With normal development, there is usually a single entity or owner of a project. With downtowns, multiple owners and stakeholders are involved in a small area. Additionally, these areas usually constitute a large public and private investment. Because of the many parts associated with coordinating downtown development, a town center plan will assist in achieving the creation of a healthy downtown. Reasons for creating a town center plan include:

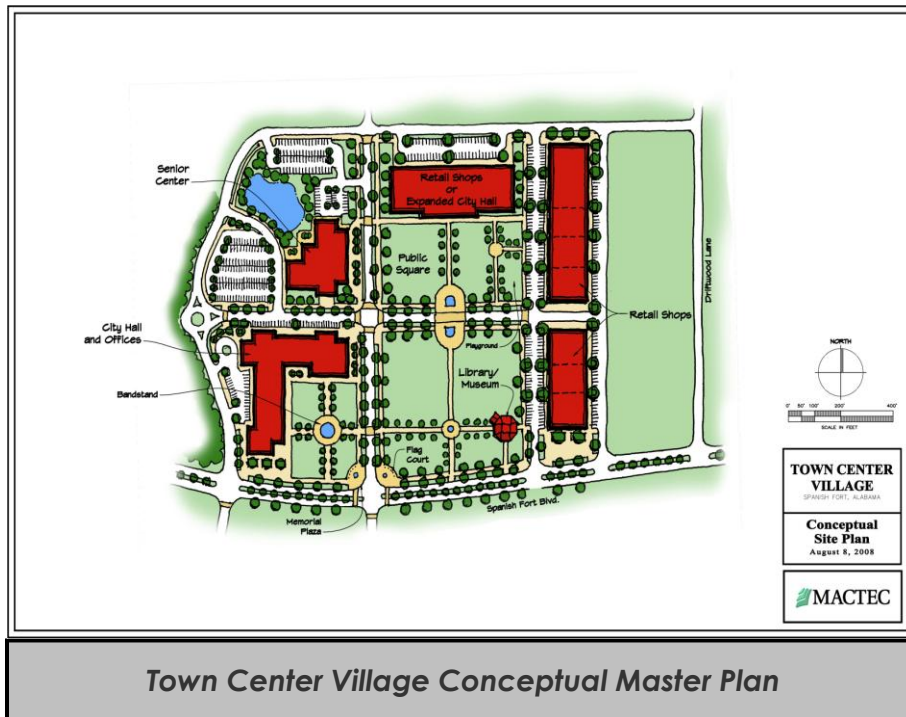
- Establish a vision for the future;
- Coordinate improvement activities;
- Provide guidance to owners and developers; and
- Market downtown investment and development.

As part of the charrette process, a conceptual Municipal Center Master Plan was created to identify a potential development strategy. The Municipal Center site is located along Spanish Fort Boulevard and consists of several parcels currently owned by the City. The main focus of the plan is to create a focal point for the City. Potential public development includes municipal buildings for public works, a new City Hall, police headquarters, community center, library and a post office. Additionally, a public park space is created in the plan to provide additional civic space that the city has identified as a major goal. Also, built into the plan is the potential for a future transit stop or park-and-ride location for the Baldwin Rural Area Transit System (BRATS).

Figure 5-14: Town Center Concept



Source: Google



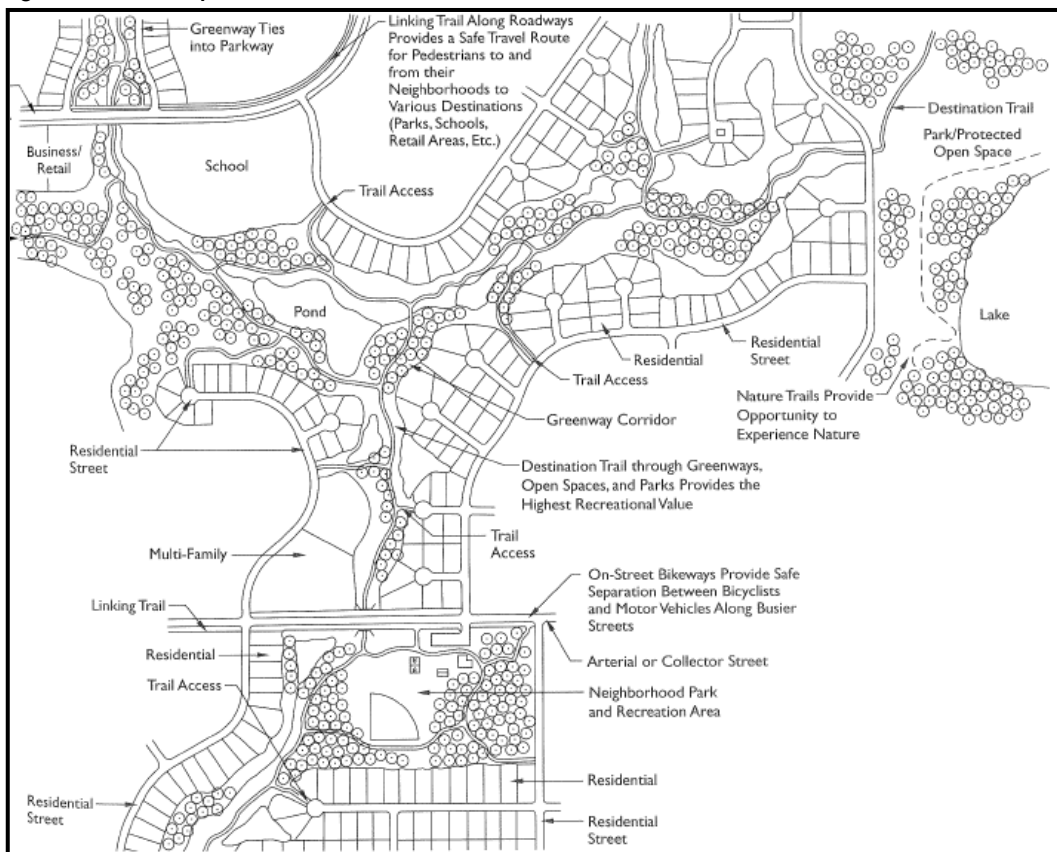
Town Center Village Conceptual Master Plan

5.8 Connectivity and Green Infrastructure

Creating connections is a key component to enhancing Spanish Fort's mobility, health, and quality of life. Connections are a means of getting from one point to another. With fewer connections, distances are increased between the place of origin and the destination. Additionally, the modes of travel are reduced as distances increase with a greater tendency towards driving. As figure 5-15 illustrates, connectivity can reduce distances traveled and increase travel modes (e.g. walking or biking) and can also connect people to trails and parks. The benefits of connectors are many. With more walking or biking, people will be healthier, and the amount of pollution associated with automobile traffic will be reduced. Emphasis on trails and connectivity may also lead to greater preservation of natural areas. For Spanish Fort, this translates into greater storm water management and preservation of important natural habitat such as streams.

In order to promote connectivity, regulations and policies should be created and adopted to encourage connections. With many traditional ordinances, connections outside of the development site are not encouraged. To help with this situation, zoning and subdivision regulations may be modified to allow sidewalks and other trail-like connections between a development and the property and public right-of-way surrounding it. Other ways to encourage connections between developments include development incentives such as density bonuses or property easements behind developments which would allow the creation of trail right-of-way (as illustrated below). By allowing connections, Spanish Fort can improve the quality of life in its communities, as well as help to preserve some of its natural beauty.

Figure 5-15: Conceptual Trail Network



Source: Planning and Urban Design Standards (2006)

5.9 Greyfield Redevelopment

Today, America's urban landscape is dotted with shopping malls which have become obsolete. These shopping centers, built primarily in the 1970's and 1980's, are dying due to various factors including differences in the market, changes in accessibility, and increased competition. A new tool for design experts is to turn these fading centers, named 'greyfields' for the typically empty parking lots surrounding them, into thriving downtown communities.

Greyfield revitalization efforts attempt to encourage smart new growth which is more environmentally friendly and establishes a strong sense of place. Revitalization of greyfield sites often consists of major redevelopment rather than conventional regional retail or simple face-lifts. Design initiatives are inspired by classic urban form and characterized by attractive, walkable streets and high density. Many greyfield sites are more suitable for conversion into housing, retail, office, services, and public space rather than standard retail. In these cases, mixed-use development becomes an attractive option.

An example of greyfield redevelopment could include a traditional strip of commercial development situated on a site with a large parking lot located between the roadway and the building. A mixed-use development plan concept replaces an isolated big box store and its large parking lot with traditional, urban design, placing buildings close to the street, separated from the street only by a sidewalk and landscaped strip. Parking is located in the rear or to the side of the commercial buildings in order to create a friendly pedestrian environment along each street. This type of design connects the development to the adjacent community's street grid with pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, accomplishing the goal of providing housing, employment, shopping, recreation and entertainment all within walking distance of each other. In addition, a new destination point could also be a transit stop, supporting mass transit by creating an activity center where multiple activities could take place in one location. The City should promote the redevelopment of greyfields and provide flexible guidelines for design and development which will encourage the creation of mixed-use communities.

Figure 5-16: Greyfield Redevelopment



Traditional strip commercial development



Mixed Use redevelopment concept sketch

5.10 Design Concepts Summary

Below is a summary table which links the character areas with applicable design concepts. While the concepts will not always apply to each land use decision, they do give guidance on how to implement the concepts to achieve the goals of each district.

Table 5-1 Design Concept Matrix

<i>Character Area</i>	<i>Coastal Management</i>	<i>Conservation Subdivision</i>	<i>Traditional Neighborhood Development</i>	<i>Mixed Use</i>	<i>Roads and Streetscapes</i>	<i>Housing Infill</i>	<i>Municipal Center Development Plan</i>	<i>Connectivity and Green Infrastructure</i>	<i>Greyfield Redevelopment</i>
Spanish Fort Causeway – Battleship Parkway	•				•			•	
Spanish Fort Municipal Center District	•		•	•	•		•	•	
Regional Commercial Center District	•			•	•			•	•
Emerging Neighborhood Areas	•	•			•	•		•	
Major Corridor Character	•			•	•			•	•
The Highlands of Spanish Fort	•		•	•	•			•	

6 Implementation

The City of Spanish Fort will work toward the accomplishment of community goals by implementing policies, establishing development regulations according to those policies, developing a capital improvements program based on community priorities, and initiating plan projects through coordination of City staff, volunteers, consultants, and funding sources. This section of the Comprehensive Plan focuses on building capacity within the City to accomplish plan projects through organizational efforts, prioritizing and phasing, and identifying potential funding strategies and sources.

This chapter includes three sections. Section 6.1 briefly describes the government organization needed to implement the plan. Section 6.2 presents the action plan which includes specific projects and actions categorized into the basic plan element headings. Each subsection includes the actions listed in tables where the actions are identified as short- or long-term actions as well as linked to the corresponding goals and objectives established in Chapter 3. Section 6.3 presents the funding mechanisms available.

6.1 Government Organization

Currently, the City of Spanish Fort's organizational structure is composed of a Mayor, City Council, and Planning Commission. Within this overall structure, several committees should be established and members assigned to lead efforts in areas such as zoning, historic preservation, education, etc. To enhance this structure, each committee may be assigned project planning tasks which fall within the committee's area of responsibility and community members recruited to build the capacity of each group. To aid these groups in their efforts, the City will maintain a close working relationship with county, regional and state agencies which can provide technical assistance and consultant services.

6.2 Action Plan

Several projects were identified to assist the City in improving residential and economic development potential, safety and mobility, education, community services, and recreational opportunities. To begin the process of planning these projects, the City should first clearly define and assign priorities to projects through a series of public involvement meetings. Projects will have different levels of complexity, time frames, and costs which must be considered in conjunction with their importance to the community. Financing strategies will play an important role in determining priorities, as some projects may require loans or bond generation – increasing the indebtedness of the City - while others may be funded through grants.

6.2.1 Economic Development

Economic Development should be a cooperative effort between the key stakeholders in Spanish Fort including, but not limited to, the City Council, regional chambers of commerce, Planning Commission, County School Board, individual businesses, County government agencies and local institutions of higher learning. Collectively, this team approach will be more successful in attracting new business opportunities within the City.

Table 6-1 provides a complete list of the Economic Development Actions necessary to implement the vision, goals and objectives of the plan. In summary, the City should encourage business startups and expansions with incentives and financing programs and by providing

marketing and promotional information, especially related to tourism, with an updated, comprehensive website. The City should also bring activity to the City by creating an open air market and recruiting a hotel with meeting facilities. While not among the actions listed in Table 6-1, the City should also encourage private sector involvement and collaboration with local schools and small businesses to develop mentor/protégé programs and other general economic development activities. Improving educational attainment and job skills among the working age population as well as preparing the City's youth for today's competitive job market are critical elements for improving the City's economic condition.

Table 6-1 Economic Development Actions

<i>Priority</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Short/Long Term</i>	<i>Goals Implemented</i>
	Develop local business start up/expansion incentives.	Short Term	ED-1
	Update City website.	Short Term	ED-1
	Encourage business association and development.	Short Term	ED-1
	Develop business-retention strategy.	Long Term	ED-1
	Develop business tax incentive program.	Long Term	ED-1
	Recruit medical facilities.	Long Term	ED-2

6.2.2 Housing

The need for a diversity of housing options is important to Spanish Fort's long-term vitality. Table 6-2 provides a complete list of the Housing Actions necessary to implement the vision, goals and objectives of the plan. In summary, the City must continue to support housing options which match the jobs and incomes of the community.

Table 6-2 Housing Actions

<i>Priority</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Short/Long Term</i>	<i>Goals Implemented</i>
	Adopt zoning regulations to encourage appropriate housing types, as needed.	Short Term	H-1, H-2
	Encourage the use of federal and state financial assistance programs designed to assist low and moderate income residents.	Short Term	H-1, H-2

6.2.3 Historic and Cultural Resources

Historic and cultural resources surround the City and are available for residents and tourists to use and enjoy. Table 6-3 provides a complete list of the Historic and Cultural Resources Actions necessary to implement the vision, goals and objectives of the plan.

Table 6-3 Historical and Cultural Resources Actions

<i>Priority</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Short/Long Term</i>	<i>Goals Implemented</i>
	Develop inventory of available historic and cultural resources and promote their use by the local community, as well as by tourists.	Long Term	HCR-1
	Plan for development and archival of significant artifacts and items related to the history of Spanish Fort in available public facilities to be constructed.	Long Term	HCR-1
	Develop programs to educate the public about the intrinsic value, use and need to preserve Mobile Bay and the Mobile-Tensaw Delta.	Long Term	HCR-1
	Encourage programs to educate the community about the historical significance and heritage of the community.	Long Term	HCR-1

6.2.4 Environmental and Natural Resources

Environmental and Natural Resources should be protected for existing and future development. Table 6-4 provides a list of the Environmental and Natural Resources Actions necessary to implement the vision, goals and objectives of the plan. In summary, the City needs to develop policies and regulations which protect these sensitive areas and protect them for future generations.

The City should develop a City-wide parks and recreation master plan which can provide for strategically acquiring properties for greenspace. The plan would focus on protecting water quality and environmentally sensitive areas, as well as providing passive and active parkland. The plan would also focus on providing trail systems and linear parks which connect neighborhood, community and regional parks to neighborhoods, schools and commercial areas, as well as identifying sites for acquisition for neighborhood parks throughout the City, including linear parks. The plan would also assess the needs of the City's existing parks.

Table 6-4 Environmental and Natural Resources Actions

Priority	Action	Short/Long Term	Goals Implemented
	Develop a City-wide Parks and Recreation Master Plan.	Short Term	ENR-1
	Adopt watersheds, wetlands, and tributaries protection ordinances.	Long Term	ENR-1, ENR-2
	Develop open space ordinance that allows for right-of-way acquisition for the creation of an integrated trail system throughout the City.	Long Term	ENR-1
	Prepare and adopt a Tree Protection/Replacement ordinance that limits clearing and grading and therefore maintains the tree canopy as much as possible.	Long Term	ENR-2
	Amend Subdivision Regulations to establish standards for conservation subdivisions.	Short Term	ENR-2
	Encourage the study and adoption of a master plan or overlay district for the Causeway to protect and preserve natural resources and encourage orderly development and public recreational uses.	Long Term	ENR-1, ENR-2

6.2.5 Infrastructure, Facilities and Services

Table 6-5 provides a complete list of the Infrastructure Actions necessary to implement the vision, goals and objectives of the plan. Areas that can be developed without having to invest in new infrastructure or take on additional maintenance responsibilities should be a priority for Spanish Fort. Redeveloping unused, underused, or blighted sites would yield property which would already have infrastructure and public services readily available such as utilities, streets, emergency services, etc.

Public safety infrastructure is also needed. Organizing neighborhood and business watch groups and working with stakeholders to audit street lighting will provide a safer environment for the citizens of the City and make operation of the various services more manageable.

The City should plan to provide facilities for community activities, gatherings, meetings, etc. An assessment should be performed of all the City's properties (structures) for suitability for intended uses.

Community facilities should also be tracked and managed through a Geographical Information System (GIS) which will assist the City in planning. GIS information would generally include the location, capacity and square footage of each structure. The GIS mapping of existing facilities and their purposes will also provide a tool for siting new facilities. Siting of new community facilities such as police, fire, and other municipal buildings should include a careful study into the density, accessibility, and visibility of the area being served.

The City should continue to monitor the need for additional police and emergency response facilities based upon development trends, visibility, population density, crime statistics, and access to major travel routes.

Table 6-5 Infrastructure, Facilities and Services Actions

<i>Priority</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Short/Long Term</i>	<i>Goals Implemented</i>
	Develop a drainage and storm water system management plan pursuant to interjurisdictional agreement.	Short Term	IFS-2
	Conduct City lighting audit.	Short Term	IFS-3
	Implement City-wide Geographic Information System (GIS).	Short Term	IFS-1, IFS-3, IFS-4
	Organize Neighborhood Watch and Business Watch programs.	Short Term	IFS-4
	Expand water and wastewater services to all areas of the City.	Long Term	IFS-3
	Expand fire and police response facilities to improve response time.	Long Term	IFS-3
	Assess all City properties.	Short Term	IFS-1
	Encourage the study and assessment of the current state of Spanish Fort's water supply and available water service and sewer service.	Long Term	IFS-1, IFS-3

6.2.6 Transportation

Table 6-6 provides a complete list of the Transportation Actions necessary to implement the vision, goals and objectives of the plan. In summary, two basic actions are needed. First, an assessment of current conditions and a prioritized plan for road improvements are needed. Second, an assessment of potential street connections and new regulations to ensure future neighborhood connectivity is needed.

The road assessment should include an analysis of the condition of pavement, signage, signalization, and striping. It would be followed by cost estimations and analysis of potential funding sources including capital improvement budget, pay as you go, and other funding sources. A preliminary assessment should also be performed on the existing levels of service for major roads in the City. This assessment would include a review of existing traffic data available through the state department of transportation.

The connectivity assessment would identify additional connection opportunities within the City and outline important locations for streets to connect as development occurs. Subdivision regulation and zoning ordinance amendments to require street connectivity for new development would provide an important tool for the City. While preparing these plans, it will be important to also prepare street connection design guidelines which outline methods that blend the neighborhood development styles and encourage slow speeds, etc.

Table 6-6 Transportation Actions

Priority	Action	Short/Long Term	Goals Implemented
	Prepare assessment of and master plan for a citywide pedestrian and bicycle network.	Long Term	T-1
	Assess current street connectivity and develop street connectivity plan.	Long Term	T-1
	Perform citywide study of street resurfacing needs, including striping, signage and signalization. Prioritize resurfacing needs and include in capital improvement budgets. Also, identify other funding sources such as pay as you go, etc.	Short Term	T-1
	Prepare assessment of street facilities.	Short Term	T-1
	Review subdivision regulations and zoning ordinance to ensure street connectivity and sidewalk installation requirements.	Short Term	T-1
	Prepare streetscape plan for Municipal Center and other major corridors.	Short Term	T-1
	Develop wayfinding system for City roads and major destinations.	Long Term	T-1
	Establish City gateways and develop design standards for signage, landscaping, etc for a uniform City entrance.	Long Term	T-1
	Coordinate funding for construction of streetscape improvements.	Long Term	T-1
	Encourage the City Council to consider the realignment of roads and intersections when possible to aid in traffic control on Highway 31 and other transportation corridors.	Long Term	T-1

6.2.7 Land Use and Zoning

Table 6-7 provides a complete list of the Land Use and Zoning Actions necessary to implement the vision, goals and objectives of the plan. In summary, the City should develop and adopt new zoning districts, revise existing zoning regulations, revise subdivision regulations and make other regulatory changes in order to provide the tools needed to generate the desired change in development patterns. The desired pattern includes traditional neighborhoods with connected streets and ample parks and open space developed in ways that protect historic, cultural and natural resources.

Table 6-7 Land Use and Zoning Actions

<i>Priority</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Short/Long Term</i>	<i>Goals Implemented</i>
	Prepare detailed Municipal Center master plan.	Short Term	LUZ-7
	Adopt Municipal Center zoning district.	Short Term	LUZ-7
	Adopt Conservation Subdivision Ordinance.	Short Term	LUZ-1
	Review and update zoning regulations and subdivision regulations.	Short Term	LUZ-1

6.2.8 Municipal Center Development

Table 6-8 provides a list of the Land Use and Zoning Actions necessary to implement the vision, goals and objectives of the plan. The City needs a detailed Master Plan outlining all of the elements necessary for a productive and engaging municipal center.

Table 6-8 Municipal Center Actions and Projects

<i>Priority</i>	<i>Project/Action</i>	<i>Short/Long Term</i>	<i>Goals Implemented</i>
	Create Municipal Center Master Plan.	Short Term	LUZ-7

6.3 Funding Sources

Grants often include local match requirements, but are important sources of funds. The City is currently pursuing available grant funds, both individually and in cooperation with other local governmental authorities. Other projects may be initiated through private developments where tax abatements and other incentives may be applied. The following is an outline of available funding sources to the City of Spanish Fort.

6.3.1 Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)

CDBG Grants are intended to benefit low- and moderate-income people, aid in the prevention or removal of slum and blight, or meet an urgent need. Funding is provided by HUD and typically administered through the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) with the following program funds: Competitive Fund, Community Enhancement Fund, Planning Fund and Economic Development Fund.

Competitive Fund

The Small City and County funds both have ceilings of \$400,000. The Large City fund has a ceiling of \$500,000. Typical activities include:

- Water and Sewer Extensions / Rehabilitation
- Housing Rehabilitation
- Neighborhood and Downtown Revitalization
- Street and Drainage Improvements

Community Enhancement Fund

The Community Enhancement Fund has a grant ceiling of \$250,000. Typical activities include:

- Fire Protection
- Senior Citizens Centers
- Community Centers
- Boys & Girls Clubs
- Recreational Facilities
- Other "Quality of Life" – Related Activities

Planning Fund

The Planning Fund has a grant ceiling of \$50,000. Typical activities include:

- Comprehensive Plans
- Elements of Comprehensive Plans
- Downtown Revitalization Plans
- Regional Strategies and Plans, etc.

Economic Development Fund

The Economic Development Fund grant ceiling varies depending on the type of project and requires a 20% local match. Typical activities include:

- ED Incubator (\$250,000)
- ED Float Loans (\$10 million)
- ED Grants (\$200,000 subject to waiver)

This fund is available to all eligible communities for projects supporting the creation or retention of jobs. Construction cannot begin prior to grant award or release of environmental conditions.

6.3.2 Community Services Block Grant Program (CSBG)

The Federal Community Services Block Grant Act was enacted to assist low-income individuals and families to achieve self-sufficiency. In Alabama, the CSBG program is administered by the Community Services Division of ADECA. The activities in the CSBG Program address issues such as employment, economic development, education, housing, emergency financial assistance, health and nutrition services, public involvement, youth services, and coordinated government/social services assistance. Funding is distributed to states in this program using a formula based on the percentage of population below the poverty line.

6.3.3 Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Program

The ESG program is administered by ADECA. ESG funds are used to upgrade existing homeless facilities and domestic abuse shelters, to help meet the operating costs of such facilities, to provide essential services to these groups, and to help prevent homelessness. ESG dollars must be matched on a dollar for dollar basis by recipients. However, the State is incorporating into this Plan the option allowed by law and regulations to forgive up to \$100,000 in required match when circumstances of extreme need indicate this is appropriate. The grant ceiling for the program is \$200,000. ESG funds may be used for such purposes as conversion of buildings for emergency use, rehabilitation of buildings for use as shelters, operating costs (no more than 10%

of grants can go to staffing costs), essential services (such as education, drug abuse, child care, job training, etc.), and programs designed to prevent homelessness.

6.3.4 HOME Program

HOME is a federal HUD program authorized under Title II of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act. HOME provides formula grants to states and localities which communities (often in partnership with local nonprofit groups) use to fund a wide range of activities that build, buy, and/or rehabilitate affordable housing for rent or homeownership or provide direct rental assistance to low-income people. HOME is the largest Federal block grant to state and local governments designed exclusively to create affordable housing for low-income households.

HOME funds are awarded annually as formula grants to participating jurisdictions. The State of Alabama is a participating jurisdiction and administers funding through the Alabama Housing Finance Authority (AHFA). HUD establishes HOME Investment Trust Funds for each grantee, providing a line of credit that the jurisdiction may draw upon as needed. The program's flexibility allows states and local governments to use HOME funds for grants, direct loans, loan guarantees or other forms of credit enhancement, rental assistance or security deposits.

In Alabama, AHFA primarily promotes the use of HOME funding for the construction of new rental housing for low-income households, with a minimum of 12 units and a maximum of 56 units per development. AHFA also permits HOME funding use for other uses consistent with the state's Consolidated Plan which may be deemed necessary by AHFA. However, AHFA specifically does not permit HOME funding for use for public housing modernization, special-purpose tenant subsidies, project-based rental assistance, matching funds for other federal programs, annual contributions contracts, and some other uses, including mobile homes and shelters or transitional housing.

Funding recipients must match every dollar of HOME funds used (except for administrative costs) with 25 cents from nonfederal sources, which may include donated materials or labor, the value of donated property, proceeds from bond financing, and other resources. The match requirement may be reduced if the jurisdiction is distressed or has suffered a disaster which was declared by the President. In addition, jurisdictions must reserve at least 15 percent of their allocations to fund housing to be owned, developed, or sponsored by experienced, community-driven nonprofit groups designated as Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs). Jurisdictions must ensure that HOME-funded housing units remain affordable in the long term (20 years for new construction of rental housing; 5-15 years for construction of homeownership housing and housing rehabilitation, depending on the amount of HOME subsidy).

6.3.5 Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is comprised of two programs: a federal program that funds the purchase of land and water areas for conservation and recreation purposes; and a state matching-grants program (50/50) that provides funds for state and local governments. Eligible activities are divided into two categories: acquisition and development.

Acquisition

- Water-based public recreation projects such as frontage on the bays, rivers, streams and lakes
- Land for creating water impoundments
- Natural areas and preserves

- Urban land for day use (picnic areas, playgrounds, etc.)

Development

- Renovation of existing outdoor recreation facilities
- Sports and playfields
- Picnic areas and swimming facilities
- Boating, fishing, hunting, camping areas and trails
- Aggregate surfacing of parking areas and access roads

6.3.6 Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) administers the EWP program, which is used to assist in relieving hazards to life and property from floods and the products of erosion created by natural disasters that cause a sudden impairment of a watershed. A sudden watershed impairment results from a single natural occurrence or a short-term combination of occurrences. For the watershed to be eligible for assistance, the impairment must significantly exceed that which existed before the disaster.

6.3.7 Environmental Protection Agency Special Appropriations Program (EPA SPAP)

The EPA receives SPAP money from Congress to fund grants for waste water and drinking water infrastructure projects. SPAP grants are limited to 55 percent of the estimated project cost and require matching funds. Other federal funds may be used only if such use is permitted by the other funding source (such as CDBG funding). These grants are administered through the Waters Division of the Alabama Department of Environmental Management.

6.3.8 Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Funding

The Federal Transit Administration administers funding broadly associated with transit improvements. In the Mobile area, examples of funding recipients include WAVE Transit and the Alabama State Docks. FTA funding is apportioned to local government bodies based on criteria established by Congress. In addition to grant money, FTA works with local government to secure non-grant funding sources, including bond insurance and credit assistance programs.

6.3.9 Recreational Trails Program

The Federal Recreational Trails Program is administered by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), which distributes money to the states under a formula established by Congress. In Alabama, the Recreational Trails Program is administered by ADECA and has a grant ceiling of \$80,000 and requires a 20% local match. Eligible activities include the following:

- Development of urban trail linkages near homes and workplaces. This category includes trail linkages to schools, parks, and existing trails.
- Maintenance of existing recreational trails.
- Restoration of areas damaged by usage of recreational trails and back-country terrain.
- Development of trail-side and trail-head facilities which meet goals identified by the National Recreational Trails Advisory Committee. Development should include trail components or associated facilities which serve the purpose and facilitate safe use of the recreational trail and may include, but are not limited to, the following: 1) Drainage,

2) Crossings, 3) Stabilization, 4) Parking, 5) Signage, 6) Controls, 7) Shelters, 8) Water facilities, 9) Sanitary sewer facilities, and 10) Access facilities.

- The provision of features which facilitate the access and use of trails by persons with disabilities.
- The acquisition of easements for trails, or for corridors, identified in a state trail plan.
- The acquisition of fee simple title to property from a willing seller.
- The construction of new trails on state, county, municipal, or private lands, where a recreational need for such construction is shown.
- Only as otherwise permissible, and where necessary and required by a State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation plan, construction of new trails crossing federal lands, where such construction is approved by the administering agency of the state, and the federal agency or agencies charged with management of all impacted lands, such approval to be contingent upon compliance by the federal agency with all applicable laws.
- Purchase of trail maintenance equipment.

6.3.10 Other FHWA Funding Programs

With the exception of the Recreational Trails Program, which is administered by ADECA, the majority of FHWA are administered through the Mobile Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The Mobile MPO is responsible for identifying and prioritizing transportation projects in the Mobile area, and distributes FHWA funding accordingly. The MPO is a division of the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC), which is a regional planning agency for Mobile, Baldwin, Escambia, and Washington Counties with a much broader mandate to support planning in the region. Two programs through which the MPO distributes funding include the Surface Transportation Program (STP) and the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program. STP funding is primarily used for road construction and improvements. CMAQ funding is devoted to promoting air quality improvements in areas with poor or threatened air quality. Historically, CMAQ funding has not been expended in Mobile County. Transportation Enhancement (TE) Grants are also available through the Alabama Department of Transportation. To increase the possibility of leveraging transportation funds, the City should maintain an active relationship with the Mobile MPO.

6.3.11 South Alabama Regional Planning Commission Revolving Loan Fund

The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) is a locally controlled source of capital used to finance small business start-up and expansion whose projects will create permanent jobs. By combining RLF and bank financing, the borrower can realize an effective rate well below market rates. For the borrower, the use of the RLF means below market rate loans. For the bank, the use of the RLF means attractive finance packages with lower debt service. The loan amount is usually based on the number of jobs created and at roughly \$10,000 per job created. Additionally, the minimum funding amount is \$10,000 with a maximum of \$125,000. The RLF targets manufacturing, service, and other small businesses which can demonstrate a community need. In general, the funds can be used to:

- Purchase Land
- Construct New Buildings
- Renovate / Modify Existing Buildings
- Purchase Equipment

- Provide Working Capital