

Casablanca Neighborhood Enhancement Plan

Navarre
Cumberland
Surrey
Hampton

Gilmore
San Carlos
Warwick
York

The City of Gulf Breeze

“Will preserve and enhance its hometown character and natural environment to foster a high quality of family life.”

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Table of Contents

1. Program Details
2. Neighborhood Profile and Characteristics
3. SWOT Analysis
4. Traffic
5. Speed Spy Study
6. Road Paving
7. Stormwater
8. Septic Tank Elimination Program
9. Project Ideas



Program Details



The Neighborhood Enhancement Program (NEP) is an initiative of the Neighborhood Services Division within the Gulf Breeze Community Services Department. The NEP empowers residents to propose and select modest capital projects to enhance their neighborhood. These projects may be funded with a blend of city funds, grant funds, and community funds. The NEP rotates through the city's neighborhood areas based upon the priorities and funding established by the City Council each year. The program prioritizes areas based upon the number of households in each area.

The Sequence

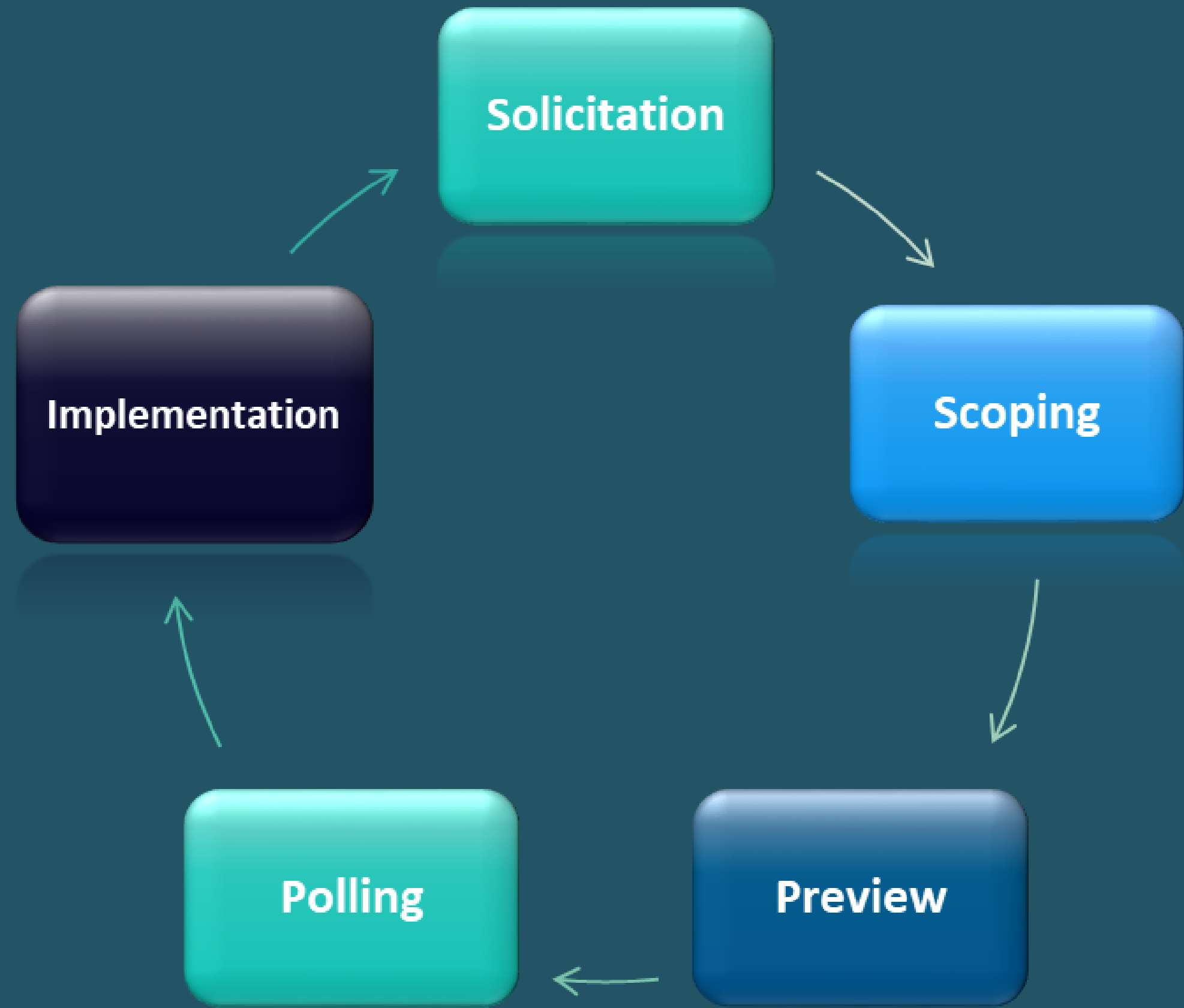
1. Solicitation: Residents submit project ideas (mail, website or kick-off meeting).

2. Scoping: Staff reviews project ideas using screening criteria and generates projects.

3. Preview: Residents review and comment on projects (open house or website).

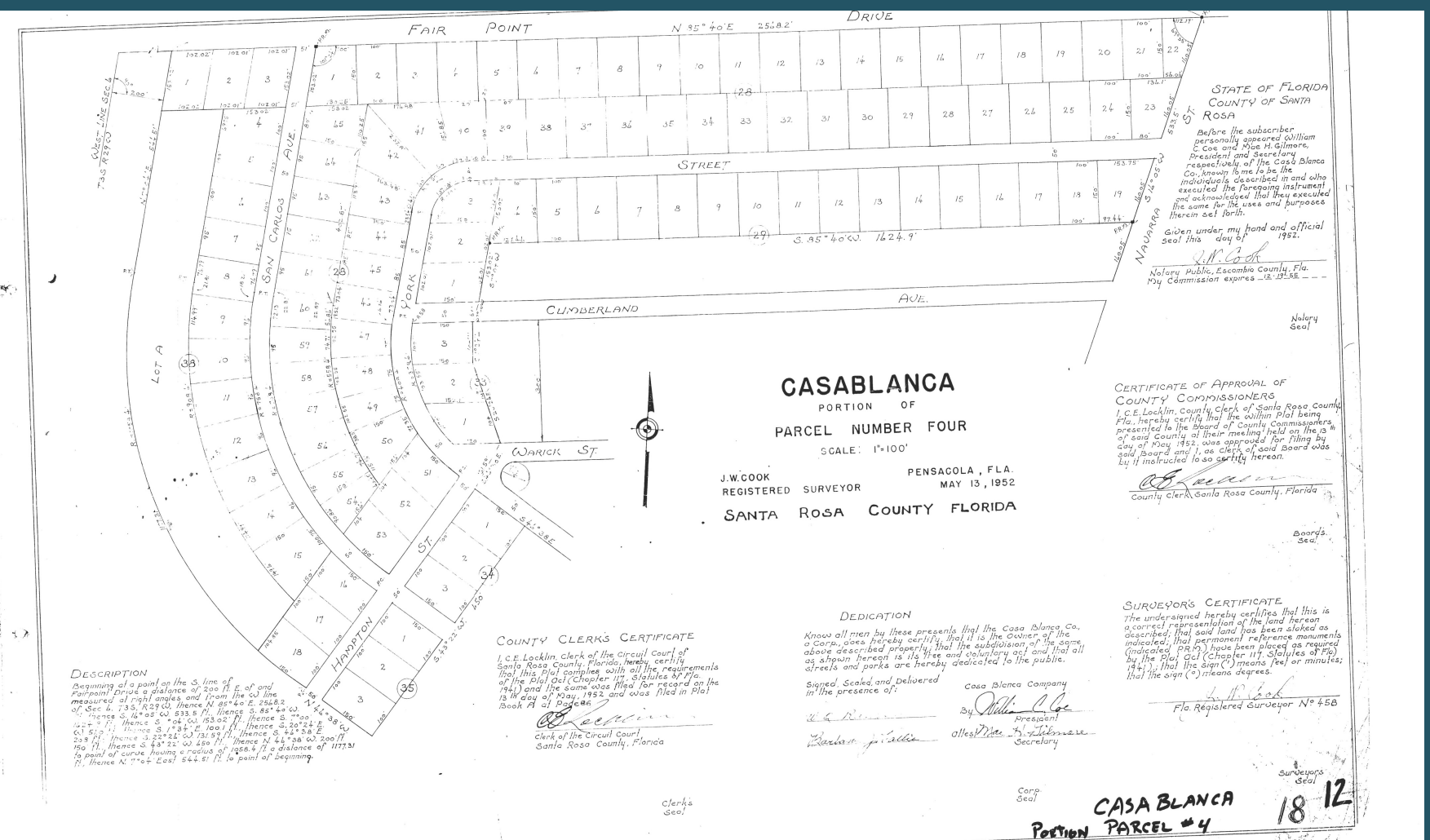
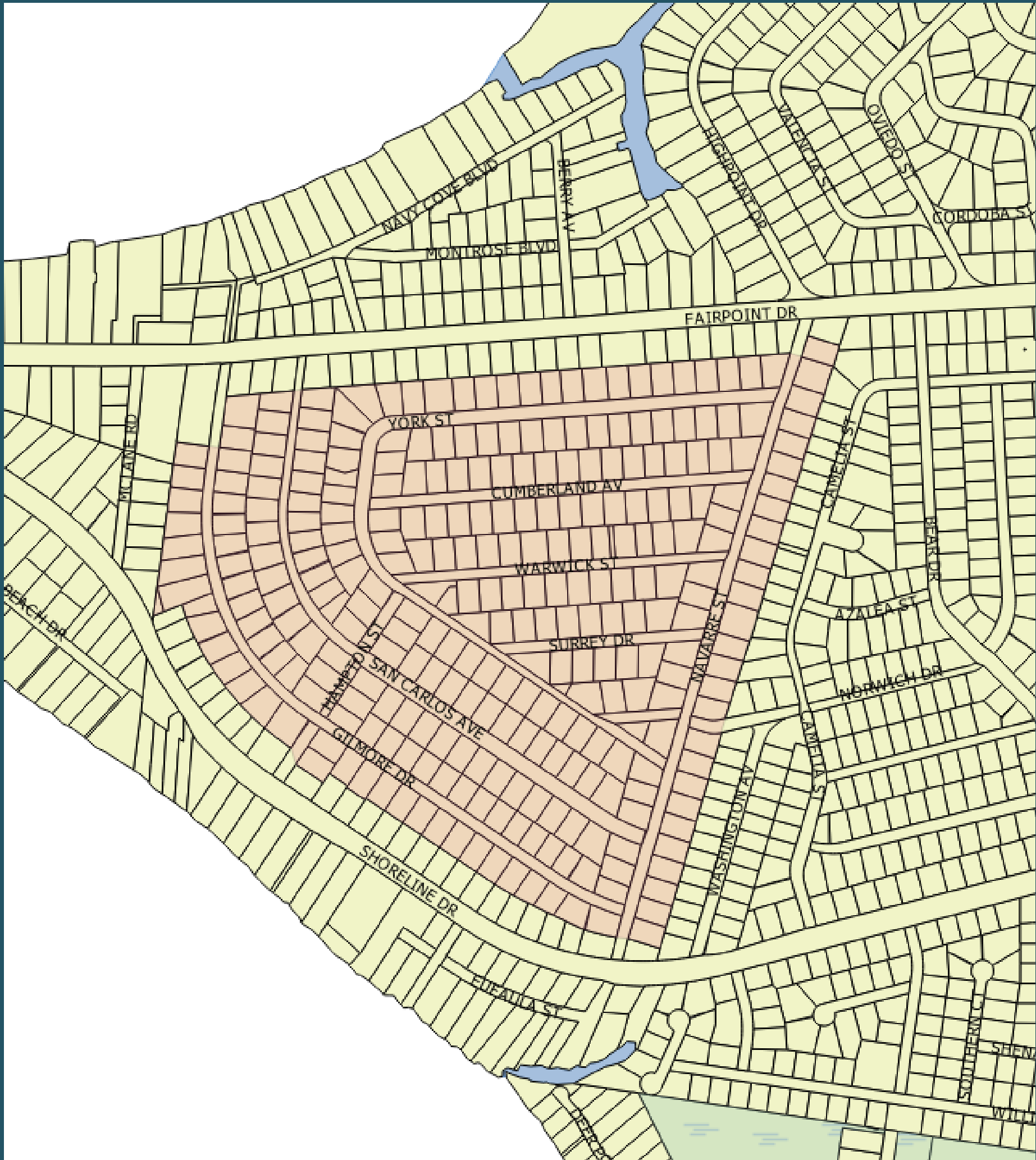
4. Polling: Households in the neighborhood area receive a draft enhancement plan with listed projects to vote for the top projects of their choice.

5. Implementation: The City implements the project(s) that receive neighborhood consensus; the goal is the implementation of the top-voted project within five years.



Neighborhood Profile & Characteristics

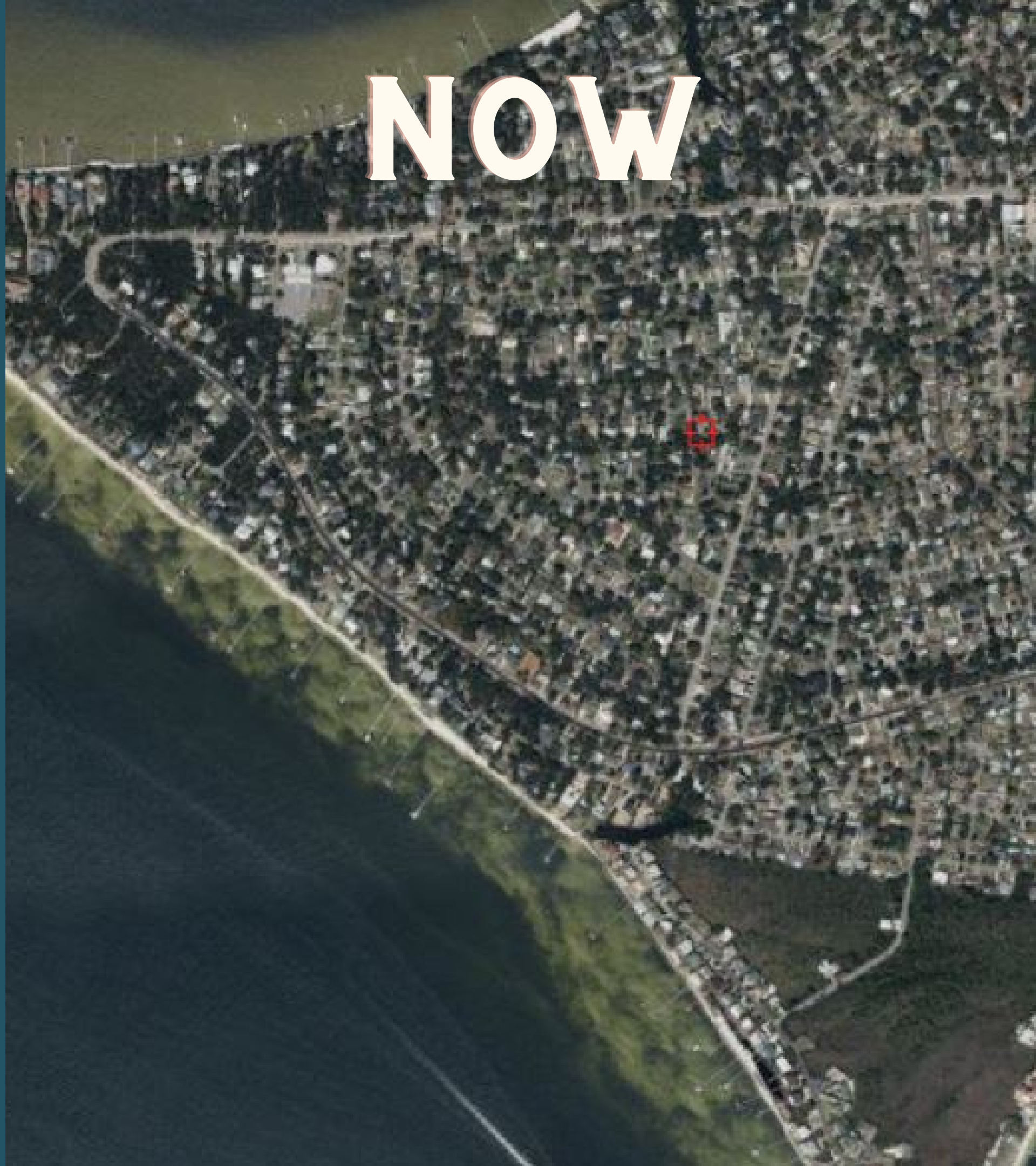
Platted in 1952, Casablanca was one of Gulf Breeze's original neighborhoods, predating the incorporation of the City. Likely, the nickname Casablanca came from a white house that could be seen from the Pensacola mainland early in the peninsula's history. A quote from a 2017 Gulf Breeze News article from Ms. Ann Brodie described the creation of the neighborhood. "Gulf Breeze population began to grow when Casablanca Subdivision was established early in the 1950s by Millard and Mae Gilmore and William C. Coe. Casablanca came as a result of WWII and the families who lived there were young and growing. The typical house built in the area was red brick, three bedrooms, one or one-and-a half baths, usually with a single carport. The original Casablanca had no waterfront within its boundaries. The subdivision was designed with no square blocks and small winding streets to discourage fast driving. Navarre Street is the only through street in Casablanca. In those early years, there were very few cars on the street but lots of bicycles and tricycles." Roadways were named York Street, Cumberland Ave, Warwick St, Surrey Dr, San Carlos Ave, Gilmore Drive and Navarre Street. Today, the average size of a home in Casablanca is 2,464 square feet with a SRCPA 2022 average home and lot value of \$361,386 or \$151,798 average home value and \$209,588 lot value. There are 296 residential lots included in this improvement plan, excluding lots along Fairpoint and Shoreline. Recent Property Appraiser data of the area shows that in the last 5 years 82 houses have been sold in the neighborhood, representing 27%.



THEN



NOW



SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis is a tool used to help articulate goals when neighborhood ideas might otherwise feel unfocused.

Identifying neighborhood strengths and weaknesses can provide insight for future opportunities. The accompanying survey provides you the opportunity to complete a SWOT analysis for the Casablanca Neighborhood.

Staff will blend this data to help residents envision their analysis of the neighborhood.

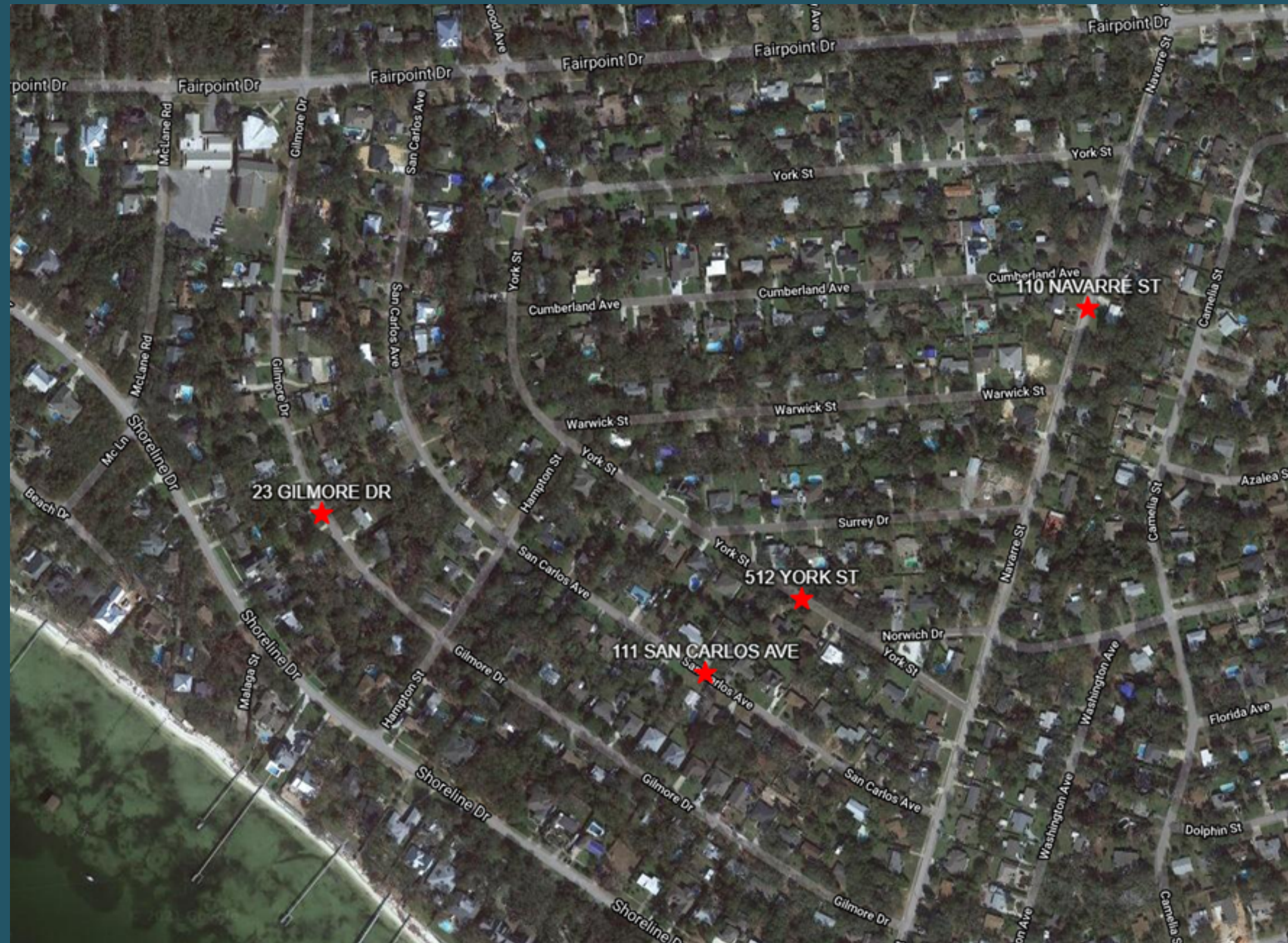


Traffic

The Casablanca neighborhood has had very few traffic complaints in the past five years. The City has received visibility complaints at the intersections of Hampton and Navarre Streets with the Shoreline Drive. Vegetation created safety concerns when entering the 35 mph Shoreline Drive traffic corridor. The City has moved to address these issues as they are brought to the staff's attention. In 2012, the City installed speed humps to address the issue of cut-through traffic on Navarre Street and excessive speed of vehicles entering the Navarre Street corridor as they leave Shoreline and Fairpoint Drives. This was done in response to an accident that involved a vehicle and pedestrian on Navarre Street. Since this installation, no speed or cut through complaints have been recorded.

In preparation for this report the City initiated FOUR speed study locations, utilizing an unmarked speed recording radar. The locations are as indicated in Figure T-1 below. The unit records the speeds of all cars traveling a specific direction for a period of two to three days. The data is scrubbed for non-motorized traffic, sprinkler systems, lawn equipment and other items that give erroneous data. An analysis is performed to determine the traffic volume and design speed of the roadway. If the analysis indicates the design speed is higher than the posted speed then the improvements to reduce the design speed, such as speed humps or lane narrowing can be introduced.

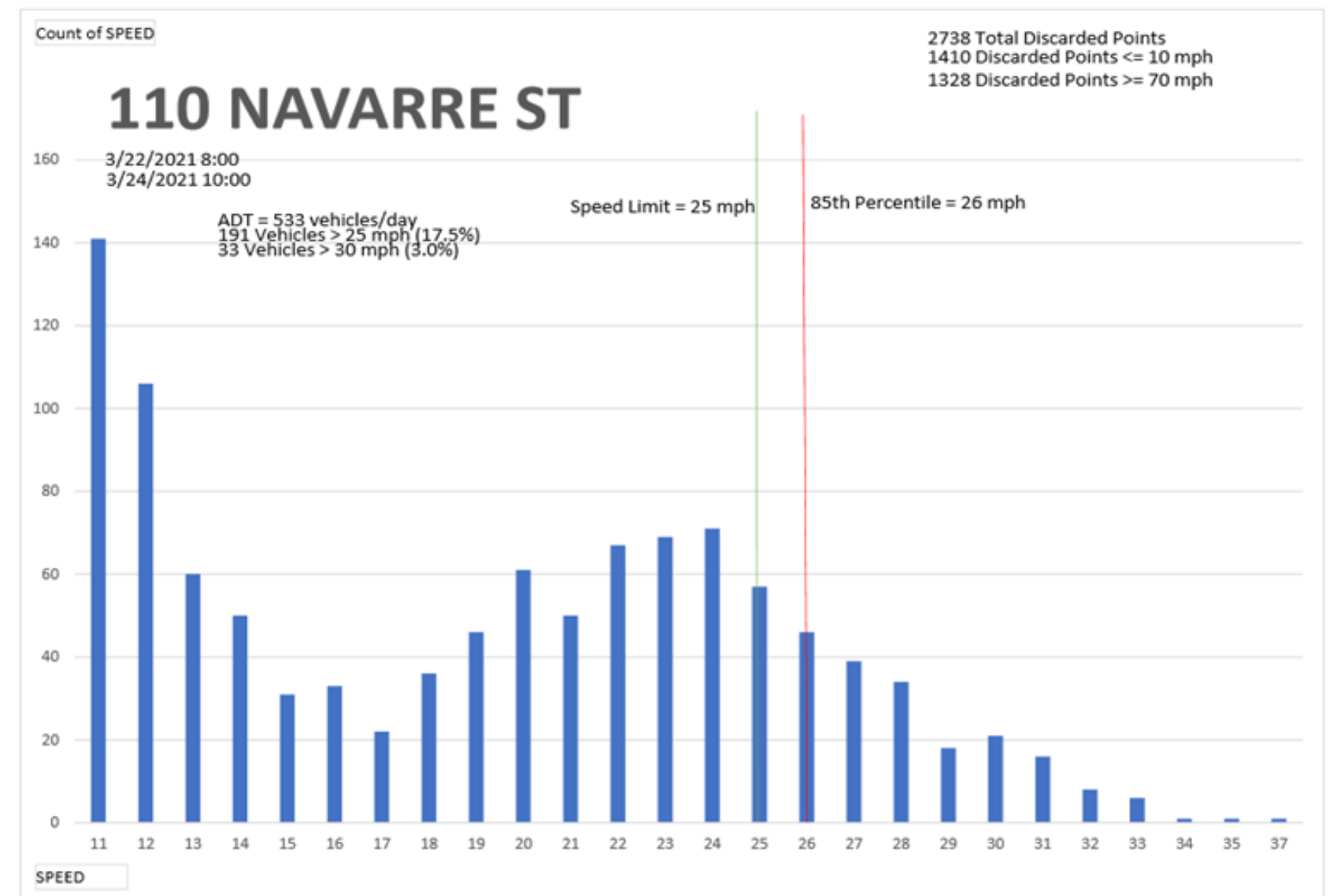
Speed Spy Study Locations



Navarre Street Speed Study

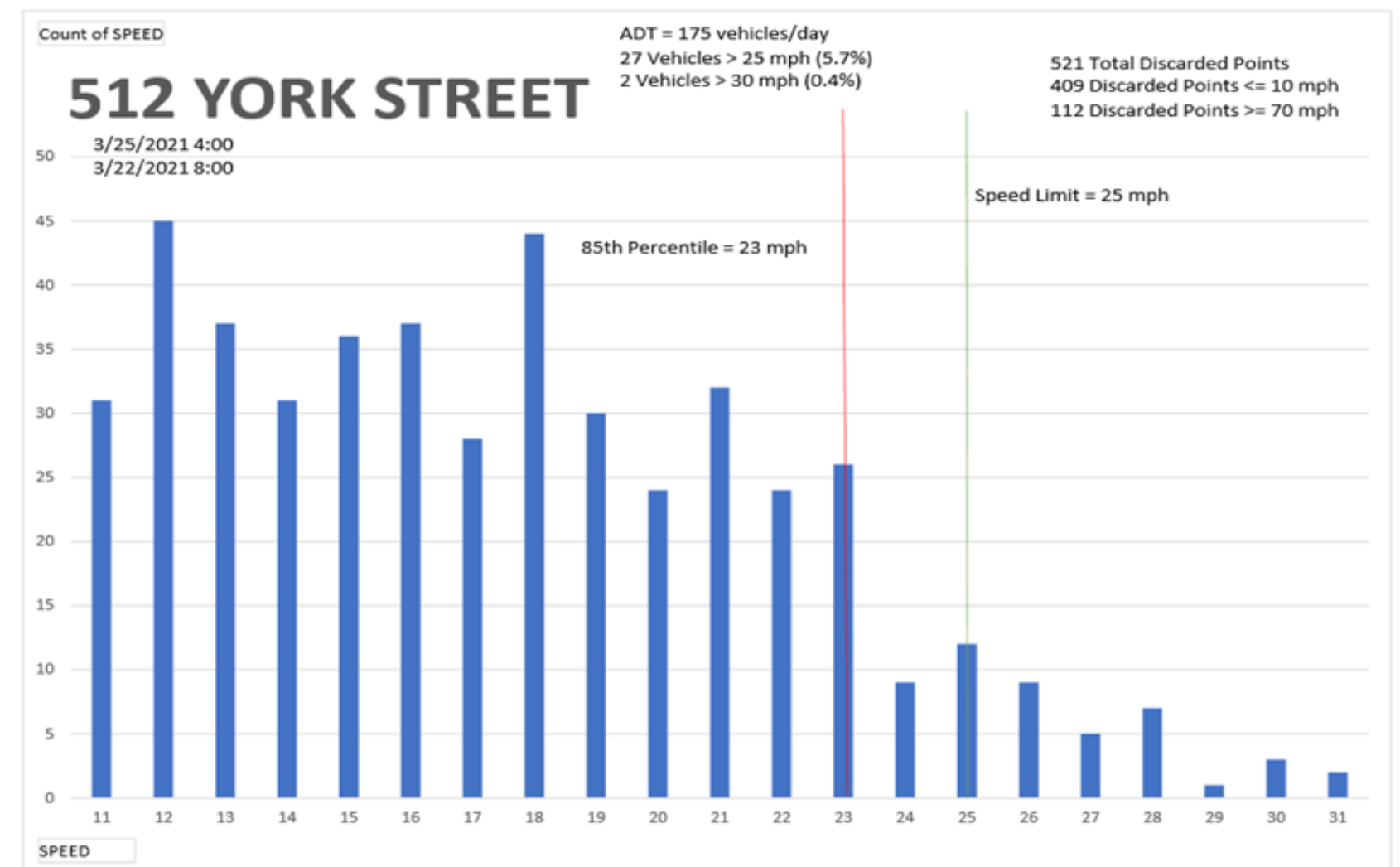
The Navarre Street speed study was conducted from March 22nd through March 24th of 2021. The project indicates that 85 percent of the vehicles travel at or below 26 mph. This is considered to be the acceptable design limit for a 25 mph speed designation for the roadway.

Prior to the installation of the speed humps on Navarre Street, the speed and safety concerns were more numerous.



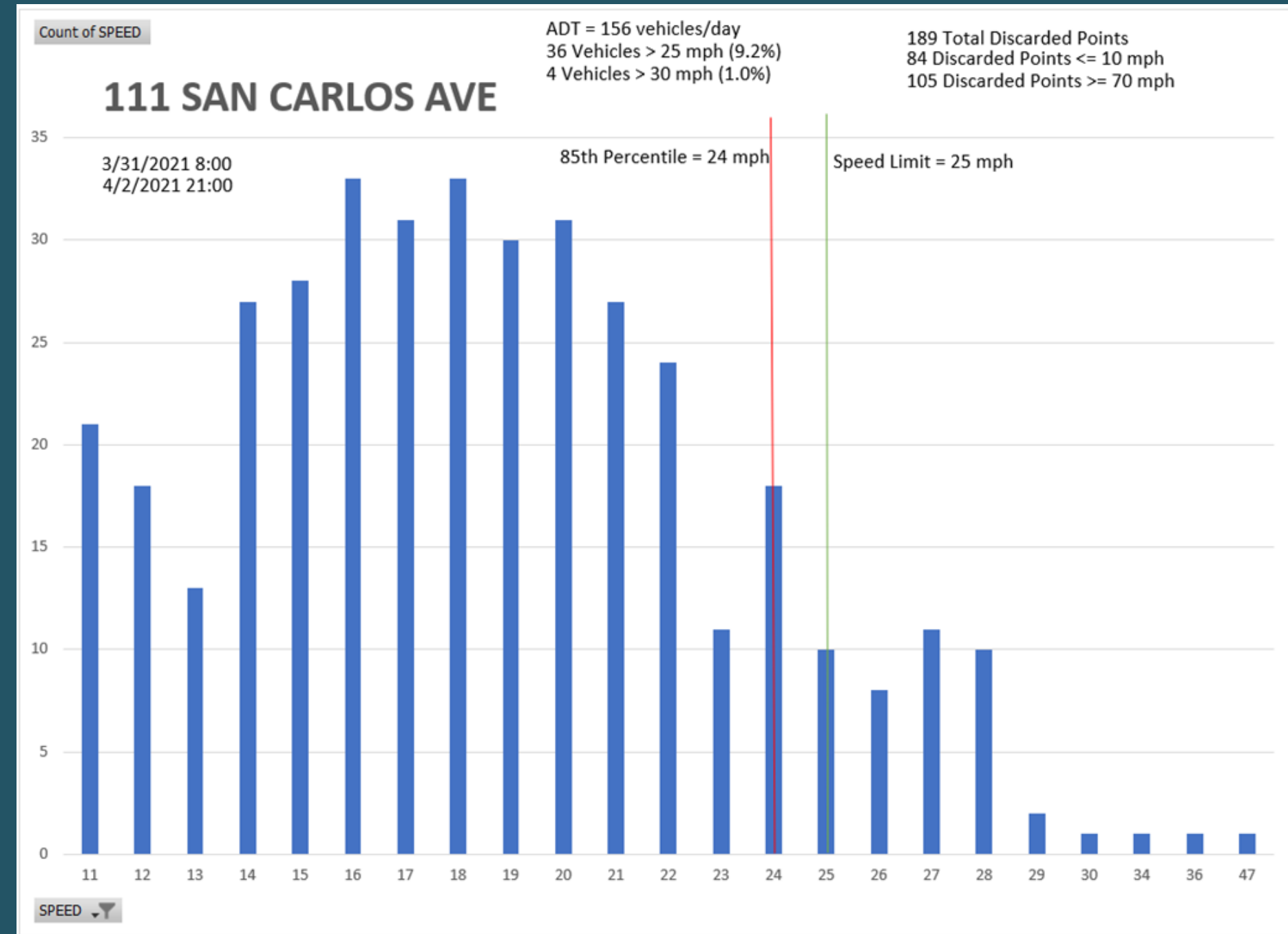
York Street Speed Study

The York Street speed study was conducted from March 22nd through March 24th of 2021. As the 85th percentile for this roadway is 23 mph, the posted limit of 25 mph is acceptable, and no modifications are proposed.



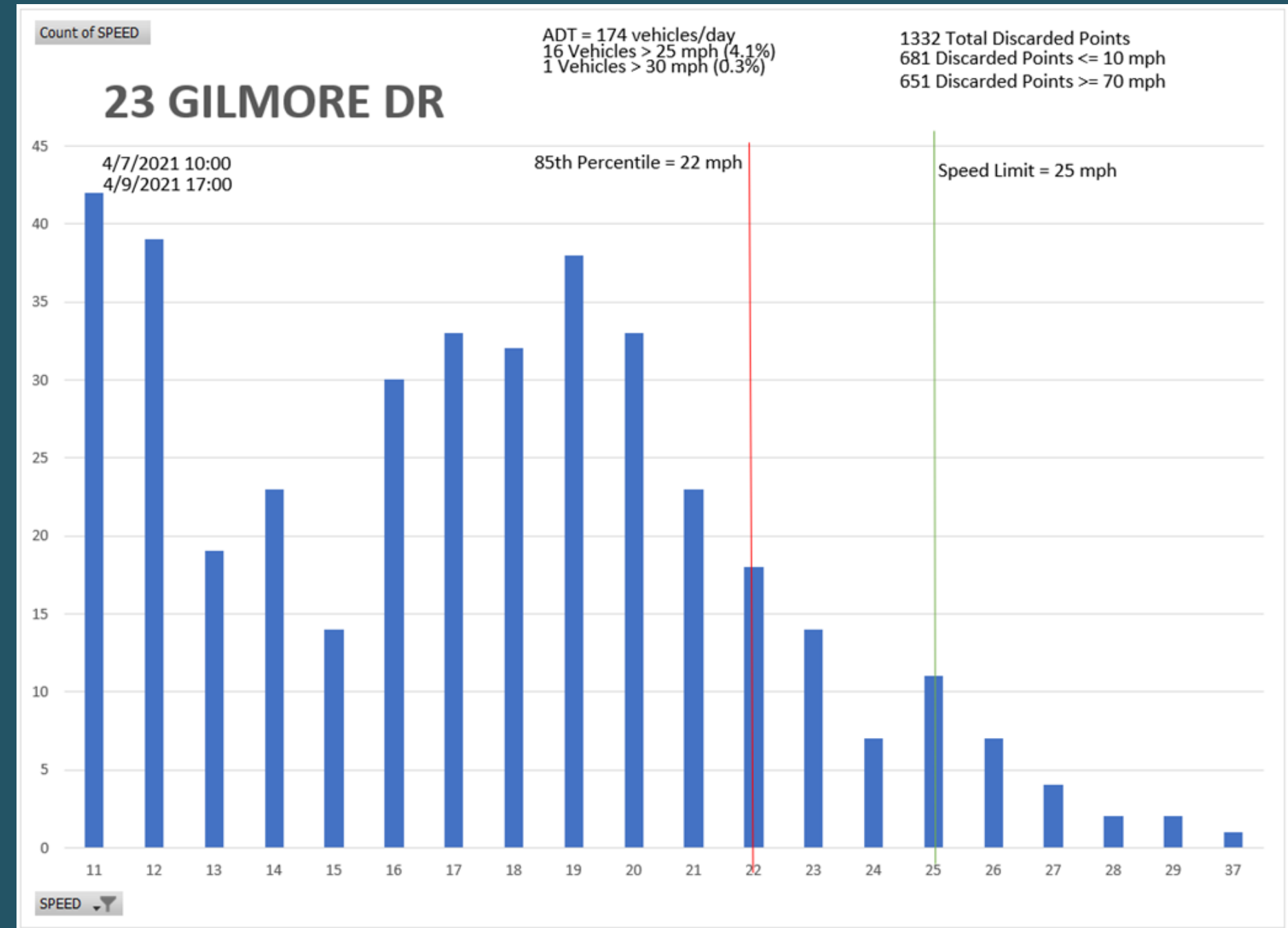
San Carlos Speed Study

The San Carlos Avenue speed study was conducted from March 31st through April 2nd of 2021. The 25 mph speed limit set for the roadway is appropriate as 85% of vehicles are going 24 mph or less. No speed reducing enhancements are proposed for the roadway.



Gilmore Speed Study

The Gilmore Drive speed study was conducted from April 7th through 9th of 2021. The data again suggests the 25 mph speed limit is adequate and no modifications are proposed. The possibility of lowering the speed limit to 20 mph is mildly supported by the data, but a detail study would be required. This study is not recommended at this time because of the minimal benefit and very low traffic counts on the roadway. In the future, other circumstances may develop to reconsider the position.



Road Paving

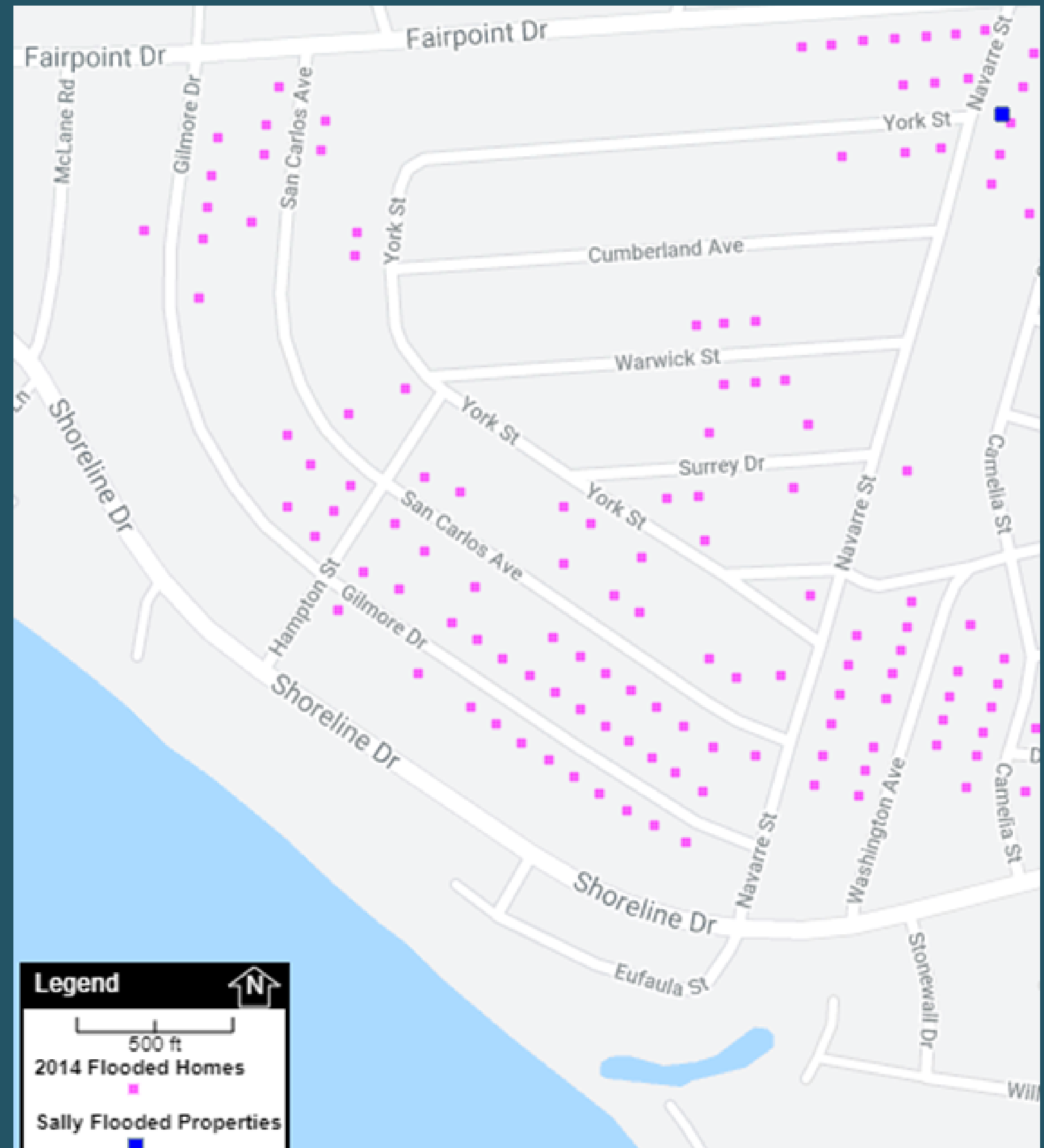
The width of the pavement in the Casablanca neighborhood is 24 feet, meeting the suggested design criteria for access by emergency and service vehicles. Sidewalks are provided only on Navarre Street.

The roads in the Casablanca neighborhood have been paved in 2017 and 2020, with Fairpoint and Shoreline Drives completed in 2022. No change from the current paving schedule is suggested based on the conditions of roadways. The 2022 paving of Navarre Street is in the contracting stage, but has been delayed by material and contractor availabilities.



Stormwater

The Casablanca neighborhood has experienced flooding in the past, especially in the April 2014 event. Over 100 of the 300 homes that flooded in April 2014 are within the Casablanca neighborhood, as shown in the attached image.

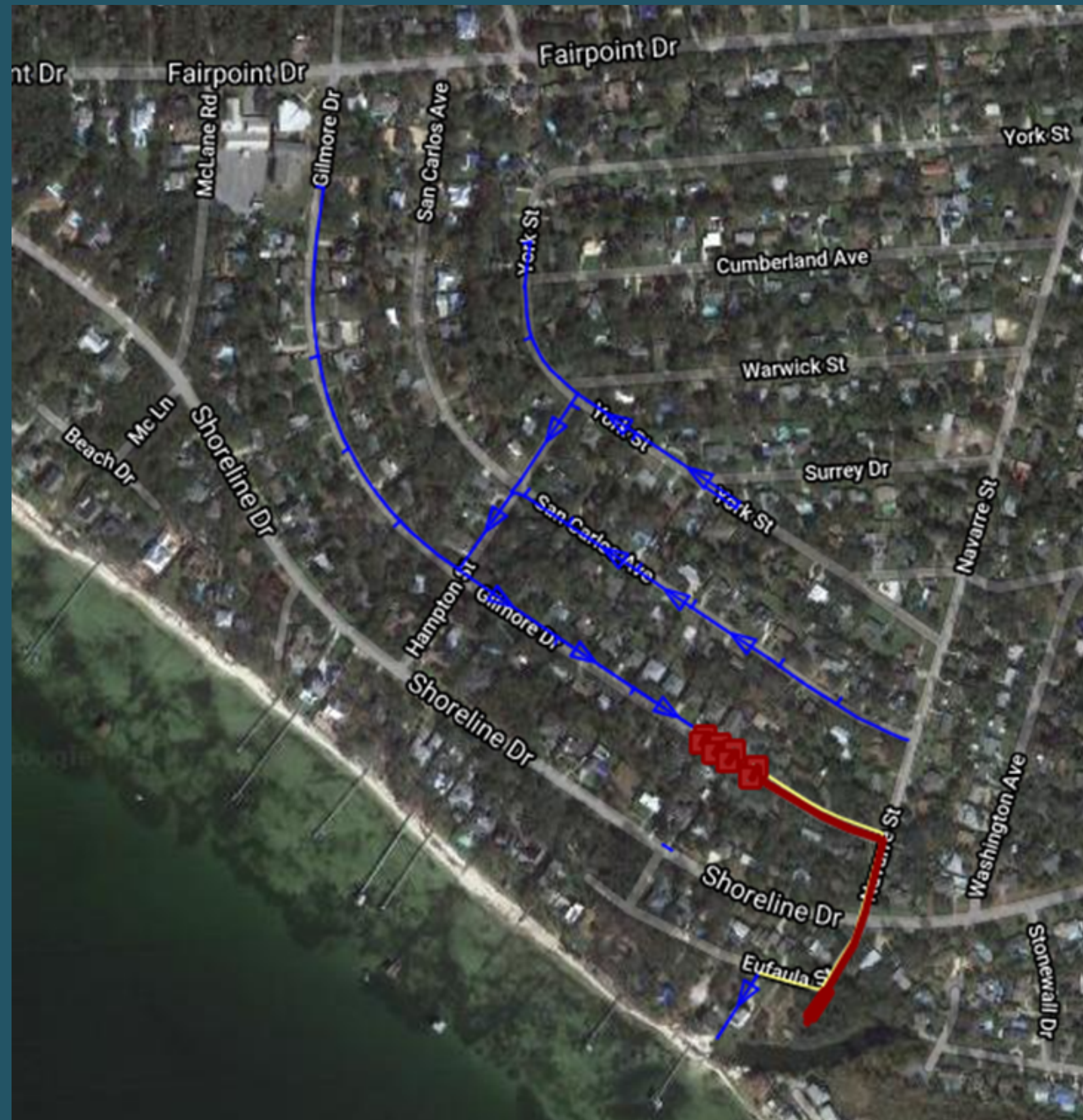


Stormwater

The neighborhood is served by a drainage collection system originally installed in the mid-1980s and replaced in 2007. The system relies on a electric pumping station. The system has served the area well, but the extreme rainfall in 2014 overwhelmed the ability of the pump station to remove water.

The Stormwater Task Force was formed to evaluate options for improving the city's drainage system to reduce the likelihood of flooding. Two feasibility studies were conducted for a gravity outfall for the area. The study recommended a gravity system discharging to the south under shoreline drive.

The proposed new and existing systems are shown in the attached image. Blue indicates existing and red shows the proposed outfall location.

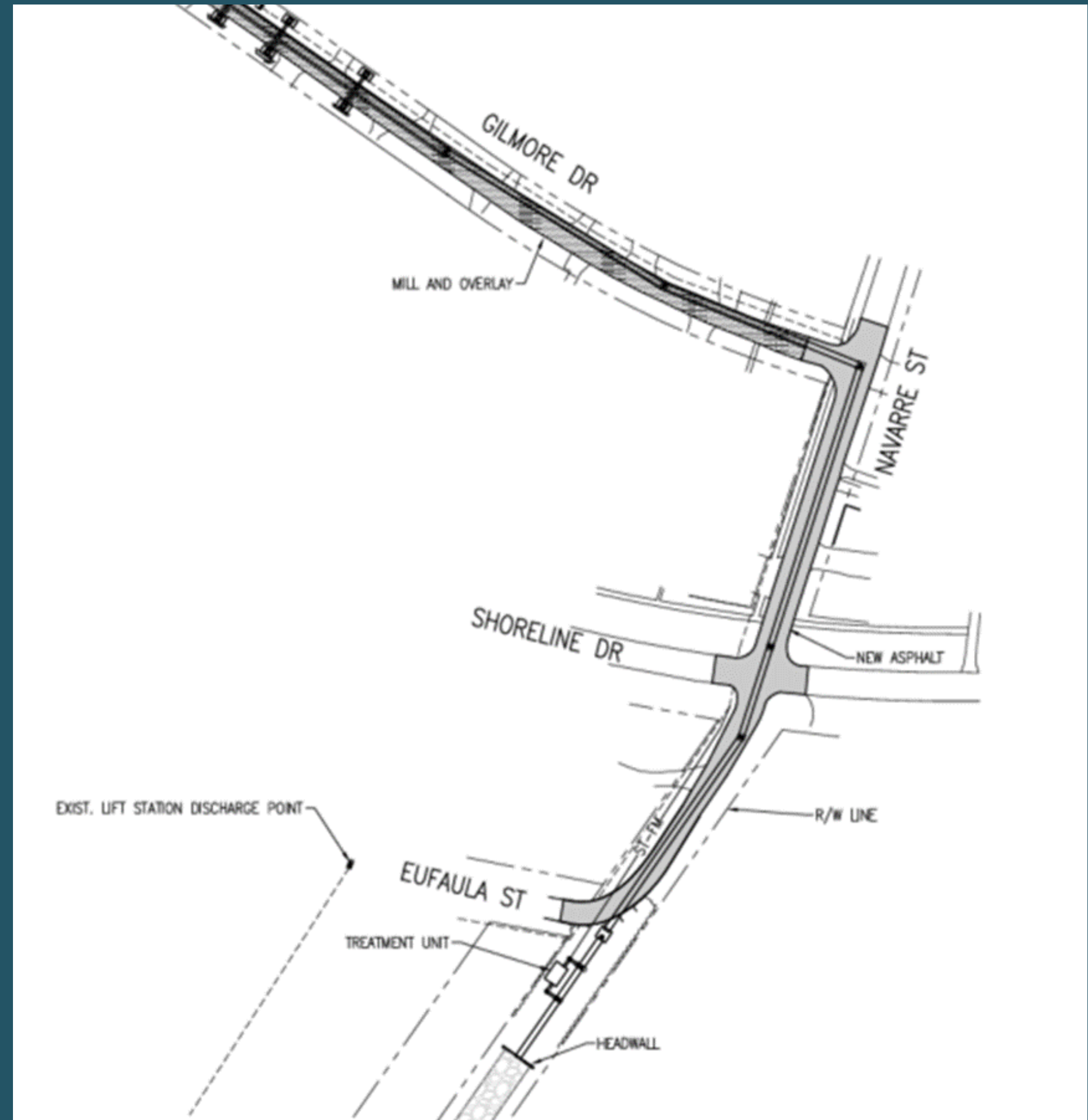


Stormwater

The Gilmore Basin Outfall project will provide a gravity pipe outfall capable of twenty times the capacity of the pump station and is independent of power requirements. The addition of the new outfall to the existing drainage collection system will vastly improve the abilities of the basin to drain. The existing lift station will remain in service to provide additional groundwater level control.

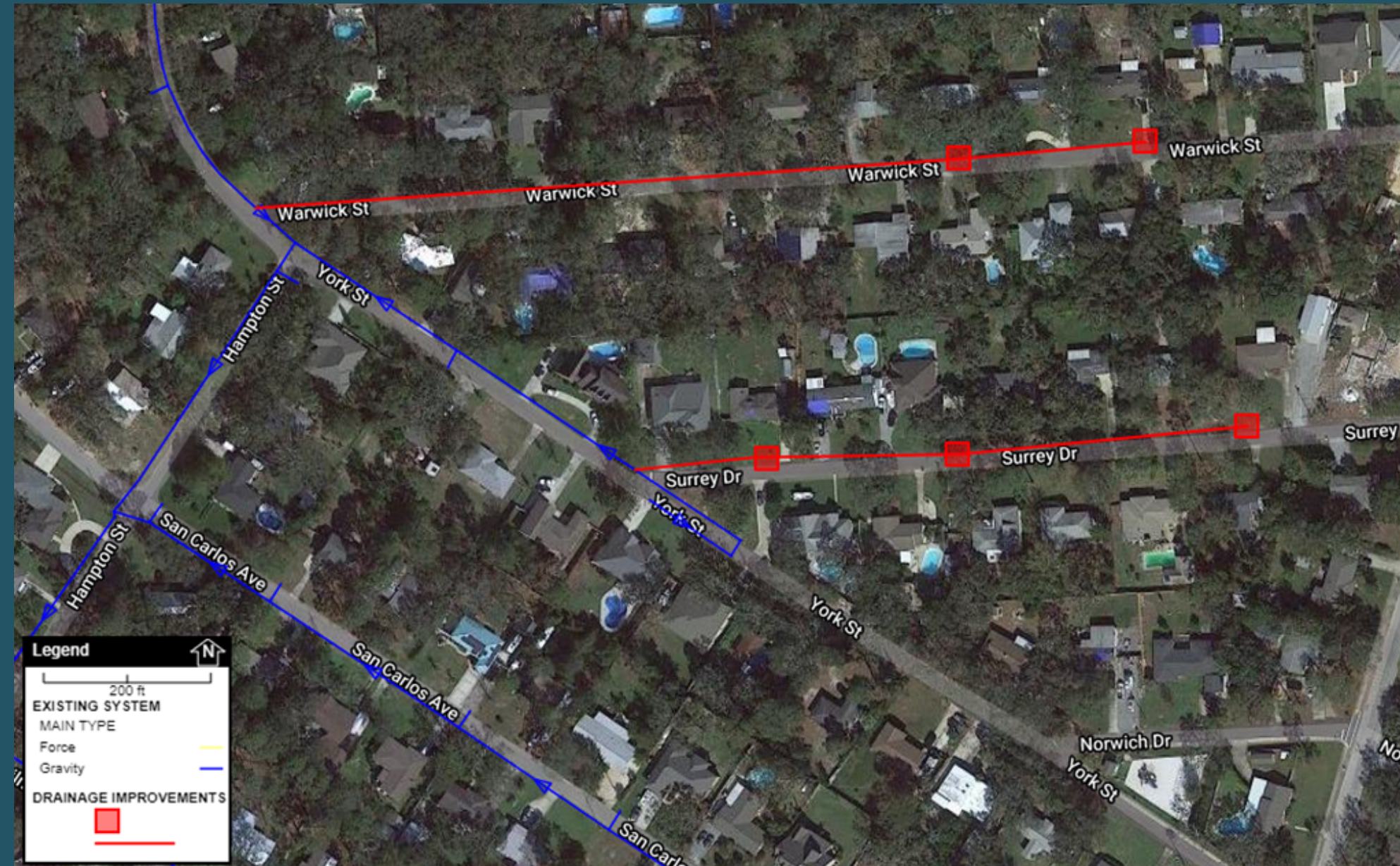
The project was bid in March of 2022. The \$4.8 million low bid was more than what was available to fund the project. The City will attempt to rebid the project once current inflationary conditions ease. The design is shown in the attached image.

The Gilmore Basin Outfall project also includes a partial grant from the RESTORE Act, as part of the BP oil spill reparations. The outfall treatment prior to discharge into the canal is 50% funded (\$373,500) by this grant.



Stormwater

The City has additionally identified two minor modifications required to prevent street flooding in two depressions on Surrey Drive and Warwick Street. These modifications will require extensions to the existing drainage collection system and inlets in this area. These minor projects, shown in Figure D-4, have not yet been programmed.



Septic Tank Elimination Program (STEP)



The City Council in 2019 authorized a study for the complete conversion of all properties within the City from septic tanks to central sewer collection and treatment. The project has been approved to move forward, dedicating \$6 million to the project. The City Council also recently approved the preliminary implementation plan for the project, which includes an application for a State Revolving Fund (SRF) loan. The SRF loan provides vary low rates for projects related to drinking water and clean water projects for wastewater and stormwater. The project will be implemented over an eight-year period. The study identified twelve project areas, with The Casablanca neighborhood divided across three of these projects: the Gilmore, San Carlos, and Warwick projects. These are shown in the attached figure.

STEP Priority List

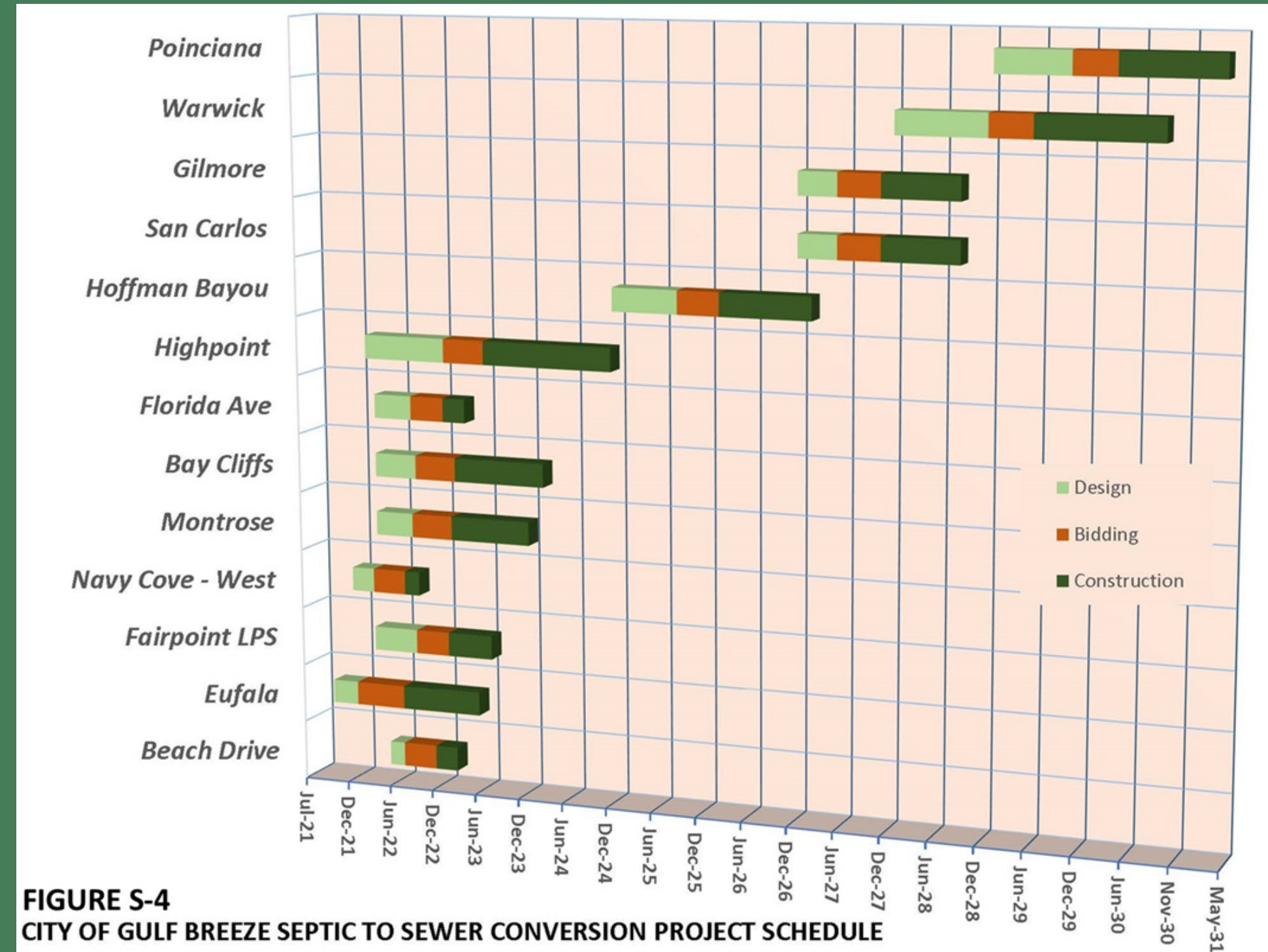
The San Carlos project includes all of San Carlos Avenue and a portion of Gilmore Drive. This project was previously designed and submitted for grant funding. Unfortunately, three attempts to receive grant funding have been unsuccessful. The Gilmore project includes the remainder of Gilmore Drive and will connect to the San Carlos project when constructed. The Warwick project includes the remainder of the Casablanca neighborhood including Warwick Street, Navarre Street, Surrey Drive, Cumberland Avenue, a portion of Norwich Drive and the areas of York Street not currently served by sewer.

The study prioritized the twelve project areas based on a list factors including environmental risk, flood history, and construction complexity. The three project areas for the Casablanca neighborhood were ranked nine through eleven as shown below.

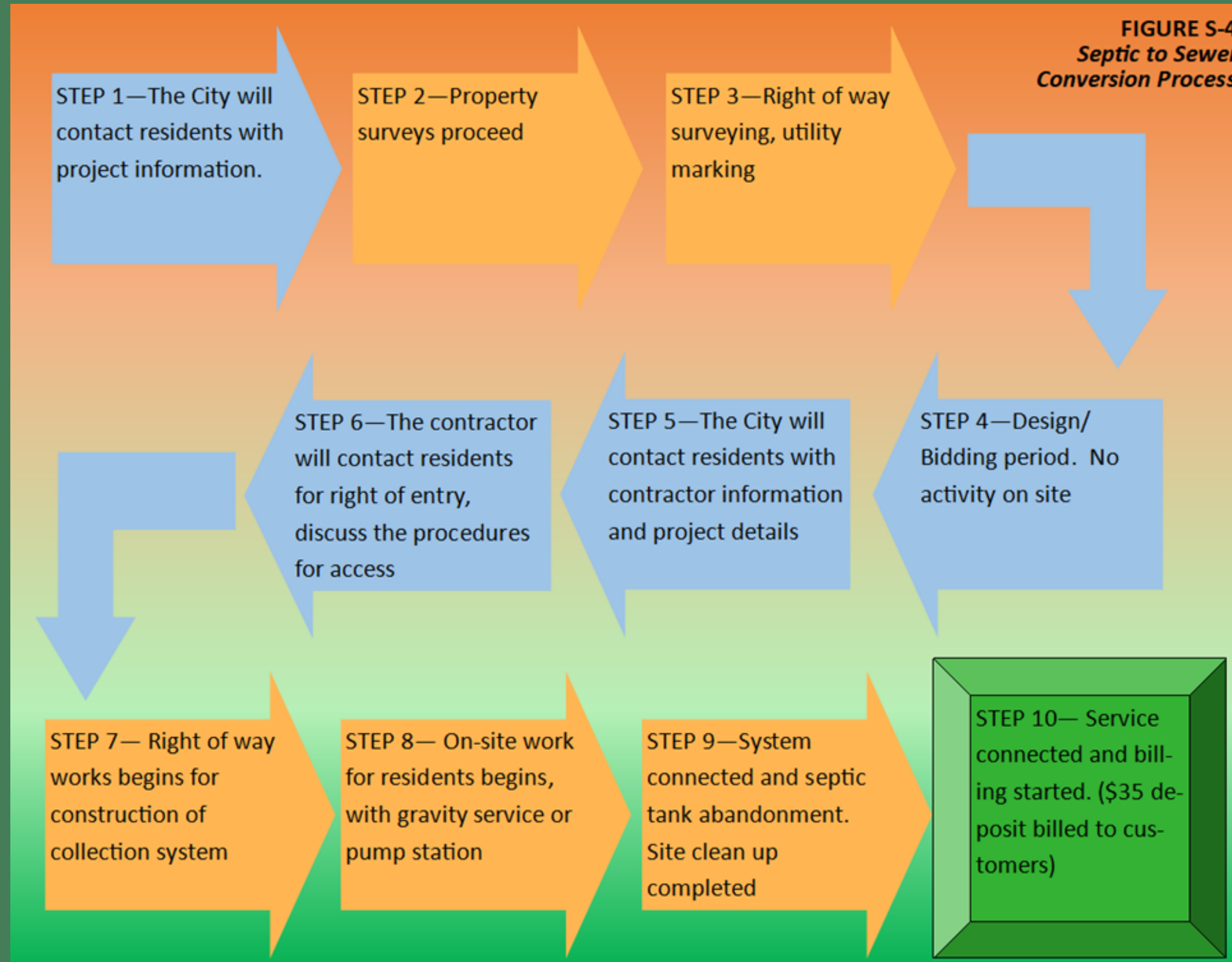
Map Area No.	Name	Total Unsewered Parcels	% Structures w/ Flood History	Shallow Groundwater (1-low concern, 5-high concern)	Risk of Migration to Waterways (1-low concern, 5-high concern)	Ease of Connection/ Construction (1-Difficult, 5 - Relatively Easy)	Priority Score (Sum of Subjective Scores)
6	Beach Drive	7	43%	5	5	5	15
12	Eufala	39	10%	5	5	5	15
1	Navy Cove - West	7	0%	3	5	5	13
2	Montrose	48	8%	4	5	3	12
5	Bay Cliffs	79	9%	4	5	3	12
10	Florida Ave	12	0%	2	3	4	9
3	Highpoint	152	1%	2	5	1	8
4	Hoffman Bayou	120	0%	2	5	1	8
8	San Carlos	70	4%	2	1	5	8
7	Gilmore	32	0%	2	1	4	7
9	Warwick	161	3%	3	1	2	6
11	Poinciana	132	2%	2	1	3	6

STEP Schedule

The City Council authorized an eight-year timeline for the completion of the projects. This plan will require approximately \$2 million be spent per year on the conversion project. The current schedule for these projects is shown in Figure S-4, indicating that the Casablanca projects will be completed in years six and seven of the project. The official start of the program began in October 2021, so construction can be expected in 2028 and 2029 for the neighborhood.



STEP Process Flow Chart



STEP Process Flow Detail

1. The City will contact residents to provide information on the process and secure right of entry documents for surveying and septic tank location. The City will provide the name of the engineering/surveying firm. Anyone doing work for the City should be able to provide identification and a letter from the City. Vehicles will be marked with the company name indicated. Any concerns or issues can be addressed to 850.934.5110, 24 hours per day.
2. The surveyor/engineer will enter property to obtain relevant data for the design. The surveyor or engineer may contact the resident or property owner if questions or concerns arise.
3. The surveyor and engineer will also be working within the rights of way to design the collection system for your homes. Flags, paint marks and small PVC pipes may be placed in the right of way of your yard during this process. Please do not remove these items for at least 30 days after they appear. PVC pipes should remain until removed by the surveyor or contractor. The paint marks are nontoxic and nonpermanent. These marks will wash away with time. If you have a irrigation system, you will be provided flags to place at your sprinkler heads.
4. When the design is complete, there will be a period where the engineer completes the design and the City obtains and approves bids from qualified contractors. You may notice a period of several months where there is not activity in your neighborhood.
5. When the bids are approved, the City will contact residents with the name of the contractor selected and the typical installation requirements. This notice will also inform you if your system will be a gravity service lateral or a low-pressure pump connection. It is not possible to serve all properties with a gravity service. Some properties will only be able to be served with pump stations for an individual home. These stations will be installed at no charge to all residents, but the station will be given to the resident for future maintenance.
6. The contractor will contact residents to obtain right of entry forms for the work on your property. This form details the responsibilities of the contractor to the property owner as well as the obligations of owner. If this property is a rental unit, both the renter and the property owner should execute agreements with the contractor. Again, any concerns at this step in the process can be addressed to City staff at 850.934.5110, 24 hours per day.

STEP Process Flow Detail continued

7. The contractor will begin work in the rights of way to install the collection system. This work may require the grass in the right of way in front of your home to be disturbed, as well as landscaping to be removed. The contractor will make every effort to coordinate the relocation of landscaping from the right of way on to your property, but some items must be removed to accommodate the new utility. Additionally, the pavement may need to be removed and replaced, and one lane traffic and detours instituted during parts of the construction.

8. When the collection system is near completion, the contractor will proceed with installation of the service on your property. This may be a gravity service lateral to the new system, or it may be a grinder pump station. The contractor will be required to protect or replace anything damaged during the construction on your property. The contractor and a City representative will contact you prior to beginning work to discuss the proposed construction, the schedule, the extent of work to be performed, and any concerns they may need your assistance to address. If you have locked gates, pets, children or any other special concerns, please discuss these issues with the contractor to determine the best way to coordinate the issues. Please do NOT provide the contractor with keys or security codes for your home. You may request that a City representative be present when you meet with the contractor in the future, to ensure your concerns are addressed. The City representatives cannot always be present during the construction process, but we will ensure the contractor does not meet with you without the City representative.

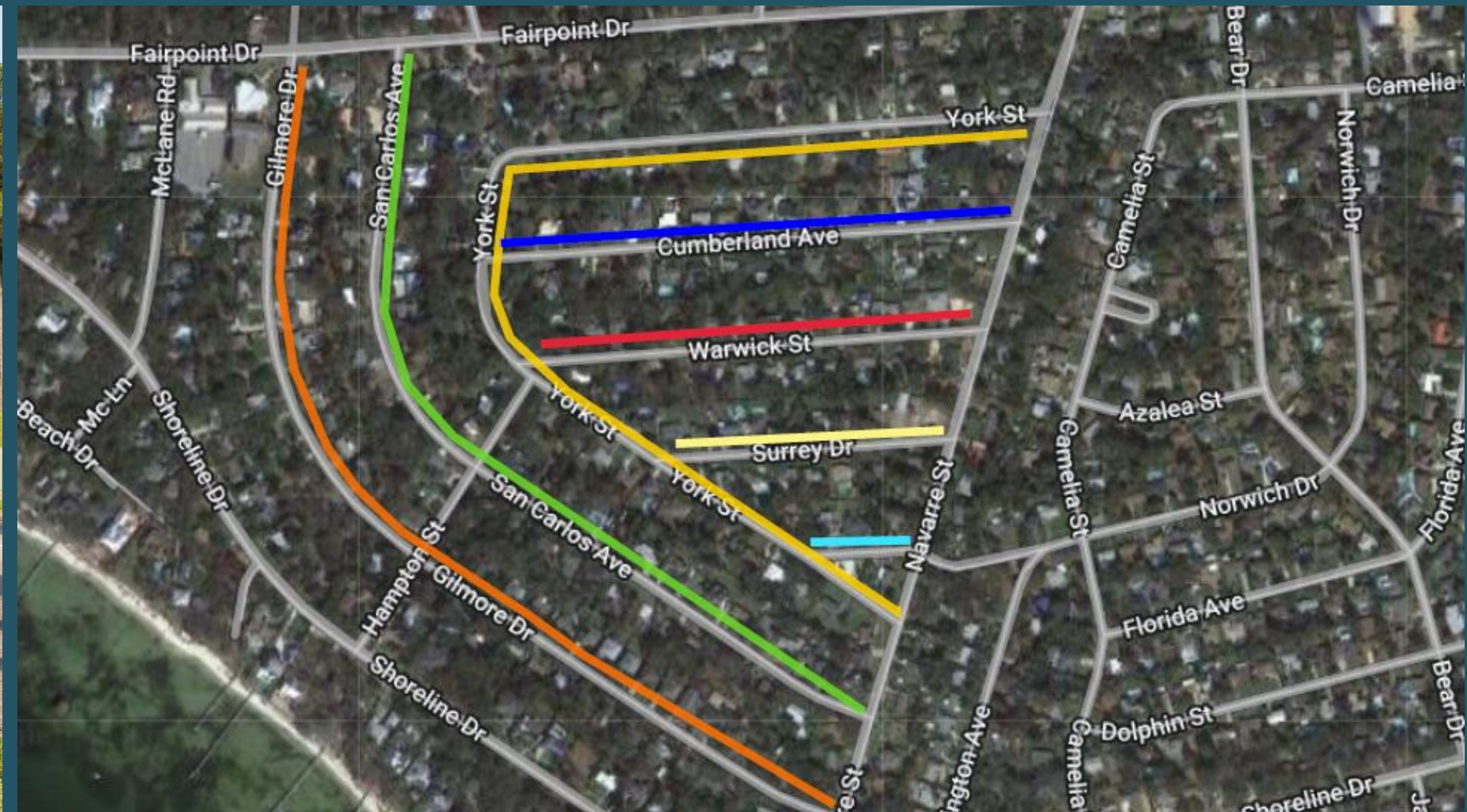
9. When the service is complete and active, the contractor will obtain a permit for the abandonment of the septic tank. The tank will be pumped out and excavated to sufficient depth to collapse the side walls at least a foot deep and punch holes in the bottom. The contractor will backfill with clean sand and stake the location of the tank. The Health Department must examine this site, so please do not remove the stakes. The contractor will remove the stakes and place sod on the site when the inspection is complete. Once the new service is activated, the City will bill a \$35 sewer deposit on your account and start the monthly billing. The current rate is \$18.96 sewer base fee per month and \$4.80 per thousand gallons per month, based on water billing.

10. Once the new service is activated, the City will bill a \$35 sewer deposit on your account and start the monthly billing. The current rate is \$18.96 sewer base fee per month and \$4.80 per thousand gallons per month, based on water billing. If you are currently using potable water for irrigation, it is highly recommended you investigate the installation of a well. The City is not allowed by permit to issue irrigation meters or sewer credits for irrigation.

Sidewalk

Currently, a sidewalk system is only present in a small portion of the neighborhood, on Navarre Street from Fairpoint Drive to Shoreline Drive. The construction of additional sidewalks creates a safer environment for residents while allowing for a separation of vehicular and pedestrian travel. If desired, a study can be completed to determine the most effective and efficient locations for additional sidewalks. The figure below demonstrates road sections that could be studied to determine feasibility and impact.

The City staff monitor the conditions of sidewalks annually, replacing broken sections and removing trip hazards as discovered. Citizens are requested to report any poor conditions they experience to help staff maintain the City's walkability.



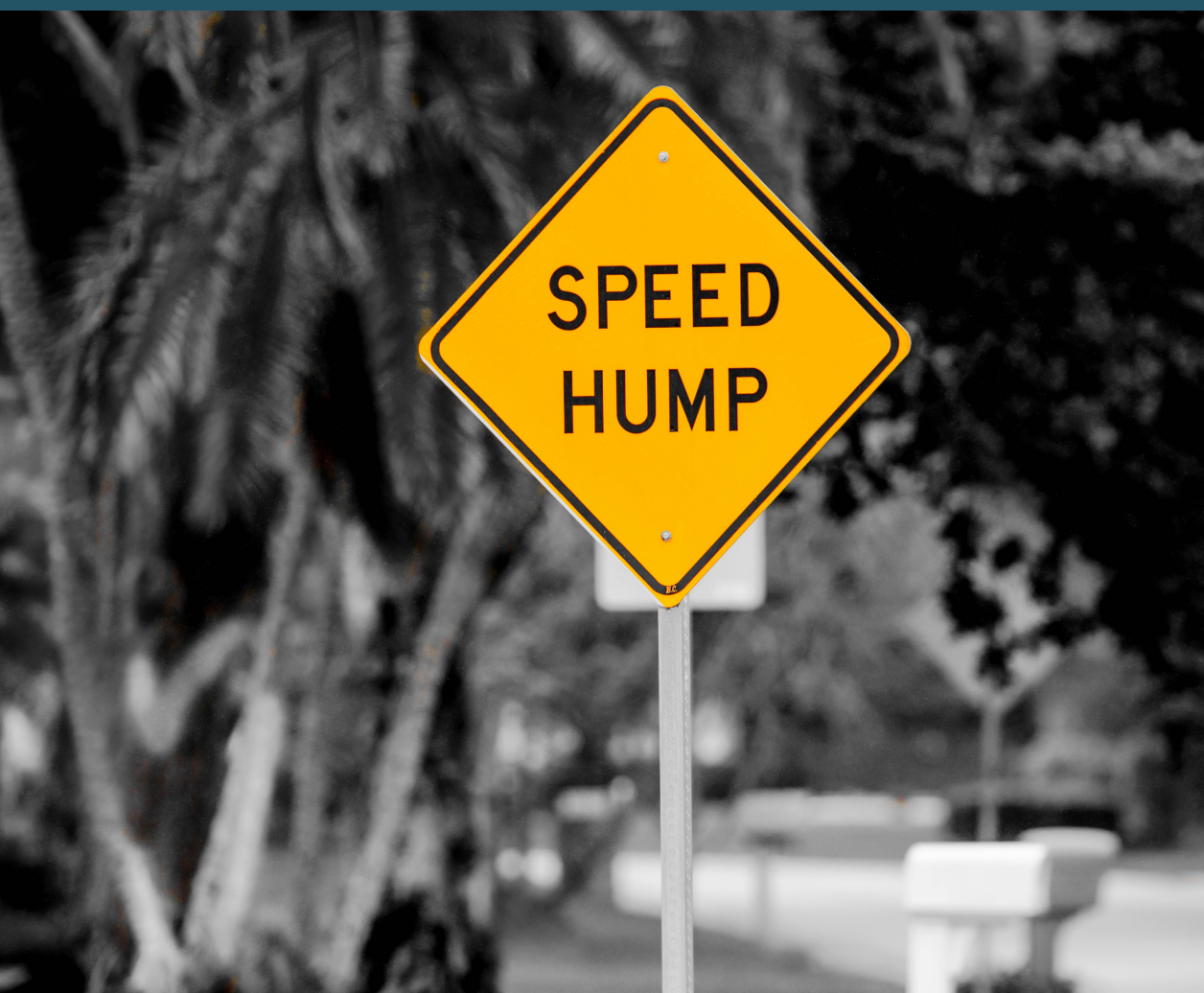
Decorative signs and Lighting

Expanding the City's adopted Decorative Lighting design into the Casablanca Neighborhood. Decorative light poles could be used to focus light into trouble areas while improving the aesthetics and character of the neighborhood. If desired, a photometric study can be completed to determine the most effective locations for additional lighting. Street Signs could be replaced with a decorative sign that matches the light pole style. These new poles were recently installed as part of other improvement projects along Shoreline, Fairpoint, S Sunset, Daniel & Joachim.



Traffic Calming Features

While the speed study data analysis does not indicate the need for further traffic control improvements, the residents of the neighborhood might identify specific areas where additional controls might be desired. Such situations would be parks or communal features where a gathering of more than a handful of residents might congregate. Features such as real time information signs, neighborhood entrance features, road narrowing, and landscaping are all proven to reduce the speed or volume of traffic or warn drivers of the potential for pedestrian/vehicle conflicts. The City staff has no specific recommendation for improvement but is open to consider resident suggestions



Hodges Park Improvements



In the heart of the Casablanca Neighborhood sits Hodges Park, a neighborhood gathering spot constructed in 2010 with the support from a family donation and volunteers. The City could explore adding additional amenities or upgraded play equipment.