



DRAFT
JULY 2026

[CLEAN]

DATA & ANALYSIS



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FROM SHORELINE TO SKYLINE

INTRODUCTION

The Community Planning Act, codified in Part II of Chapter 163, Florida Statutes (F.S.), establishes Florida's framework for comprehensive planning and growth management. As stated in Section 163.3161, F.S., the Act is intended to strengthen the role, processes, and powers of local governments in establishing and implementing comprehensive planning programs to guide and manage future development consistent while protecting the public health, safety, and welfare.

The Act is implemented through the preparation and adoption of a comprehensive plan that satisfies the requirements of Section 163.3177, F.S., including the required elements with corresponding goals, objectives, and policies. The comprehensive plan serves as the community's long-range policy guide for managing growth, coordinating land use with public facilities and services, protecting natural and cultural resources, promoting economic development, and ensuring that future public and private development occurs in a manner consistent with the adopted plan. The plan is implemented through the local government's programs, activities, capital improvements, and land development regulations, all of which must be consistent with the comprehensive plan.

The following are the required elements:

- Future Land Use
- Transportation
- Housing
- Infrastructure (Sanitary Sewer, Solid Waste, Stormwater Management, Potable Water and Natural Groundwater Aquifer Recharge)
- Coastal Management
- Conservation
- Recreation and Open Space
- Intergovernmental Coordination
- Capital Improvements
- Property Rights

The City of Gulf Breeze elected to prepare one more element, the Public School Facilities Element. Although this Element is not a required component of Comprehensive Plans, the City of Gulf Breeze recognizes its responsibility to collaborate with the School District to address development impacts on school capacity and support educational facilities.

BACKGROUND

Gulf Breeze, Florida is a waterfront community in Santa Rosa County with a 2020 population of 6,342 that prides itself on its fine small-town character, quality education, excellent local government and a multitude of waterfront activities. It is located on the end of the Fairpoint peninsula in Santa Rosa County separated on the north by a three-mile

bridge across Pensacola Bay from the City of Pensacola and on the south by Bob Sikes Bridge over Santa Rosa Sound to Pensacola Beach. On the east, landward up the peninsula is the 1,329-acre Naval Live Oaks of the Gulf Islands National Seashore. The geographical location of the city dictates a unique environment that fosters the small-town character sought after by its current and future residents.

The City adopted its original Comprehensive Plan in 1990 and has updated the Plan over time, including adoption of the Comprehensive Plan 2035 in 2020 (adopted by ordinance in 2022). The Comprehensive Plan 2050 builds on this planning foundation to guide long-term growth, resiliency, and quality of life. The City evaluates and updates the Comprehensive Plan consistent with Florida Statutes, including Section 163.3191, F.S., and related state requirements. The Land Development Code was last revised in 2025 reflecting the changes in local needs and state regulations. The Plan will strive to be a strategic document that addresses the needs and aspirations of the community while addressing the requirements of Florida's growth management program. It provides the City with guidance through tailored goals, objectives and policies that implement the City's current and future planning needs.

VISION 2050

The City of Gulf Breeze embarked upon the tremendous task of revising its 2035 Comprehensive Plan. State law requires comprehensive plans to be updated at least every seven years. The last update was completed in 2018, and since then, state statutes have changed, local conditions have evolved, and community priorities have shifted. This update extends the planning horizon to 2050 and includes updates to the Future Land Use Map. A series of visioning workshops, which included three virtual stakeholder meetings and two in person public meetings, were held in 2025 and 2026.

Based on the feedback, the goals, objectives, and policies were revised to incorporate the current desires of the community based on past achievements and ideas from new residents. Adherence to statutory regulations and overall desires for the community shaped the vision statement. Several draft vision statements were created and ultimately combined for a final statement to be called "Vision 2050."

In June 2013, the City Council adopted the master plan, called the "Most Livable City Plan", to define how the community would like to grow over the next 50 years. The Most Livable City Plan includes recommendations for land use, transportation, and economic development that will be implemented through the Comprehensive Plan, Land Development Code, Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) master plan, and through partnerships with state agencies, including the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and private land owners.

The 2050 Comprehensive Plan reflects the City's vision and builds on key principles of the 2013 Most Livable City Plan by updating goals, objectives, and policies to address current conditions, statutory requirements, and the 2050 planning horizon.

01



FUTURE LAND USE



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FROM SHORELINE TO SKYLINE

DRAFT [AUG 2026]

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I. FUTURE LAND USE

A. INTRODUCTION

The Future Land Use Element (FLUE) establishes the framework for how land within the City of Gulf Breeze will be used and developed through the 2050 planning horizon. It identifies the appropriate distribution, location, density, and intensity of land uses needed to accommodate anticipated population and economic growth while protecting the City's natural resources and ensuring the efficient provision of public facilities and services.

The Data and Analysis (D&A) portion of this Element provides the foundation for future land use decisions and informs potential policy updates to guide sustainable growth and development. Topics considered in this analysis include Gulf Breeze's regional context, demographic and socioeconomic trends, existing and vacant land uses, natural, cultural, and historical resources, public facilities and services, redevelopment opportunities, and the city's capacity to accommodate projected growth within its remaining developable areas.

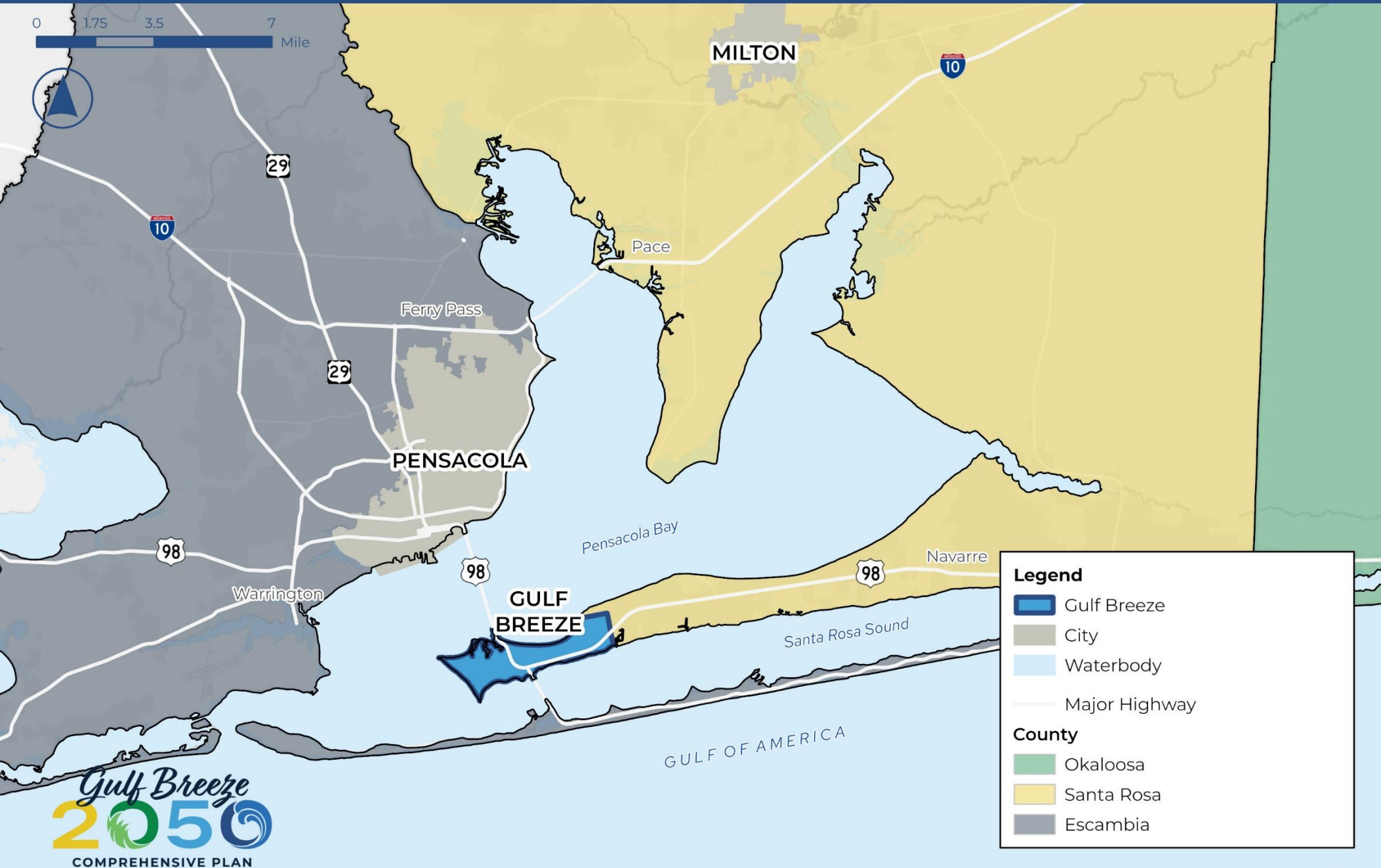
1. Geographic Context

The City of Gulf Breeze is located on the southwestern end of Santa Rosa County, Florida and situated on the Fairpoint Peninsula between Pensacola Bay and Santa Rosa Sound. The city encompasses approximately 3,000 acres, or roughly 4.7 square miles and is part of the Pensacola Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Gulf Breeze is bounded by water on the west, north, and south, and unincorporated Santa Rosa County to the east.

Shoreline and water access are defining features of the community, with Pensacola Bay, Santa Rosa Sound, the federally protected National Seashore, and Naval Live Oaks Preserve serving as the most prominent natural areas within or adjacent to the city.

U.S. Highway 98 is the primary transportation corridor connecting Gulf Breeze to Pensacola, Navarre, and other communities along the coast. The Pensacola Bay Bridge provides direct access to regional job centers and services. The city's boundary and its broader regional context is shown in **Map I - 1**.

REGIONAL CONTEXT



2. Demographic and Socioeconomic Context

According to the most recent American Community Survey (ACS) (2019-2023) estimates released by the U.S. Census Bureau, the City of Gulf Breeze has an estimated population of 6,721 residents, of which approximately 386 are considered seasonal residents.

An overview of Gulf Breeze's current demographic profile, including age, sex, and race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic characteristics (e.g., income, housing status, and education) is provided in **Tables I-1 and I-2**. These tables utilize data from ESRI Business Analyst Online (BAO), which extrapolates population characteristics from the 2020 Decennial Census and creates estimates for 2025.

Table I-1. Demographic Profile Comparison

	Gulf Breeze	Santa Rosa County	Florida
Total Population	6,534	209,704	23,027,836
Female Population (%)	51.5%	49.0%	50.9%
Male Population (%)	48.5%	51.1%	49.2%
Median Age	48.5	41.0	43.6
Senior Population 65+ (%)	25.7%	18.8%	23.2%
Non-Hispanic White Pop (%)	91.6%	82.8%	69.2%
Hispanic Population (%)	4.9%	7.2%	27.7%
Population of 2+ Races (%)	8.1%	9.7%	17.4%
Black Population (%)	0.4%	6.0%	14.9%
Other Race Population (%)	0.8%	2.1%	7.6%
Non-Hispanic Asian Population (%)	1.8%	2.4%	3.3%
American Indian Population (%)	0.3%	0.7%	0.5%
Pacific Islander Population (%)	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%

Source: Esri BAO, 2025

The City of Gulf Breeze has an older overall population profile than Florida, with a median age of 48.5 compared to the state median of 43.6. This trend is reinforced by the city's higher proportion of residents aged 65 and older relative to both Santa Rosa County and the State, suggesting that Gulf Breeze is an attractive community for retirees. Demographically, the population is more homogenous than that of Florida overall. Approximately 91.6% of residents identify as non-Hispanic White, compared to 69.2% statewide.

Table I-2. Socio-economic Profile Comparison

	Gulf Breeze	Santa Rosa County	Florida
Median Household Income	\$116,815	\$88,945	\$78,205
Households with income below poverty level (ACS 5-Yr)	7.3%	8.8%	12.6%
Median Home Value	\$591,142	\$378,284	\$416,969
Owner-occupied housing units	78.8%	79.7%	67.2%
Renter-occupied housing units	21.2%	20.3%	32.8%

	Gulf Breeze	Santa Rosa County	Florida
Population age 25+: graduate/professional degree	21.7%	12.2%	13.5%
Population age 25+: bachelor's degree	40.3%	21.5%	22.5%
Population age 25+: high school diploma	8.0%	20.7%	22.7%
Employed civilians 16+	91.9%	95.9%	96.2%
Unemployed population 25-54	255	3,948	426,192

Source: Esri BAO, 2022 and 2024

Gulf Breeze is more affluent than both Santa Rosa County and the State of Florida. The city's median household income is \$116,815, significantly higher than the statewide median of \$78,205. Gulf Breeze has a smaller share of households living below the poverty level and substantially higher median home values. With a median home value of \$591,142, which is higher than the county's \$378,284 and the state's \$416,969, Gulf Breeze demonstrates a strong demand for housing and a preference for homeownership, as evidenced by its lower renter-occupied housing rate of 21.2% in comparison to Florida's 32.8%.

Educational attainment is similarly elevated: approximately 62 percent of residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 33.7 percent in Santa Rosa County and 36 percent statewide.

B. LAND USE INVENTORY

1. Existing Land Use

Existing land use represents the current use of land within the city, as determined by the Department of Revenue (DOR) land use codes included in the latest Santa Rosa County Property Appraiser tax parcel shapefile. **Map I-2** identifies the existing land use of every parcel within Gulf Breeze, while **Table I-3** totals the acreage comprised by each existing land use.

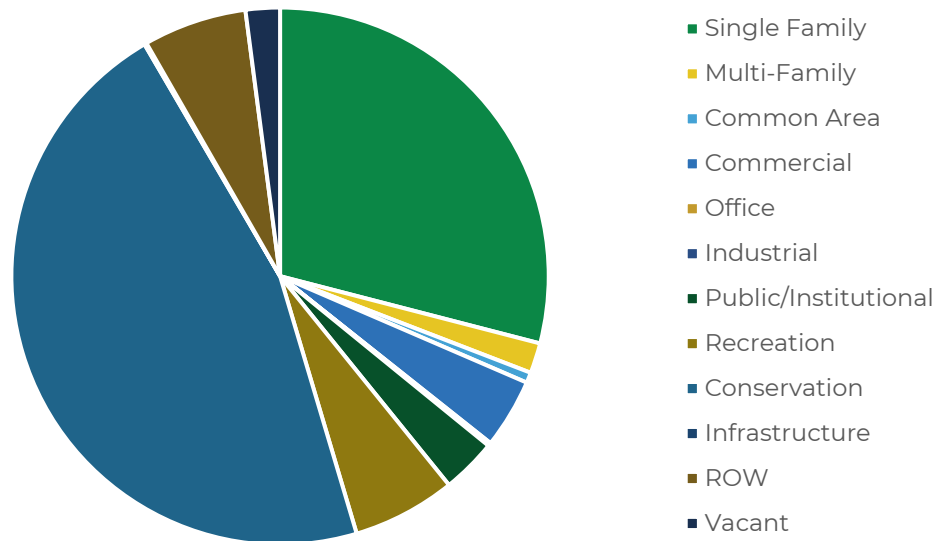
Table I-3. Existing Land Use Inventory

Existing Land Use	Acres	Percent
Single Family	840.3	28.13%
Multi-Family	52.8	1.77%
Common Area	18.2	0.61%
Commercial	121.4	4.06%
Office	1.7	0.06%
Industrial	4.0	0.13%
Public/Institutional	95.6	3.20%
Recreation	180.1	6.03%
Conservation	1,336.9	44.75%
Infrastructure	3.9	0.13%
ROW	180.1	6.03%

Existing Land Use	Acres	Percent
Vacant	59.8	2.00%
TOTAL	2,987.5	100%

Source: City of Gulf Breeze, 2025

Figure I - 1: Existing Land Uses



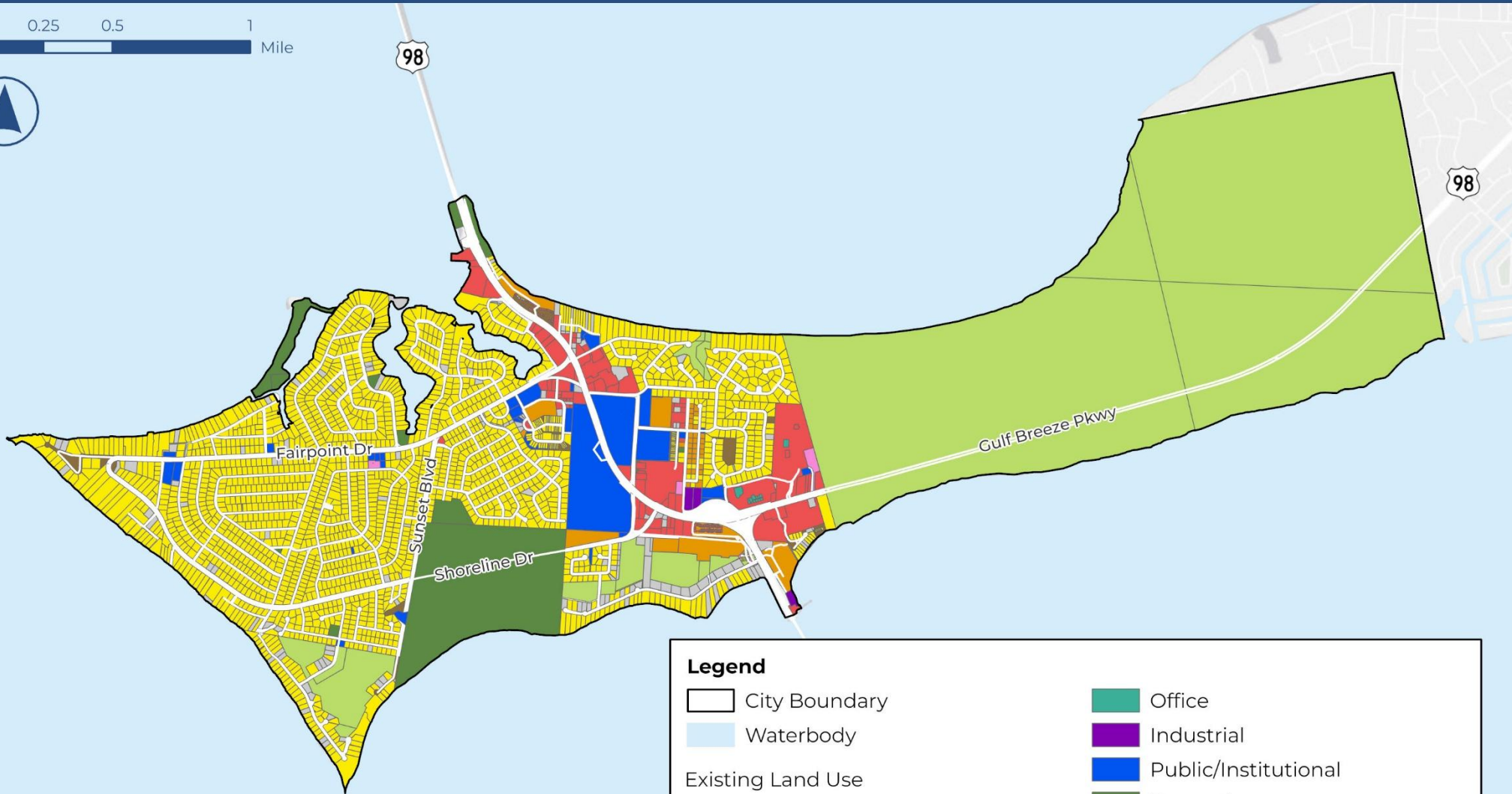
Source: City of Gulf Breeze, 2025

Approximately 1,337 acres, nearly one-half of the City of Gulf Breeze's total land area, are designated as conservation lands. Most of this acreage is encompassed by the Naval Live Oaks Nature Preserve, a component of the federally managed Gulf Islands National Seashore administered by the National Park Service. Outside of these conserved lands, the city is primarily developed with single-family residential uses, which constitute 28 percent of the total land area and represent approximately one-half of all non-preserve lands. Gulf Breeze also includes roughly 180 acres of recreational land, including Shoreline Park, the city's largest and most prominent recreational facility. Higher intensity uses, such as commercial, public/institutional, and multi-family residential, are largely concentrated along the U.S. Highway 98 corridor, which serves as the city's principal development spine.

Given the city's geographic constraints, being bounded by Pensacola Bay and Santa Rosa Sound and limited in its eastward expansion by the Naval Live Oaks Preserve, Gulf Breeze is effectively built out. Only approximately 60 acres of vacant land remain within the city limits, a portion of which consists of wetlands or other environmentally constrained areas that are not suitable for development. As a result, opportunities for new growth are limited to the small amount of developable vacant land that remains. Future development will therefore depend largely on redevelopment, infill, or strategic densification of existing developed areas to accommodate additional housing or other land uses.

EXISTING LAND USE

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



Legend

- City Boundary
- Waterbody

Existing Land Use

- Single Family
- Multi-Family
- Common Area
- Commercial

- Office
- Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Recreation
- Conservation
- Infrastructure
- ROW
- Vacant

2. Natural Resources

Natural systems, such as wetlands, floodplains, soil permeability, and aquifer recharge areas play a significant role in shaping where and how development can occur in Gulf Breeze. These environmental features affect drainage, stormwater management, infrastructure design, and the long-term protection of the city's water resources. As Gulf Breeze plans for future growth, land use decisions should account for these constraints to ensure that development is both resilient and environmentally responsible. Additional details, data, and mapping related to these natural systems are provided in the *Conservation Element*, which provides guidance on resource protection and regulatory considerations.

3. Water-Dependent and Water-Related Uses

Gulf Breeze has 18 miles of waterfront along Pensacola Bay and three protected bayous. The Naval Live Oaks Preserve area, part of the Gulf Islands National Seashore, covers approximately 1,388 acres and offers beach access.

The city also has a number of water-dependent uses, which are activities that can be carried out only on, in, or adjacent to shorelines, such as marinas, boat ramps, and recreational areas. The list below identifies notable public and privately owned water-dependent and water-related uses within the city. Gulf Breeze does not have a port within city limits. The closest major port facility is the Port of Pensacola, located across the bay.

- Shoreline Park Pier
- Shoreline Park Boat Ramp
- Wayside Park Boat Ramp
- Santa Rosa Yacht and Boat Club (Marina)

These water-dependent and water-related uses are central to the community's quality of life, providing access to boating, paddling, and shoreline recreation. Because many are located in low-lying areas and within the Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA), they face heightened vulnerability to storm surge, erosion, and sea level rise. Maintaining public access while protecting facilities will require resilient design and shoreline stabilization to ensure these assets remain safe and functional over time.

4. Gulf Islands National Seashore

A defining feature of Gulf Breeze is its proximity to the National Park Service's Gulf Islands National Seashore, portions of which lie within the city's boundaries as the Naval Live Oaks area. This nationally protected shoreline is one of the community's most valued environmental and recreational assets. The park preserves extensive coastal habitats, including maritime forests, dunes, and estuarine systems, that contribute to the city's natural character and ecological resilience. These areas provide critical wildlife habitat, help buffer storm impacts, and support the overall health of Pensacola Bay.

Within the city, the National Seashore offers residents and visitors direct access to high-quality outdoor recreation. Trails, beaches, and interpretive areas draw significant regional visitation, supporting the local economy while reinforcing Gulf Breeze's identity as an environmentally oriented, high-quality coastal community.

Because the National Seashore is federally managed, land use and development within these areas are subject to strict conservation and management standards. Coordination between the city, the National Park Service, and neighboring jurisdictions is essential to ensure that land use decisions protect the seashore's natural resources, maintain public access, and uphold its long-term environmental integrity. The presence of the National Seashore also limits opportunities for development within and adjacent to its boundaries, underscoring the importance of directing growth toward appropriate infill and redevelopment areas within the city.

C. HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Shaped by its strategic location along Pensacola Bay, the history of Gulf Breeze reflects centuries of cultural, economic, and regional change. Long before incorporation, the area supported Native American communities, serving as a focal point of Spanish, British, and early American settlement. The city also played a significant role in naval expansion, maritime trade, and early industry. By the twentieth century, bridges, aviation facilities, and military installations linked the peninsula to the broader region. These layers of history are visible today in the city's archaeological sites, mid-century neighborhoods, preserved natural areas, and long-standing cultural landmarks. Together, these resources illustrate Gulf Breeze's evolution from a sparsely populated coastal outpost into a modern city with a rich heritage and strong ties to both its natural environment and regional history.

1. Historical Context

a. Early History and Colonial Era (Pre-1821)

The Gulf Breeze area was initially home to the Pensacola people, a Native American group associated with a regional variant of the broader Mississippian culture. They lived in coastal and estuarine zones, used marine resources, and constructed shell mounds. However, by the mid-18th century, they had been assimilated into other tribes.

The first European attempt to establish a permanent settlement in the region occurred in 1559 when Tristan de Luna y Arellano led a Spanish expedition to the area. Nevertheless, storms, diseases, and dissension led to its abandonment in 1561. After reestablishing control of the Florida peninsula in 1698, the Spanish returned to the area but faced ongoing conflicts with the French until 1722. During this period, the settlement was relocated several times: first to Santa Rosa Island and later to the mainland, where it became known as Panzacola.

Following the Treaty of Paris in 1763, Florida came under British control and Pensacola was developed into a fortified maritime port. The western tip of the peninsula, particularly around Old Navy Cove, English Navy Cove, and Town Point, served as a major ship careening and repair area, which was commonly referred to as "Town Point."

The Spanish regained control of northwest Florida in 1781. While industries like timber milling and the deerskin trade flourished, growing Anglo-American pressure and frontier conflicts weakened Spanish authority.

b. U.S. Territory, Naval Expansion, and Industrial Beginnings (1821-1900)

In 1821, Florida became a U.S. territory following a series of invasions of Pensacola led by Andrew Jackson. The Pensacola Navy Yard was established in 1826 under President John Quincy Adams as a strategic naval station on the southern tip of Escambia County. At the same time, a growing lumber industry spurred an influx of water-powered sawmills and grist mills, birthing small frontier communities. In 1828, the United States government purchased land for the Naval Live Oaks Reservation. This endeavor established the nation's first tree farm to cultivate live oak trees for U.S. Navy shipbuilding on the peninsula between Pensacola Bay and Santa Rosa Sound.

At the start of the American Civil War, northwest Florida was divided based on loyalty to either the Union or Confederates. Fort Pickens, sitting at the entrance to Pensacola Bay, remained under Union control and withstood Confederate attacks through 1862. The Confederate troops feared attack from the west and retreated.

The region remained sparsely populated. Most of northwest Florida's industrial capacity was decimated in the war. The lack of adequate transportation to inland areas also impeded economic development and population growth. Much of the Navy Yard was reduced to rubble.

In the late 1800s, the area known as Town Point had very few permanent residents. At the turn of the century, the area began to experience renewed growth driven by the lumber and turpentine industries. Deadman's Island, a small peninsula on the northwestern tip of Fairpoint Peninsula, became known as Pensacola Bay's shipbuilding center and quarantine station. This area is where shipwrecks, barrel wells, and human remains have been found. Today, it is a protected nature and archeological preserve.

c. Community Formation and Regional Connections (1900-1960)

At the turn of the century, the aviation industry significantly influenced the transformation and development of northwest Florida. In 1914, the U.S. Navy established its first permanent aviation training station with the Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola. In 1931, Pensacola Bay's first bridge, often referred to as the Thomas A. Johnson Bridge, connected Gulf Breeze to Pensacola. Its construction spurred the initial development in the area.

During the Great Depression in the 1930s, Mark and Elouise Benson managed the Gulf Breeze Cottages and formed a community hub by building a gas station and a grocery store on Live Oak Street. This inspired the name of



Source: Roger Belanger, Year Unknown. Original Post Office.

the city later. Mark Benson served as the area's first postmaster and opened the first permanent post office in 1939.

The Great Depression further weakened the postwar economy. Nonetheless, the onset of World War II revitalized the region. NAS Pensacola became the hub of naval aviation training, producing thousands of pilots and solidifying northwest Florida's role in national defense. A surge in military development, which included the construction of the Whiting Field and Eglin Air Force Base facilities, occupied the area from the 1940s through the mid-20th century. Additionally, the rise of chemical plants, oil fields, and beach-related tourism across the Gulf Coast diversified the local economy.

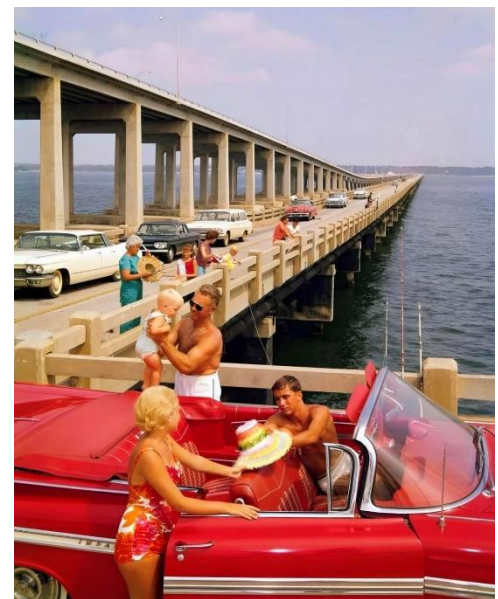
d. Municipal Growth, Tourism, and Modern Infrastructure (1960-Present)

In 1960, the Thomas A. Johnson Bridge was repurposed to a fishing pier and replaced by the Philip D. Beall Sr. Memorial Bridge (also referred to as the Pensacola Bay Bridge). Following the opening of the improved bridge, the city experienced significant growth, culminating in its incorporation as the City of Gulf Breeze in 1961.

Surfing legend Yancy Spencer III, known as the "Godfather of Gulf Surfing," played a pivotal role in establishing surf culture along the northern Gulf Coast in the 1960s. In 1969, Spencer founded the Innerlight Surf & Skate shop in Gulf Breeze, which later grew into a prominent regional retailer. Innerlight continues to serve as a gathering place and fosters community connections. The shop draws local surfers, skaters, tourists, and the youth through event sponsorships and school and team partnerships. To honor its significance to Gulf Breeze's history and identity, there has been some interest in establishing a Surfing Museum in the Mark X. and E. Louise Benson Home, pending a determination regarding the house's viability for such use.

In 1971, the Bob Sikes Bridge was built, which linked Gulf Breeze to Pensacola Beach across the Santa Rosa Sound. Later in 1998, the Naval Live Oaks Cemetery, which includes important Pensacola archeological sites, was added to the U.S. National Register of Historic Places. The current Pensacola Bay Bridge project began construction in 2016, with the eastbound span opening in 2019 and the westbound span completed in 2023. This project replaced the 1960 structure with modern dual spans that include pedestrian and bicycle pathways.

In recent history, major hurricanes have repeatedly shaped the landscape and development of the Gulf Breeze and Pensacola Bay region. Historic storms, such as Hurricane Eloise (1975), Hurricane Erin and Opal (1995), Hurricane Ivan (2004), and Hurricane Sally (2020) caused widespread damage to homes, infrastructure, and



*Source: Sarah Emily, Year Unknown.
Original Pensacola Bay Bridge,*

coastal ecosystems. Hurricane Ivan, in particular, produced a storm surge exceeding 10 feet in parts of the bay and destroyed the fishing pier, severely impacting Gulf Breeze and becoming one of the costliest storms in Florida's history.

Together, these periods illustrate the evolution of the Gulf Breeze area from an Indigenous coastal landscape to a community influenced by regional military presence and transportation infrastructure, and ultimately to an incorporated city with a distinct coastal identity. Regional connections, particularly bridges, military installations, maritime activity, and surfing identity shaped patterns of settlement, economic development, and community life. This historical context provides a foundation for understanding Gulf Breeze's growth, resilience, and sense of place today.

2. Historic Resources

In 2019, the City adopted a historic landmark protection and preservation ordinance establishing a local register of historic landmarks and procedures for designating resources. The ordinance also contains standards for alterations, additions, or changes to locally designated landmarks.

The Florida Master Site File (FMSF) office maintains the State of Florida's official inventory of historical and/or cultural resources. Categories of resources recorded within the FMSF include archeological sites and historical structures, cemeteries, bridges, districts, and landscapes. The following subsections describe the findings from previous surveys.

a. Structures

According to the FMSF office, a limited number of historic resource surveys have been conducted within Gulf Breeze, resulting in the documentation of nine historic properties. **Table I-4** lists these resources and **Map I-3** depicts their location.

Seven of the nine surveyed properties are mid-20th-century residential buildings constructed between 1955 and 1965. These homes represent Gulf Breeze's early suburban development during the post-World War II expansion and exhibit characteristics of Mid-Century Modern and Mid-Century Ranch architecture that became prevalent throughout Florida during this period. The FMSF identifies all seven properties as potential contributors to a future National Register Historic District, pending additional evaluation.

The Pensacola Beach Sign, which the FMSF determined is not individually eligible for listing in the National Register, was designed in 1960 and installed in 1962 at the US 98/SR 399 interchange. Serving as a prominent visual gateway to Pensacola Beach, the sign's animated neon lighting and sailfish imagery reflect the growth of coastal tourism during the mid-20th-century and reinforce Gulf Breeze's historic role as a regional access point for coastal recreation and travel.

The FMSF survey for the Benson House does not include a completed eligibility evaluation. Mark and Louise Benson were among Gulf Breeze's earliest permanent residents. In 1939, Mark Benson constructed the community's first post office and served as its first postmaster. Although the original post office that gave the city its

name no longer exists, the Benson House remains an important historic resource as the family's original residence and a tangible link to the community's early development.

The property was donated to the Gulf Breeze Historical Society in 2007 with the condition that it be restored and preserved as a museum. In 2023, the Benson House was added to the city's registry of historic resources. Restoration efforts are underway to convert the property into a multipurpose heritage facility that could include a visitor center, meeting space, and, if approved, the future Gulf Coast Surfing Museum. As part of this effort, the building is currently undergoing structural evaluation to determine whether it can safely accommodate public use as a museum and heritage facility while preserving its historic character.

Founded in 1969 by Yancy Spencer, Innerlight Surf & Skate Shop is a longstanding community institution closely associated with the region's surfing heritage. The shop remains a cultural landmark and hosts the annual Yancy Spencer III Memorial Surf Contest on Pensacola Beach.

Table I-4. Surveyed Structures

FMSF Number	Name/Address	Year Built	Style	Potentially Eligible	
				Individually	As part of a district
SR02164	413 Warwick St.	1955	Mid-century modern	Insufficient info	Yes
SR02190	4 Futura Dr.	1960	Frame vernacular	Insufficient info	Yes
SR02191	2 Poinciana Dr.	1960	Frame vernacular	Insufficient info	Yes
SR02192	9 Laura Ln.	1960	Ranch	Insufficient info	Yes
SR02193	901 Poinciana Dr.	1962	Frame vernacular	Insufficient info	Yes
SR02196	805 Poinciana Dr.	1965	Frame vernacular	Insufficient info	Yes
SR02197	204 Hibiscus Av.	1965	Ranch	Insufficient info	Yes
SR02474	Pensacola Beach Sign	1961	Sign advertisement	No	No
SR02476	Benson House (15 Live Oak Av.)	1940	Ranch	n/a	n/a

Source: State Historic Preservation Office, 2025

b. Resource Groups

According to the State Division of Historical Resources, three resource groups were also surveyed in the past. Resource groups consist of districts, landscapes, building complexes, and linear resources. The resource groups include the Naval Live Oaks Reservation, the First American Road, and Wayside Park – South Approach. The first two are described in **Table I-5**. The Wayside Park–South Approach, located at the southern end of the Pensacola Bay Bridge, was surveyed but determined to lack sufficient historic integrity for listing in the National Register of Historic Places due to substantial alterations and the presence of modern recreational and support facilities.

c. Archeological Sites

Although historic structures in Gulf Breeze have received limited attention, the city's archaeological resources have been studied and documented extensively. As of

2025, six archeological sites are officially listed on the National Register. These sites were all added on September 28, 1998, as part of the Archeological Properties of the Naval Live Oaks Reservation Multiple Property Submission (MPS). This designation recognizes the prehistoric and early historic significance of the peninsula. All six sites are within or adjacent to the Gulf Islands National Seashore/Naval Live Oaks Area. The names and descriptions of these sites, along with their Florida Master Site File (FMSF) number, are found in **Table I-5**.

As elucidated, several FMSF archaeological sites have been found and documented along Gulf Breeze's shoreline, including shell middens, artifact scatters, and ancient campsites that illustrate long-term prehistoric use of the Fairpoint Peninsula. These include Camp Inky (8SR23), Butcherpen Cove (8SR60), and Rattlesnake Midden (8SR73).

Deadman's Island, located along the Gulf Breeze shoreline, functioned as a major 19th-century quarantine station where ships arriving in Pensacola were inspected before entering the port. The name may refer to a history of unmarked graves and shipwrecks, or the nautical term "deadman," which is a buried anchor point. The island remains an important archaeological and ecological site undergoing restoration, as well as a recreational area for fishing, snorkeling, kayaking, and paddleboarding.

The Naval Live Oaks Reservation remains a locally significant resource, known as the first federal forestry station and early U.S. naval resource management project. The Reserve contains remnants of historic quarries, boundary markers, early roads, and live-oak cultivation areas.

Table I-5. Archaeological Sites Listed on the National Register of Historic Places

FMSF Site Number	Name	Description
8SR8	Third Gulf Breeze	A shell ring, formed through patterned refuse disposal, reflects unique settlement arrangements or ceremonial activities. While shell mining in the antebellum period depleted other sites, this example remains the largest and best-preserved shell ring of its kind in the southeast U.S.
8SR29	Butcherpen Mound	A prehistoric multi-mound site with evidence of occupation spanning from the Middle Woodland period through the Mississippian period, which is rare in northwest Florida. Constructed by loading sand and shells into platform or conical shapes, these mounds may have served as burial sites or structural foundations and retain significant research potential.
8SR36	Naval Live Oaks Cemetery	A non-mound subsurface burial site containing artifacts from the Late Mississippian (Pensacola) period, as well as Spanish trade goods. The site presents insight into Native American burial practices during the earliest years of European contact, suggesting that the Pensacola people

FMSF Site Number	Name	Description
		maintained traditional lifestyle while incorporating elements of Spanish material culture into their society.
8SR48	Naval Live Oaks Reservation	A conservation site that encompasses the first federally designated forestry project established by John Quincy Adams. Established in 1928, the reservation was intended to preserve and cultivate live oak trees for shipbuilding and naval repairs.
8SR66	First American Road in Florida	The First American Road in Florida was completed between 1824 and 1826 and runs parallel to existing State Highway 98 through the Naval Live Oaks Reserve. The preserved segment is approximately 12 feet wide and 2.39 miles long and serves as an early link between two former Spanish colonies, Pensacola and St. Augustine. In addition, the road is noteworthy for the major engineering challenges overcome in carving a route through dense vegetation and harsh conditions.
8SR68	Big Heart West	A large, deep midden deposit containing features and artifacts associated with early coastal settlement. Features include refuse and storage pits, while recovered artifacts include shell tools, bone tools, and ceramic fragments. Further study has the potential to provide valuable information on prehistoric settlement and subsistence patterns.

Source: State Historic Preservation Office, 2025

d. Cemeteries

Two cemeteries have been surveyed: Inky Cemetery and Duncan Cemetery. Although not listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Inky Cemetery is a large Mississippian/Protohistoric cemetery located within the Naval Live Oaks Nature Preserve. The cemetery is associated with the Inky Tent North Site, an accretionary midden of buried shell and organic materials that may contain the remnants of the ancient village associated with the site. Its inland location has been subject to shoreline erosion.

Duncan Cemetery is a private family cemetery on Fairpoint Drive across from the First Baptist Church. The Duncan family were original landowners of a property adjacent to the cemetery. In the late 1800s, James Duncan received a land grant to begin a homestead. The earliest gravestone found in the cemetery is from 1876.

3. Transportation Resources

The General Daniel “Chappie” James Jr. Bridge, locally known as the Pensacola Bay Bridge or the Three-Mile Bridge and serves as the primary regional connection between

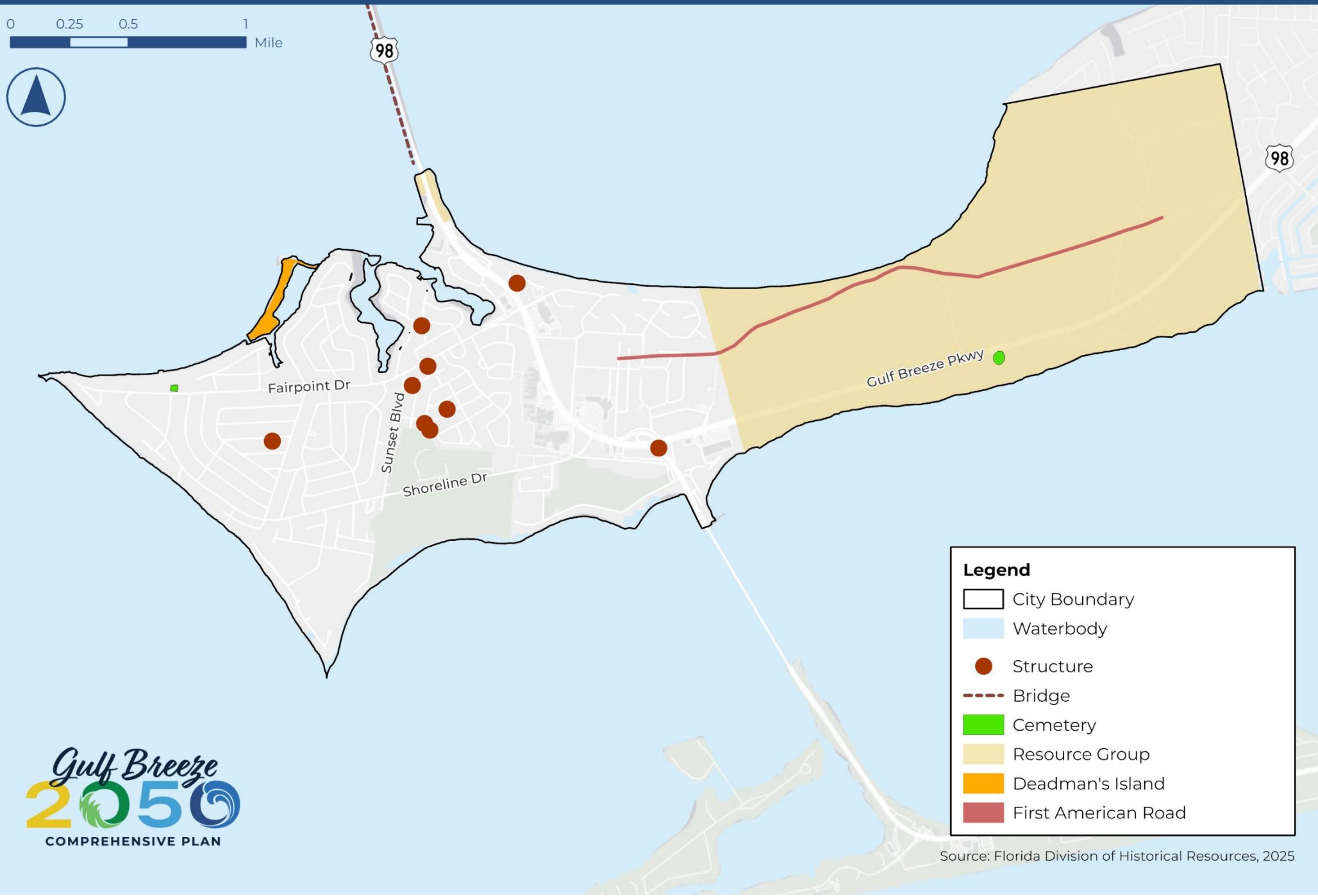


Gulf Breeze and downtown Pensacola. It carries six lanes of U.S. Highway 98 across Pensacola Bay. The current structure opened in 2019, replacing earlier bridges dating back to 1931. It was constructed to address structural deficiencies identified by FDOT and to modernize the corridor.

Over its history, the crossing has experienced notable disruptions, including barge strikes in 1989 and major hurricane impacts from Ivan in 2004 and Sally in 2020, which damaged both bridge segments and adjacent fishing piers.

The most recent replacement project was initiated in the 2010s, with a construction cost of approximately \$596 million. The project resulted in a two-span, hurricane-resilient facility with improved safety features and a multi-use path. After Hurricane Sally caused significant damage and temporary closure in 2020, the bridge reopened in phases through 2021, with full westbound completion in early 2023. Today, the General Daniel “Chappie” James Jr. Bridge remains a critical transportation asset for regional mobility, emergency access, and economic connectivity for Gulf Breeze.

HISTORIC RESOURCES



D. PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

1. Infrastructure

The relationship between land use and public facilities is fundamental to how Gulf Breeze grows and functions. The city coordinates with state agencies, regional utilities, and private partners to maintain, upgrade, and expand its infrastructure systems to support existing and future development. The availability and capacity of public facilities directly influence the location, timing, and intensity of land use throughout the community.

Further details regarding specific infrastructure systems are provided in other elements of this Comprehensive Plan. The *Transportation Element* addresses roadway networks and multimodal connections; the *Infrastructure Element* discusses potable water, sanitary sewer, solid waste, and drainage, and aquifer recharge; the *Recreation and Open Space Element* outlines the provision of parks and recreational amenities; and the *Intergovernmental Coordination Element* highlights the city's partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions and service providers to ensure coordinated infrastructure planning and service delivery.

2. Airports

There are no airports located within the City of Gulf Breeze. However, residents and businesses have convenient access to regional air transportation through the Pensacola International Airport, located approximately 10 miles north of the city. The airport provides both commercial passenger and cargo services for the region. Additional general aviation facilities, such as Peter Prince Field in Milton and Jack Edwards Airport in Gulf Shores, further support private and recreational air travel needs in the surrounding area. Gulf Breeze does not anticipate the development of any airport facilities within its city limits.

3. Railways

There are no active railway lines or facilities within the City of Gulf Breeze. The nearest freight rail service is operated by Florida Gulf & Atlantic Railroad (FG&A), which runs between Pensacola and Baldwin, just west of Jacksonville, Florida. Historically, rail infrastructure has not played a significant role in Gulf Breeze's development due to its geographic location on the Fairpoint Peninsula and limited industrial activity. As a result, the city does not anticipate future railway expansion or service within its boundaries.

E. COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA

The Florida Community Redevelopment Act of 1969 (Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes) authorizes local governments to create Community Redevelopment Agencies (CRAs) to address and revitalize areas affected by blight or disinvestment. Conditions that may warrant the establishment of a CRA include substandard structures, inadequate infrastructure, insufficient roadways, limited parking, or a shortage of affordable housing. Once established, a CRA is tasked with preparing and implementing a Community



Redevelopment Plan that identifies the area's needs, sets redevelopment goals, and outlines projects and strategies to stimulate economic growth and community improvement.

Before Gulf Breeze's incorporation in 1961, development along U.S. Highway 98 was characterized by uncoordinated "strip commercial" growth with little planning or guidance to promote a cohesive city center. To revitalize this corridor and encourage a more sustainable and vibrant downtown, the city established the Gulf Breeze CRA and its managing agency in December 1989. This CRA specifically focuses on reducing vacancies in retail and office units, improving infrastructure, and fostering a sense of place along the city's primary economic corridor. The Gulf Breeze CRA is about 393 acres in size and is comprised of about 410 parcels. The CRA encompasses the entire US 98 corridor within city limits, beginning at the south side of the General Daniel "Chappie" James Jr. Bridge and extending at various depths northeast and southwest of the highway to the city's eastern limits. The location of the CRA can be seen on **Map I-4**. The CRA uses Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to support redevelopment in this area. Any increase in property tax revenue above the 1989 baseline is collected each year and reinvested into public projects within the CRA.

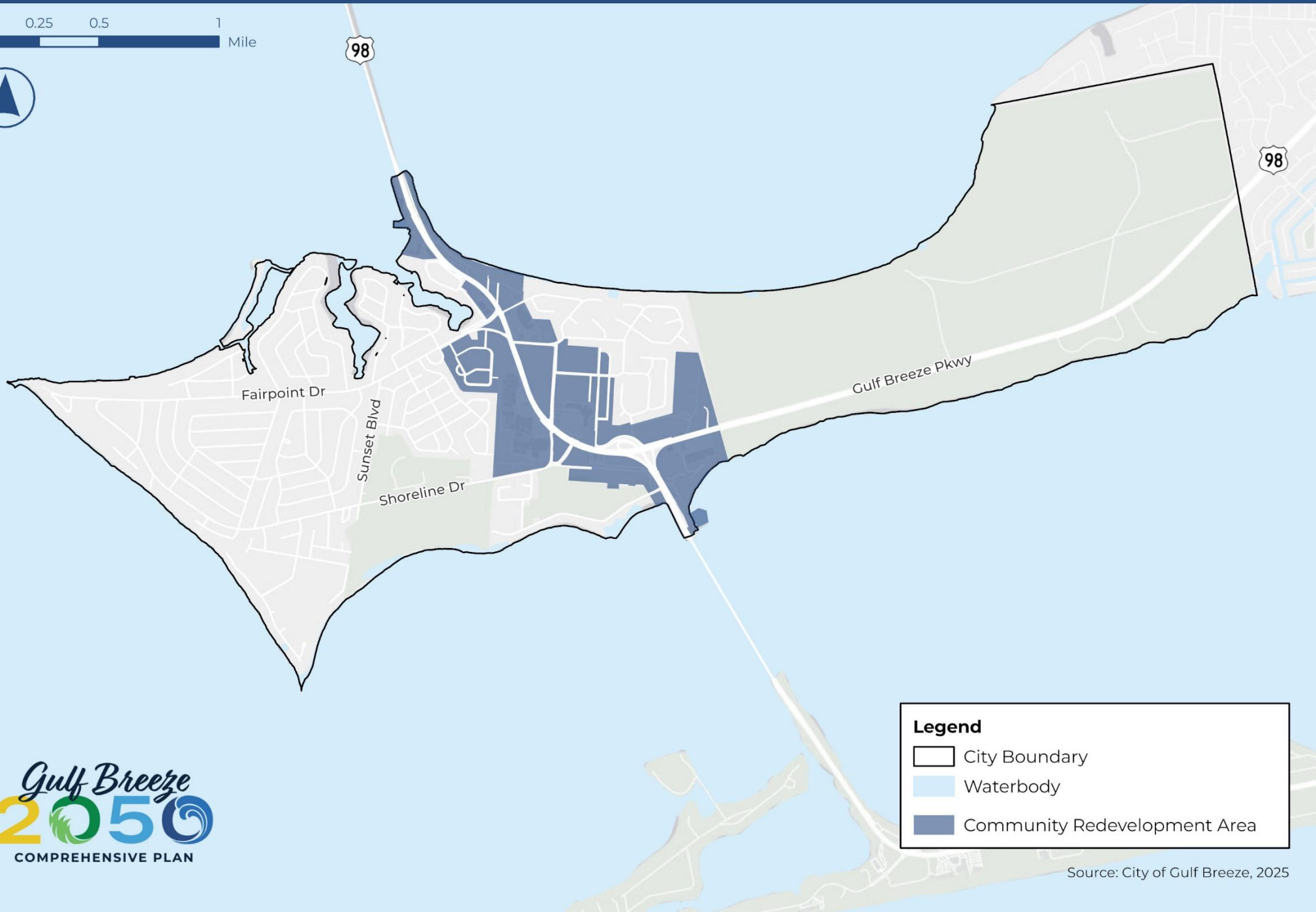
In 2018, the city updated the CRA Plan, building on the Most Livable City Plan and associated comprehensive plan updates adopted in 2014. The Most Livable City Plan was born out of a desire to diversify and strengthen the local economy and respond to changing economic and transportation conditions resulting from the reconstruction of the General Daniel "Chappie" James Jr. Bridge. This community-driven document established a long-term vision for the city and outlined implementation strategies to transform Gulf Breeze into the "most livable city in America."

Since the base year, the CRA value has grown by nearly \$280 million, now totaling nearly \$328 million. In 2025 alone, the TIF strategy generated more than \$1.9 million in CRA revenue. In 2026, the TIF strategy is projected to generate just over \$1.5 million. The drop in revenue is due to the County reducing their millage rate. To date, significant investments have been made in public facilities and infrastructure, including undergrounding utilities along Highway 98, the Daniel Circle Streetscape project, design plans for a multimodal overpass over Highway 98, and planned improvements to Wayside and Vista Parks. Additional initiatives, such as sidewalk upgrades, paving projects, enhancements to the Safe Streets lighting program, the establishment of community policing zones, and façade improvement grants for small businesses, have contributed to a cleaner, safer, and more attractive environment for Gulf Breeze residents.

Looking ahead, the CRA Board plans to expand many of these efforts, including undergrounding utilities along collector streets, advancing transportation improvements, expanding bike trail networks, investing in additional public spaces, and continuing to strengthen policing and safety programs.

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



Legend

- City Boundary
- Waterbody
- Community Redevelopment Area

F. FUTURE LAND USE NEEDS

1. Projected Population

In 2020, the United States Census Bureau estimated that Gulf Breeze had 6,302 residents, representing 3.35% of Santa Rosa County's total population. By 2025, the Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research estimated that the city had a total population of 6,342 permanent residents, representing 3.00% of the Countywide population.

While Santa Rosa's population continues to grow, Gulf Breeze is facing complete build-out, thus leading to a decrease in population share over time (from 11% in 1970 to 3.05% in 2024). Opportunities to annex are limited given the city's position on the Fairpoint Peninsula. Water borders the city to the north, south, and west. Annexation east of the Naval Live Oaks Nature Preserve would be impractical because of the physical separation from the urban core of the city. Within the city, very few vacant sites remain for future residential development, thus limiting further development. Opportunities for the city to grow mainly exist within redevelopment and infill.

Based on the slow past growth and limited annexation potential, it is estimated that the city's population will only grow slightly over the next two decades. **Table I-6** shows the permanent and seasonal projected population for the coming decades, with an estimated seasonal and permanent population of 6,971 by the year 2050. This indicates an increase of 250 seasonal and permanent residents. The methodology and sources utilized in this population projection through the 2050 planning horizon are documented in **Attachment A**.

Table I-6. Projected Population for Gulf Breeze

Year	Permanent	Seasonal	Total	Increase from 2024
2024	6,335	386	6,721	-
2030	6,582	378	6,960	239
2035	6,618	380	6,998	277
2040	6,621	380	7,001	280
2045	6,608	380	6,988	267
2050	6,592	397	6,971	250

Source: University of Florida Shimberg Center, Florida Housing and Data Clearinghouse; BEBR, 2025

2. Future Land Use Map

The City of Gulf Breeze's Future Land Use map (**Map I-5**) includes nine future land use categories, which are listed in **Table I-7**. Each category has a maximum permitted development density and/or intensity. Density is measured by the number of dwelling units per gross acre. The gross land area includes all land owned within the property boundaries of the subject parcel. However, there are various factors that could impact the actual yield of a parcel, which may include the existence of jurisdictional wetlands, submerged areas, and the availability of public facilities and services. Development intensity is measured by Floor Area Ratio (FAR). Floor Area Ratio is the ratio of the total square footage of the building area to the total square footage of a parcel. The

designations and their allowed density, intensity, and maximum residential and non-residential shares are detailed in **Table I-7**.

The Mixed-Use Development (MXD) land use category supports the mixed-use vision outlined in the City's Most Livable City Plan. It allows a blend of residential, commercial, office, and public uses, with residential densities ranging from 11 to 40 units per acre and non-residential development permitted at 0.25 to 3.0 FAR. Mixed use can occur within a single building or across a site, either vertically or horizontally.

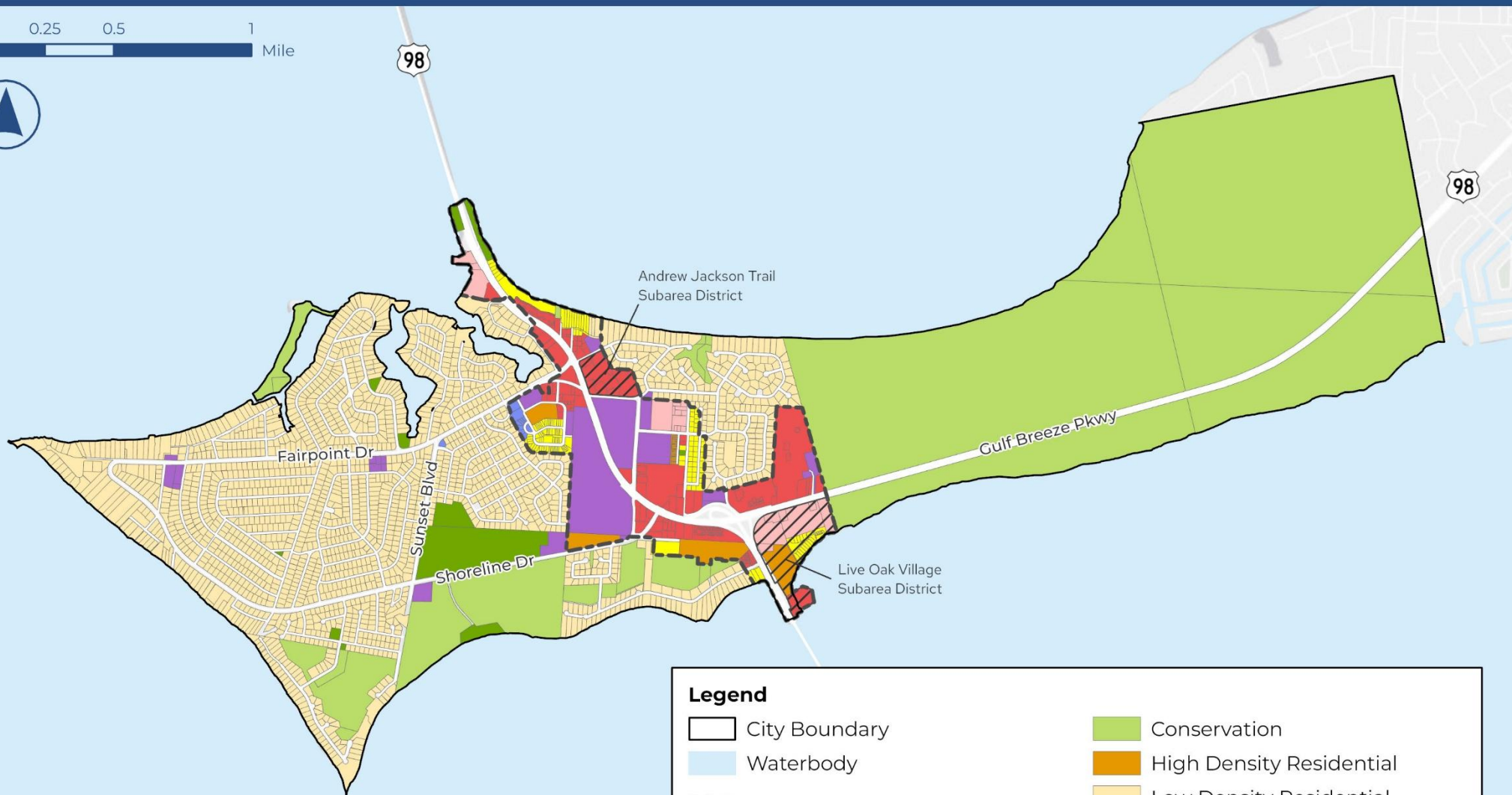
Table I-7. Future Land Use Categories

Future Land Use Category	Permitted Density (du/ac)	Permitted Intensity (FAR)
Low-Density Residential (LDR)	1-4	N/A
Medium-Density Residential (MDR)	5-10	N/A
High-Density Residential (HDR)	11-25	N/A
Mixed-Use District (MXD)	11-40	0.25-3.0
Commercial	5-30	2.0
Neighborhood Business (NB)	1-10	0.5
Public Facilities/Institutional (P/I)	N/A	1.0
Parks/Recreation (P/R)	N/A	0.25
Conservation (CNS)	N/A	N/A

Source: City of Gulf Breeze, 2025

FUTURE LAND USE

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



Legend

City Boundary

Waterbody

Subarea Policy

CRA District

Future Land Use

Commercial

Mixed Use

Conservation

High Density Residential

Low Density Residential

Medium Density Residential

Neighborhood Business

Public/Institutional

Parks/Recreation

3. Carrying Capacity Analysis

Carrying capacity analysis is a common planning tool used to evaluate how well a community can support its projected growth. It examines the spatial relationships among existing land uses, wetlands, and future land use designations to understand a community's remaining development potential. For Gulf Breeze, the carrying capacity analysis reflects the development capacity allowed under the Future Land Use Map. To complete this analysis, the city followed a five-step process:

1. **Identified Existing Land Use:** Using the most recent Santa Rosa County Property Appraiser parcel data and its associated DOR land-use codes, each parcel within the City of Gulf Breeze was assigned a generalized existing land use category (e.g., single-family residential, commercial, public/institutional, or vacant). This forms the basis for understanding current development patterns.
2. **Isolated Undeveloped Parcels:** Parcels identified as "vacant" in the existing land use map were isolated as the primary areas with remaining development potential. These properties represent the limited amount of land within Gulf Breeze that has not yet been built upon.
3. **Removed Wetlands:** Using the latest National Wetlands Inventory dataset, all mapped wetlands and open-water features were removed from further consideration. Due to state and local regulations, these areas offer little to no development potential and therefore are excluded from the calculations.
4. **Identified Future Land Use Designations:** For the remaining developable parcels, the city's Future Land Use Map was used to identify the underlying land use designation assigned to each property. This step ensures that future capacity estimates reflect the development types and intensities permitted by the city's Comprehensive Plan.
5. **Calculated Carrying Capacity:** The city's overall carrying capacity was calculated based on each parcel's Future Land Use designation, its allowable residential density, its maximum allowable share of residential development, and a development factor accounting for typical build-out patterns. For future land use categories that allow a mix of residential and non-residential uses, maximum percentage allocations are also established to guide the overall balance of uses within a site. This represents the realistic development potential of Gulf Breeze under current land use policies.

The development factor coefficient reflects that due to development regulations (e.g. zoning, stormwater, setbacks, lot sizes, etc.) and market factors, very few parcels develop at the maximum density allowed by their future land use designation. Thus, it was assumed that each undeveloped land parcel was to be 'developed' to 85% of the highest density permitted.

Based on the carrying capacity analysis, Gulf Breeze's future land use map does not have enough capacity to meet population projections through the 2050 planning horizon, with a deficit of about 140 units (multiplied times 2.3 persons per dwelling unit, this translates to 323 residents). However, as identified in the *Most Livable City Plan*, there are several underutilized commercial sites that could redevelop to accommodate more residents and effectively address the projected deficit. t.

Table I-8: Carrying Capacity

Future Land Use Category	Acres	Vacant Parcels	Vacant Land w/o Wetlands	Max Density (du/ac)	Dev. Factor	Max Res. Share	Carrying Capacity (units) ¹
Low Density Residential (LDR)	873.4	44.9	23.7	4.0	85%	100%	79
Medium Density Residential (MDR)	40.5	3.8	3.5	10.0	85%	100%	33
High Density Residential (HDR)	30.1	0.2	0.2	25.0	85%	100%	24
Neighborhood Business (NB)	3.8	0.7	0.7	10.0	85%	50%	3
Commercial (C)	119.3	5.7	5.6	30.0	85%	30%	56
Mixed Use (MXD)	37.1	2.8	2.8	40	85%	75%	72
Conservation (CNS)	1,400.7	0.6	0.5	0.0	N/A	N/A	0
Public Facilities/Institutional (PI)	98.9	0.4	N/A	0.0	N/A	N/A	0
Parks/Recreation (PR)	61.1	N/A	N/A	0.0	N/A	N/A	0
Total	2888.6	55.0	36.2	N/A	N/A	N/A	232
Carrying Capacity (residents) ²							534
Projected Increase in New Residents by 2050 ³							857
Carrying Capacity Surplus/Deficit (residents)							-323

¹Determined using the following formula: Developable Land x Maximum Permitted Density x Maximum Residential Share x Development Factor

²Assuming an average household size of 2.30

³Based upon Gulf Breeze population projections as shown in Appendix A (permanent + seasonal)

G. FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

As a largely built out city constrained by surrounding water bodies and National Park lands, Gulf Breeze must use its land and infrastructure efficiently to meet future needs and adapt to changing conditions. The following considerations are intended to inform the Future Land Use Element goals, objectives, and policies.

1. Continue implementing the Most Livable City Plan

The city's 2020–2025 Strategic Plan, known as the *Most Livable City Plan*, outlines strategies to preserve Gulf Breeze's hometown character, protect its natural environment, and enhance quality of life. Community input gathered during the Most Livable City Plan's development showed that while 53% of respondents opposed new development, many supported reinvesting in existing areas.

These findings were reinforced through stakeholder meetings and public workshops conducted for the 2050 Comprehensive Plan update. Participants expressed a strong desire to preserve the city's defining characteristics, such as its natural setting, tree canopy, access to water, parks, and trails, and strong sense of community. There was recognition that future growth will need to occur through thoughtful redevelopment and the strategic reuse or replacement of aging structures, many of which date from the 1950s – 1970s. Some participants also expressed openness to a broader range of housing types, including missing middle housing and limited higher-density development, when located in appropriate areas such as along established commercial corridors. Infrastructure upgrades, particularly utility upgrades and hurricane-proof design, will be critical to supporting this evolution. Participants of the meetings also indicated openness to incremental enhancements that improve recreation and school infrastructure, multi-family housing in certain areas, youth-oriented amenities, and cultural and historical attractions. These comments suggest broad support for maintaining the city's family-oriented community identity while selectively enhancing quality of life amenities.

The city shall continue implementing The Most Livable City Plan's redevelopment framework, particularly its identified catalyst sites, to create walkable mixed-use environments, support local employment, and introduce new housing options needed to accommodate incoming residents. The Plan's recommended master plan could potentially yield an estimated 300–350 multi-family attached units and approximately 60 single-family attached units, offering a significant opportunity to meet future housing demand.

2. Continue advancing the CRA plan

Gulf Breeze's CRA provides an important tool for reinvestment in aging commercial areas and for supporting infill development. Continued implementation of the CRA Plan can help revitalize underutilized properties, strengthen the city's economic base, and create a more inviting, walkable, and mixed-use environment. CRA funding may also support streetscape enhancements, façade improvements, infrastructure upgrades, and catalytic redevelopment projects that align with the city's long-term vision.

3. Accommodating projected population growth

With the city nearing full buildout and lacking opportunities for annexation, accommodating the projected 250 new residents by 2050 will require a strategic approach. If the Future Land Use Map remains unchanged and redevelopment does not occur, the city may face difficulty housing its future population. Gulf Breeze will continue prioritizing infill development, redevelopment where appropriate, and targeted increases in residential density in walkable districts. These strategies will help broaden the city's housing options while maintaining its small-town character.

4. Maintain public access and protect water-related uses

Water-dependent and water-related uses are central to the community's quality of life. They provide access to boating, paddling, and shoreline recreation. However, many are located in low-lying areas and face heightened vulnerability to storm surge, erosion, and sea level rise. Maintaining public access while protecting facilities will require resilient design, storm adaptation best practices, and shoreline stabilization to ensure these assets remain safe and functional over time.



02



TRANSPORTATION



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FROM SHORELINE TO SKYLINE

[DRAFT JULY 2026]

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II. TRANSPORTATION

A. INTRODUCTION

Transportation is a key factor in shaping how residents of Gulf Breeze live, work, and connect within their community. A safe, efficient, and well-connected transportation system supports economic development, enhances regional mobility, and ensures convenient access to critical community destinations such as schools, healthcare facilities, parks, and recreational areas. As the city continues to grow, a robust transportation network remains essential to maintaining a high quality of life for all residents.

The Data & Analysis section of this element provides a comprehensive overview of Gulf Breeze's current multimodal transportation network, including roadways, public transit, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and ongoing transportation improvements. It also evaluates regional and local transportation planning initiatives that influence mobility within the City.

B. ROADWAY NETWORK

This section describes the City's roadway network, including SIS facilities, maintenance responsibility, functional classification, context classification, posted speed limits, adopted level of service, current level of service, and projected level of service.

1. Maintenance Responsibility

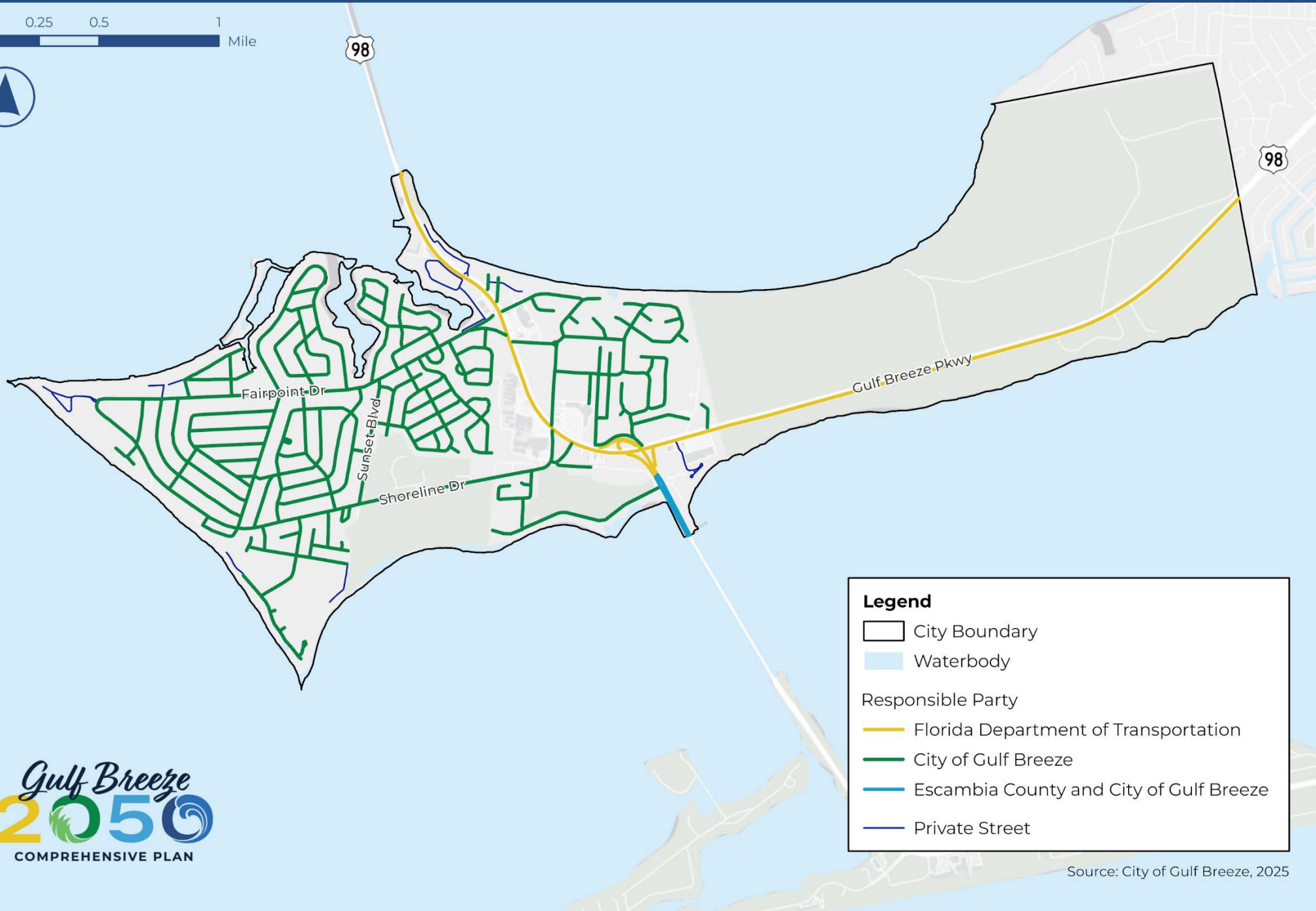
When addressing transportation concerns for the residents of Gulf Breeze, it is important to know who is responsible for the maintenance of each roadway. The only two entities responsible for the maintenance of roadways in the city are the City of Gulf Breeze and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). FDOT is responsible for US 98 and the three-mile Pensacola Bay Bridge, while the city maintains all other roadways (See **Map II-1**).

2. Number of Lanes

The number of lanes on a roadway has a significant impact on a roadway's capacity (i.e., the number of vehicles it can accommodate in a given amount of time). The general rule of thumb is the more lanes a road has, the more capacity it has. **Map II-2** shows the number of lanes on all roads within the City of Gulf Breeze. Most roads are 2 lanes with the exception of Gulf Breeze Parkway (US 98) and Pensacola Beach Road.

MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY

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Mile



Legend

City Boundary

Waterbody

Responsible Party

Florida Department of Transportation

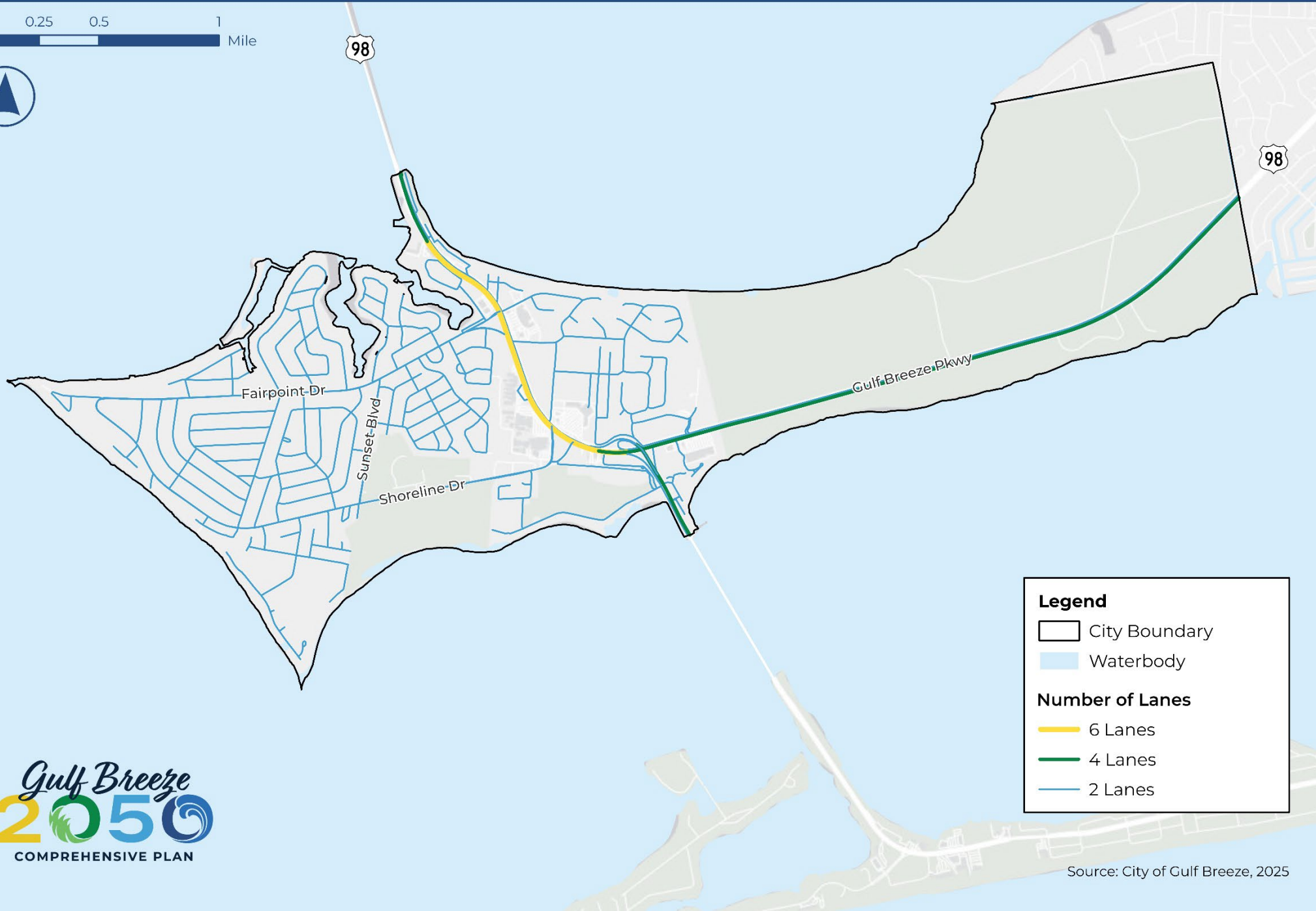
City of Gulf Breeze

Escambia County and City of Gulf Breeze

Private Street

NUMBER OF LANES

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



Legend

- City Boundary
- Waterbody

Number of Lanes

- 6 Lanes
- 4 Lanes
- 2 Lanes

3. Context Classification

The FDOT context classification system describes the general, existing land use characteristics, development patterns, and roadway connectivity along a roadway. It provides guidance regarding the types of uses and user groups likely to utilize the roadway. Grounded in the complete streets initiative, the system classifies roads according to their surrounding built or natural context. It also serves as an important step in the planning and design process, helping establish multimodal design criteria and standards.

The eight different context classifications used by the FDOT are described in **Table II-1**. **Map II-3** displays the current context classifications for select major roadways in Gulf Breeze. Within the city, existing roadways generally fall within the C1 Natural, C3R Suburban Residential, and C3C Suburban Commercial classifications.

Table II-1. Context Classification Descriptions

Context Classification	Descriptions
C1-Natural	Lands preserved in a natural or wilderness condition, including lands unsuitable for settlement due to natural conditions
C2-Rural	Sparsely settled lands, which may include agricultural land, grassland, woodland, and wetlands
C2T-Rural Town	Small concentrations of developed areas immediately surrounded by rural and natural areas, including many historic towns
C3R-Suburban Residential	Mostly residential uses within large blocks and a disconnected or sparse roadway network
C3C-Suburban Commercial	Mostly non-residential uses with large building footprints and large parking lots within large blocks and a disconnected or sparse roadway network
C4-Urban General	Mix of uses set within small blocks with a well-connected roadway network. May extend long distances. The roadway network usually connects to residential neighborhoods immediately along the corridor or behind the uses fronting the roadway
C5-Urban Center	Mix of uses set within small blocks with a well-connected roadway network. Typically concentrated around a few blocks and identified as part of a civic or economic center of a community, town, or city
C6-Urban Core	Areas with the highest densities and building heights, and within FDOT classified Large Urbanized Areas (population greater than one million). Many are regional centers and destinations. Buildings have mixed uses, are built up to the roadway and are within a well-connected roadway network

Source: Florida Department of Transportation, 2022

CONTEXT CLASSIFICATION

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



Legend

- City Boundary
- Waterbody

Context Classification

- C1: Natural
- C3R: Suburban Residential
- C3C: Suburban Commercial

4. Functional Classification

FDOT also uses the Federal Functional Classification System, which is standard across all states. This classification system focuses primarily on moving cars efficiently. Each classification is based on the type of service the road provides to the motoring public. Design standards are also tied to the functional classification assigned to the facility. Each classification has a range of allowable lane widths, shoulder widths, curve radii, etc. The functional classifications are listed below in **Table II-2** and displayed on **Map II-3** for the major roadways in the City. Sunset Boulevard is classified as an urban local road; however, it functionally operates as a collector.

Table II-2. Functional Classification Descriptions

Functional Classification	Description
Urban Area	A geographic region comprising as a minimum the area inside the United States Bureau of the Census boundary of an urban place with a population of 5,000 or more persons, expanded to include adjacent developed areas as provided for by Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) regulations. The FHWA Urban Boundary maps are available online
Freeway (Limited Access Highways)	The terms Freeway, Interstate, Toll Road, and Expressway are often used synonymously when establishing criteria within this manual. A freeway is a divided highway that provides full control of access (i.e., Limited Access) and is intended for long-distance trips. Interstate is a federally funded network of freeways that must meet national design criteria and operational standards. Toll Road is a general term for any road that requires the user to pay to use all or a portion of the road. Expressways are freeways situated in major metropolitan areas with primary service for commuters; and may or may not be tolled. Movement of traffic, free of interference and conflicts, is of primary importance for these types of facilities. Essential elements include interchanges, medians, grade separations, and, in some cases, collector-distributor roads and frontage roads. Freeways may be further classified as rural, urban, or urbanized.
Arterials	Divided or undivided roadways that provide continuous routes which serve through traffic, high traffic volumes, and long average trip lengths. Arterials include expressways without full control of access, US numbered highways and principal state roads that connect cities and towns. Arterials are further classified by context.
Collectors	Divided or undivided roadways which serve to link arterials with local roads or major traffic generators. They serve as a transition link between mobility needs and land use needs. Collectors may include minor state roads, major county roads, and major urban and suburban streets. Collectors on the SHS are further classified by context.
Local roads	Roadways that provide high access to abutting property, low average traffic volumes, and short average trip lengths. Local roads may include minor county roads, minor urban and suburban subdivision streets, and graded or unimproved roads.

Source: FDOT Manual, 2026

FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



5. Current Roadway Performance

Roadway performance within Gulf Breeze is measured using Level of Service (LOS) standards, which identify the minimum acceptable operating conditions of a roadway. LOS conditions are classified into six categories, which are explained in **Table II-3**.

Table II-3. Level of Service Descriptions

Level of Service	Description
LOS A	Users are practically unaffected by the presence of other vehicles on a road section. The choice of speed and the maneuverability are free. The level of comfort is excellent, as drivers need minimal attention.
LOS B	The presence of other vehicles begins to affect the behavior of individual drivers. The choice of the speed is free, but the maneuverability has somewhat decreased. The comfort is excellent, as drivers simply need to keep an eye on nearby vehicles.
LOS C	The presence of other vehicles affects drivers. The choice of speed is affected and maneuvering requires vigilance. The level of comfort decreases quickly at this level, because drivers have a growing impression of being caught between other vehicles.
LOS D	The speed and the maneuverability are severely reduced. Low level of comfort for drivers, such as collisions with other vehicles, must constantly be avoided. A slight increase in the traffic risks causing some operational problems and saturating the network.
LOS E	Low but uniform speed. Maneuverability is possible only under constraint for another vehicle. Users are in a state of frustration.
LOS F	Unstable speed with the formation of waiting lines at several points. Cycles of stop and departure with no apparent pattern because created by the behavior of other drivers. A high level of vigilance is required for the user with practically no comfort.

Source: Transportation Research Board, 2020

The current LOS for the various roads in Gulf Breeze can be found in **Table II-5** and on **Map II-5**. The LOS was determined using Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT), a calculated Average Annual Growth Rate (AAGR), and LOS standards from the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) 2023 Quality Level of Service Handbook. Based on the LOS analysis, there is currently one roadway segment with a failing level of service: Gulf Breeze Parkway from the east end of the Pensacola Bridge to Fairpoint Drive.

Table II-4. Current Level of Service

Roadway	From	To	Context Classification	Functional Classification	Lanes	AADT	LOS
Daniel Dr	Shoreline Dr	US-98/SR-30	C3C: Suburban Commercial	Urban Collector	2	4,800	C
Fairpoint Dr	Peakes Point	US-98/SR-30	C3R: Suburban Residential	Urban Collector	2	8,400	C
Gulf Breeze Pkwy	East end of Pensacola Bridge	Fairpoint Dr	C3C: Suburban Commercial	Urban Principal Arteria (Other)	6	58,000	F
	Off ramp	Bayshore Rd	C1: Natural	Urban Principal Arteria (Other)	4	43,500	C
	Fairpoint Dr	Off Ramp	C3C: Suburban Commercial	Urban Principal Arteria (Other)	6	53,000	D
Pensacola Beach Rd	Off ramp	US-98/SR-30	C3C: Suburban Commercial	Urban Minor Arterial	2	9,200	C
	N End Bob Sikes Br	Off Ramp	C3C: Suburban Commercial	Urban Minor Arterial	4	23,500	C
Shoreline Dr	Restaurant Entrance	School Entrance	C3R: Suburban Residential	Urban Collector	2	6,400	C
	US-98/SR-30	N/A	C3R: Suburban Residential	Urban Collector	2	6,400	C
	School Entrance	Peakes Point	C3R: Suburban Residential	Urban Collector	2	6,400	C
Sunset Blvd	Shoreline Dr	Fairpoint Dr	C3R: Suburban Residential	Urban Local	2	2,600	C

Source: FDOT, 2025; Inspire Placemaking, 2025

CURRENT LEVEL OF SERVICE

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



Legend

- City Boundary
- Waterbody

Current Level of Service (2024)

- LOS C
- LOS D
- LOS F

6. Projected Level of Service

The City of Gulf Breeze has adopted levels of service for the major roadways within the city as shown in **Table II-5** and **Map II-6**.

Table II-5. Adopted Level of Service Standards

Roadway Type	Adopted Level of Service
Arterials (4-lane and 6-lane)	E + 10%
Arterials (2-lane)	E + 30%
Collectors	D
Local Roads	D

Source: City of Gulf Breeze, 2022

If a roadway segment's performance does not meet the adopted LOS standards identified above, the segment is considered to be failing. The projected LOS for the years 2035 and 2050 can be found in **Table II-6** and on **Maps II-7** and **II-8**. Those levels of service were determined using Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT), a calculated Average Annual Growth Rate (AAGR), and LOS standards from the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) 2023 Quality Level of Service Handbook.

Based on the LOS analysis, two US 98 segments will have a failing LOS by 2035: Gulf Breeze Parkway from the east end of the Pensacola Bridge to Fairpoint Drive and from Fairpoint Drive to the off ramp. These segments will require roadway capacity improvements to maintain their adopted level of service.



Table II-6. Adopted and Projected Level of Service

Roadway	From	To	Adopted LOS	AADT 2035	LOS 2035	AADT 2050	LOS 2050
Daniel Dr	Shoreline Dr	US-98/SR-30	D	5,654	C	6,562	C
Fairpoint Dr	Peakes Point	US-98/SR-30	D	9,895	C	11,483	C
Gulf Breeze Pkwy	East end of Pensacola Bridge	Fairpoint Dr	E + 10%	68,321	F	79,289	F
	Off ramp	Bayshore Rd	E + 10%	51,241	D	59,467	E
	Fairpoint Dr	Off Ramp	E + 10%	62,431	F	72,454	F
Pensacola Beach Rd	Off ramp	US-98/SR-30	E + 10%	10,837	C	12,577	C
	N end Bob Sikes Br	Off Ramp	E + 10%	27,682	C	32,126	D
Shoreline Dr	Restaurant entrance	School Entrance	D	7,539	C	8,749	C
	US-98/SR-30	N/A	D	7,539	C	8,749	C
	School entrance	Peakes Point	D	7,539	C	8,749	C
Sunset Blvd	Shoreline Dr	Fairpoint Dr	D	3,063	C	3,554	C

Source: FDOT, 2025; Inspire Placemaking, 2025

ADOPTED LEVEL OF SERVICE

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



Legend

- City Boundary
- Waterbody

Adopted Level of Service

- LOS D
- LOS E + 10%

2035 LEVEL OF SERVICE

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



Legend

- City Boundary
- Waterbody

Projected Level of Service (2035)

- LOS C
- LOS D
- LOS F

2050 LEVEL OF SERVICE

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



Legend

- City Boundary
- Waterbody

Projected Level of Service (2050)

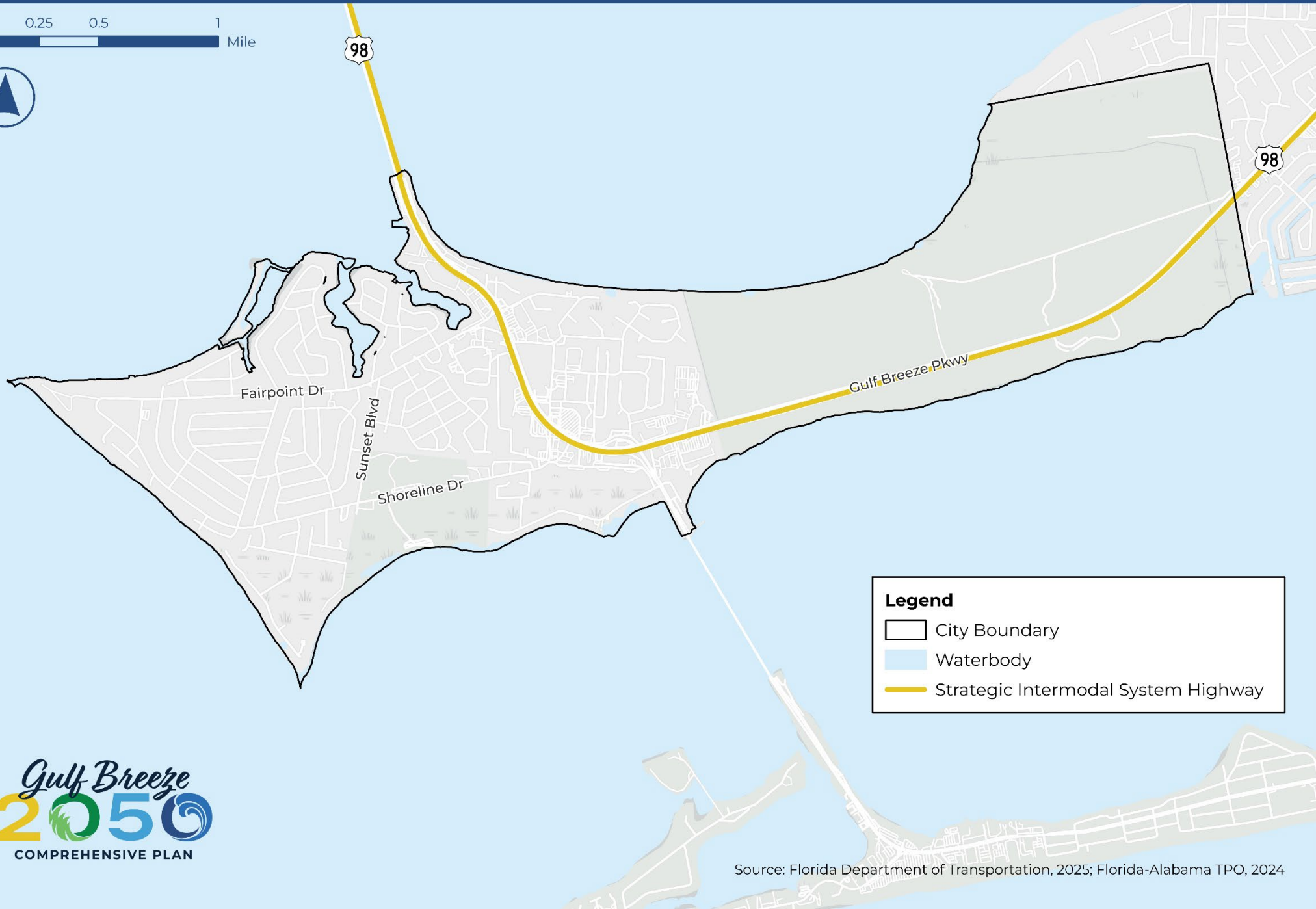
- LOS C
- LOS D
- LOS E
- LOS F

C. STRATEGIC INTERMODAL SYSTEM

Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) facilities are considered Florida's highest priority network of transportation facilities, which are important to the state's economy and mobility. The Governor and Legislature established the SIS in 2003 to allocate the state's limited transportation resources on the more significant interregional, interstate, and international facilities. There is only one SIS Highways within Gulf Breeze, which is US 98 (See **Map II-9**).

STRATEGIC INTERMODAL SYSTEM

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



D. TRANSIT SYSTEM

Transit, or public transportation, is a vital service that provides access to essential goods, services, and community destinations for people who do not have access or prefer not to use other transportation modes. The City of Gulf Breeze currently has two transit services: a fixed route bus service operated by Escambia County Area Transit and a paratransit service provided by the Tri-County Community Council.

1. Fixed-Route Bus

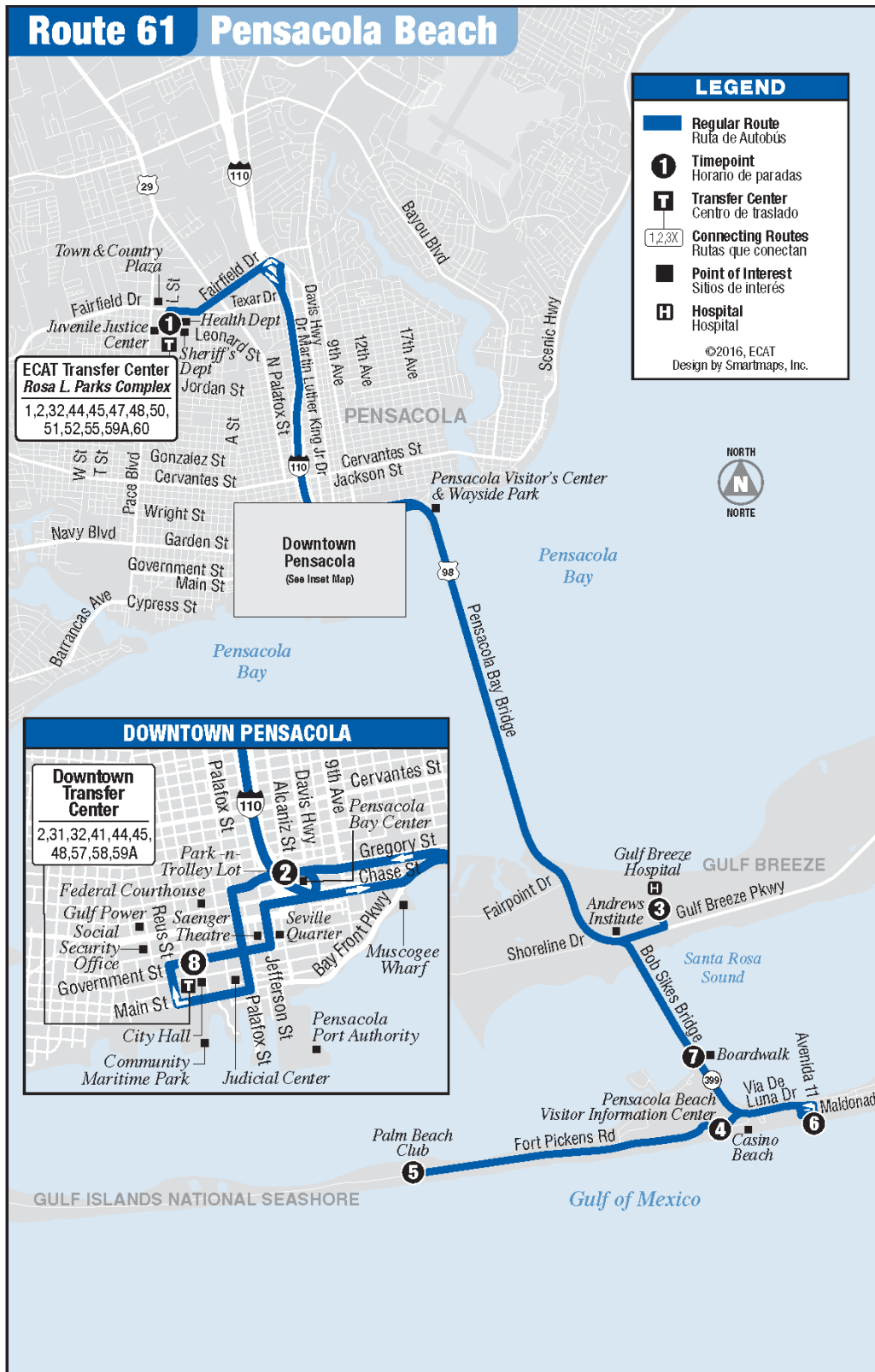
Escambia County Area Transit (ECAT) provides two fixed bus routes that go through the City of Gulf Breeze, Route 61 (**Figure II-1**) and Route 64 (**Figure II-2**). Route 61 runs from the ECAT transfer center in Pensacola to Pensacola Beach. Within Gulf Breeze, Route 61 includes one stop located at the hospital.

Route 64, known as the Beach Jumper, operates between the Pensacola Naval Complex and Pensacola Beach. It runs through Gulf Breeze but does not include any stops.

2. Paratransit

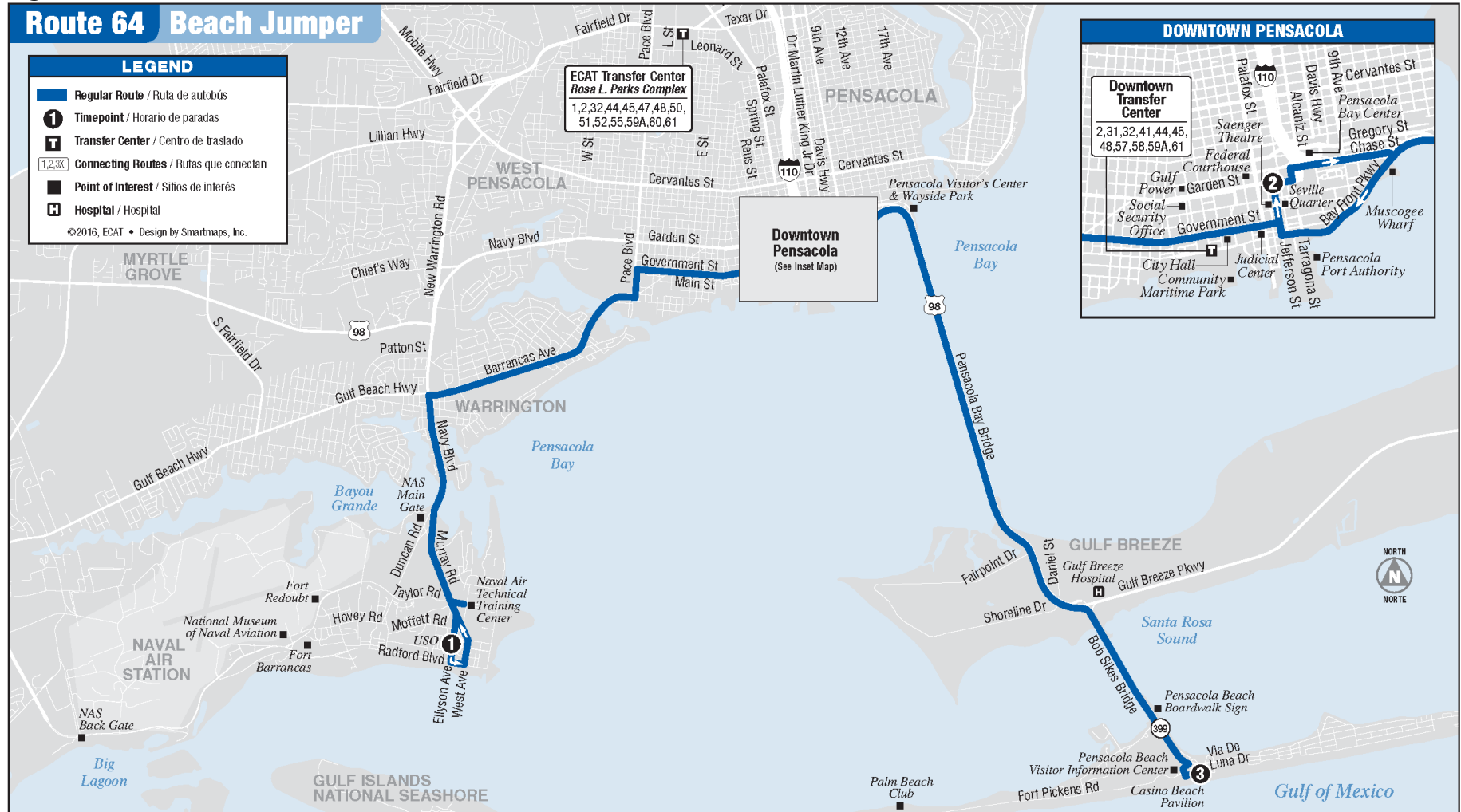
Tri-County Community Council provides services to transportation disadvantaged residents in Holmes, Walton, Washington, and Santa Rosa counties. Services include public transportation trips for local non-emergency medical treatment, nutritional, shopping, education, recreation, employment/training and other daily needs. . This service is available to all eligible Santa Rosa County residents, including Gulf Breeze residents, subject to application and eligibility determination by the Tri-County Community Council.

Figure II-1. Route 61 Pensacola Beach



Source: Escambia County Area Transit, 2025

Figure II-2. Route 61 Pensacola Beach



E. PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE NETWORK

The City's current pedestrian network can be found on **Map II-10**. As depicted on the map all segments of US 98 and segments of Fairpoint Drive, Shoreline Drive, and Daniel Drive have sidewalks on both sides of the road. While many of the other roadway segments have sidewalks along one side of the road.

Throughout the public engagement process, stakeholders expressed strong appreciation for the trails, bridge routes, and elevated walkways, noting their role in promoting physical activity, safety, and community connection. They also identified the absence of sidewalks as a significant safety concern, particularly near schools, along busy corridors, and on streets with limited visibility. Silverthorn Road was specifically cited as an area of concern, pointing out that poor lighting and obstructed sightlines exacerbate unsafe conditions for pedestrians.

Stakeholders also identified US 98 as a significant barrier for pedestrians and cyclists. Previous planning efforts have identified an overpass as a potential solution to improve connectivity across US 98 but the overpass has been put on hold by the State. Residents reiterated their support for this concept.

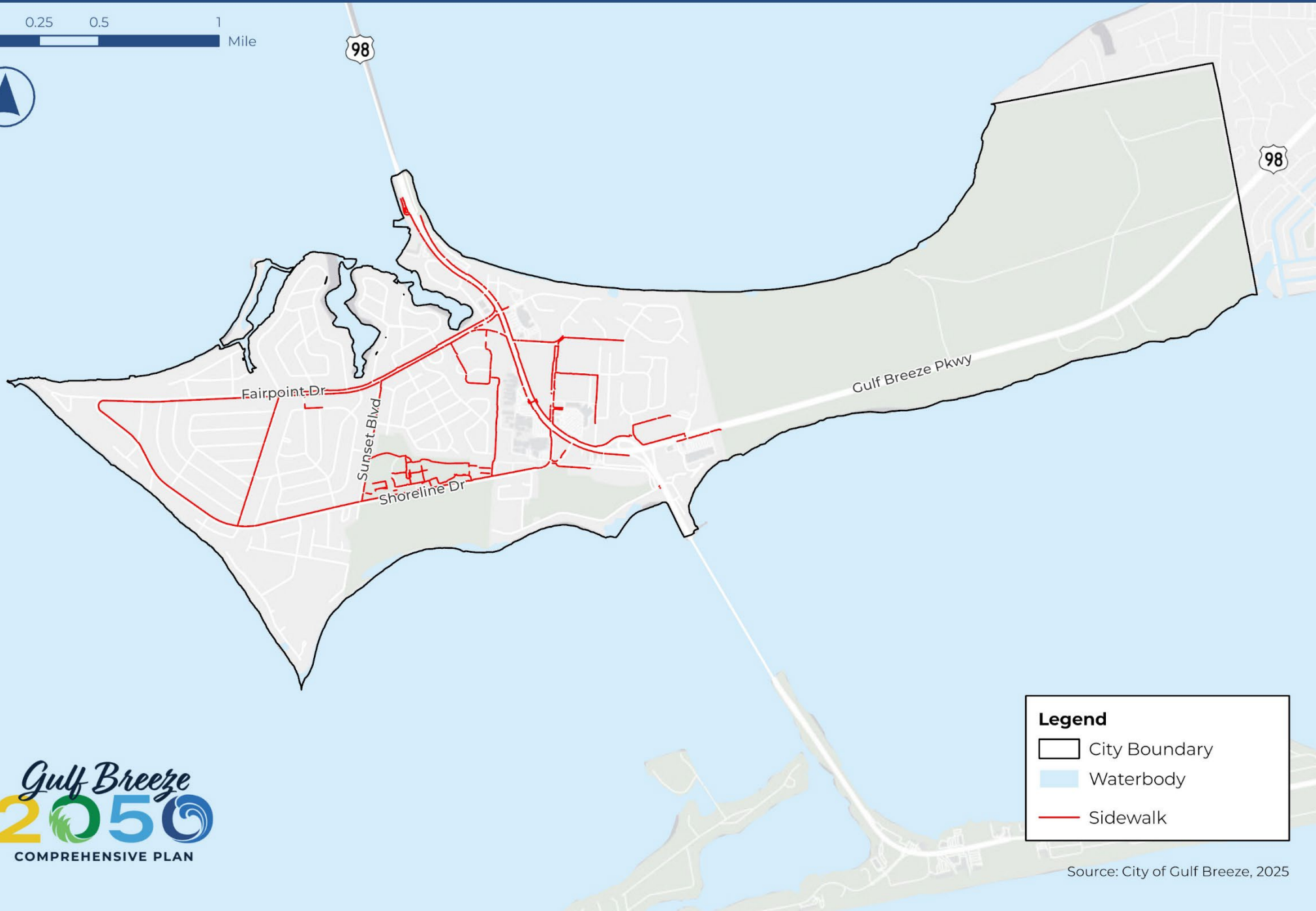
In addition to the public sidewalk network, Gulf Breeze has a system of nature and multi-use trails within two parks and the Shoreline MUP trail. The nature trails system is primarily concentrated in Shoreline Park and the Naval Live Oaks Preserve section of the Gulf Islands National Seashore. Trail facilities within these parks vary by surface type, ranging from natural dirt paths to elevated boardwalks and paved multi-use segments.

A new path, known as the "Multi-Use Path (MUP)," has been completed along Shoreline Drive and Fairpoint Drive, with future plans for extension. The pathway will provide a safe and separated travel corridor for low-speed wheeled modes (e.g. bikes, skates, scooter, and golf carts), distinct from pedestrian and automobile travel. The project will rehabilitate and realign the existing sidewalk network, including portions of the existing "MUP," to improve safety for all users, particularly at roadway crossings. The "MUP" will also provide residents with improved access to Shoreline Park and the Santa Rosa Sound.

The City is also currently working with FDOT to create a segment of the **SUN Trail** within the city limits. The pathway will follow Highway 98, skirt around Harbortown, and continue onto State Road 399, providing a direct route to Pensacola Beach and the Florida National Scenic Trail. Continuing east toward the Gulf Islands National Seashore and the Great Northwest Coastal Trail, the path will include an enhanced raised crosswalk with rapid flashing beacons across State Road 399 for improved safety. The SUN Trail is a program that was established in 2015 to create a statewide "Shared-Use Non-motorized" (SUN) Trail, as shown in **Figure II-3**. The current completed and planned to be completed segments of the SUN Trail will provide the residents of Gulf Breeze safe recreational opportunities for non-motorized transportation. As the SUN Trail program continues, the system will provide the residents of Gulf Breeze non-motorized transportation opportunities to the entire state of Florida.

SIDEWALK NETWORK

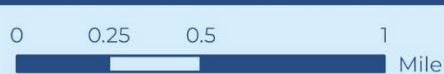
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Mile



Legend

- City Boundary
- Waterbody
- Sidewalk

BICYCLE NETWORK



Legend

- City Boundary
- Waterbody

Bicycle Facility

- Bike Lane
- Shared Use Path

Figure II-3. SUN Trail Network



F. PLANNED TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

The Florida-Alabama TPO is currently updating its Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), which currently identifies a multitude of transportation improvement projects for the City of Gulf Breeze, such as cost feasible projects and need-based projects. Cost Feasible projects are transportation projects that have already begun or have dedicated funding. These projects can be seen in **Table II-7** and on **Map II-13**. While need-based projects are projects that have been identified as necessary or have plans but do not yet have dedicated funding, these projects can be seen on **Table II-8**.

Table II-7. Cost Feasible Projects

Project	Improvement	From	To	Year	Total Cost
Soundview Trail Path	SUN Trail Project	Shoreline Dr / US 98	Bob Sikes Bridge / Gulf Islands National Seashore	2027 - 2031	\$2,124,419
US 98 Multimodal Overpass (Gulf Breeze)	Overpass	N/A	N/A	2027 - 2031	\$4,680,000
US 98	Interchange	West of Bay Bridge Drive	East of Bayshore Road	2027 - 2031	\$121,989,681

Source: Florida-Alabama TPO, 2025

Table II-8. Need-Based Transportation Improvements

Project Name	From	To	Length	Total Cost
US 98 (SR 30) [Gulf Breeze Pkwy] - Provide 6 Lanes Capacity	East of Pensacola Bay Bridge	East of Bayshore Road	4	\$121,989,681
Provide Interchange Reconstruction	US 98 [Gulf Breeze Pkwy] at SR 399 Overpass		0.5	\$81,400,000
Express Bus - Santa Rosa Tiger Point Community Center	Pensacola	Tiger Point Community Center	27.5	\$6,884,497
SW Greenway Corridor of Great NW Coast Connector (SUNTrail) Unfunded Gap 8 Barrancas Ave / Main St	Pace Blvd	I St	1.5	\$3,669,452
McClure and Andrew Jackson Sidewalk	Multiple	Multiple	0.6	\$1,758,632
City of Gulf Breeze (CRA) Pedestrian Bridge Overpass over US 98	McClure	Commercial District	0.1	\$4,680,000
Williamsburg Multi-Use Trail	Multiple	Multiple	0.2	\$2,736,082
Soundview SUNTrail	Shoreline Drive / US 98	Bob Sikes Bridge	2.3	\$5,884,680
Pensacola Beach Shared Use Path	Toll Booth	Ft. Pickens Rd	1	\$2,348,867

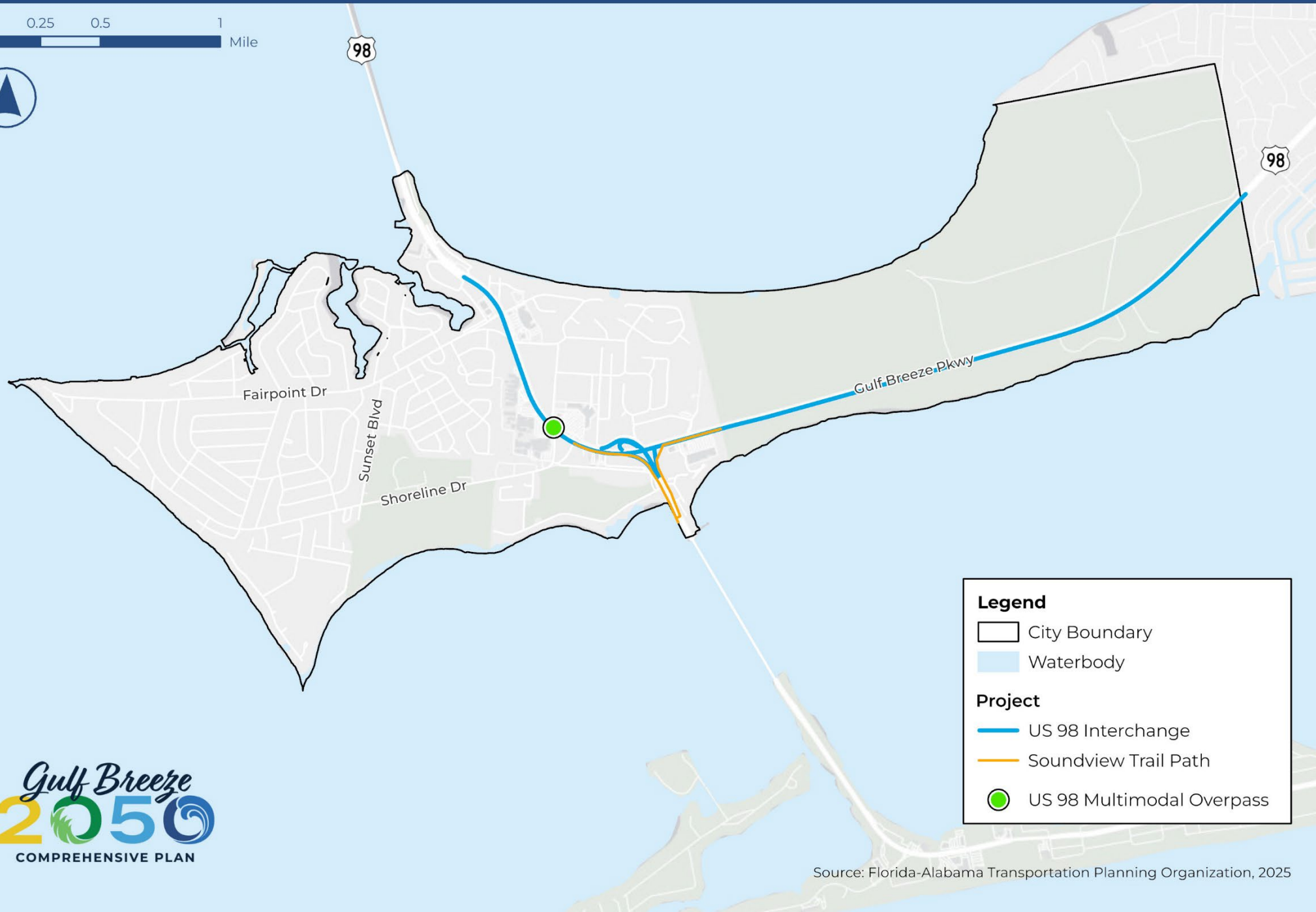
Project Name	From	To	Length	Total Cost
Soundview Trail Walking Trail	Shoreline Drive / US 98	Bob Sikes Bride / Gulf Islands National Shoreline	1.1	\$2,124,419
ITS Communication System FL-AL TPO ITS Fiber Deployment	Multiple	Multiple	16.3	\$357,667

Source: Florida-Alabama TPO, 2025



COST FEASIBLE PROJECTS

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



Legend

- City Boundary
- Waterbody

Project

- US 98 Interchange
- Soundview Trail Path
- US 98 Multimodal Overpass

G. FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

The City of Gulf Breeze's transportation system is vital to the everyday life of its residents, providing access to homes, neighborhoods, employment, services, and regional destinations. As Gulf Breeze continues to grow and evolve through the 2050 planning horizon, the City will continue to work on the following.

1. US 98

Expressed by the public during the Comprehensive Plan update public engagement activities, US 98 is a major barrier to mobility. School traffic congestion, difficulty crossing the highway, and safety challenges for pedestrians and cyclists due to wide crossings and shorts signal timing were all expressed. The public expressed interest in alternative modes, especially golf carts, biking, and walking, for future trips. Additionally, the lack of a legal or practical way to cross US 98 by golf cart significantly limits this option, reinforcing concerns about connectivity across the corridor. Overall, there is a desire for improved connectivity, safer crossings, and more locally accessible daily services, while continuing to build on the City's strong foundation of trails.

A segment of US 98 currently operates at a failing level of service. Multiple segments are projected to have failing levels of service through the 2050 planning horizon. To address these capacity issues and address the public's concerns for multi-modal transportation, the City of Gulf Breeze will continue to coordinate with FDOT and the Florida-Alabama Transportation Planning Organization to ensure that improvements to US 98 focus on pedestrian safety and do not diminish the city's small-town character. Potential solutions include pursuing a reclassification of the roadway's context classification from C3C: Suburban Commercial to a more urban context classification to support multimodal design, as well as coordinating alternative routes to reduce motor vehicle traffic on US 98.

2. Coordination

The city and FDOT maintain the roadway, pedestrian, and bicycle system, and two different transit agencies manage transit services within the city limits. The city will continue to coordinate with these various entities to ensure residents and visitors can circulate within the city in a safe and efficient manner.



03



HOUSING



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FROM SHORELINE TO SKYLINE

[DRAFT JULY 2026]

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III. HOUSING

A. INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to Chapter 163, F.S., the Housing Element is intended to establish principles, guidelines, standards, and strategies to be followed in:

1. The provision of housing for all current and anticipated future residents of the City.
2. The elimination of substandard dwelling conditions.
3. The structural and aesthetic improvement of existing housing.
4. The provision of adequate sites for future housing, including affordable workforce housing, housing for low-income, very low-income, and moderate-income families, mobile homes, and group home facilities and foster care facilities, with supporting infrastructure and public facilities.

This data and analysis document contains the background information used to develop the Housing Element Goals, Objectives and Policies (GOPs).

The data used in this chapter is primarily sourced from the American Community Survey (ACS) and the Florida Housing Data Clearinghouse, which is maintained by the Shimberg Center for Housing Studies at the University of Florida. The data represented from the Shimberg Center was compiled in 2025 (most recent and best available) and may differ in data collection periods, methodologies, and geographic precision from other datasets presented in this element.

B. HOUSING INVENTORY

1. Housing Unit Types

Gulf Breeze currently has a total of 3,118 housing units. Similar to other coastal, suburban communities, Gulf Breeze has a high proportion of single-family homes, accounting for approximately 71.3% of all housing units in the city. The remaining 28.7% of housing units comprise of multi-family dwelling units. There are currently no mobile homes within the City of Gulf Breeze. **Table III-1** below provides a breakdown of housing units in Gulf Breeze by their typology.

Table III-1. Housing Unit Types

Geography	Single Family		Multi Family		Mobile Home		Other		Total
	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%	Units
Gulf Breeze	2,222	71.3%	896	28.7%	-	-	-	-	3,118
Santa Rosa County	66,625	81.4%	7,940	9.7%	6,976	8.5%	-	-	81,814
Florida	6,418,848	61.4%	3,190,227	30.5%	822,706	7.9%	20,042	0.2%	10,451,823

Source: UF Shimberg Center, 2025

2. Housing Age

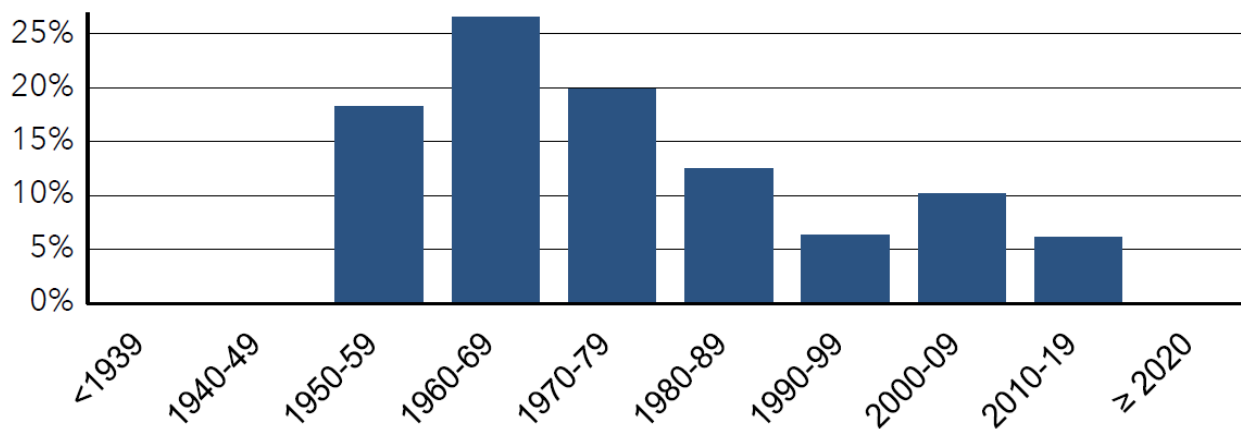
There were no homes built prior to the 1950s. The largest percentage of homes were built in the 1950s, 1960s, and the 1970s, with over 64.8% of the City's housing stock being developed during those three decades. Housing development has slowed down with less than 192 units being developed in the last 15 years. **Table III-2** below provides the breakdown of the years all housing units in Gulf Breeze were built.

Table III-2. Housing Units by Years Built

Years Built	Units	Percent
2010 or After	192	6.2%
2000-2009	317	10.2%
1990-1999	198	6.4%
1980-1989	391	12.5%
1970-1979	622	19.9%
1960-1969	828	26.6%
1950-1959	570	18.3%
1940-1949	-	-
1939 or Earlier	-	-
Total	3,118	100.0%

Source: UF Shimberg Center, 2025

Figure III-1. Housing Units by Years Built



Source: EsriBao, 2025

3. Occupancy Status

In terms of occupancy status, the City of Gulf Breeze more closely aligns with Santa Rosa County than the State of Florida, as shown in **Table III-3**.

Homeownership is predominant in Gulf Breeze, with 68.7% of housing units owner-occupied compared to 58.4% statewide. The percentage of renter-occupied housing is significantly lower than the State of Florida but higher than Santa Rosa County. Gulf Breeze's vacancy rate is lower than the State but slightly higher than the County. A certain level of housing vacancy is expected in a housing market as vacant units facilitate resident mobility and expand housing choice within the community.

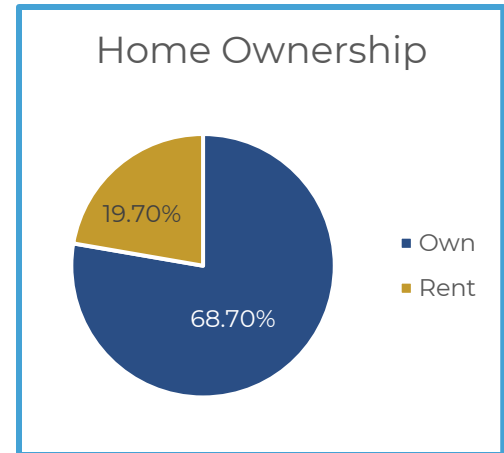


Table III-3. Occupancy Status

Geography	Owner		Renter		Vacant		Total Units
	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%	
Gulf Breeze	2,143	68.7%	614	19.7%	361	11.6%	3,118
Santa Rosa County	60,101	73.5%	12,868	15.7%	8,845	10.8%	81,814
Florida	6,103,429	58.4%	2,862,973	27.4%	1,485,421	14.2%	10,451,823

Source: UF Shimberg Center, 2025

4. Vacancy Rate

Table III-4 summarizes vacancy rates for the City of Gulf Breeze and other jurisdictions in Santa Rosa County. Gulf Breeze has 361 vacant units. The city's overall vacancy rate is fairly consistent with the rest of Santa Rosa County. However, the City has the largest percentage of vacant units for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use, reflecting the presence of housing units that serve Gulf Breeze's seasonal population.

Table III-4. Vacancy Rates

Geography	Gulf Breeze	Jay	Milton	Santa Rosa-Uninc.	County Total
Vacant Units for Rent	41	7	88	384	635
Vacant Units For Sale	112	-	-	496	669
Vacant Units Rented or Sold, Not Occupied	-	11	37	382	-
Vacant Units for Seasonal, Recreational, or Occasional Use	168	-	50	2,930	4,942
Vacant Units for Migrant Workers	-	-	-	-	-
Other Vacant Units	40	50	178	2,051	2,599
Total Vacant Units	361	68	353	6,243	8,845
Total Occupied Units	2,757	267	4,533	65,412	72,969
Total Units	3,118	335	4,886	73,475	81,814

Source: UF Shimberg Center, 2025

5. Substandard Units

The University of Florida Shimberg Center for Housing Studies does not directly identify “substandard housing” as defined in Florida Statutes. Instead, it compiles a set of housing quality indicators derived from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS), which are used for planning purposes. These indicators include overcrowding (more than 1.0 person per room), lack of complete plumbing facilities, lack of complete kitchen facilities, and households reporting no fuel used for cooking or heating.

Section 420.0004, Florida Statutes (F.S.), defines substandard housing as:

“Any unit lacking complete plumbing or sanitary facilities for the exclusive use of the occupants; a unit which is in violation of one or more major sections of an applicable housing code and where such violation poses a serious threat to the health of the occupant; or a unit that has been declared unfit for human habitation but that could be rehabilitated for less than 50 percent of the property value.”

The Shimberg Center’s estimates are derived from ACS 5-year estimates, specifically tables such as B25051 (Kitchen Facilities for All Housing Units) and B25047 (Plumbing Facilities for All Housing Units), along with ACS overcrowding indicators. These datasets reflect survey-based statistical estimates rather than inspections, code enforcement records, or field verification. As such, they should be interpreted as indicators of housing conditions rather than definitive counts of units determined to be substandard under Florida law.

For Gulf Breeze, the Shimberg Center’s most recent ACS-based estimates (2020–2024 5-year ACS) indicate approximately 165 housing units lacking complete kitchen facilities. This figure is based on the ACS estimate for all housing units and includes both occupied and vacant units, depending on the underlying table structure. A prior release showed 189 units, reflecting updates to the underlying ACS 5-year dataset and sampling variation between releases.

By comparison, U.S. Census Bureau ACS tables focused on renter-occupied units only show substantially lower values (approximately 68 units lacking complete kitchen facilities in recent data). This difference is expected, as tenure-specific tables (e.g., renter-only housing) measure a narrower subset of the housing stock and are not directly comparable to all-units estimates used in Shimberg’s methodology.

Given Gulf Breeze’s relatively small housing stock, these ACS-derived estimates are subject to notable sampling variability and margins of error. Accordingly, the reported figures should be interpreted as approximate indicators of housing conditions rather than precise counts of structurally deficient units.

C. HOUSING COSTS

This section explores housing costs for both homeowners and renters in Gulf Breeze. Tracking housing cost data is important because even modest increases can be highly disruptive to a household’s financial wellbeing. Housing is generally considered affordable when a household spends no more than 30% of their income on housing costs. Households that spend more than 30% of their income on housing are considered cost burdened.

Households that spend more than 50% are determined to be severely cost-burdened. As housing costs consume a larger share of household income, fewer resources are put towards other essential needs, such as healthcare, transportation, and food. Therefore, addressing housing affordability is vital to maintaining a high quality of life for all Gulf Breeze residents.

1. Cost Burdened Renter Households

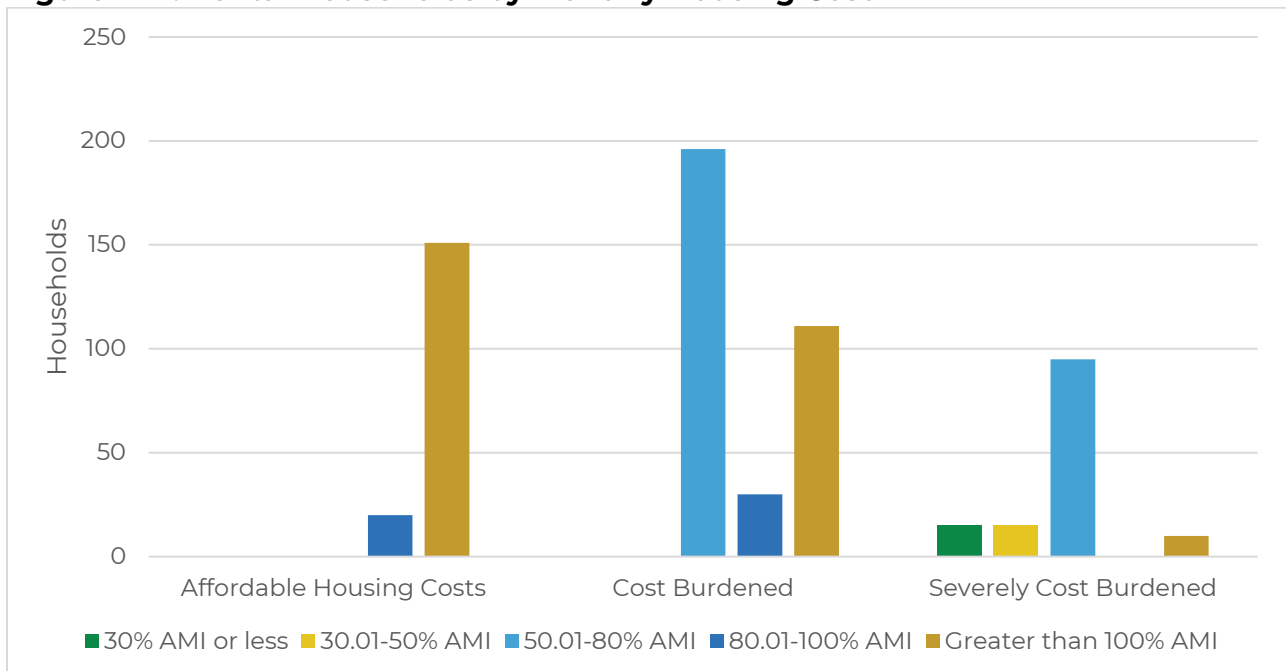
Currently, 73.4% of renter households in Gulf Breeze are either cost burdened or severely cost burdened. There are 337 renter households who are cost burdened and 135 renter households who are severely cost burdened. **Table III-5** provides a complete breakdown of renter households by their percentage of area median income (AMI) and their level of housing cost burden.

Table III-5. Rental Households by Monthly Housing Cost

Household Income	Affordable Housing Costs		Cost Burdened		Severely Cost Burdened		Total HHs
	HHs	%	HHs	%	HHs	%	
30% AMI or less	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	15	2.3%	15
30.01-50% AMI	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	15	2.3%	15
50.01-80% AMI	-	0.0%	196	30.5%	95	14.8%	291
80.01-100% AMI	20	3.1%	30	4.7%	-	0.0%	50
Greater than 100% AMI	151	23.5%	111	17.3%	10	1.6%	272
Total	171	26.6%	337	52.4%	135	21.0%	643

Source: UF Shimberg Center, 2025

Figure III-2. Rental Households by Monthly Housing Cost



Source: UF Shimberg Center, 2025

2. Monthly Homeownership Cost

Table III-6 presents the distribution of monthly homeownership cost (with mortgage) among the 2,143 owner households in Gulf Breeze. Approximately 428 homeowners (33.4%) spend more than \$4,000 per month on housing, representing the largest group. **Table III-7** provides a complete breakdown of owner households by their percentage of area median income (AMI) and their level of housing cost burden. Approximately 143 household owners (7.2%) are cost burdened, while 181 (9.1%) are severely cost burdened, resulting in a combined total of 16.3% of household owners experiencing cost burden.

Table III-6. Owner Households by Monthly Housing Cost (With a Mortgage)

Monthly Cost	Units	Percent
\$1,250-\$1,499	103	8.0%
\$1,500-\$1,999	178	13.9%
\$2,000-\$2,499	226	17.6%
\$2,500-\$2,999	205	16.0%
\$3,000-\$3,499	92	7.2%
\$3,500-\$3,999	-	-
>\$4,000	428	33.4%
Total	1,282	100.0%

Source: UF Shimberg Center, 2025

Figure III-3. Owner Households by Monthly Housing Cost (With a Mortgage)

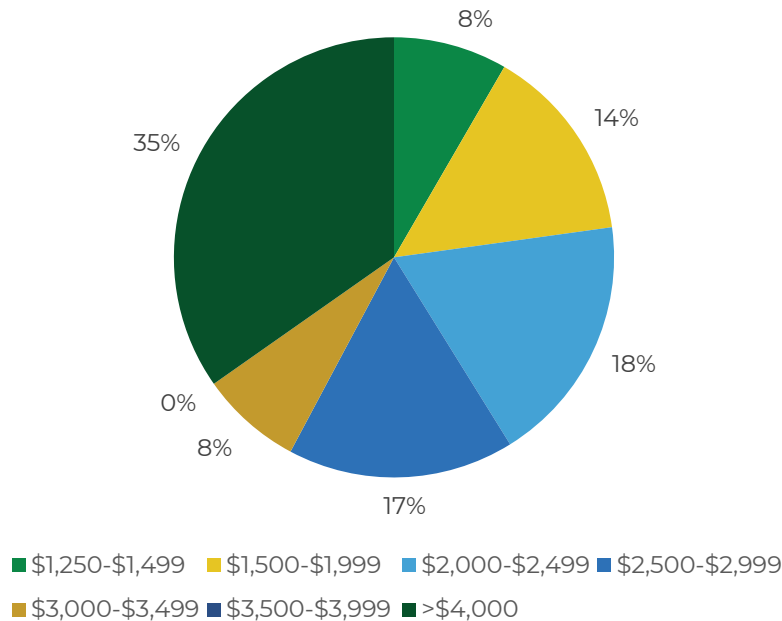


Table III-7. Owner-Occupied Households, Cost Burden by Income

Household Income	Affordable Housing Costs		Cost Burdened		Severely Cost Burdened		Total HHs
	HHs	%	HHs	%	HHs	%	
30% AMI or less	-	-	15	0.8%	64	3.2%	79
30.01-50% AMI	-	-	-	-	49	2.5%	49
50.01-80% AMI	68	3.4%	15	0.8%	10	0.5%	93
80.01-100% AMI	15	0.8%	44	2.2%	29	1.5%	88
Greater than 100% AMI	1,576	79.5%	69	3.5%	29	1.5%	1,674
Total	1,659	83.7%	143	7.2%	181	9.1%	1,983

Source: UF Shimberg Center, 2025

3. Median Sales Price

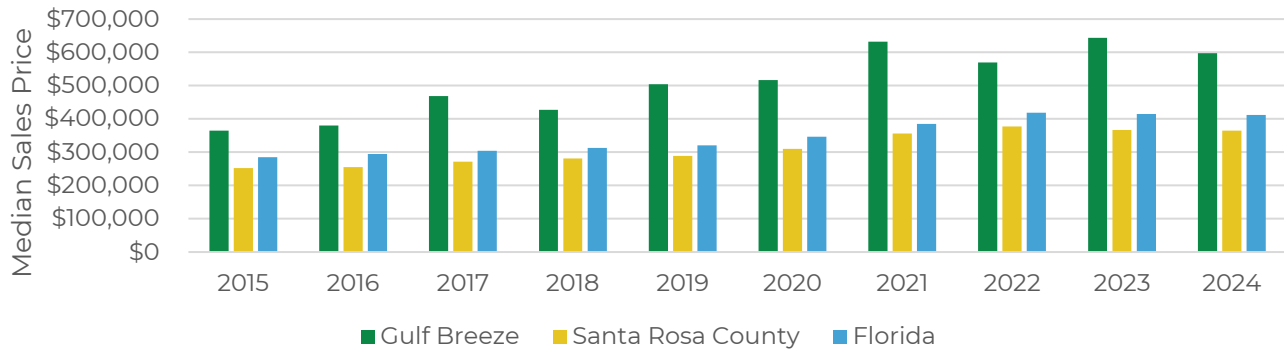
Like in many other communities, the median sales price for single-family homes in Gulf Breeze has increased greatly in recent years. Between 2015 and 2024, single-family home prices increased by over 60% in Gulf Breeze. Notably, compared to Santa Rosa County and the state of Florida, single-family homes in Gulf Breeze are more expensive. These higher home prices suggest that Gulf Breeze is a desirable destination within the region for residents. **Table III-8** includes the median sales price for single-family homes in 2024 dollars going back to 2015 and comparing the City to Santa Rosa County and the State of Florida. Together with increasing home sales prices, a portion of homeowners are experiencing housing cost burdens, as shown in **Table III-7**.

Table III-8. Median Sales Price of Single-Family Home

Year	Gulf Breeze		Santa Rosa County		Florida	
	Price	Units	Price	Units	Price	Units
2024	\$597,500	54	\$365,000	2,209	\$411,600	170,703
2023	\$643,607	68	\$366,301	3,988	\$415,107	333,655
2022	\$569,293	95	\$377,506	5,205	\$418,914	396,011
2021	\$632,280	151	\$356,165	6,227	\$384,711	478,574
2020	\$516,306	109	\$309,662	5,399	\$346,229	395,484
2019	\$504,122	108	\$288,948	4,820	\$320,425	364,812
2018	\$426,963	106	\$281,376	4,660	\$313,023	48,000
2017	\$468,201	131	\$271,877	4,478	\$303,882	326,982
2016	\$379,900	133	\$255,319	4,086	\$294,750	310,725
2015	\$364,810	104	\$252,051	3,320	\$285,215	277,482

Source: UF Shimberg Center, 2025

Figure III-4. Median Sales Price of Single-Family Home



Source: UF Shimberg Center, 2025

4. Government Subsidized Housing

The City of Gulf Breeze does not currently have any government subsidized housing developments within City limits. The closest subsidized housing development is Wind Meadows Apartment, east of Gulf Breeze in Unincorporated Santa Rosa County. Wind Meadows Apartment consists of 46 units and receives rental assistance. The subsidy of this housing development is scheduled to expire in 2036.

5. Projected Housing Needs

Gulf Breeze is projected to see minimal population growth through 2050, with an expected increase of about 250 people, as shown in **Table III-9**. To accommodate this growth, the City will need approximately 121 new housing units over the next 25 years. As indicated in **Table III-2** housing construction has remained fairly limited since 2010. As discussed in the Future Land Use Element, the City shall prioritize infill development, redevelopment of low-density areas where appropriate, and targeted increases in residential density to meet this population growth.

Table III-9. Population and Household Projections

	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Permanent Population	6,582	6,618	6,621	6,608	6,592
Permanent Households ¹	2,862	2,877	2,879	2,873	2,866
Seasonal Population	378	380	380	380	379
Seasonal Households ¹	164	165	165	165	165
Total Population	6,960	6,998	7,001	6,988	6,971
Total Households	3,026	3,043	3,044	3,038	3,031

¹The number of households was determined by dividing the projected population by 2.30, the estimated number of people per household.

Source: UF Shimberg Center, 2025

6. Population Projections by Age Group

A person's age can influence housing needs and priorities. **Table III-10** presents population estimates by age group, which were derived from Shimberg and adjusted to include seasonal residents. The largest change in population is expected to be in the

75+ cohort, which is projected to increase by 158 residents between 2025 and 2050. The City will consider the housing needs and priorities of these age groups when making housing decisions, including policies related to aging-in-place or review of standards for senior or age-restricted housing.

Table III-10. Population Projections by Age Group

Age	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050	25 Year Increase
0-4	300	300	289	284	284	-16
5-9	326	325	325	310	307	-19
10-14	639	671	678	672	645	6
15-19	415	406	394	390	388	-27
20-24	266	290	358	370	368	102
25-29	199	196	172	178	185	-14
30-34	230	226	237	216	225	-5
35-39	341	337	339	346	317	-24
40-44	393	431	397	380	389	-4
45-49	506	453	464	437	421	-85
50-54	416	446	415	467	443	27
55-59	392	398	472	466	527	135
60-64	382	345	339	385	383	1
65-69	412	342	309	301	345	-67
70-74	425	412	313	282	276	-149
75+	940	1040	1120	1124	1089	149
Total	6,582	6,618	6,621	6,608	6,592	10

Source: UF Shimberg Center, 2025

7. Population Projections by Household Income

Household income can also play a role in shaping housing needs and priorities. The projections shown in **Table III-11** were derived from Shimberg and adjusted to include seasonal residents. By 2050, approximately 489 households are expected to be cost burdened, while approximately 324 households are projected to be severely cost burdened.

Table III-11. Household Projections by Household Income

Income Level	Number of Households			
	Affordable Housing Costs	Cost Burdened	Severely Cost Burdened	Total
2030				
Owner-Occupied				
30% of AMI or less	-	15	65	80
30.01%-50% AMI	-	-	50	50
50.01%-80% AMI	69	15	10	95
80.01%-100% AMI	15	45	30	91
Greater than 100% AMI	1,614	70	30	1,714
Renter-Occupied				
30% of AMI or less	-	-	15	15

Income Level	Number of Households			
	Affordable Housing Costs	Cost Burdened	Severely Cost Burdened	Total
30.01%-50% AMI	-	-	15	15
50.01%-80% AMI	-	200	97	297
80.01%-100% AMI	20	31	-	51
Greater than 100% AMI	154	113	10	277
Total 2030	1,872	489	324	2,685
2035				
Owner-Occupied				
30% of AMI or less	-	15	65	80
30.01%-50% AMI	-	-	50	50
50.01%-80% AMI	69	15	10	95
80.01%-100% AMI	15	45	30	91
Greater than 100% AMI	1,610	70	30	1,710
Renter-Occupied				
30% of AMI or less	-	-	15	15
30.01%-50% AMI	-	-	15	15
50.01%-80% AMI	-	200	97	297
80.01%-100% AMI	21	31	-	52
Greater than 100% AMI	154	113	10	277
Total 2035	1,869	489	324	2,682
2040				
Owner-Occupied				
30% of AMI or less	-	15	65	80
30.01%-50% AMI	-	-	50	50
50.01%-80% AMI	68	15	10	94
80.01%-100% AMI	15	45	30	91
Greater than 100% AMI	1,592	69	30	1,692
Renter-Occupied				
30% of AMI or less	-	-	15	15
30.01%-50% AMI	-	-	15	15
50.01%-80% AMI	-	198	96	294
80.01%-100% AMI	20	30	-	50
Greater than 100% AMI	152	112	10	274
Total 2040	1,848	484	323	2,655
2045				
Owner-Occupied				
30% of AMI or less	-	15	65	80
30.01%-50% AMI	-	-	50	50
50.01%-80% AMI	69	15	10	95
80.01%-100% AMI	15	45	30	91
Greater than 100% AMI	1,596	70	30	1,696
Renter-Occupied				
30% of AMI or less	-	-	15	15

Income Level	Number of Households			
	Affordable Housing Costs	Cost Burdened	Severely Cost Burdened	Total
30.01%-50% AMI	-	-	15	15
50.01%-80% AMI	-	197	96	293
80.01%-100% AMI	20	30	-	50
Greater than 100% AMI	152	111	10	273
Total 2045	1,852	483	323	2,659
2050				
Owner-Occupied				
30% of AMI or less	-	15	65	80
30.01%-50% AMI	-	-	50	50
50.01%-80% AMI	69	15	10	95
80.01%-100% AMI	15	45	30	91
Greater than 100% AMI	1,602	70	30	1,702
Renter Occupied				
30% of AMI or less	-	-	15	15
30.01%-50% AMI	-	-	15	15
50.01%-80% AMI	-	198	96	294
80.01%-100% AMI	20	30	-	50
Greater than 100% AMI	152	112	10	274
Total 2050	1,858	485	323	2,666

Source: UF Shimberg Center, 2025

D. FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

The City of Gulf Breeze's population is not expected to significantly grow over the next 25 years. However, the City's housing needs are expected to evolve as both the population and the housing stock age. An increasingly older demographic underscores the need to support long-term residents while also creating opportunities to retain and attract younger individuals and families. To respond to these shifting needs, the City will consider the following.

1. Encourage aging-in-place strategies

The City of Gulf Breeze will promote aging-in-place facilities that allow residents to remain safely, independently, and comfortably in their homes as they grow older. Potential approaches include supporting universal design standards, home retrofitting and repair programs, and neighborhood design improvements that enhance accessibility to transit, healthcare facilities, and other essential services. These strategies can help maintain neighborhood stability while reducing displacement among older residents.

2. Rental Cost Burden

Housing affordability remains a significant challenge in Gulf Breeze. Over 73% of renter households are cost-burdened or severely cost-burdened. In addition, high real estate prices for starter homes make it difficult for young families and individuals to live in the city. The city will continue exploring strategies aimed at expanding housing options and

improving affordability so renters and prospective homeowners are not priced out of their community.

Community feedback from the first 2050 Comprehensive Plan workshop revealed varied perspectives on expanding housing options in Gulf Breeze. Several participants expressed support for additional duplexes, townhomes, tiny homes, and ADUs, particularly when located in select areas. Others felt that additional housing types are unnecessary, reflecting mixed community sentiment. There was, however, widespread support for higher-density housing, including mid- to high-rise multifamily development and mixed-use projects with residential units above commercial space, especially along US 98 and near major civic and institutional areas such as City Hall and Gulf Breeze High School.

Residents further acknowledged that opportunities for horizontal expansion are limited and that future growth will likely occur through redevelopment and vertical development rather than outward expansion. Annexation of land east of the Naval Live Oakes Preserve was generally viewed as impractical due to its physical separation from the rest of the City. Collectively, this input reflects both a willingness to consider more diverse and denser housing types and an understanding that housing preferences vary across the community.

3. Housing Rehabilitation

A significant portion of Gulf Breeze's housing stock was constructed during the mid-to-late 19th century and will continue to age over the next 25 years. As a result, many homes may need major renovation or repair to remain safe and functional. Programs to alleviate the cost or regulatory burden associated with home rehabilitation, particularly for long-term residents, to preserve existing neighborhoods would be beneficial.



04



INFRASTRUCTURE



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FROM SHORELINE TO SKYLINE

[DRAFT JULY 2026]

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IV. INFRASTRUCTURE

A. INTRODUCTION

Infrastructure is a fundamental component of cities and essential to the daily lives of people who live, work, and visit the City of Gulf Breeze. This element outlines the inventory, analysis, and projected future needs of key systems serving city residents. These systems include sanitary sewer, solid waste, stormwater, potable water, reclaimed water, natural gas, and aquifer recharge. In addition to serving areas within the City limits, Gulf Breeze provides potable water, reclaimed water, natural gas, and sewer services to areas outside the City boundaries including small areas of unincorporated Santa Rosa County as described below.

B. SANITARY SEWER

Formerly known as the South Santa Rosa Utility System, the Gulf Breeze Regional Water System (GBRWS) provides centralized, safe, and reliable wastewater treatment services within the City of Gulf Breeze and unincorporated areas of Santa Rosa County east of the Naval Live Oaks Preserve. Established in 2021, the GBRWS was created to consolidate the previous South Santa Rosa Utility System (non-city) and Gulf Breeze Water & Sewer (city) to improve operational efficiency and regional coordination.

Today, GBRWS serves 9,500 sewer customers and 1,100 reclaimed customers across a 33-square mile service area, which is the fourth-fastest growing region in the State of Florida¹. The sanitary sewer infrastructure within the service area includes a network of sewer service lines and a wastewater treatment plant. The GBRWS service area and major wastewater facilities are illustrated in **Map IV-1**.

1. Sewer Capacity

The City of Gulf Breeze currently utilizes the Tiger Point Wastewater Treatment Facility, which has a maximum capacity of 2.0 million gallons per day (MGD). However, the City is currently increasing its maximum capacity to 3.5 MGD. Additional details on the expansion are provided in the *Capital Improvements Element* and the City's FY 2026-FY 2035 Capital Improvement Plan.

2. Sewer Demand

The city's adopted level-of-service (LOS) standard for wastewater is 100 gallons per person per day. The city currently provides sewer service for approximately 9,500 customers, representing an estimated service population of 21,850 people based on an average household size of 2.30 persons. **Table IV-1** summarizes projected sewer demand, which was derived by applying the same growth rate to the service area as the citywide population projections.

¹ Source: City of Gulf Breeze Public Works

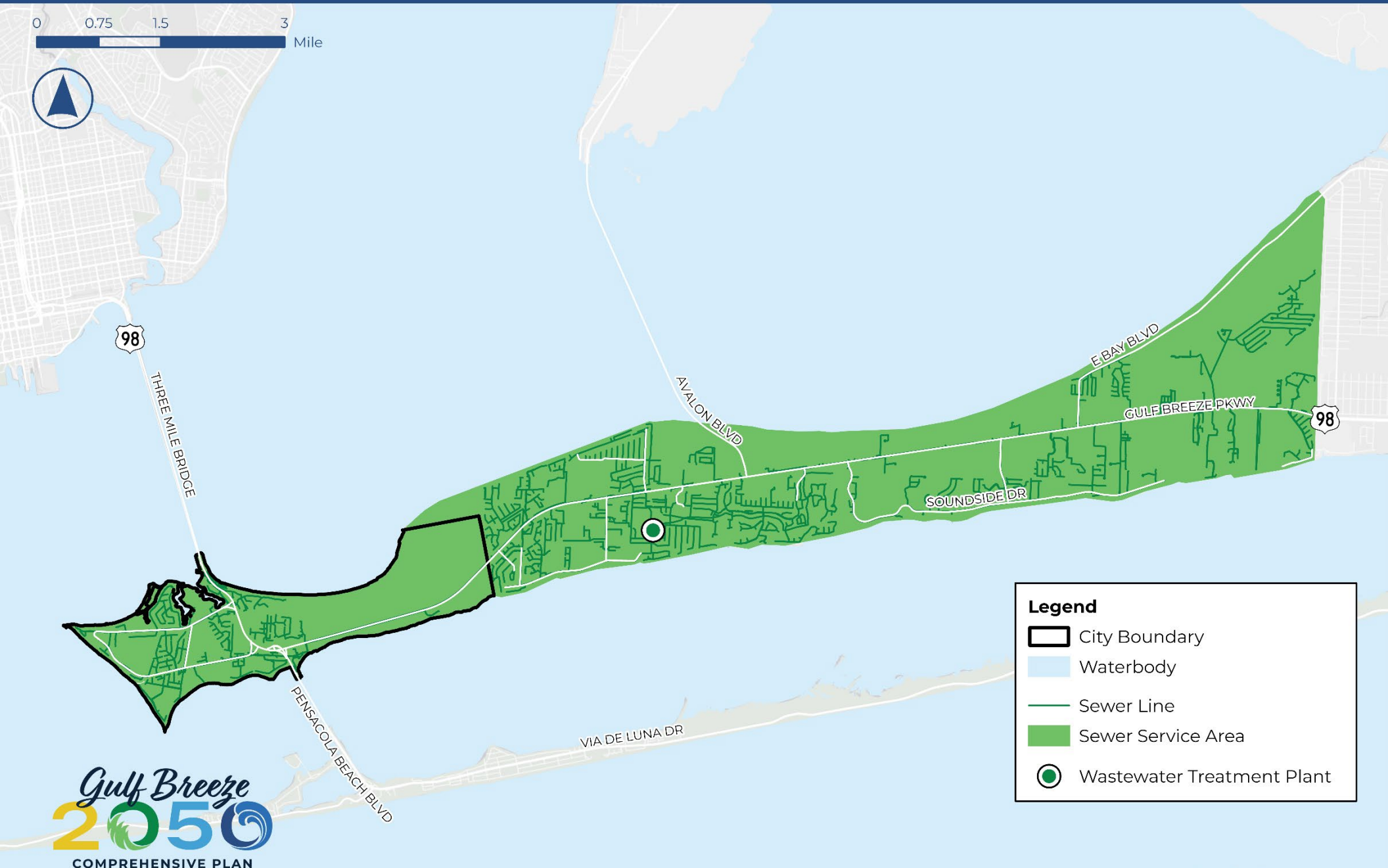
Table IV-1. Sewer Demand

Year	Population Projection	Gulf Breeze Demand	Service Area Population	Service Area Demand
2030	6,960	696,000	21,850	2,185,000
2035	6,998	699,800	21,969	2,196,930
2040	7,001	700,100	21,979	2,197,871
2045	6,988	698,800	21,938	2,193,790
2050	6,971	697,100	21,885	2,188,453

Source: City of Gulf Breeze, 2025

With a current capacity of 2 MGD, the City does not have adequate capacity to accommodate the projected service population. However, the expansion to 3.5 MGD will be sufficient to maintain the adopted level of service standards through 2050.

SEWER SYSTEM



3. Septic to Sewer

In 2019, the City evaluated the feasibility of converting areas currently served by septic tanks to a centralized sewer system through the City's Septic Tank Elimination Program. Approximately 1,023 properties within City limits utilized septic tanks at that time. The study focused on properties within the City limits west of the Naval Live Oaks Preserve area and identified potential projects for connection to the South Santa Rosa Utilities System (now GBRWS) wastewater treatment facility. A total of 859 parcels using septic tanks were identified and grouped into twelve study areas, as exhibited in **Figure IV-1**.

The twelve areas were prioritized based on environmental and constructability considerations. Environmental factors included shallow groundwater, historical flooding events, and migration pathways to surface water, while constructability factors focused on the ease of connection and construction. Using these criteria, the City created a prioritized list of areas for septic-to-sewer conversion and estimated conversion costs. These results are summarized below in **Table IV-2**.

Since the completion of the study in 2019, many of the identified areas have been converted to centralized sewer service. The remaining areas are planned for conversion by 2029, as detailed in **Table IV-2**.

As of April 2025, the City has been awarded a Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) grant totaling \$12,219,200 to support completion of the remaining septic-to-sewer (STS) conversion projects within the City limits. Four of the City's 12 STS projects are currently under construction: Highpoint STS, Fairpoint STS, Florida/Montrose STS, and Shoreline Phase I STS.

Table IV-2. Septic to Sewer Prioritization

Map Area No.	Name	Priority Score	Total Unsewered Parcels	Estimated Costs for Conversion*	Completion Date
6	Beach Drive	15	7	\$154,000	
12	Eufala	15	39	\$858,000	2024
1	Navy Cove - West	13	7	\$154,000	
2	Montrose	12	48	\$864,000	2024
5	Bay Cliffs	12	79	\$1,422,000	2024
10	Florida Ave	9	12	\$216,000	2024
3	Highpoint	8	152	\$2,940,000	2025
4	Hoffman Bayou	8	120	\$2,160,000	2026
8	San Carlos	8	70	\$1,260,000	2026
7	Gilmore	7	32	\$608,000	2026
9	Warwick	6	161	\$2,898,000	2028
11	Poinciana	6	132	\$2,376,000	2029
Total	-	-	859	\$15,910,000	-

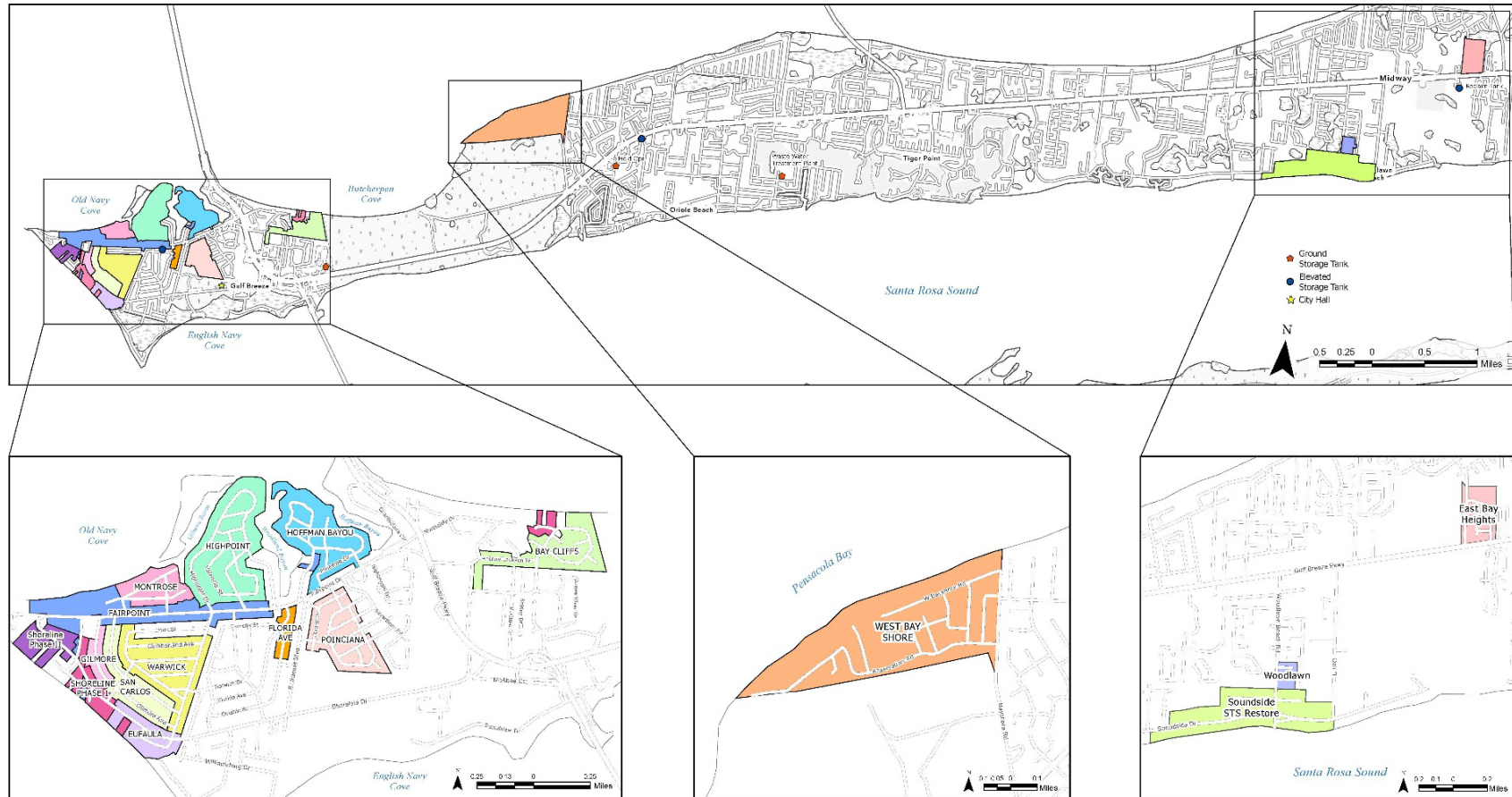
* Gravity Sewer Installation or Pressure Sewer Installation

Source: City of Gulf Breeze, 2025

Figure IV-1. Septic to Sewer Conversion Projects



City Of Gulf Breeze Septic to Sewer Conversion Projects



Source: City of Gulf Breeze, 2025

C. SOLID WASTE COLLECTION

The City of Gulf Breeze has a franchise agreement with Waste Pro of Florida for solid waste collection. The franchise agreement includes provisions for the collection of residential and commercial solid, recycling, and bulk waste, and yard waste collection. All of the waste collected by Waste Pro is taken to the Central Landfill located in unincorporated Santa Rosa County near Milton, Florida. This agreement expires in 2028.

The Santa Rosa County 2040 Comprehensive Plan states that the Central Landfill serves the entire County. The facility was designed and permitted to handle municipal solid waste based on population projections for the County, which includes incorporated municipalities. Under current and projected conditions, the landfill has adequate capacity to meet the County's waste disposal needs through 2065.

1. Solid Waste Demand

The City's adopted level-of-service standard for solid waste is 3.60 pounds per person per day. **Table IV-3** shows the projected demand for solid waste through the 2050 planning horizon based on the adopted LOS.

Table IV-3. Solid Waste Demand

Year	Population Projection	Demand (lbs/day)	Demand (tons/day)	Demand (tons/year)
2030	6,960	25,056	12.53	4,573
2035	6,998	25,193	12.60	4,598
2040	7,001	25,204	12.60	4,600
2045	6,988	25,157	12.58	4,591
2050	6,971	25,096	12.55	4,580

Source: City of Gulf Breeze, 2025

2. Hazardous Waste

The City does not regularly collect hazardous waste. However, residents may dispose of household hazardous waste year-round at the Household Hazardous Waste Center located at the Santa Rosa County Central Landfill near Milton (6337 Da Lisa Road, Milton, FL 32583). In coordination with Santa Rosa County, the City also hosts an annual Amnesty Day, which allows residents to dispose of up to five gallons of hazardous waste without traveling to the Central Landfill near Milton.

D. STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Flooding is a challenge in Gulf Breeze. The city and Santa Rosa County participate in the National Flood Insurance Program and Community Rating System, administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The City provides assistance to determine if a property is located in the floodplain or a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) and whether flood insurance coverage is required.

The City is currently working on three different stormwater management projects: the Navy Cove / Driftwood / Berry Stormwater improvements, the Nightingale & Fairpoint

Gravity System, and the Shoreline Basin Project. More details on these projects can be found in the Capital Improvements Element.

The City's adopted (LOS) standards for stormwater management facilities are provided below in **Table IV-4**. The City has additional stormwater management standards in Article III of Chapter 24 of the Land Development Code.

Table IV-4. Adopted Stormwater Management Level of Service Standards

Aspect	Standard
Frequency	25-year storm
Duration	24-hours
Treatment	Less than 100 acres: treatment of the first one-half inch of runoff
	Greater than 100 acres: treatment of the first inch of runoff

Source: City of Gulf Breeze, 2022

E. POTABLE WATER

Potable water service in the city is provided by the Gulf Breeze Regional Water System (GBRWS), which also provides service to approximately 4,500 households in unincorporated Santa Rosa County east of the City boundaries. **Map IV-2** shows the potable water service area, the water lines, and the two GBRWS water treatment plants. GBRWS purchases potable water from the Fairpoint Regional Utility System (FRUS). The purchase agreement stipulates the city's maximum allocations and minimum water purchase commitments from FRUS.

Gulf Breeze is located within the Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD) Region II water supply planning area, which covers Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, and Walton Counties. The NFWFMD completed the most recent Regional Water Supply Plan (RWSP) for Region II in December 2024, covering a 20-year planning horizon period through 2045. Per Florida Statutes, the City is required to update its Water Supply Facilities Work Plan within 18 months of the RWSP's adoption. As of the adoption of this Comprehensive Plan update, the City has not completed the preparation of the Water Supply Facilities Work Plan. When the City prepares such plan, the Comprehensive Plan will be updated. The Work Plan will identify the water supply sources and facilities needed to serve existing and future development within the City's jurisdiction over a minimum 10-year planning period.

The 2024 Region II RWSP identifies several regional issues that are relevant to Gulf Breeze's water supply. The coastal areas of Region II, including the area served by FRUS, are designated a Water Resource Caution Area (WRCA) due to significant drawdowns in the Upper Floridan aquifer and the ongoing risk of saltwater intrusion. In response, FRUS transitioned its primary water source from the Floridan aquifer to an inland sand-and-gravel aquifer wellfield, which expanded daily production from approximately 2.8 million gallons per day (MGD) in 2004 to 6.21 MGD by 2021.

The 2024 RWSP identifies FRUS's proposed construction of two additional sand-and-gravel aquifer wells capable of producing approximately 3.4 MGD, with an estimated capital investment of \$13.9 million. These projects are intended to meet growing regional demand while further reducing reliance on the Floridan aquifer. The RWSP also emphasizes the

need to expand reuse systems, implement water conservation programs, and evaluate alternative water supplies, including surface water from the Choctawhatchee River, to meet projected regional demand increases of approximately 30.8 MGD by 2045. The City's continued coordination with FRUS and the NFWFMD is essential to align Gulf Breeze's water infrastructure with the 2024 RWSP strategies and associated water resource and supply development projects.

1. Potable Water Capacity

Table IV-5 summarizes these water allocations and commitments from FRUS through 2032 and after. Based on the current purchase agreement, GBRWS will have a capacity of 2,874,447 MGD through the 2050 planning horizon. This capacity is for customers within and outside of the City's boundaries. The City is currently updating its agreement with Fairpoint Regional Utility System.

Table IV-5. Water Purchase Agreement

Year	Average Daily Allocation	Maximum Daily Allocation	Minimum Water Purchase Commitments
2023	1,842,166	2,874,447	1,842,166
2024	1,845,025	2,874,447	1,845,025
2025	1,847,888	2,874,447	1,847,888
2026	1,850,756	2,874,447	1,850,756
2027	1,853,629	2,874,447	1,853,629
2028	1,856,507	2,874,447	1,856,507
2029	1,859,389	2,874,447	1,859,389
2030	1,862,276	2,874,447	1,862,276
2031	1,865,168	2,874,447	1,865,168
2032 and after	1,868,064	2,874,447	1,868,064

Source: City of Gulf Breeze, 2023

GBRWS has two water treatment plants with a design capacity of approximately 3.2 MGD. FRUS has a consumptive use permit that permits them to extract approximately 6.8 MGD. GBRWS does not have any water allocated through a consumptive use permit but rather receives 100% of its potable water from FRUS through a purchase agreement, as detailed above.

2. Potable Water Demand

For potable water, the City currently has an adopted level of service standard of 130 gallons per day per person. The city currently provides potable water service to approximately 7,500 customers or 17,250 people based on a household population of 2.30 persons per household. **Table IV-6** provides the potable water demand which was determined by applying the same growth rate to the service area population as the citywide population projections.

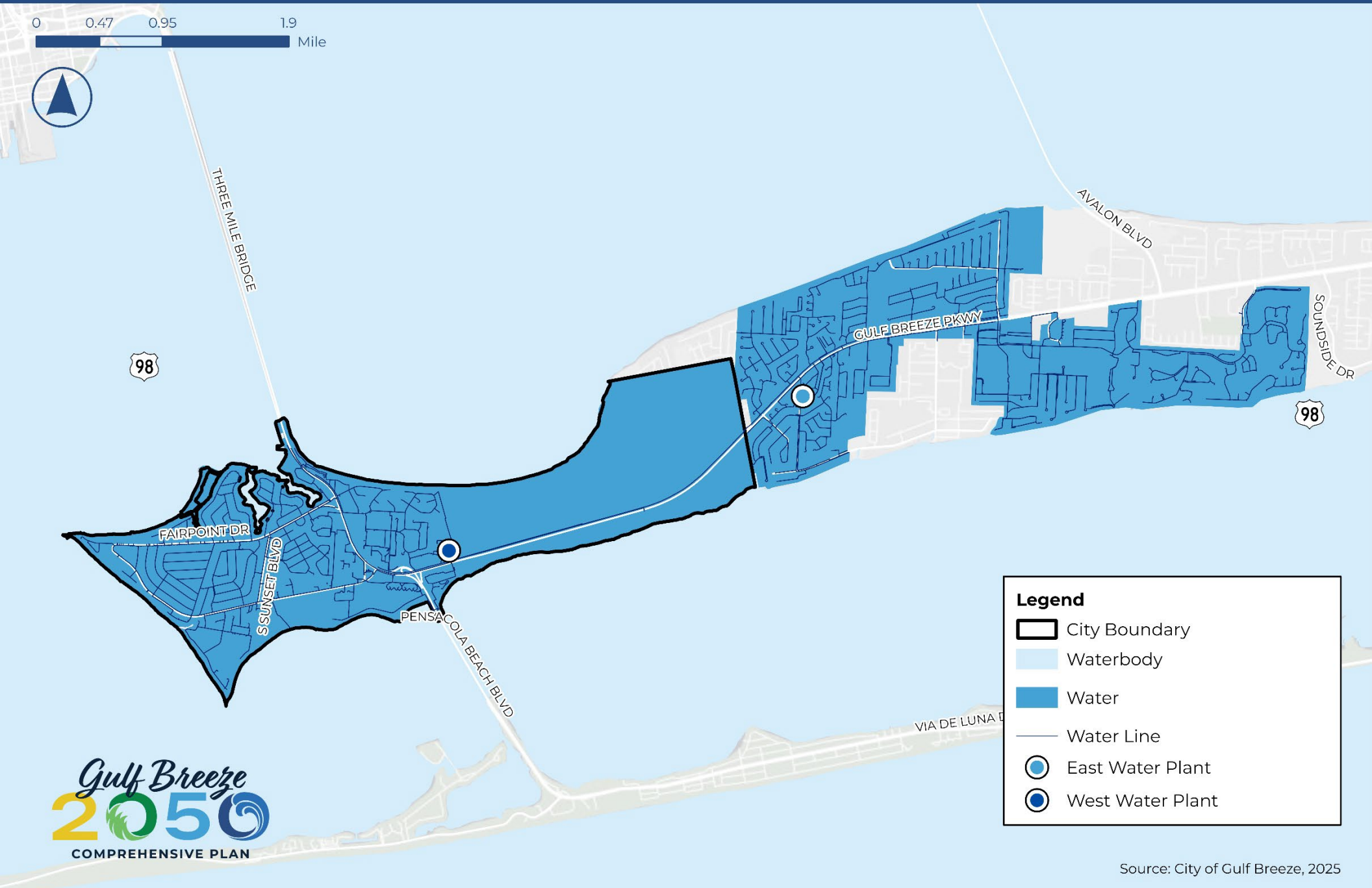
Table IV-6. Potable Water Demand

Year	Population Projection	Gulf Breeze Demand	Service Population	Service Population Demand
2030	6,960	904,800	17,250	2,242,500
2035	6,998	909,740	17,355	2,256,155
2040	7,001	910,130	17,362	2,257,122
2045	6,988	908,440	17,330	2,252,931
2050	6,971	906,230	17,288	2,247,450

Source: City of Gulf Breeze, 2025

Based on the water purchase agreement and the projected populations, the City of Gulf Breeze will have sufficient potable water to maintain its adopted level of service standards for both the population within city limits and the overall service area.

POTABLE WATER SYSTEM



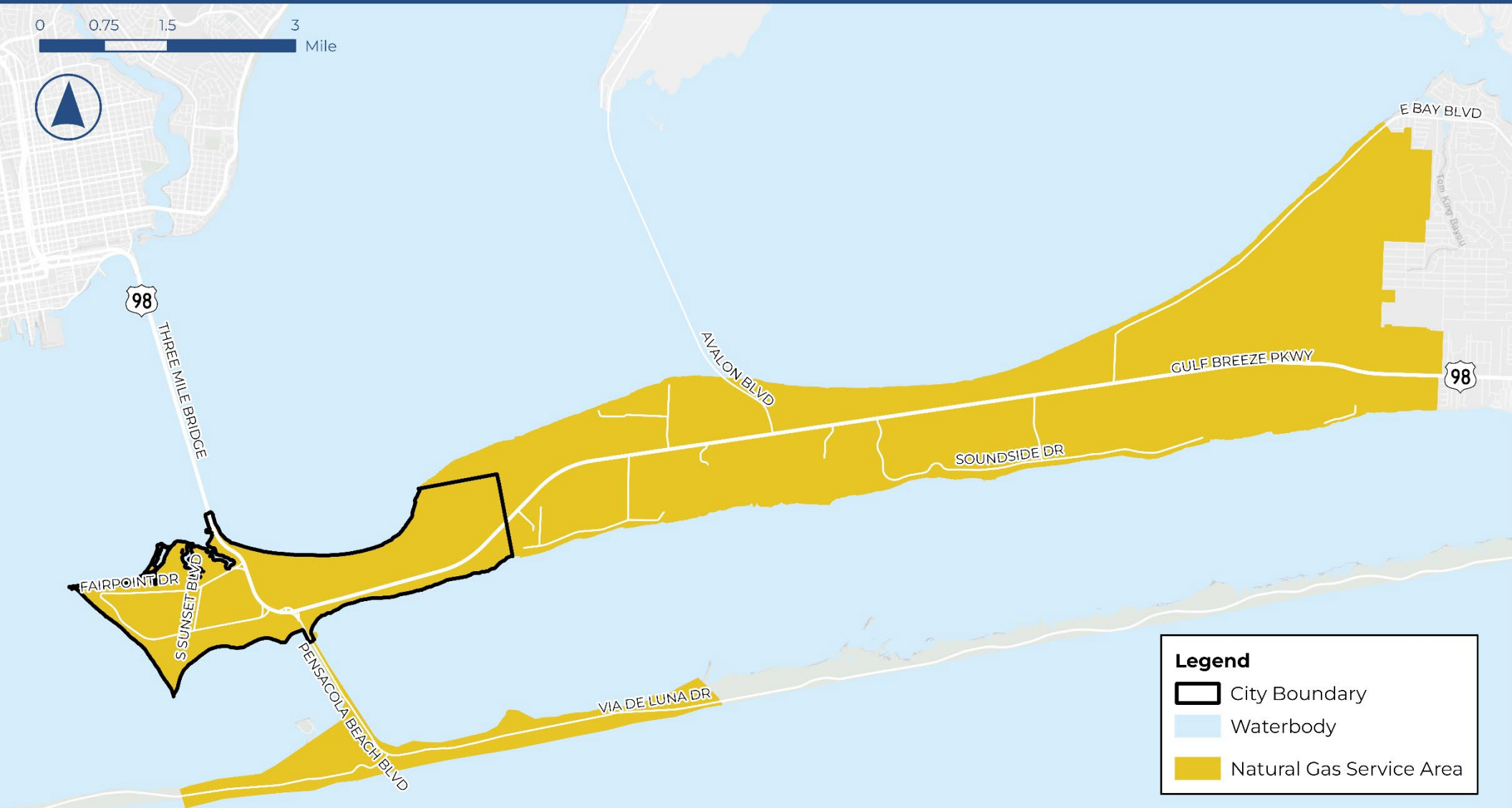
F. RECLAIMED WATER

Reclaimed water is primarily used for irrigation purposes. The City currently receives approximately 5 million gallons per day of reclaimed water from Holley-Navarre Water Service for 8,500 customers. The city is currently upgrading the wastewater treatment plant to increase the reclaimed water capacity in order to meet regulatory requirements related to the reclaimed water, as outlined in the *Capital Improvements Element*.

G. NATURAL GAS

Natural gas is a fossil fuel that is primarily composed of methane. It is colorless and odorless. Natural gas can be used for heating, cooling, and electric power generation. The City of Gulf Breeze has a Natural Gas Department that provides gas services to its residents and some residents in unincorporated Santa Rosa County. The service area for Gulf Breeze Natural Gas is shown in **Map IV-3**.

NATURAL GAS SERVICE AREA



H. AQUIFER RECHARGE

Aquifer recharge and discharge areas are classified into six categories: recharge (low, medium, and high) and discharge (low, medium, and high). Aquifer discharge areas are areas where water seeps upwards to the surface rather than downward into the aquifer. Meanwhile, aquifer recharge areas provide water volumes that contribute to groundwater storage within the aquifer system. Furthermore, aquifer recharge areas are areas where water coming from rainfall, soil moisture, and surface water bodies gain access to the aquifers. Aquifers are where groundwater is stored and are currently the most common source of potable water for the state of Florida. Aquifer recharge areas not only replenish aquifers but also remove natural and artificial pollutants. As a result, protecting these aquifer recharge areas is crucial in maintaining the City's potable water sources. The City of Gulf Breeze is entirely in a low discharge area, as seen in **Map VI-3** of the Conservation Element.

I. WELLHEAD PROTECTION AREAS

There are currently no potable water wells in the City of Gulf Breeze. However, the City does have adopted language in the Comprehensive Plan for potential future wells. This policy is in the Infrastructure Element and requires newly installed potable water wells to be compliant with the wellhead protection rules established in Rule 62-521 of the Florida Administrative Code.

J. FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

While the City is not expected to experience significant growth over the next 25 years, the City still needs to ensure that the current capacity of its various infrastructure systems is maintained. In order to do this, the City will consider the following:

1. Coordination with FRUS

The City of Gulf Breeze purchases its potable water from FRUS. The city will continue to coordinate with FRUS to ensure the residents of Gulf Breeze maintain access to safe and reliable potable water.

2. Ensure Sufficient Capacity

The city currently has enough capacity to maintain the adopted level-of-service standards for sewer and potable water. The City will continue to evaluate on a regular basis the need for capacity improvements to meet the city's current and future demand.

3. Stormwater Management

The City, as a coastal community, will continue to implement its existing stormwater management standards and consider updating them to ensure the safety and security of its residents.

4. Water Supply Facilities Work Plan

The City of Gulf Breeze is committed to coordinating with the NFWFMD to prepare a 10-Year Water Supply Facilities Work Plan consistent with statutory requirements and the Regional Water Supply Plan.



05



COASTAL MANAGEMENT



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FROM SHORELINE TO SKYLINE

[DRAFT AUG 2026]

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V. COASTAL MANAGEMENT

A. INTRODUCTION

Coastal management helps communities protect residents, property, and natural resources from hazards, such as flooding, erosion, and sea level rise. It also supports the preservation of sensitive coastal ecosystems that sustain water quality, wildlife, and the long-term environmental health of the community.

The Coastal Management Element provides a strategic framework for the responsible use, protection, and sustainable management of the city's coastal resources. Its primary goals are to reduce vulnerability to natural hazards while conserving the natural systems that make Gulf Breeze's coastline both environmentally valuable and economically vital.

The city aims to balance water-dependent recreational activities and active commercial waterfront uses with the protection of coastal and natural resources. Effective coastal management is essential to safeguarding life and property from natural disasters while maintaining the integrity of coastal ecosystems.

Although Gulf Breeze is nearing build-out and the City's 2050 plan directs growth away from coastal areas, limited population growth within coastal areas is still anticipated. This continued growth places additional pressure on coastal resources. To minimize impacts, federal, state, county, and city agencies must work collaboratively to guide coastal development and ensure long-term environmental protection.

B. COASTAL HIGH HAZARD AREA

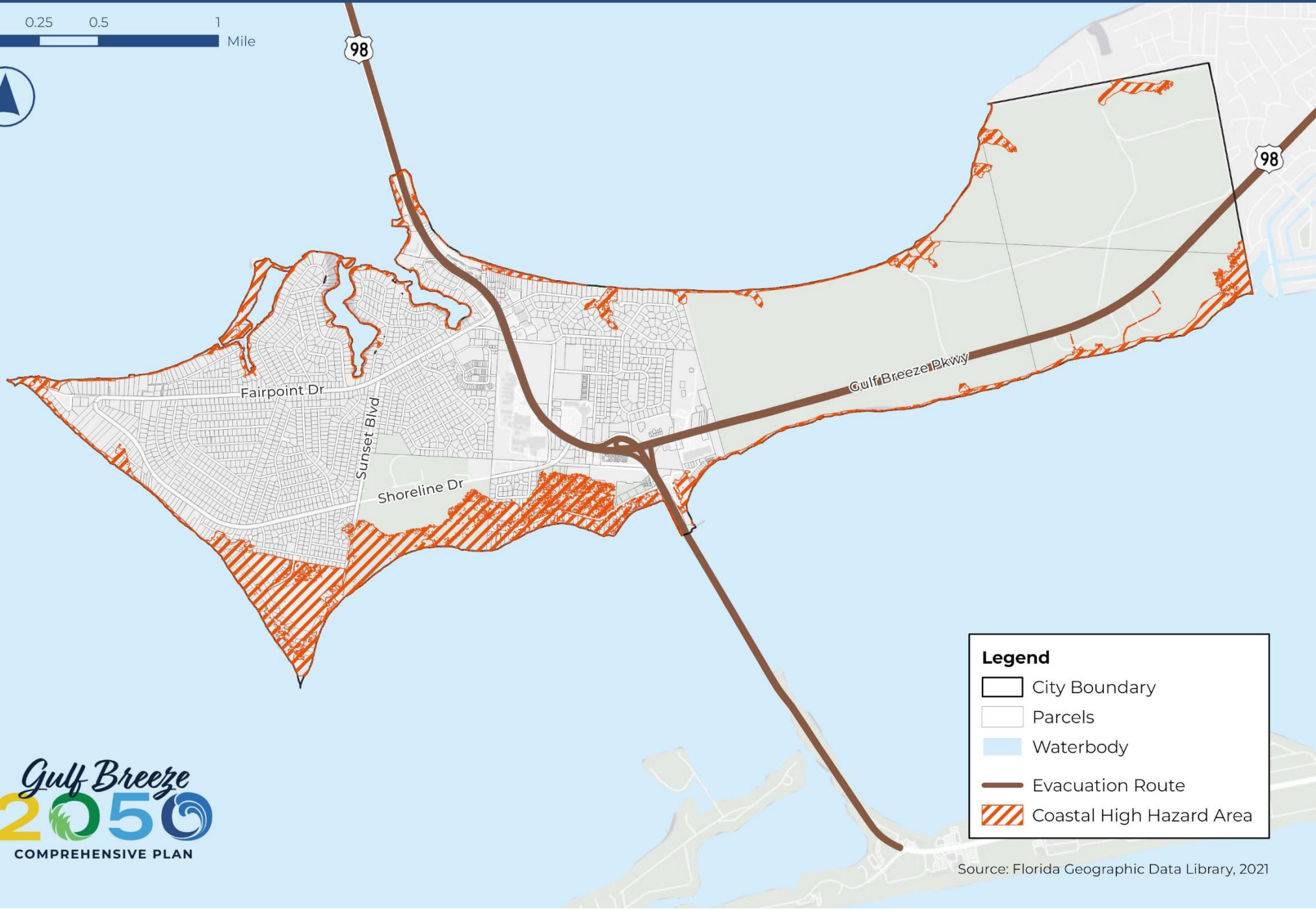
Gulf Breeze contains approximately 344 acres of land within the Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA), as shown in **Map V-1**. CHHAs are defined in Section 163.3178(2)(h)9 of the Florida Statutes as:

"The area below the elevation of the Category 1 storm surge line as established by a Sea, Lake, and Overland Surges from Hurricanes (SLOSH) computerized storm surge model."

To minimize risks to life and property and discourage further population concentrations in Coastal High Hazard Areas, Florida's growth management framework discourages increases in density and intensity within these areas. Comprehensive Plan amendments proposing increased density in CHHAs must be evaluated for their impact on hurricane evacuation levels of service. While reductions in land use densities may be appropriate, such changes must respect existing lawful uses and private property rights.

COASTAL HIGH HAZARD AREA

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



Legend

- City Boundary
- Parcels
- Waterbody
- Evacuation Route
- Coastal High Hazard Area

C. COASTAL VULNERABILITY

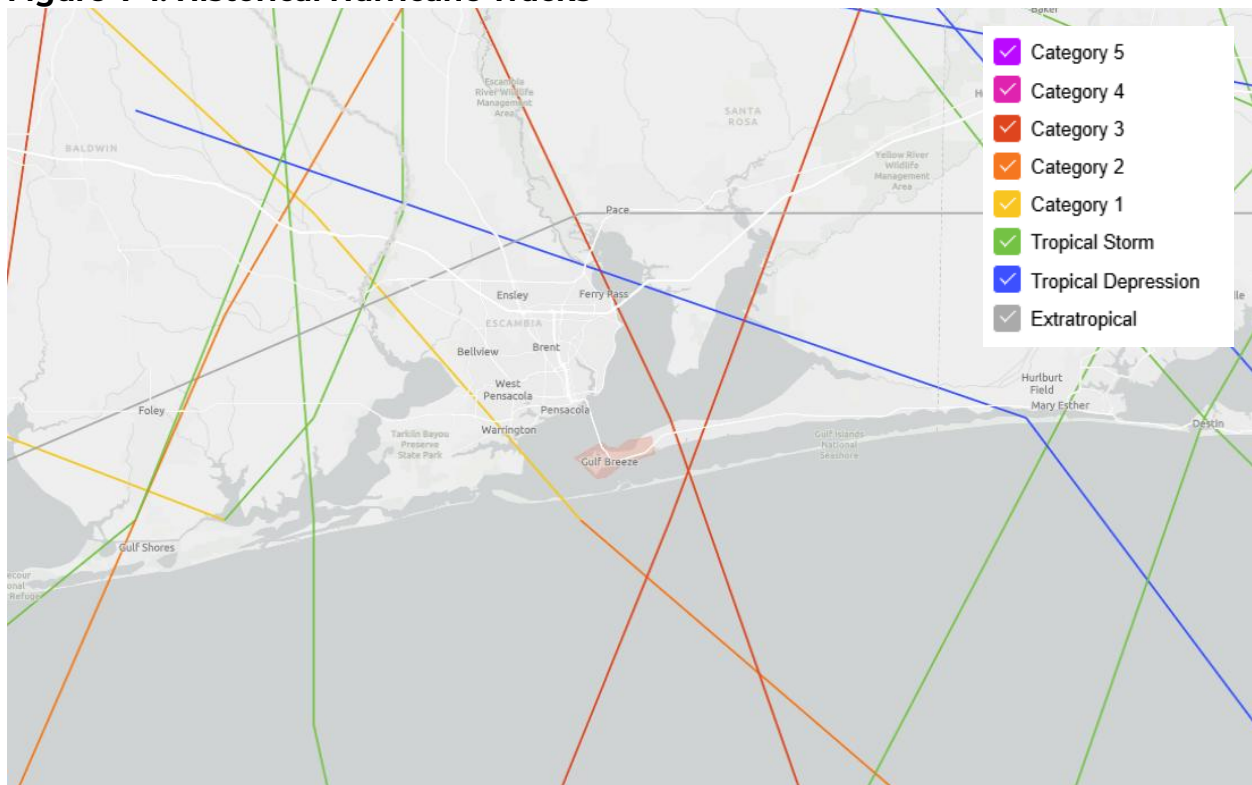
1. Storm Surge

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), storm surge is defined as the “abnormal rise in seawater level during a storm, measured as the height of the water above the normal predicted astronomical tide.” NOAA’s Sea, Lake and Overland Surges from Hurricanes (SLOSH) model identifies the maximum extent of a community’s anticipated storm surge based upon the category of the storm causing the flooding.

Areas of the city that are located below the elevation of a Category 1 storm surge are known as the Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA) and are considered by the Florida Legislature as areas particularly vulnerable to the effects of coastal flooding. **Map V-2** shows the impact of storm surge within the city. Citywide impacts and substantial flooding of residential areas are expected during a Category 4 hurricane event.

Within the last 40 years, Gulf Breeze has been impacted by a number of intense storms, as shown in **Figure V-1**. In recent years, Hurricane Sally in 2020, Hurricane Dennis in 2005, and Hurricane Ivan in 2004 significantly impacted the city. Each of these storms produced storm surges that inundated roads and damaged buildings, in addition to widespread wind damage to trees, power lines, and structures.

Figure V-1. Historical Hurricane Tracks



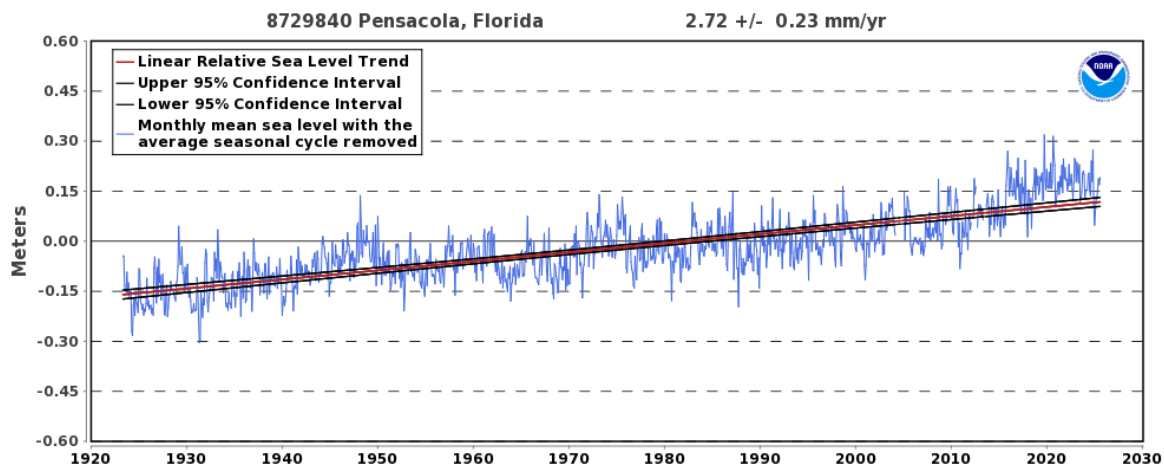
Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 2025

2. Sea Level Rise Projections

The closest tidal gauge to Gulf Breeze is located in Pensacola. According to the NOAA, sea levels in this region are expected to rise by 0.92 feet by 2040 and 3.28 feet by 2080. Under this scenario, Gulf Breeze can expect to see severe inundations in portions of the city, most notably in Shoreline Park and in areas adjacent to Soundview Trail, Deer Point Dr, Colley Cove, and Chesapeake Drive.

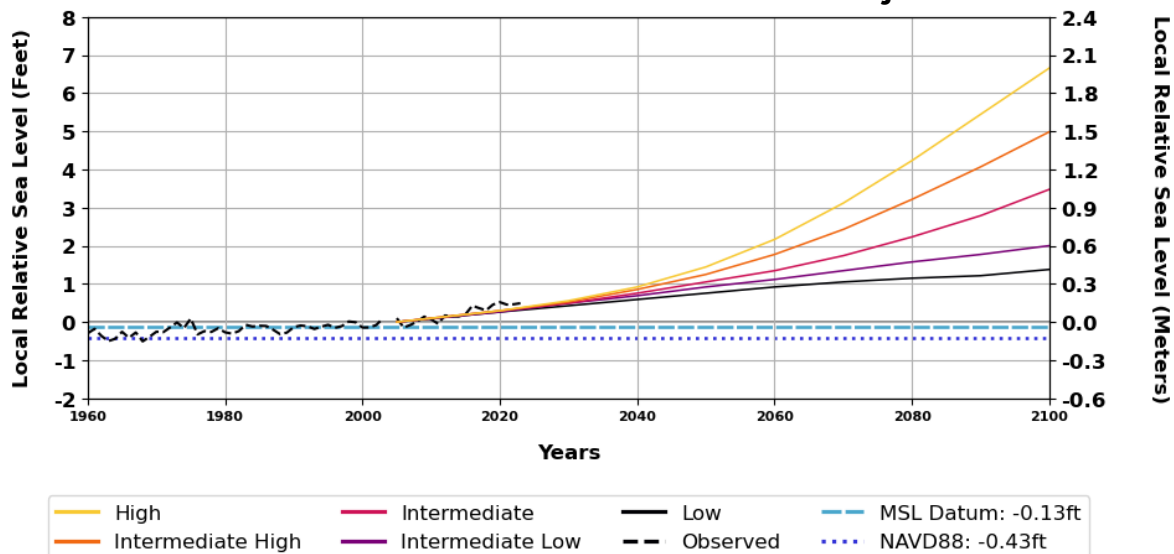
Figure V-2 shows the average rise in sea level over the past 100 years, which has averaged an increase of 0.23 mm/yr. This rate of change is expected to increase, as shown in **Figure V-3**.

Figure V-2. Sea Level Rise Trend



Source: Sea Level Rise Trend for Pensacola (Station ID: 8729840) National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 2025

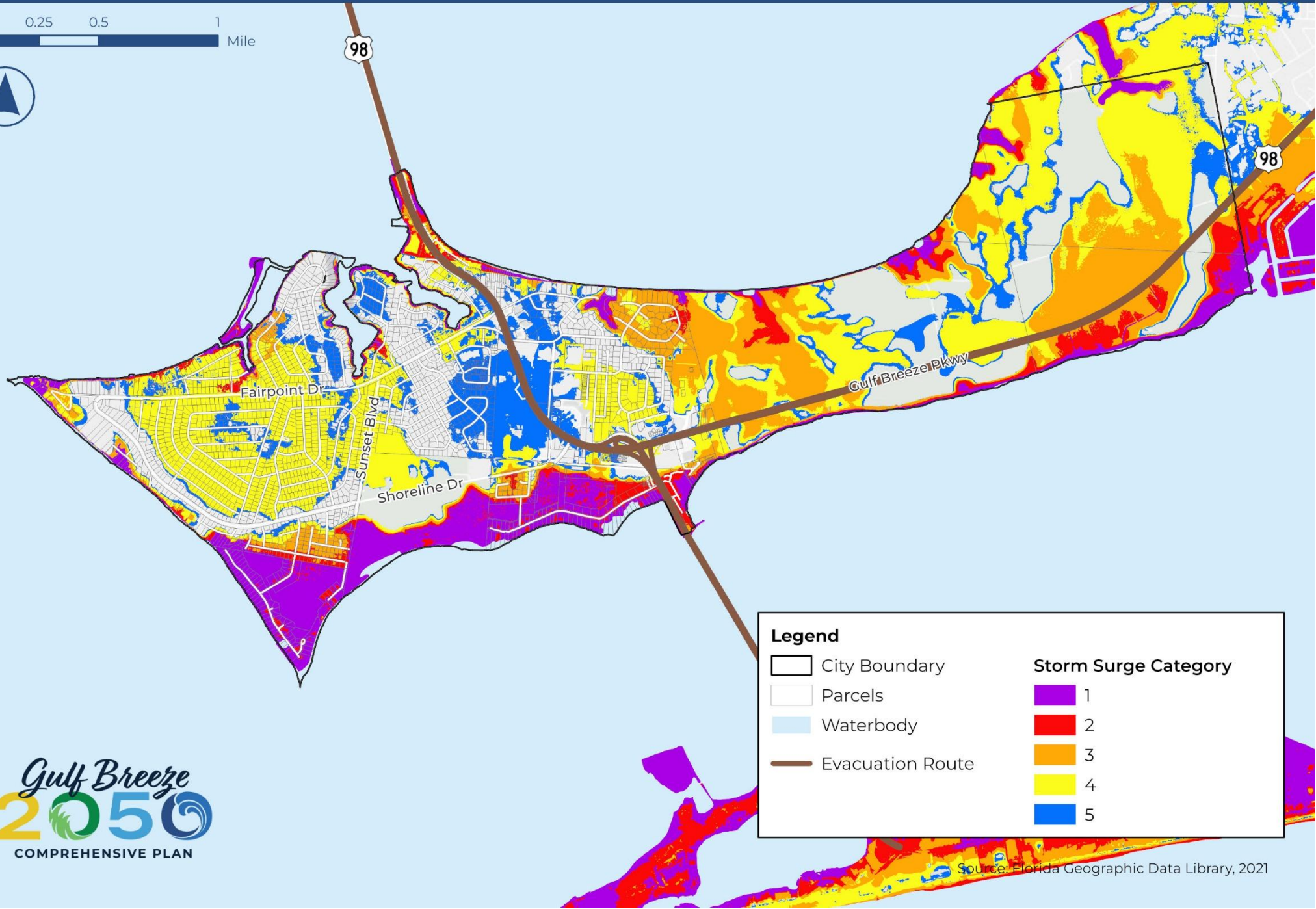
Figure V-3. Annual Relative Sea Level Rise Since 1960 and Projections



Source: Annual Relative Sea Level Since 1960 and Regional Scenarios, for Pensacola (Station ID: 8729840) National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 2025

STORM SURGE

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



Legend

- City Boundary
- Parcels
- Waterbody
- Evacuation Route

Storm Surge Category

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

D. INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

1. Natural Resources

Within the 344 acres that comprise the CHHA, approximately 30% (about 103 acres) consists of vegetated, non-forested wetlands. Developed land accounts for roughly 24% of the CHHA (about 81 acres) along Soundview Trail and Deer Point Drive. The remaining acreage is composed of a mix of wetland communities, open water, upland forests, and sandy coastal areas.

As illustrated by the Statewide Land Use Land Cover dataset shown in **Map V-3**, the CHHA contains a diverse range of habitats that support native Florida vegetation and wildlife. The primary land cover types found within the CHHA are listed below.

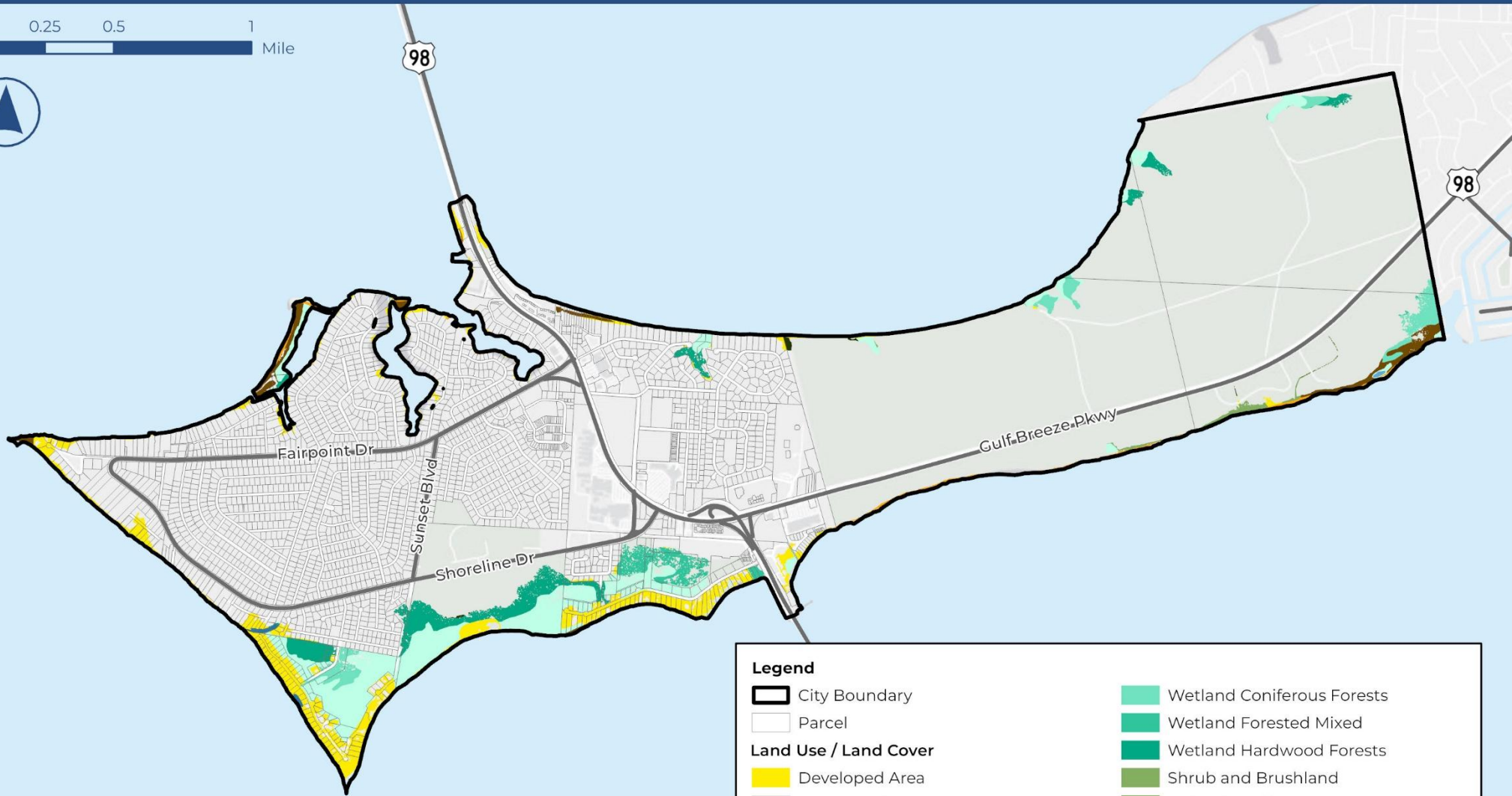
- Bays and estuaries
- Beaches and other than swimming beaches
- Exposed rock
- Lakes
- Open land
- Reservoirs
- Sand other than beaches
- Shrub and brushland
- Streams and waterways
- Upland coniferous forests
- Upland hardwood forests
- Vegetated non-forested wetlands
- Wetland coniferous forests
- Wetlands forested mixed
- Wetland hardwood forests
- Developed areas

Gulf Breeze's coastal environment is shaped by the unique geography of the Fairpoint Peninsula and a series of protected coves that open into Pensacola Bay. These coves and shoreline areas contain extensive forested wetlands and mixed wetland-upland systems that dissipate wave energy, stabilize coastal soils, and filter stormwater before it enters the Bay. The peninsula's configuration creates sheltered inlets that support diverse coastal vegetation and wildlife, forming an interconnected network of habitats along the waterfront. These natural systems also support key recreational and eco-tourism amenities, including the Shoreline Park wetlands boardwalk and the Naval Live Oaks Preserve area of the Gulf Islands National Seashore, which offer public access to conserved coastal landscapes. Collectively, these resources contribute to Gulf Breeze's coastal identity, environmental quality, and natural resilience to storm surge and sea level rise.

Gulf Breeze is also an active partner in the Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program (PPBEP), a cooperative, bi-state effort among local governments in Florida and Alabama to restore and protect the Pensacola and Perdido Bay systems. Through this partnership, the City collaborates with regional agencies to develop and implement the Program's Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP). This plan establishes shared goals for improving water quality, conserving estuarine and wetland habitats, enhancing flood resilience, and supporting healthy coastal ecosystems. Participation in the PPBEP strengthens the City's ability to protect its coves, tidal wetlands, and shoreline habitats by aligning local management strategies with regional science, monitoring data, and restoration efforts. This collaboration provides valuable support for Gulf Breeze's ongoing work to preserve natural systems within and adjacent to the CHHA and to maintain the ecological functions that help buffer the community from storm surge and sea level rise.

LAND USE / LAND COVER IN CHHA

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



Legend

City Boundary

Parcel

Land Use / Land Cover

Developed Area

Open Land

Streams and Waterways

Reservoirs

Lakes

Bays and Estuaries

Vegetated Non-Forested Wetlands

Wetland Coniferous Forests

Wetland Forested Mixed

Wetland Hardwood Forests

Shrub and Brushland

Upland Coniferous Forests

Upland Hardwood Forests

Beaches Other Than Swimming Beaches

Exposed Rock

Sand Other Than Beaches

2. Development and Infrastructure

Coastal flooding poses a significant risk to development and infrastructure within the city. The following inventory provides an overview of the existing land uses, future land uses, and public facilities located within the city's CHHA that may be impacted by storm surge and coastal flooding.

a. Existing Land Use

Within the CHHA, land uses in Gulf Breeze are primarily residential and conservation oriented. The predominant existing land uses, listed from greatest to least land area, include conservation, single-family residential, recreation, vacant, right-of-way, multi-family, industrial, common areas, commercial, public/institutional, and infrastructure. Given the heightened flood and storm-surge risk in the CHHA, residential development in these areas should remain limited and incorporate resilience-focused design. **Map V-4** shows the existing land uses within the CHHA.

The Santa Rosa County Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) identifies repetitive loss properties across the County. Within Gulf Breeze, these include 20 residential properties, 14 condominium properties, and one commercial property. The Comprehensive Plan restricts high-density development and limits infrastructure improvements within the CHHA for public safety and environmental protection. Vulnerable uses, such as group homes and nursing homes, are prohibited in the CHHA. A local Vulnerability Assessment would re-evaluate existing assets that exist within the CHHA to find potential nonconformities and strategize ways to relocate such assets.

Much of the city is situated on highly erodible soils. Coastal events such as storm surge can accelerate erosion, resulting in the loss of waterfront areas and significant damage to structures along the shoreline. The City has set requirements to identify and protect wetlands and flood-prone areas, maintain erosion and sediment controls during development, and preserve native vegetation to ensure environmental protection where feasible. In addition, the City maintains inventories of environmentally sensitive lands and areas with repetitive storm damage to help guide mitigation, redevelopment, and conservation efforts.

b. Future Land Use

A large share of Gulf Breeze's Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA) is guided by future land use designations that intentionally limit development in areas most vulnerable to coastal flooding. Conservation lands cover roughly 59% of the CHHA, reflecting the city's longstanding commitment to natural resource protection, storm surge mitigation, and public safety in high-risk coastal areas. Residential uses within the CHHA are predominantly low intensity. Low Density Residential accounts for approximately 32% of the area, helping to limit the exposure of people and structures to coastal hazards. Higher-intensity land uses are minimal and occur only in small pockets: Parks and Recreation (2%), Commercial (1%), Medium Density Residential (2%), and High

Density Residential (1%). Future land use designations within the CHHA are shown in **Map V-5**.

c. Infrastructure

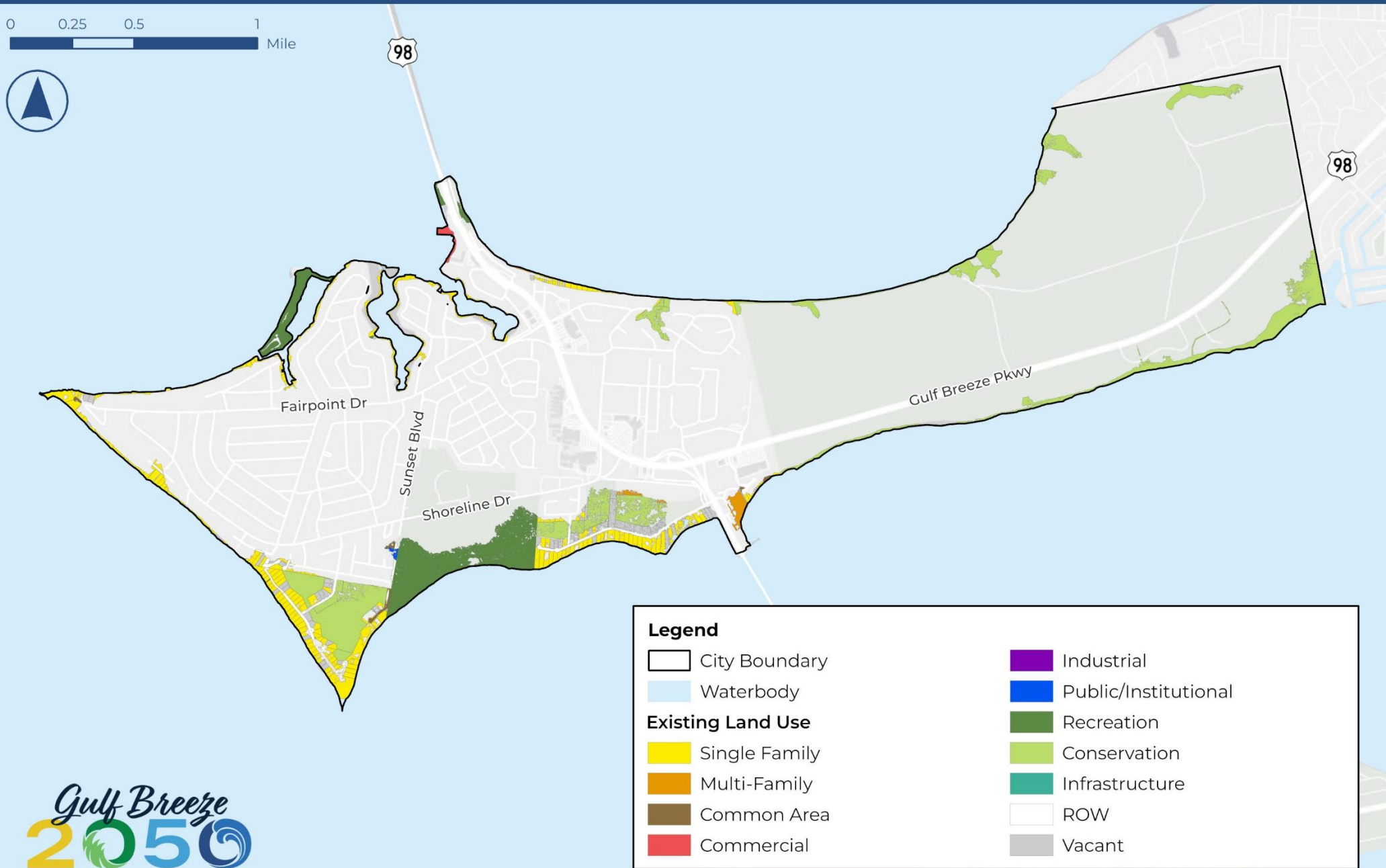
The provision, protection, and maintenance of infrastructure is one of the city's most important responsibilities. Public facilities are essential to the daily functioning of residents, businesses, and municipal operations. While Gulf Breeze was included in Santa Rosa County's countywide Vulnerability Assessment, which provides a high-level overview of potential flooding impacts to essential infrastructure, the city has not yet conducted a city-specific assessment. Completing a local Vulnerability Assessment would allow the city to better understand risks to critical facilities, infrastructure networks, and community assets, as well as inform future planning, investment, and resilience strategies.

Coastal flooding from sea level rise, storm surge, and related impacts can also affect stormwater system performance, including culverts, ponds, ditches, and other components. Flooding in or near these facilities may indicate existing or emerging drainage concerns that could worsen over time, affecting nearby neighborhoods and transportation corridors. Furthermore, rising sea levels elevate groundwater and tailwater levels, reducing the system's ability to drain effectively. These conditions can further limit stormwater capacity, slow post-storm recovery, and affect both water quantity and quality even in the absence of observable surface flooding. Hence, infrastructure planning and coordination is vital to supporting the long-term resilience of the city.

To address these challenges, Gulf Breeze is an active participant in Santa Rosa County's LMS. The City has supported and will continue to support the LMS and the Flood Mitigation Plan through robust floodplain, stormwater, coastal management, and emergency response policies. The Plan requires development in flood-prone areas to comply with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and City floodplain standards, maintain current Flood Insurance Rate Maps, and meet stormwater and shoreline protection requirements that exceed state and federal minimums. Infrastructure planning prioritizes correcting existing deficiencies in sewer, stormwater, and potable water systems before expanding capacity, with emphasis on reducing flooding, pollutant loads, and risks to public safety.

The LMS notes that Gulf Breeze, along with Navarre, are among the most vulnerable areas to hurricane winds. Evacuation challenges are compounded by the City's limited roadway connections. Only three routes exit the City, two of which cross bridges that can be unsafe during storms. The Pensacola Bay Bridge is especially prone to weather-related closures, as experienced with hurricanes Ivan and Sally. Highway 98 toward Navarre is the sole viable evacuation route for most residents. The City coordinates evacuation planning with the Santa Rosa County Office of Emergency Management. Together, the City and County limit public expenditures in areas that experience repetitive storm damage, except where needed for health, safety, or natural resource protection.

EXISTING LAND USE IN CHHA



FUTURE LAND USE IN CHHA

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Mile



Legend

City Boundary

Future Land Use

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Commercial
- Parks/Recreation
- Conservation

d. Historic Resources

Several historic resources in Gulf Breeze fall within the CHHA. These include nearly all of Deadman’s Island, a locally recognized historic area, as well as state recognized resource groups, including a substantial portion of Wayside Park and shoreline areas of the Naval Live Oaks Reservation. None of the recognized historic structures or cemeteries within the City limits are located in the CHHA.

e. Water-Dependent and Water-Related Uses

Gulf Breeze has multiple water-related and water-dependent uses that are central to the community’s quality of life. These uses are discussed in more detail in the *Future Land Use* element.

3. Vulnerable Populations

For many residents of Florida’s coastal communities, preparing for flooding and storm impacts is a routine part of life. Nonetheless, some households face greater challenges than others when responding to and recovering from these events. As noted by the U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit, certain populations experience “uneven exposures and sensitivities to growing coastal risks and limited adaptation options” due to social and economic conditions. Factors that can heighten vulnerability include limited access to a vehicle, living below the poverty level, having a household member with a disability, or lacking an English-speaking adult. These indicators were evaluated within the Gulf Breeze’s Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA) using demographic analysis tools in ESRI Business Analyst Online (BAO), and the results are summarized in **Table V-1**.

Table V-1. Vulnerability Factors for Households within the CHHA

Vulnerability Factor	Number of Households
Total Households	551
Households with No Vehicle	122
Households Earning Below the Poverty Level	74
Households with One or More Persons with a Disability ¹	161
Households with No English Speaker	0

¹The U.S. Census Bureau defines disability broadly as difficulty with one of the following six basic areas of functioning - ambulation, cognition, hearing, independent living, self-care, and vision.

Source: Esri Business Analyst, 2025

As shown in the table above, the most significant vulnerability factors within the CHHA include households with one or more persons with a disability, followed by households with no vehicle. Households caring for individuals with disabilities are at higher risk due to potential difficulties in evacuating, maintaining access to essential medications or medical equipment (particularly during power outages), and arranging appropriate transportation. For households without a vehicle, evacuation and preparedness become significantly more difficult. Limited mobility can delay response times, reduce access to evacuation routes and other resources, and create dependence on public transit or emergency transportation, which are services that may be disrupted or overwhelmed

during a storm. This lack of independent transportation increases the likelihood of residents remaining in hazardous areas longer than is safe.

4. Economic and Demographic Characteristics of the CHHA

Approximately 1,172 residents (about 17%) across roughly 580 single-family homes live within Gulf Breeze's Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA). Households in the CHHA tend to be smaller than those found citywide or across Santa Rosa County and Florida, with an average of 2.12 persons per household. The median household income in the CHHA (\$125,000) is slightly lower than the citywide median but remains substantially higher than countywide and statewide levels. Home values in the CHHA are notably higher, nearly 14% above the citywide median, which likely reflects the predominance of waterfront properties.

The age profile of the CHHA also differs from the rest of the city. With a median age of 52.1, the area skews older and has fewer younger residents and families. This indicates that much of the CHHA is likely occupied by retirees or empty nesters. Residents in the CHHA and across Gulf Breeze also tend to be more highly educated than the broader region, with at least one in five holding a graduate degree or higher.

Housing conditions present another layer of vulnerability. Many CHHA homes were built in the 1960s, predating modern statewide building codes designed to improve hurricane resilience. As a result, these older structures may be more susceptible to damage from storm surges and high winds.

From an economic standpoint, the CHHA contains primarily low intensity uses, conservation lands, and single-family residences. The city's commercial activity is largely concentrated along Highway 98 and outside the CHHA. Therefore, while storm impacts within the CHHA could significantly affect private property owners and an older, higher-income residential population, they are less likely to disrupt the city's core economic functions. The primary consequences of CHHA damage would be borne by homeowners, local infrastructure, and emergency response operations rather than the city's broader economic base.

E. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Emergency management efforts in the City of Gulf Breeze are guided by the Santa Rosa County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP), prepared in accordance with Chapter 252, Florida Statutes. The CEMP provides the framework for managing all phases of emergency management, prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery for both natural and human-caused hazards. Gulf Breeze is included in the Santa Rosa County CEMP and participates in coordinated planning and response activities to protect residents, property, and critical infrastructure.

1. Evacuation Procedures and Zones

In the event of a hurricane or other emergency, the City of Gulf Breeze follows the direction of the Santa Rosa County Office of Emergency Management in implementing coordinated response activities. These efforts include issuing warnings, disseminating



public information, managing communications, and coordinating evacuations, shelter operations, and related services. Depending on the severity and projected impacts of a storm, residents in Gulf Breeze, particularly those in coastal and low-lying areas, may be advised or required to evacuate to ensure public safety and allow emergency personnel to conduct critical operations. Gulf Breeze falls within multiple evacuation zones, as shown in **Map V-6**, and coordinates with both Santa Rosa and Escambia counties to maintain consistency with the regional evacuation plan.

2. Evacuation Clearance Times

Clearance time refers to the total time needed for all evacuees to reach safety once an evacuation begins. It depends on factors, such as the number of people evacuating, available vehicles, road capacity, and elevation, and special considerations for medical facilities and residents with special needs.

Clearance time begins when the first evacuating vehicle enters the road network (as defined by a hurricane evacuation behavioral response curve) and ends when the last evacuating vehicle reaches an assumed point of safety. Clearance time includes:

- Mobilization Time: the time required by evacuees to prepare for evacuation and enter the road network.
- Travel Time: the time needed to travel along the road network.
- Queuing Delay Time: the cumulative times for all stops caused by traffic congestion.

Clearance time does not relate to the time any one vehicle spends traveling on the road network and does not include time needed for local officials to assemble and make a decision to evacuate.

According to the Northwest Florida Hurricane Evacuation Study (1999), the worst-case evacuation time for the region is approximately twelve hours and fifteen minutes for Category E zones. Because Gulf Breeze relies on limited bridge connections and can experience heavy traffic during evacuations, Santa Rosa County may issue evacuation orders earlier than the study's estimates to ensure residents have adequate time to reach safety. **Table V-3** presents the hurricane evacuation clearance times for Santa Rosa County according to the Florida Division of Emergency Management's Statewide Regional Evacuation Study Program.

Table V-2. 2025 Evacuation Clearance Times

Clearance Time Type	Level A (hrs)	Level B (hrs)	Level C (hrs)	Level D (hrs)	Level E (hrs)
BASE SCENARIO					
Clearance Time to Shelter (Zone Clearance Time)	13	13	13	13.5	14
In-County Clearance Time	15.5	19.5	21.5	39.5	40
Out of County Clearance Time	15.5	19.5	21.5	39.5	40
OPERATIONAL SCENARIO					
Clearance Time to Shelter (Zone Clearance Time)	13	13	13	13	13
In-County Clearance Time	15.5	16	19	26	33
Out of County Clearance Time	15.5	16	19	26	33

Source: Florida Division of Emergency Management, 2025

3. Emergency Shelters

An important part of hurricane evacuation planning for Gulf Breeze is ensuring that adequate public shelter capacity is available to meet demand during storm events. Santa Rosa County Emergency Management, in coordination with the American Red Cross, local governments, and volunteer organizations, oversees emergency shelters for impacted and displaced residents. Hurricane shelters are opened as needed when evacuation orders are issued, and openings are announced through local media, press conferences, and public notifications. Shelter operations follow the County's Emergency Support Function Plans for Mass Care and Health and Medical Services guides, with additional information available in the Santa Rosa County Hurricane Procedures booklet. **Table V-3** lists the shelters in Santa Rosa County that are available to city residents. There are no shelters located within the Gulf Breeze city limits.

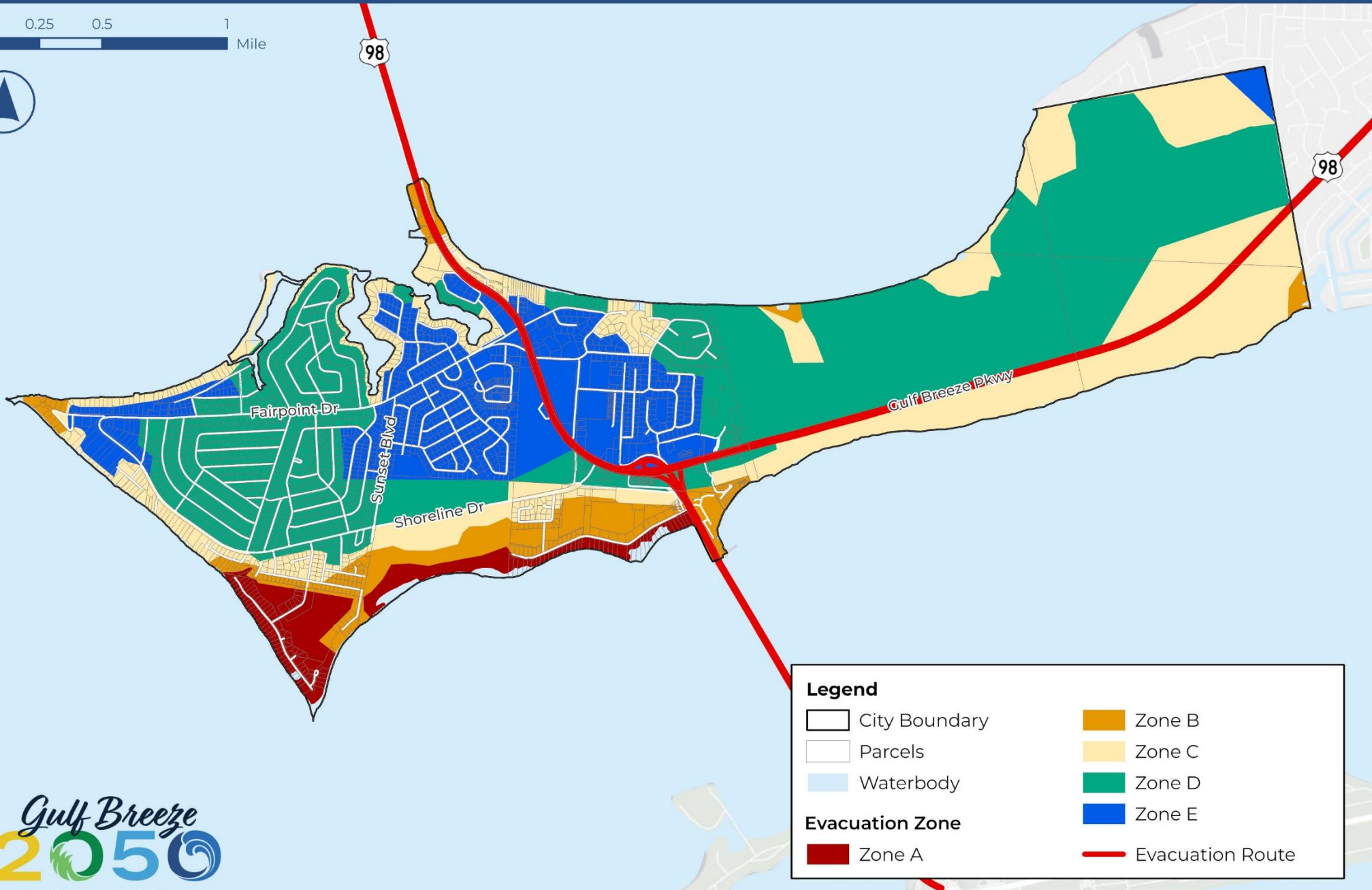
Table V-3. Santa Rosa County Emergency Shelters

Name	Address	Suitable Capacity	Operational Capacity
RISK SHELTERS			
Avalon Middle School (pet friendly)	5445 King Arthur's Way, Milton	1,559	529
Bennett C Russell Elementary School	3740 Excalibur Way, Milton	4,000	0
Chumuckla Community Center	2355 Highway 182	0	116
S.S. Dixon Intermediate School	5540 Education Dr., Pace	2,016	1,873
Jay High School	3741 School St, Jay	883	883
Milton Community Center	5629 Byrom St., Milton	383	384
West Navarre Primary School	1955 Lowe Rd., Navarre	1,823	0
SPECIAL NEEDS SHELTERS			
Sims Middle School	5500 Education Dr., Pace	704	0
Milton Community Center	5629 Byrom St., Milton	128	20
Bennett C Russell Elementary School	3740 Excalibur Way	237	132

Source: Florida Division of Emergency Management, Statewide Emergency Shelter Plan, 2025

EVACUATION ZONES & ROUTES

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



F. FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

Gulf Breeze's coastal environment, recreational identity, and unique location on the Fairpoint Peninsula make long-term coastal management both essential and increasingly challenging. As storm surges, sea level rise, and coastal erosion continue to intensify, the City's future planning efforts shall remain adaptive, data-driven, and aligned with both regional and state guidance. Maintaining up-to-date scientific information, modeling, and risk assessments will ensure that policies, development decisions, and capital planning reflect current and projected coastal conditions.

The city shall continue coordinating closely with Santa Rosa County, the Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program (PPBEP), FEMA, and regional emergency management agencies to align mitigation, restoration, and hazard planning activities. Consistency with the Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS), Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP), Flood Mitigation Plan, and countywide Vulnerability Assessment will remain central to strengthening resilience and preparing for future coastal hazards.

As growth pressures persist and redevelopment occurs within the Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA), the City will monitor demographic shifts and the concentration of vulnerable populations. A significant share of CHHA households include individuals with disabilities or lacking access to a vehicle. These factors increase evacuation difficulty and slow recovery time. Ensuring that these residents have access to preparedness resources, evacuation support, and resilient housing options will remain a high priority.

In addition, Gulf Breeze's limited roadway network and dependence on two bridge crossings heighten evacuation challenges. Continued evaluation of transportation capacity, roadway vulnerabilities, and shelter access will be necessary as evacuation clearance times increase across the region.

The City's extensive wetlands, coves, and coastal forests provide important natural defenses that help reduce storm surge and wave energy. Preserving and enhancing these systems, particularly within conservation-designated areas, will remain a central component of long-term flood resilience and water-quality protection. Shoreline stabilization, living shorelines, and habitat restoration should continue to be explored as preferred alternatives to armoring where feasible.

To further strengthen the city's long-term coastal resilience, the city shall consider the following as part of its update to the Comprehensive Plan:

1. Update Flood and Coastal Modeling

A city-specific Vulnerability Assessment would improve understanding of risks to critical facilities, infrastructure networks, natural resources, and residential areas within the CHHA. This would include updated sea level rise projections, stormwater system impacts, erosion trends, and repetitive loss areas. A local Vulnerability Assessment would also re-evaluate existing assets that exist within the CHHA to find potential nonconformities and strategize ways to relocate such assets. Overall, a city-specific Vulnerability Assessment would allow the city to better understand risks to critical facilities, infrastructure networks, and community assets, as well as inform future

planning, investment, and resilience strategies. As a result, the City could better manage and reduce flooding, maintenance, and ongoing improvements.

2. Evaluate Redevelopment and Retreat Strategies

As opportunities arise, the City will continue to transition the most vulnerable residential areas toward lower intensity uses through conservation acquisitions, voluntary buyouts, or redevelopment standards that reduce long-term exposure to storm surge.

3. Implement Shoreline Resilience Strategies

Ongoing monitoring of shoreline conditions and implementation of necessary strategies, such as wetland restoration, sediment management, and living shorelines will support ecological function and reduce erosion and flood risk.

4. Explore Adaptation and Mitigation Funding

The city will consider grant programs, special assessment districts, and partnerships with state, federal, and regional entities to support shoreline stabilization, stormwater improvements, land acquisition, and nature-based resilience projects. Establishing adaptation action areas following a Vulnerability Assessment may be one way to access funding opportunities through FDEP.

To

06



CONSERVATION



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FROM SHORELINE TO SKYLINE

[DRAFT AUG 2026]

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VI. CONSERVATION ELEMENT

A. INTRODUCTION

The Conservation Element of the Gulf Breeze Comprehensive Plan is intended to guide the protection, enhancement, and sustainable management of the City's natural resources as the community continues to grow and evolve. This element plays a critical role in ensuring that ecological integrity, environmental quality, and public access to green and blue spaces are preserved for current and future generations.

The Data and Analysis section of this Element establishes the factual foundation for future conservation efforts. It evaluates existing conditions, identifies environmental programs, and highlights key areas of ecological importance. This information supports the development of goals, objectives, and policies that will guide the City in making informed decisions related to land use planning, water resource protection, tree preservation, air quality, wildlife corridors, and climate adaptation.

B. NATURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

1. Wetlands

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), wetlands are areas where water is present at or near the surface for significant portions of the year. These vital ecosystems provide a wide range of essential environmental services, including natural water retention, flood control, and stormwater filtration by removing excess nutrients and particulates. In addition to their hydrological functions, wetlands play a critical role in sustaining Florida's diverse native vegetation and wildlife, serving as habitat for numerous plant and animal species and contributing to the overall ecological health and resilience of the region.

Wetlands can be classified into two generalized categories: coastal (tidal) and inland (non-tidal). Coastal wetlands, which often line oceanic bodies of water, tend to remain muddy or sandy with little vegetation. Inland wetlands, which are often found along river floodplains and lake perimeters, tend to be marshy and highly vegetated. Inland wetlands are referred to as freshwater emergent or freshwater forested/shrub wetlands and are often some of the most productive ecosystems on earth.

Wetlands throughout Florida are heavily regulated and generally protected from development and other human activities. According to the latest wetland GIS data provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service through the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI), Gulf Breeze possesses approximately 282.6 acres of wetlands (excluding lakes, ponds, and rivers). **Map VI-1** depicts all the wetlands within the city and **Table VI-1** provides the acreage of each wetland type.

Table VI-1. Wetland Acreage

Wetland Type	Acres
Estuarine and Marine Wetland	38.1
Freshwater Emergent Wetland	23.8

Wetland Type	Acres
Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland	220.7
Total	282.6

Source: US Fish and Wildlife Service,, 2024

2. Floodplains

Floodplains are another important ecological feature that contributes to a region's water flow and storage, vegetative health, groundwater refreshment, and water quality. Whereas wetlands remain wet throughout the year, floodplain areas are next to bodies of water that experience flooding at different points in time.

Floodplains are comprised of two categories: 100-year floodplain or 1% annual chance of flood and 500-year floodplain or 0.2% annual chance of flood. There is a total of 873.8 acres of floodplains in Gulf Breeze, as shown on **Map VI-2** and detailed in **Table VI-2**. Approximately 470.6 acres are classified as 100-year floodplains while roughly 403.2 acres are categorized as 500-year floodplains. When comparing the locations of wetlands and floodplains within the community using **Map VI-1** and **Map VI-2**, significant portions of these critical environmental features often overlap. This is because both wetlands and floodplains are typically found within the lowest-lying areas of a community.

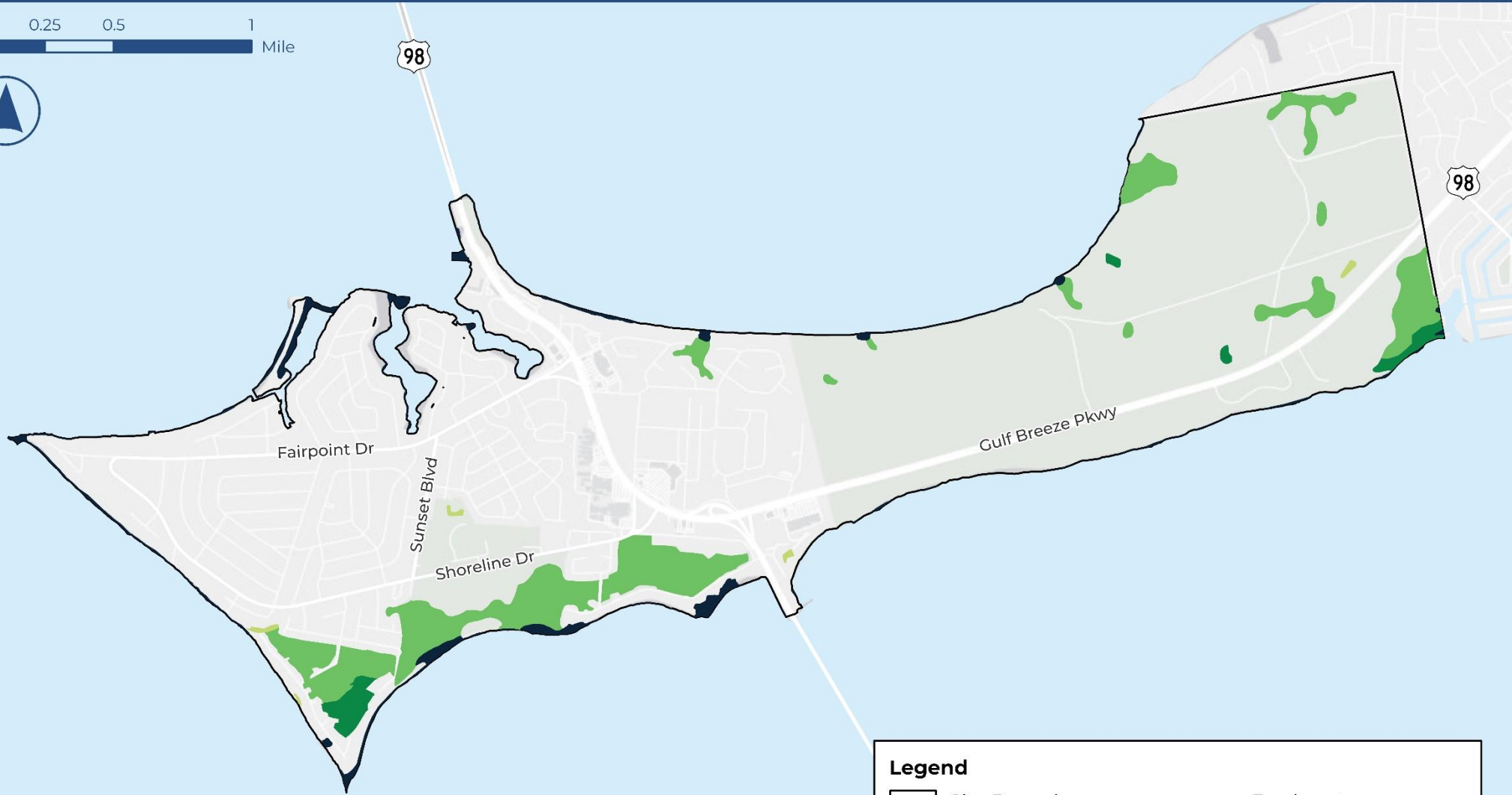
Table VI-2. Floodplain Acreage

Floodplain	Acres		
	Outside Gulf Islands	Inside Gulf Islands	Total
100-Year Floodplain	354.1	116.6	470.6
500-Year Floodplain	82.8	320.4	403.2
Total	436.9	436.9	873.8

Source: FEMA, 2024

WETLAND INVENTORY

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



Legend

- City Boundary
- Waterbody

Wetland Type

- Estuarine and Marine Wetland

- Freshwater Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
- Freshwater Pond

FLOODPLAIN INVENTORY

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



98

98

Gulf Islands
National
Seashore

Legend

 City Boundary

 Waterbody

 Gulf Islands National Seashore

Floodplain

 100 - Year Floodplain

 500 - Year Floodplain

3. Aquifer Recharge and Discharge Areas

Aquifer recharge refers to the downward movement of water from the land surface into underground water-bearing zones, known as aquifers. Aquifers store groundwater and serve as the primary source of potable water for the State of Florida. Recharge typically occurs through precipitation, surface water infiltration, irrigation, and soil moisture.

Aquifer recharge areas not only replenish aquifers but also remove natural and artificial pollutants. Therefore, protecting these aquifer recharge areas is crucial in maintaining the City's potable water sources. In contrast, aquifer discharge involves the upward movement of groundwater from the aquifer to the surface, occurring naturally through springs, seeps, and base flow to surface waters. Aquifer recharge and discharge areas are classified into six categories: recharge (low, medium, and high) and discharge (low, medium and high). The City of Gulf Breeze is entirely located within a low discharge area, as seen in **Map VI-3**.

AQUIFER RECHARGE

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



Legend

- City Boundary
- Waterbody
- Low Discharge

C. VEGETATION & WILDLIFE

1. Land Use and Land Cover

All five water management districts in Florida produce land use and land cover maps. These maps are produced using aerial photography and a standardized land use classification system to categorize the entirety of each water management district's boundaries into generalized land use and land cover classes. LULC information helps illustrate the relationships between human activities, land surface characteristics, and water resources. The classification system also provides insight into the vegetative communities present in a given area.

The Northwest Florida Water Management recently updated their LULC map and the results for Gulf Breeze can be found in **Table VI-3** and **Map VI-4**.

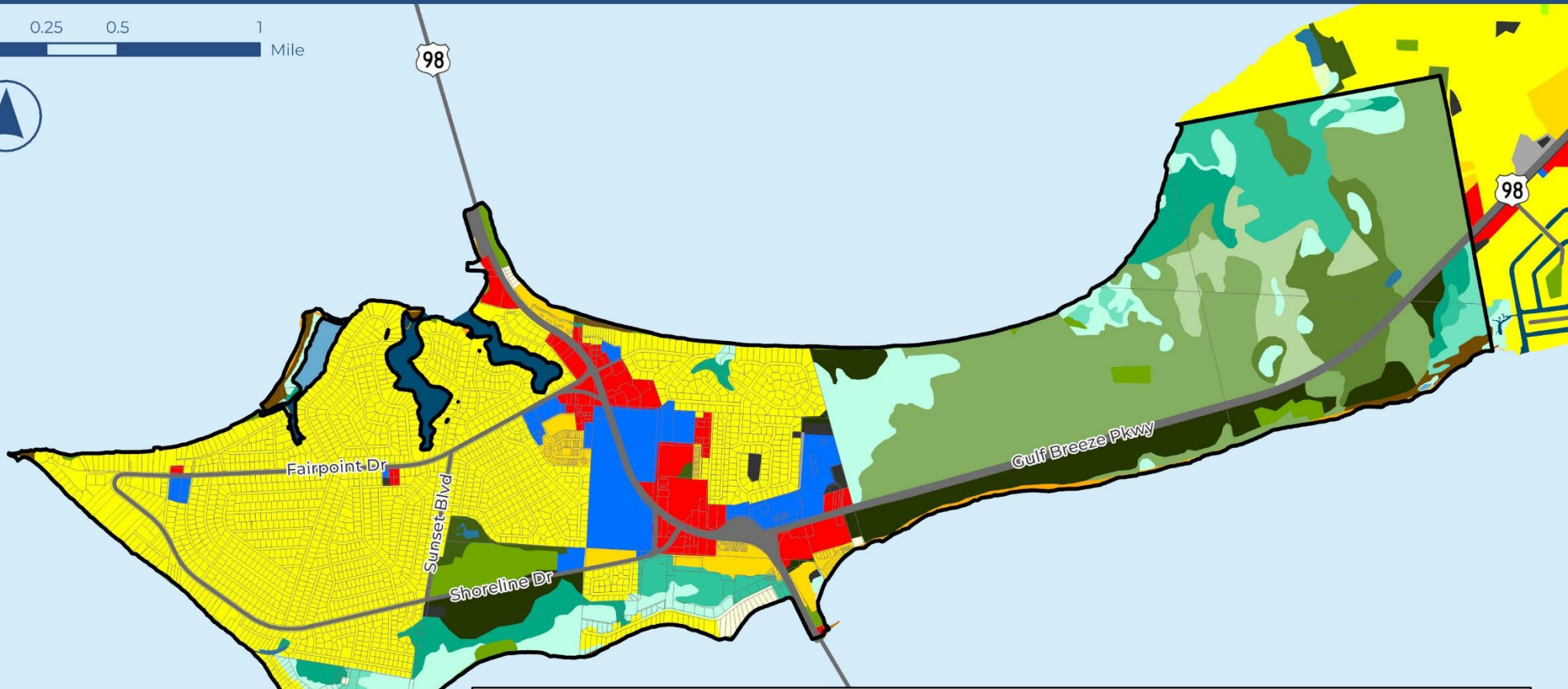
Table VI-3. Land Use and Land Cover

Land Use / Land Cover	Acres	Percent
Residential Medium Density	1,021.6	34.2%
Shrub and Brushland	527.3	17.6%
Vegetated Non-Forested Wetlands	230.6	7.7%
Upland Hardwood Forests	168.5	5.6%
Wetland Forested Mixed	131.8	4.4%
Institutional	131.7	4.4%
Commercial and Services	117.3	3.9%
Upland Coniferous Forests	108.8	3.6%
Wetland Hardwood Forests	104.4	3.5%
Transportation	89.1	3.0%
Herbaceous	87.2	2.9%
Recreational	77.5	2.6%
Residential High Density	62.0	2.1%
Wetland Coniferous Forests	35.5	1.2%
Sand Other Than Beaches	20.4	0.7%
Beaches Other Than Swimming Beaches	15.1	0.5%
Upland Mixed Forests	14.4	0.5%
Residential Low Density	12.9	0.4%
Bays and Estuaries	12.6	0.4%
Utilities	11.4	0.4%
Reservoirs	4.0	0.1%
Streams and Waterways	2.4	0.1%
Lakes	1.4	0.0%
Disturbed Lands	1.3	0.0%
Open Land	1.0	0.0%
Exposed Rock	0.9	0.0%
Total	2,991.3	100.0%

Source: Northwest Florida Water Management District, 2025

LAND USE / LAND COVER

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



Legend

City Boundary

Parcel

Land Use / Land Cover

Specialty Farms

Cropland and Pastureland

Residential Low Density

Residential Medium Density

Residential High Density

Commercial and Services

Institutional

Recreational

Utilities

Transportation

Disturbed Lands

Open Land

Streams and Waterways

Reservoirs

Lakes

Bays and Estuaries

Vegetated Non-Forested Wetlands

Wetland Coniferous Forests

Wetland Forested Mixed

Wetland Hardwood Forests

Herbaceous

Shrub and Brushland

Upland Coniferous Forests

Upland Mixed Forests

Upland Hardwood Forests

Beaches Other Than Swimming Beaches

Exposed Rock

Sand Other Than Beaches

2. Threatened and Endangered Species

Gulf Breeze is home to a wide array of wildlife species, many of which are currently considered to be threatened or endangered. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is the primary agency responsible for the continued identification and protection of these vulnerable species within the State. The Commission classifies Florida's threatened or endangered wildlife into five categories of special status: federally designated endangered; federally designated threatened; state designated threatened; state designated endangered; and species of special concern, which are also listed in **Table VI-4**.

Table VI-4. Threatened and/or Endangered Designations

Designation	Acronym	Description
Federally designated Endangered	FE	Species are in danger of extinction if the deleterious factors affecting their population continue to operate.
Federally designated Threatened	FT	Species that are likely to become endangered in the nation within the foreseeable future if current trends continue.
State-designated Threatened	ST	Species that are likely to become endangered in the state within the foreseeable future if current trends continue.
State-designated Endangered	SE	Species are in danger of extinction if the deleterious factors affecting their population continue to operate.
Species of Special Concern	SSC	Species that do not fit into the previous categories yet warrant special attention.

Source: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, 2024

There are currently 22 threatened and/or endangered animal species listed in Santa Rosa County. There are two amphibians, four birds, four clams and mussels, five fishes, and seven reptiles. **Table VI-5** provides a detailed list of these species and their habitats. There are also 48 plant and lichen species that are threatened and or endangered in Santa Rosa County. **Table VI-6** provides a detailed list of these plant and lichen species and their current status. Threatened and/or endangered species lists are compiled at the County-level; therefore, some of the species listed below may not be actively present within the City of Gulf Breeze. In addition, sea turtle nesting habitats are generally limited to the Gulf shoreline and do not extend to bay or sound environments; as a result, sea turtles have been excluded from the list below.

Table VI-5. Threatened or Endangered Animal Species in Santa Rosa County

Scientific/ Common Name	Habitat	Federal Status	State Status
Amphibians			
Ambystoma Bishopi / Reticulated Flatwoods Salamander	Post-larval individuals inhabit mesic longleaf pine (Pinus palustris)-wiregrass (Aristida stricta) flatwoods and savannas. The terrestrial habitat is best described as a topographically flat or slightly rolling wiregrass-dominated grassland having little to no midstory and an open overstory of widely scattered longleaf pine. Low-growing shrubs, such as saw palmetto (Serenoa repens), gallberry (Ilex glabra) and blueberries (Vaccinium spp.), co-exist with grasses, and forbs in the ground cover. Ground cover plant diversity is usually very high. The underlying soil is typically poorly drained sand that becomes seasonally inundated.	E	FE
Lithobates Okaloosae / Florida Bog Frog	Early successional shrub bog communities occur in or near shallow, nonstagnant, acid (pH 4.1-5.5) seeps and along shallow, boggy overflows of larger seepage streams that drain extensive sandy uplands. These habitats are frequently associated with lush beds of sphagnum moss and with black titi and Atlantic white cedar. Where streamside vegetation has matured, hardwood forest may be present, typically only in disturbed sites, such as utility right-of-way crossings. Eggs are laid in thin surface masses within pools in adult habitat. Males typically call from shallow water surrounded by sphagnum.	N/A	ST
Birds			
Dryobates Borealis / Red-Cockaded Woodpecker	Habitat consists of open, mature pine woodlands, rarely deciduous or mixed pine-hardwoods located near pine woodlands. Optimal habitat is characterized as a broad savanna with a scattered overstory of large pines and a dense groundcover containing a diversity of grass, forb, and shrub species. Midstory vegetation is sparse or absent.	T	FT
Cistothorus Palustris Mariana / Marian's Marsh Wren	Wetland habitats, primarily in coastal salt marshes and freshwater sites. These marshes are characterized by their emergent vegetation and are crucial for the species' breeding and shelter. They are known for their distinctive black-and-white striped triangular region on the upper back and their pale eyebrow and white throat.	N/A	ST

Scientific/ Common Name	Habitat	Federal Status	State Status
Rynchops Niger / Black Skimmer	Primarily coastal waters, including bays, estuaries, lagoons and mudflats in migration and winter, as well as quiet waters of rivers and lakes. Rest on mudflats, sandbars, and beaches.	N/A	ST
Sternula Antillarum / Least Tern	Seacoasts, beaches, bays, estuaries, lagoons, lakes, and rivers. Rests and loaves on sandy beaches, mudflats, and salt-pond dikes.	N/A	ST
Dryobates Borealis / Red-Cockaded Woodpecker	Habitat consists of open, mature pine woodlands, rarely deciduous or mixed pine-hardwoods located near pine woodlands. Optimal habitat is characterized as a broad savanna with a scattered overstory of large pines and a dense groundcover containing a diversity of grass, forb, and shrub species. Midstory vegetation is sparse or absent.	T	FT
Clams and Mussels			
Obovaria Choctawensis / Choctaw Bean	The Choctaw bean is known for large creeks and rivers with moderate current over sand to silty-sand substrates.	E	FE
Reginaia Rotulata / Round Ebonyshell	Ecological data regarding the round ebonyshell is sparse at best. This animal only occurs in one main river channel, with moderate current over sand and gravel substrate; in muddy sand and sand in moderate current; confined to the main channel of the Escambia [and its extension in Alabama, the Conecuh] River[s] in areas with moderate current and a mixture of sand and gravel substrates.	E	FE
Fusconaia Escambia / Narrow Pigtoe	This species is found primarily in the channels of small to medium-sized streams in sand, silty sand, or gravel, and in muddy sand in slight current. It may also occur in smaller streams. At least one population is found in a silty backwater area.	T	FT
Pleurobema Strodeanum / Fuzzy Pigtoe	It is found in medium-sized creeks and rivers, sand, and silty sand substrates with slow to moderate current.	T	FT
Fishes			
Acipenser Desotoi / Gulf Sturgeon	Primarily marine/estuarine in winter. Migrates to upper rivers in spring for spawning and returns to sea/estuary in fall. Some may remain near spawning areas. First two years are spent in riverine habitats. Spawns in fresh water	T	FT

Scientific/ Common Name	Habitat	Federal Status	State Status
	(sometimes tidal) are usually over bottom of hard clay, rubble, gravel, or shell. May spawn in brackish water. Most spawn in natal river. Telemetered adults in Choctawhatchee Bay area, Florida, usually were in nearshore waters 2-4 m deep in winter and spring; individuals usually remained within small areas (which typically had sandy substrate containing benthic crustaceans and annelids) for several weeks but sometimes moved long distances. Most males stayed in the Bay whereas most females were in the Gulf of Mexico or could not be detected.		
Crystallaria Asprella / Crystal Darter	This darter inhabits clear to slightly turbid water of raceways and swift to moderately swift riffles of small to medium rivers with expanses of clean sand or gravel. It does not associate with mud, clay, or submerged vegetation. Usually, it occurs in water more than 60 centimeters deep with strong current. Individuals often bury themselves in sand with only their eyes protruding, or they may hide under rocks. In Arkansas, this species was collected typically at depths of 114-148 centimeters and velocities of 46-90 centimeters per second; predominantly on gravel, small cobble, and patches of sand.	N/A	ST
Fundulus Jenkinsi / Saltmarsh Topminnow	This species prefers cord grass (Spartina) marsh with a salinity below 20 parts per thousand and is most abundant at 1-4 parts per thousand. It is characterized as a small, schooling fish that can occur in large numbers in quiet fresh waters, bays, saltwater marshes, tidal creeks, estuaries, and lagoons. It is not found on reefs or far away from shore. Exact habitat requirements are poorly known.	UR	ST
Miniellus Melanostomus / Blackmouth Shiner	Habitat includes detritus- and silt-bottomed pools and quiet backwaters (variable depth and amount of rooted aquatic vegetation), creeks, small rivers, sloughs, and oxbow lakes (with bald cypress and black gum) off the main channel of medium-sized to large streams; species has been observed in mid-water of open areas near aquatic vegetation, and, in other sites, in shallow marginal areas and around submerged dead branches or brush.	N/A	ST
Pteronotropis Welaka / Bluenose Shiner	Habitat includes deep, slow-moving, coastal creeks and small to medium rivers of varying clarity and usually with silty bottoms, often heavily choked with	N/A	ST

Scientific/ Common Name	Habitat	Federal Status	State Status
	brush and vegetation. These shiners seem to prefer deep pools and backwaters (often 1-2 meters) to more shallow areas.		
Reptiles			
Drymarchon Couperi / Eastern Indigo Snake	Habitat includes sandhill regions dominated by mature longleaf pines, turkey oaks, and wiregrass; flatwoods; most types of hammocks; coastal scrub; dry glades; palmetto flats; prairie; brushy riparian and canal corridors; and wet fields. Occupied sites are often near wetlands and frequently are in association with gopher tortoise burrows. Pineland habitat is maintained by periodic fires. Viable populations of this species require relatively large tracts of suitable habitat. Refuges include tortoise burrows, stump holes, land crab burrows, armadillo burrows, or similar sites. Eggs may be laid in gopher (Geomys) burrows.	T	FT
Alligator Mississippiensis / American Alligator	American alligators inhabit fresh and brackish marshes, ponds, lakes, rivers, swamps, bayous, canals, and large spring runs. They often bask in partially submerged logs or on land next to the water. Alligators dig dens in river or lake margins or in marshes. They spend cold winter and drought periods in the den. They depend on access to air holes to survive in ice-covered ponds.	SAT	FT(S/A)
Gopherus Polyphemus / Gopher Tortoise	Commonly occupies habitats with a well-drained sandy substrate, ample herbaceous vegetation for food, and sunlit areas for nesting. These habitat types include sandhill (pine-turkey oak), sand pine scrub, xeric hammock, pine flatwoods, dry prairie, coastal grasslands and dunes, and mixed hardwood-pine communities. Prefers open habitats that support a wide variety of herbaceous ground cover vegetation for forage. Usually abandons densely canopied areas and frequently can be found in disturbed habitats, such as roadsides, fencerows, old fields, and the edges of overgrown (unburned) uplands. Upland habitats with extensive canopies reduce the amount of direct sunlight on the ground which may hamper tortoises from reaching minimum thermal requirements for normal daily activities. Also, excessive shade decreases herbaceous vegetation essential for growth, development, and reproduction.	N/A	ST

Scientific/ Common Name	Habitat	Federal Status	State Status
Pituophis Melanoleucus / Pine Snake	Good quality pinesnake habitat appears to be characterized by xeric, pine-dominated or pine-oak (50 to 80% pine) woodland with an open, low understory established on sandy soils. Longleaf pine sandhills appear to represent critical habitat over much of the southeastern United States. Pinesnakes also require forest openings, with level, well-drained sandy soils and little shrub cover, as nesting and hibernation sites.	PS	ST

Source: Florida Natural Areas Inventory, 2025

Table VI-6. Threatened or Endangered Plant and Lichen Species in Santa Rosa County

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status
Agalinis Georgiana	Pine Barren False Foxglove	N/A	E
Calycanthus Floridus	Sweet-Shrub	N/A	E
Chrysopsis Cruiseana	Cruise's Goldenaster	N/A	E
Chrysopsis Godfreyi	Godfrey's Goldenaster	N/A	E
Conradina Glabra	Apalachicola Rosemary	E	E
Eleocharis Rostellata	Beaked Spikerush	N/A	E
Epigaea Repens	Trailing Arbutus	N/A	E
Fothergilla Milleri	Dwarf Witch-Alder	N/A	E
Juncus Gymnocarpus	Coville's Rush	N/A	E
Lepuropetalon Spathulatum	Little-People	N/A	E
Lilium Iridollae	Panhandle Lily	UR	E
Linum Macrocarpum	Spring Hill Flax	N/A	E
Macranthera Flammea	Hummingbird Flower	N/A	E
Magnolia Ashei	Ashe's Magnolia	N/A	E
Magnolia Pyramidata	Pyramid Magnolia	N/A	E
Magnolia Tripetala	Umbrella Magnolia	N/A	E
Medeola Virginiana	Indian Cucumber-Root	N/A	E
Pinguicula Primuliflora	Primrose-Flowered Butterwort	N/A	E
Platanthera Clavellata	Little Club-Spur Orchid	N/A	E
Platanthera Integra	Yellow Fringeless Orchid	N/A	E
Potamogeton Floridanus	Florida Pondweed	UR	E
Rhexia Parviflora	Small-Flowered Meadowbeauty	UR	E
Rhododendron Austrinum	Florida Flame Azalea	N/A	E
Rhynchospora Crinipes	Hairy-Peduncled Beaksedge	N/A	E
Ruellia Noctiflora	Nightflowering Wild Petunia	N/A	E
Schwalbea Americana	Chaffseed	E	E
Sideroxylon Lycioides	Buckthorn	N/A	E
Sideroxylon Thornei	Thorne's Buckthorn	N/A	E
Stewartia Malacodendron	Silky Camellia	N/A	E
Xanthorhiza Simplicissima	Yellow-Root	N/A	E
Agrimonia Incisa	Incised Groove-Bur	N/A	T
Andropogon Arctatus	Pinewoods Bluestem	N/A	T
Baptisia Hirsuta	Hairy Wild Indigo	N/A	T
Carex Baltzellii	Baltzell's Sedge	N/A	T
Dichanthelium Nudicaule	Naked-Stemmed Panic Grass	N/A	T
Hexastylis Arifolia	Little Brown Jug	N/A	T
Ilex Amelanchier	Serviceberry Holly	N/A	T
Kalmia Latifolia	Mountain Laurel	N/A	T
Lachnocaulon Digynum	Pineland Bogbutton	N/A	T
Lupinus Westianus	Gulf Coast Lupine	N/A	T
Mnesithea Tuberculosa	Piedmont Jointgrass	N/A	T
Najas Filifolia	Narrowleaf Naiad	UR	T

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status
Polygonella Macrophylla	Large-Leaved Jointweed	N/A	T
Quercus Arkansana	Arkansas Oak	N/A	T
Rhexia Salicifolia	Panhandle Meadowbeauty	UR	T
Sarracenia Rubra Ssp. Gulfensis	Gulf Coast Redflower Pitcherplant	UR	T
Tephrosia Mohrii	Pineland Hoary-Pea	N/A	T
Xyris Scabrifolia	Harper's Yellow-Eyed Grass	N/A	T

Source: Florida Natural Areas Inventory, 2025

3. Conservation Areas

There are approximately 1,498 acres of conservation land within Gulf Breeze managed by various agencies and organizations according to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI). The FNAI is the central repository for information on Florida's conservation lands. For a property to be considered conservation land by FNAI, a significant portion of the property must be undeveloped and retain most of the attributes expected in its natural condition. Inclusion in the FNAI does not prohibit future development but indicates a conservation priority designation. In addition, the managing agency or organization must demonstrate a formal commitment to the conservation of the land in its natural condition. The City of Gulf Breeze has a Conservation Land Use Category (CNS) that comprises approximately 1,400 acres of land. The Conservation Land Use Category was established for the long-term protection and preservation of publicly owned lands that contain environmentally sensitive natural resources, such as wetlands, floodplains and unique ecological communities. **Map VI-5** shows the conservation areas in Gulf Breeze. **Table VI-7** provides the name of these areas, managing organization, total acres, and acres within Gulf Breeze.

Table VI-7. Conservation Areas

Conservation Area	Management Agency	Total Acres	Acres within Gulf Breeze
Baycliff Preserve	City of Gulf Breeze	6.8	6.8
Gulf Islands National Seashore	US National Park Service	67,017.9	1,388.3
Shoreline Park South	City of Gulf Breeze	103.3	103.3
Total			1,498.36

Source: Florida Natural Areas Inventory, 2025

CONSERVATION AREAS

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



D. GULF ISLANDS NATIONAL SEASHORE

The Gulf Islands National Seashore is over 67,000 acres in size and spans across both the states of Mississippi and Florida. The park is part of the US National Park's National Seashore and is devoted to recreation and the preservation of natural and historical resources along the Gulf of America's barrier islands. The portion of the Seashore within Gulf Breeze is called the Naval Live Oaks Preserve Area and is approximately 1,388 acres in size. The Naval Live Oaks area includes the following features

- Gulf Islands National Seashore Headquarters
- Youth Pavillion
- Group Campgrounds
- Picnic Areas
- Small Boat Launch
- Nature Trails

E. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Soils

Table VI-8 provides an overview of the soil permeability, soil type, and acreages in the City of Gulf Breeze. Based on GIS data from the National Resources Conservation Service's soil survey (**Map VI-5**), the City of Gulf Breeze is comprised of 72.0% excessively drained soils in the form of Kureb and Lakeland Sands with some very poorly drained areas in the southwestern area of the City's boundaries.

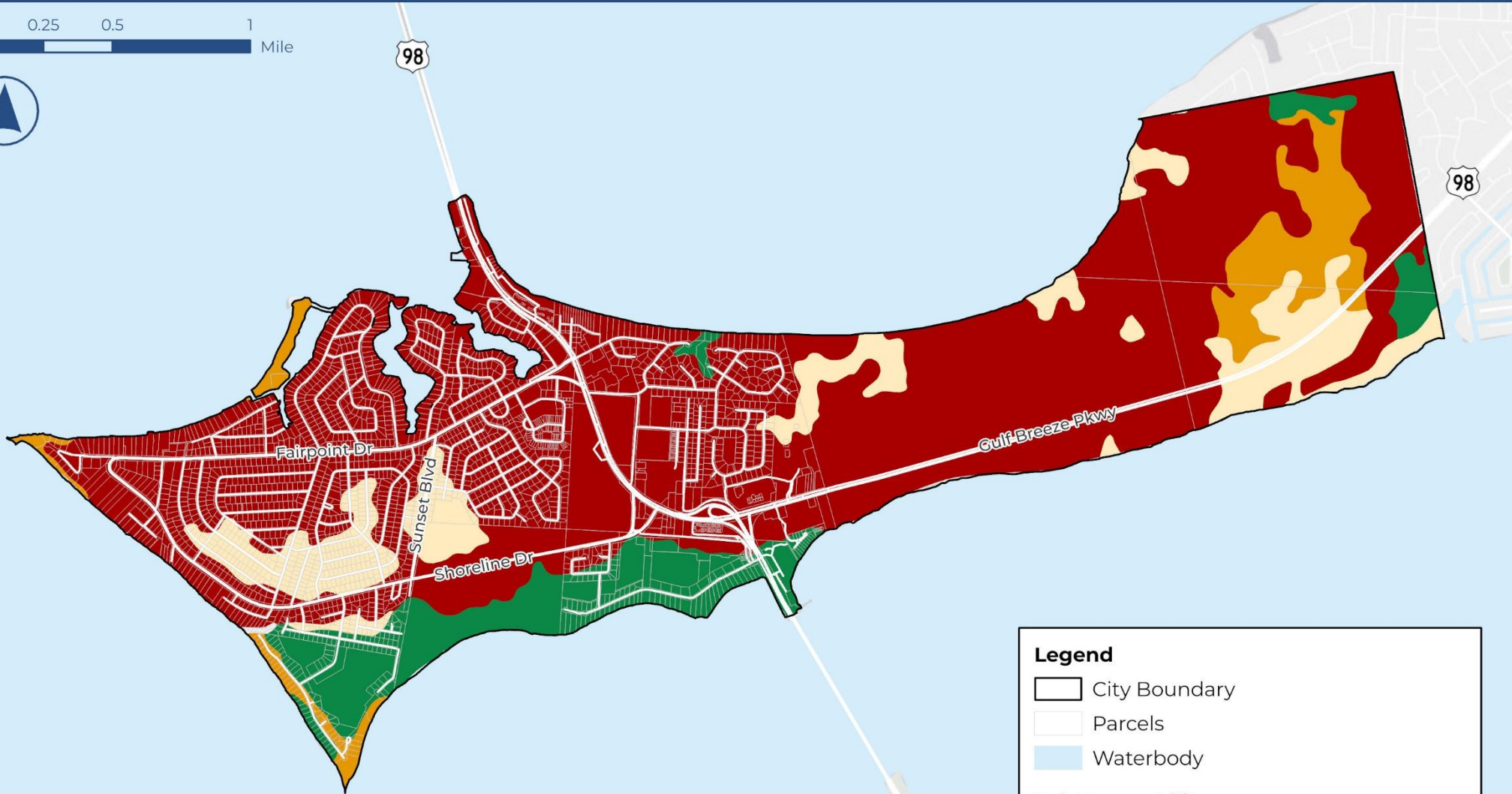
Table VI-8. Soil Permeability

Soil Permeability	Soil Type	Acres	Percent
Excessively Drained	Kureb Sand	1,819.5	61.0%
	Lakeland Sand	327.0	11.0%
Moderately Well Drained	Pactolus Loamy Sand	182.8	6.1%
Poorly Drained	Leon Sand	342.1	11.5%
Very Poorly Drained	Bohicket And Handsboro Soils	48.4	1.6%
	Dorovan-Pamlico Association	155.3	5.2%
	Rutlege Loamy Sand	105.3	3.5%
Total		2,980.4	100.0%

Source: National Resource Conservation Service; City of Gulf Breeze, 2025

SOIL PERMEABILITY

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



Legend

- City Boundary
- Parcels
- Waterbody

Soil Permeability

- Excessively drained
- Moderately well drained
- Poorly drained
- Very poorly drained

2. Air Quality

The Office of Air Monitoring at the Florida Department of Environmental Protection is responsible for monitoring air quality in the State of Florida. The office operates one air monitoring site in Santa Rosa County, located at Woodlawn Beach Middle School. This site monitors air quality for ozone and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}). Air quality in Santa Rosa County has remained in the good to moderate range over the last ten years.

3. Hazardous Waste

The City of Gulf Breeze does not regularly collect or dispose of hazardous waste. However, residents can dispose of household hazardous waste year-round at the Household Hazardous Waste Center located at the Central Landfill in Milton (6337 Da Lisa Road, Milton, FL 32583). The city, in coordination with Santa Rosa County, has an annual Amnesty Day that allows residents to be able to dispose up to 5 gallons of hazardous waste without having to go to the Central landfill.

4. Water Quality

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) requires annual reporting on water quality. The report is designed to provide information on radioactive contaminants, inorganic contaminants, and disinfectants. The most recent annual report was completed in 2024 and is available on the City's website. The City of Gulf Breeze has been installing residential backflow devices at any connection that has an alternate water source, such as an irrigation meter or a permitted well. These steps have been taken to prevent serious chemical or microbiological contamination events in our drinking water systems that could shut down the community's water supply.

F. FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

As the City of Gulf Breeze continues to develop into the 2050 planning horizon, the protection of natural systems and their ecological services will become increasingly important. In order to protect Gulf Breeze's natural environment, the city will consider the following strategies.

1. Gulf Islands National Seashore

Over 1,380 acres of the City are included in the Gulf Islands National Seashore. The City will continue to coordinate with the US National Park Service to protect the Naval Live Oaks Preserve.

2. Protection of Natural Resources

The City of Gulf Breeze has a multitude of policies related to the protection of natural resources such as surface water bodies, wetlands, soils, fisheries, wildlife habitat, marine habitat, minerals, and native vegetation. The City will continue to implement these policies and will update when necessary.



07



RECREATION & OPEN SPACE



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FROM SHORELINE TO SKYLINE

[DRAFT AUG 2026]

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VII. RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

A. INTRODUCTION

The goal of the Recreation and Open Space Element (ROSE) is to ensure that the City of Gulf Breeze continues to provide high-quality recreational and open space facilities that meet the needs of existing and future populations. The data and analysis section of this Element is the factual basis for policies that will guide future investments, improvements, and preservation efforts. The Element documents the current inventory of facilities, calculates the current level of service (LOS), projects the City's 2050 park needs, and identifies opportunities to enhance Gulf Breeze's recreation and open space system. It should be noted that only sites that are officially designated as parks have been included in this element. Thus, vacant public lands and open space typically found in medians, buffers, retention areas and similar facilities are not included as part of this inventory. Looking ahead to the 2050 planning horizon, the ROSE Element guides the Comprehensive Plan policies with the goal of a balanced, resilient, and accessible recreation and open space system.

B. INVENTORY OF RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE FACILITIES

The City of Gulf Breeze owns and maintains a diverse range of active and passive parks and recreational facilities. The inventory below summarizes all publicly accessible facilities, including their acreage, amenities, classifications, and operational characteristics. This data serves as the factual basis for determining levels of service (LOS), identifying system gaps, and informing future capital investments and policy decisions.

Parks may be categorized as regional, community, neighborhood based on their size, amenities, and service area. Community and neighborhood are intended to serve local and surrounding neighborhoods, whereas regional parks serve larger areas and emphasize passive recreation. In addition to the neighborhood and community parks, the city's inventory also includes special use facilities, such as community centers, dog parks, and skate parks. The City of Gulf Breeze also benefits from extensive public waterfront access.

The public parks within the City of Gulf Breeze are listed in **Table VII-1** and shown on **Map VII-1**.

1. Regional Parks

Regional parks provide large scale passive and active recreational opportunities, protect sensitive ecosystems, and serve regional populations. Public amenities may include trails, scenic overlooks, interpretive programs, and limited facilities depending on the site's management objectives. The City of Gulf Breeze houses the Naval Live Oaks Nature Preserve, which is part of the Gulf Islands National Seashore. Although this facility is not city owned or-maintained, it provides substantial passive recreation opportunities for residents.

2. Community Parks

Community parks serve the recreational needs of multiple neighborhoods and are often located along major roadways for convenient access. These parks are commonly considered “ride-to” facilities, accommodating visitors from across the community. Providing a broad range of amenities, community parks may have athletic courts, multipurpose fields, playgrounds, pavilions, picnic areas, and restroom facilities. Many also include a community center with meeting space, multipurpose rooms, and in some cases, indoor recreational amenities. Community parks may also function as neighborhood-level parks for nearby residents.

Community parks encompass approximately 187 acres within the city. Shoreline Park, the city’s signature community park, spans approximately 157 acres (not including the smaller neighborhood parks encompassed within this park) and offers a diverse range of recreational amenities. Shoreline Park North and Shoreline Park South function as complementary areas, each providing distinct recreational experiences. Shoreline Park North includes athletic fields and courts, playgrounds, hiking trails, community facilities, and supporting amenities, while Shoreline Park South offers a waterfront setting with a boat launch, swimming area, fishing pier, kayaking access, shoreline views, picnic areas, and trails.

3. Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks are intended to serve the recreational needs of nearby residents. These parks are typically designed as “walk-to” facilities and are located within residential areas to provide convenient access without the need to cross or travel along major roadways. Neighborhood parks generally include amenities, such as playgrounds, limited athletic courts, and multipurpose fields to support informal and organized activities. Many also offer picnic areas, pavilions, grills, and restroom facilities.

Neighborhood parks comprise approximately 3.14 acres within the city. Sunset Park, a 0.80 neighborhood park located within Shoreline Park North, features playground equipment, a seasonal splash pad, shaded canopies, benches, and picnic tables, and primarily serves children and families.

4. Special Use Facilities

Special use facilities are designed to serve specific recreational or community purposes that do not fall under traditional park classifications. Examples include Bark Park Dog Park in Shoreline Park South and Sunset Stake Park. These facilities provide specialized amenities tailored to particular activities or user groups.

Table VII-1. Inventory of Public Parks and Recreation Facilities

Map # Name	Acreage	Facilities & Amenities	General Description
Regional Parks			
Naval Like Oaks Nature Preserve (Gulf Island National Seashore)	1,388.26	Trails, Biking, Hiking, Snorkeling, Swimming, Small Boat Launch; Birdwatching, Historic Forts, Shaded Picnic Areas, Campgrounds; Youth Pavilion, Restrooms	Large federally managed coastal preserve offering extensive recreational opportunities.
Community Parks			
13. Baycliff Park	6.70	Trails, Boardwalk; Coastal Access	Coastal nature preserve featuring trails, an elevated boardwalk, and shoreline access.
2. Deadman's Island	12.18	Beach Access via Boat, Snorkeling, Paddleboarding, Kayaking; Fishing, Habitat Areas	Natural island preserve supporting passive recreation, environmental stewardship, and coastal habitat conservation.
5, 6. Shoreline Park North	52.55	Athletic Fields, Courts, Playgrounds, Splash Pad, Hiking Trails; Benches; Community Center, Covered Picnic Tables, Restrooms	Major recreation campus with active sports facilities, playgrounds, trails, and community programming.
7. Shoreline Park South	102.3	Boat Launch, Swimming Area, Hiking Trails, Kayaking, Canoe; Fishing Pier, Shoreline Access; Covered Picnic Tables, Pavilion with BBQ Area, Restrooms	Waterfront park with a boat launch, shoreline access, and passive recreation amenities, including a large gazebo.
1. Mariner's Landing Park	11.05	Boat Launch, Kayaking, Canoe, Swings; Fishing Pier, Water access; Picnic shelters	Renovated waterfront park featuring a fishing pier, picnic shelters, swings, and boat ramp facilities.

Map # Name	Acreage	Facilities & Amenities	General Description
15. Vista Park	1.09	Fishing Pier	Passive recreation area centered around a public fishing pier.
4. Woodland Park	1.34	Toddler-Age Playground, Swings, Kayak Launch, Paddleboarding; Fishing. Pedestrian Bayou and Dock Access, Water Fountain, Benches; Pavilions, Picnic Tables, Musical Playground	Shaded neighborhood park with play structures, picnic amenities, and bayou access.
Neighborhood Parks			
3. Highpoint Park	0.90	Tennis/Pickleball Courts	Local recreation facility with tennis and pickle ball courts.
11. Hodges Park	0.21	Playground; Benches; Pavilions, Picnic Tables	Small neighborhood park providing play equipment and picnic facilities for nearby residents.
14. McClure Dr Park	0.28	Playground; Benches; Pavilions, Picnic Tables	Small neighborhood park with playground equipment and surrounding open space.
16. Sunset Kids Park	0.80 ¹	Playground; Splash Pad; ; Benches; Shaded Canopy; Picnic Tables	Children's park with playground facilities and a seasonal splash pad located within the Shoreline Park North campus.
12. Williamsburg Park	0.95	Playground; Benches; Pavilions, Picnic Tables	Neighborhood green space with playground facilities, open lawn area, and seating.
Special Use Facilities			
9. Bark Park Dog Park – Shoreline Park South ¹	0.95 ¹	Off-Leash Dog Exercise Area; Tree-bordered Open Space	Designated fenced dog park within Shoreline Park South.

Map # Name	Acreage	Facilities & Amenities	General Description
17. Shoreline Disc Golf Course	10.97 ¹	Disc Golf Course	18-hole Disc Golf Course located in Shoreline Park North.
8. Sunset Skate Park	0.14 ¹	Skate Park	Concrete skatepark within the Shoreline Park North recreation complex.
10. Beachside Dog Park	0.17 ¹	Dog Exercise Area, Swimming Area; Boardwalk Access	Waterfront off-leash dog area with designated swim zone and boardwalk access located at Shoreline Park South.
Gulf Breeze Community Center	1.01	Two Dual Court Gymnasiums, Tennis Courts, Pickleball Courts, Basketball Courts, Volleyball Courts, Multi-Use Fields, Batting Cages, Turf Field; Benches; Restrooms, Auditorium, Multi-purpose Rooms	Major indoor-outdoor recreation hub providing year-round programming and community events.
Natural Areas & Preserves			
Other Conservation Lands	76.4	City-owned conservation lands	
Total	1,657.80		
Total not including Regional Parks	269.54		
(1) Acreage not counted toward total as it is included in Shoreline Park's total acreage			

Source: City of Gulf Breeze, 2025

PARKS AND RECREATION

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



Legend

City Boundary

Waterbody

Community Center

Conservation Area

National Park

City Park

1. Mariners Landing Park

2. Deadman's Island

3. Highpoint Drive Park

4. Woodland Park

5. Shoreline Park

6. Shoreline Park North

7. Shoreline Park South

8. Sunset Skate Park

9. Bark Park Dog Park

10. Beachside Dog Park

11. Hodges Park

12. Williamsburg Park

13. Baycliff Park

14. McClure Dr Park

15. Vista Park

16. Sunset Kids Park

17. Shoreline Disc Golf Course

5. Trails

Trails are a key component of a vibrant and connected community. They link neighborhoods, parks, schools, and commercial areas, supporting healthy lifestyles, alternative transportation, and environmental stewardship. In addition, trails enhance community character, connect people to natural and cultural resources, and contribute to economic vitality by attracting visitors and promoting local businesses. **Table VII-2** and **Map VII-2** highlight the existing trail network. For the purpose of this Element, trails are not included in the calculation of park acreage for LOS standards. While trails provide important recreational and connectivity benefits, they function differently from parks as they are linear in nature and serve a distinct role from traditional parkland.

a. City Trails

The City maintains a trail network of roughly 11.11 miles, comprising of natural-surface paths, elevated boardwalks, and paved walking and biking routes. These trails are grouped into four primary categories based on their surface type:

i. Natural-Surface Trails (Dirt)

Natural-surface trails make up the majority of the system and provide a more rustic, park-like experience for walking, jogging, and causal exploration. These trails often wind through wooded areas or natural landscapes that allow users to connect with the local environment.

ii. Concrete Trails

Concrete segments offer durable, low-maintenance, and accessible surfaces ideal for walking, jogging, and biking. They are designed to accommodate users of all ages and abilities and often connect key community destinations.

iii. Boardwalk Trails (Wood & Composite)

Boardwalk trails offer elevated access through wetlands and sensitive coastal areas, minimizing environmental impacts while providing scenic views. These trails are particularly suited for nature observation, birdwatching, and connecting otherwise inaccessible areas. provide elevated access through wetlands and coastal areas.

iv. Asphalt Trails

Asphalt trails offer smooth, continuous surfaces suitable for biking, jogging, and walking. They are typically integrated into urban or residential areas to provide safe and efficient routes for active transportation.

b. National Park Service Trails

The Naval Live Oaks Nature Preserve, which is part of the Gulf Islands National Seashore, features several miles of publicly accessible hiking trails. Trail mileage in this plan reflects routes as presented by the National Park Service. For planning purposes, trails have been consolidated into a single listing per named trail, with mileage presented as approximate range where multiple route options exist. Note that internal datasets may divide trails into multiple segments, such as

loops, accessible sections, or connectors, which can result in differing mileage totals.

One of the City's most significant trail assets is the SUN Trail. The Florida SUN Trail program funds paved multi-use trails statewide as part of the Florida Greenways and Trails System. FDOT is conducting a study to develop and evaluate improvements, including bicycle and pedestrian connectivity improvements, for U.S. 98 from east of the Pensacola Bay Bridge to Bayshore Road. This project would help to close the existing gap between the Pensacola Bay Bridge's multi-use path and the Naval Live Oaks Nature Preserve, and result in a more comprehensive trail network connecting Pensacola Beach, Gulf Breeze, and the Gulf Islands National Seashore.

The Multi-Use Pathway (MUP) is a four-mile paved trail along Fairpoint Drive and Shoreline Drive that connects Shoreline Park to surrounding residential neighborhoods. The City is currently planning Phase II of the MUP to extend the trail network further, building on The MUP's role as a central spine of non-motorized connectivity within Gulf Breeze.

Table VII-2. Inventory of Trails

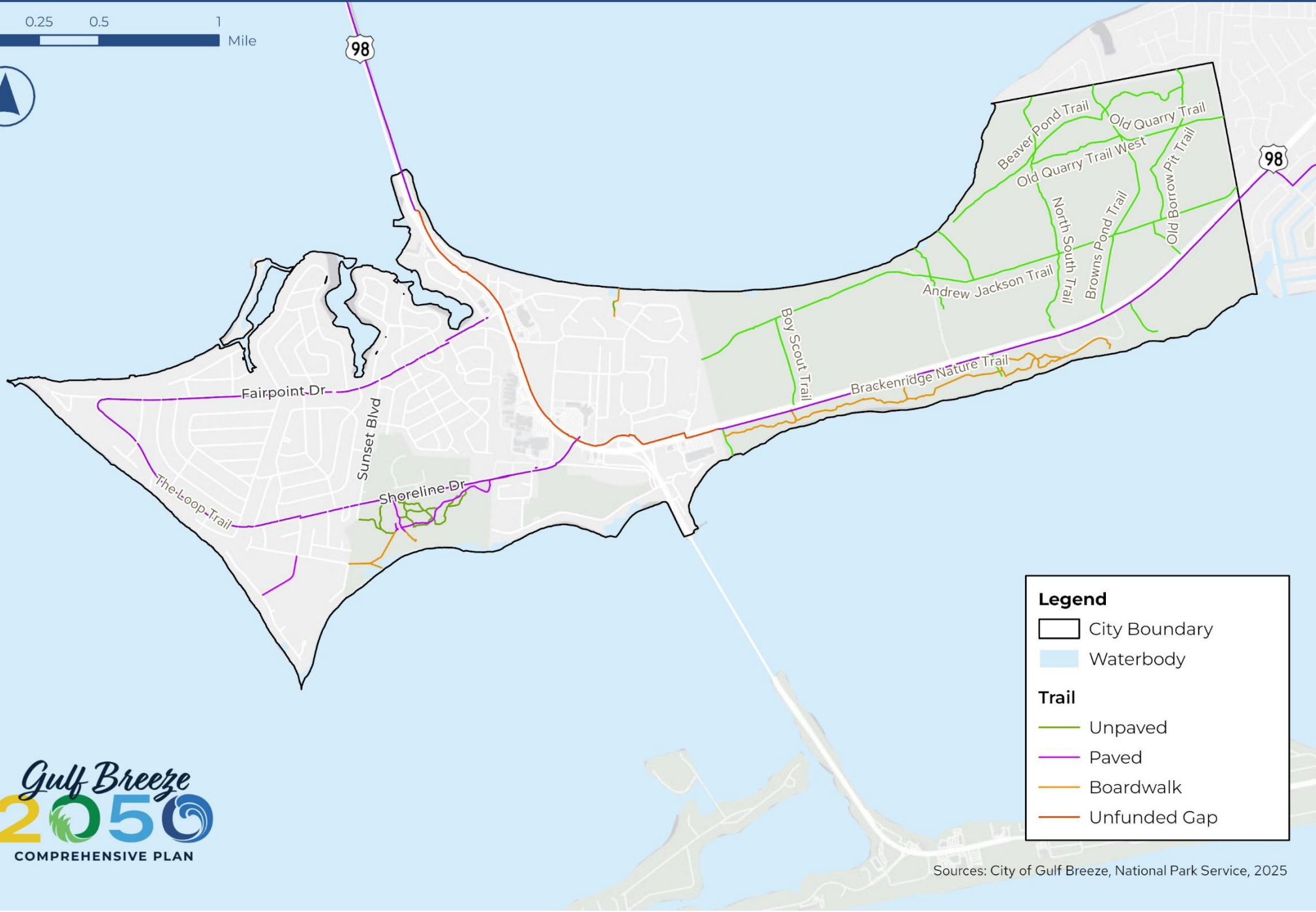
Trail Name	Approximate Mileage
City – Natural Surface Trails	
Bark Park Alley	0.19
Bench Oak Trail	0.15
Eagle's Nest Trail	0.17
Heritage Oak Trail	0.12
Mulberry Trail	0.12
Laurel Oak Trail	0.09
Miscellaneous unnamed trail segments	0.04
Plantation Hills Trail	0.05
Sand Pine Trail	0.15
Winding Way Trail	0.18
Total	1.26
City – Boardwalk Trails (Wood and Composite)	
Plantation Hills (boardwalk section)	0.08
Unnamed Boardwalk Segment	0.07
Wetlands Trail	0.31
Total	0.46
City – Concrete Trails	
Shoreline Loop Trail	0.61
Multi-Use Pathway	4.00
SUN Trail ¹	4.47
Wetlands Trail	0.05
Unnamed Concrete Connection	0.03
Total	9.16

Trail Name	Approximate Mileage
City – Asphalt Trails	
Chesapeake Drive Walking Trail	0.23
Total	0.23
National Park Service Trails	
Andrew Jackson Trail	2.40
Beaver Pond Trail	1.24
Boy Scout Trail	0.37
Brackenridge Nature Trail	2.33
Brown's Pond Trail	1.05
Fishing Trail	0.10
Highway Access Trails	0.12
North Bay Trail	0.31
North South Trail	1.04
Old Borrow Pit Trail	0.88
Old Quarry Trail	0.86
Picnic (Primitive Area) Access Trail	0.18
Pine Scrub Loop Trail	0.26
Total	11.15
11.87 miles is an unfunded gap	

Source: City of Gulf Breeze, 2025

TRAILS

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



Legend

- City Boundary
- Waterbody

Trail

- Unpaved
- Paved
- Boardwalk
- Unfunded Gap

6. Water Access

Gulf Breeze features 18 miles of waterfront, including three protected bayous. Key water access facilities with vehicular parking are Mariner's Landing Park, Woodland Park, Vista Park, and Shoreline Park Swimming Pier and Boat Ramp. Additional public access points include Duncan Avenue on the north side of the City, which provides beach access without vehicular parking and Baycliff Preserve, which offers walking and biking opportunities without vehicular parking. Navy Cove and Gilmore Bayou also provide water access opportunities on the west side of the City.

In 2019, Gulf Breeze joined the Florida Paddling Trails Association as an active Blueways Community, integrating the City to the statewide Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail. Following an extensive public engagement process, the Blueways Plan received approval in January 2019 and identifies Shoreline Park South, Woodland Park, Vista Park, and Wayside Park as primary paddle-craft destinations. In 2022, the City received a \$1.2 million FWC grant to design and implement major paddler-focused upgrades, including a relocated floating dock and new kayak launch at Woodland Park, a new kayak launch and related enhancements at Shoreline Park South, and planned repairs and improvements at Mariner's Landing Park following Hurricane Sally.

C. ANALYSIS

Level of service (LOS) standards are performance measures used to evaluate the provision of land, facilities, and services within a jurisdiction. For recreation and open space purposes, LOS standards help determine the amount of park acreage needed to meet community needs. Establishing LOS standards for individual park types or facilities can be overly restrictive since public demand and available funding sources may evolve over time. Accordingly, the city has an adopted combined LOS standard for community and neighborhood parks. The regional park acreage is not included as this acreage is directly managed by United States National Park Service.

The following analysis evaluates the city's parks, recreation and open space system in the context of existing facilities and anticipated future growth.

1. Current Level of Service

The City of Gulf Breeze has a total of 269.54 acres of parks recreation, and open space facilities, as shown in **Table VII-1**. This acreage includes the entire system, consisting of community parks, neighborhood parks, and preserves/conservation lands. This calculation, however, does not include the Gulf Islands National Seashore.

The City's adopted LOS standard for all recreation and open space facilities is five acres per 1,000 residents. With a 2025 population of 6,721, there is a surplus of 236 acres.

2. Projected Need

The City's population is projected to increase to 6,971 by 2050, accounting for both permanent and seasonal residents. **Table VII-3** presents the current and projected demand and surplus for recreational facilities based on the adopted level of service standards (5 acres per 1,000 residents). As shown in **Table VII-3**, the city's existing and

future supply of parks, recreation, and open space facilities exceeds projected demand by approximately 234.68 acres through the 2050 planning horizon. It remains important to evaluate whether the quality, functionality, and geographic distribution of parks adequately meet evolving community needs and access. Park facilities must be optimally located and designed to meet all community needs.

Table VII-3. Projected Demand for Total Overall Parkland

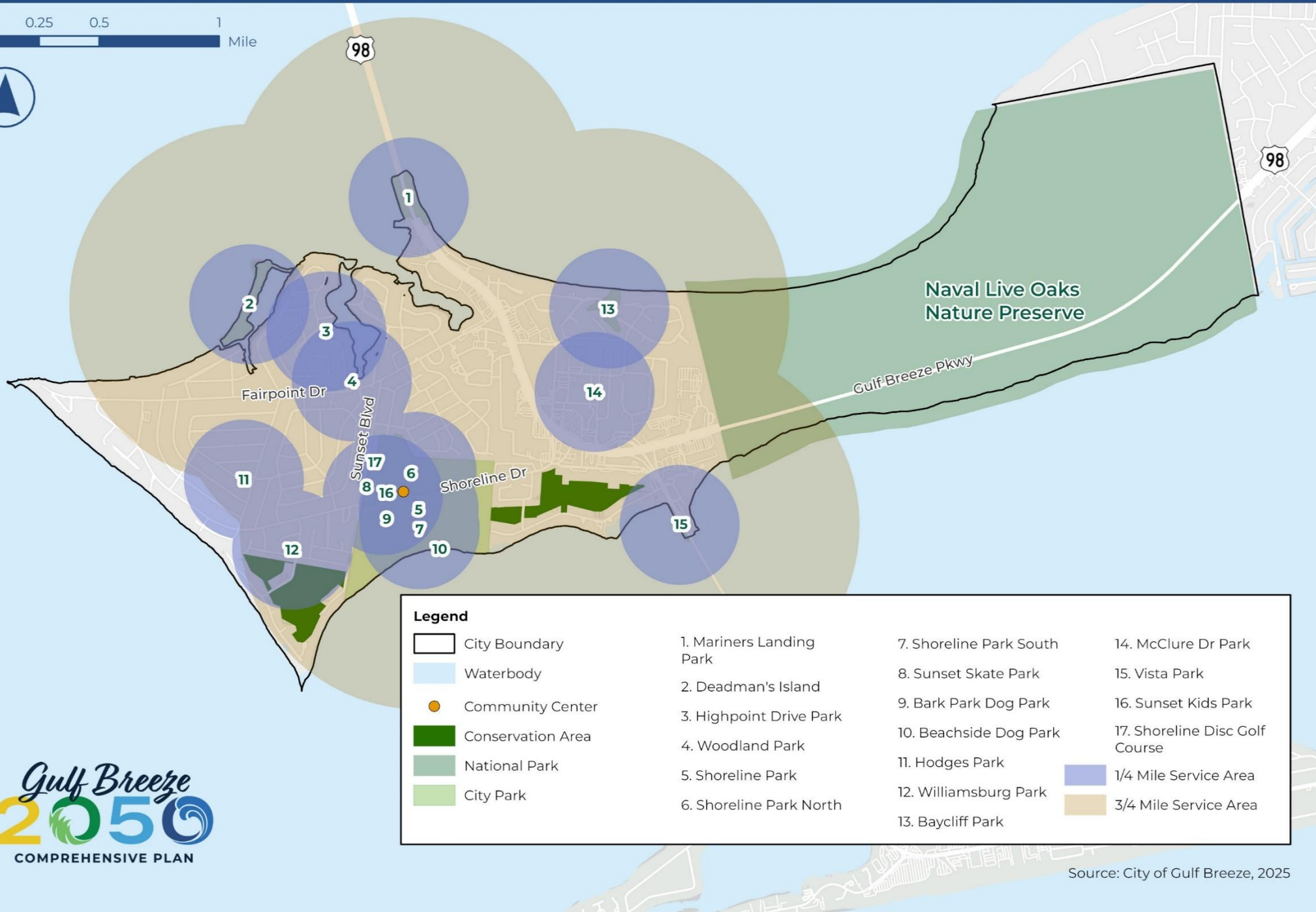
Year	Current/Projected Population	Park and Open Space Acreage (5 acres per 1,000 residents)		
		Demand	Acreage	Surplus/Deficit
2025	6,721	33.61	269.54	235.93
2030	6,960	34.80	269.54	234.74
2035	6,998	34.99	269.54	234.55
2040	7,001	35.00	269.54	234.53
2045	6,988	34.94	269.54	234.60
2050	6,971	34.86	269.54	234.68

3. Park Service Areas

While the acreage level of service shows adequate provision of parks and recreational facilities for the current population, it is also helpful to examine park service areas to determine whether parks are adequately serving all residents. **Map VII-3** shows the service areas of community and neighborhood parks. As indicated on the map, the city is well served by community parks when using a $\frac{3}{4}$ service area is applied. However, when a $\frac{1}{4}$ mile service area is used for both neighborhood and community parks (which also serve as neighborhood parks for the residents who live nearby), many areas of the city do not appear to be adequately served.

PARK SERVICE AREAS

0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile



Legend

- City Boundary
- Waterbody
- Community Center
- Conservation Area
- National Park
- City Park

- 1. Mariners Landing Park
- 2. Deadman's Island
- 3. Highpoint Drive Park
- 4. Woodland Park
- 5. Shoreline Park
- 6. Shoreline Park North

- 7. Shoreline Park South
- 8. Sunset Skate Park
- 9. Bark Park Dog Park
- 10. Beachside Dog Park
- 11. Hodges Park
- 12. Williamsburg Park
- 13. Baycliff Park

- 14. McClure Dr Park
- 15. Vista Park
- 16. Sunset Kids Park
- 17. Shoreline Disc Golf Course

- 1/4 Mile Service Area
- 3/4 Mile Service Area

D. FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

Although the analysis shows that the City exceeds its adopted LOS standards for recreational facilities, opportunities remain to strengthen and refine how the City plans for parks, recreation, and open space. The following considerations offer direction for the development of the goals, objectives, and policies of this Element.

1. Create a New Parks and Recreation Master Plan

While the City of Gulf Breeze has an existing Shoreline Park Master Plan, no citywide document currently consolidates programming and planned improvements across all parks and recreational facilities. Developing a comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan, encompassing parks, special use facilities, trails, water access points, and boat ramps, would establish a unified framework for managing and expanding the city's recreational assets. Such a plan would also support long-range planning for a connected, accessible, and equitable parks system that serves residents across the city.

2. Geographic and Environmental Factors

The city's peninsular geography presents opportunities and considerations for recreation planning. The city benefits from ample access to bays, bayous, and beaches, which support shoreline recreation, ecotourism, and a strong water-based recreation culture. At the same time, coastal conditions, such as storm surge, shoreline erosion, and hurricanes exposure influence how recreational facilities are maintained and improved.

With most developable land already built out, future recreational planning must rely on continued modernization and strategic reinvestment in existing parks and facilities rather than expansion through new land acquisition. Damage sustained to parks and water access points during recent hurricanes, particularly Hurricane Sally in 2020, further reinforces the need for ongoing resilient design, shoreline stabilization, and ongoing capital investment.

3. Walkability, Connectivity, and Accessibility

Stakeholders consistently highlighted strong appreciation for Gulf Breeze's outdoor recreational amenities, including the trails, bridge routes, elevated wetlands walkway, neighborhood parks, and recreation center. The public commended the city's investment in high-quality outdoor spaces that promote physical activity, safety, and a strong sense of place, and encouraged continued expansion and maintenance of these systems. The City will continue aiming to provide:

- Safe, continuous, and connected walking and biking routes throughout the City
- Strong linkages between parks, schools, neighborhoods, and commercial areas
- Closure of trail gaps to improve connectivity between inland parks and waterfront access points
- Improved access to water-based recreation and blueways routes

4. Trails system

The City of Gulf Breeze has an extensive trail system for both recreation and transportation. The city must preserve the existing trails and continue to expand the trail system into other areas of Gulf Breeze.

5. Modernization and Reinvestment

Given the City's LOS surplus and limited opportunities for park land acquisition, future investment should focus on improving the quality, functionality, and resilience of existing facilities. Key priorities include:

- Updating and replacing aging facilities, especially those affected by hurricane damage
- Reconfiguring existing parks to meet evolving community needs and recreation preferences
- Upgrading amenities to meet current accessibility, safety, and sustainability standards
- Leveraging redevelopment projects and capital projects to enhance nearby parks and open spaces

6. Water-Based Recreation Expansion and Access

Water-based recreation remains a defining feature of Gulf Breeze's identity. The city will continue supporting:

- Improvements to kayak launches, boardwalks, and small craft access
- Enhancements to fishing piers, shoreline seating, and passive viewing areas
- Expansion of blueways facilities, wayfinding, and signage consistent with the adopted Blueways Plan
- Designing of waterfront improvements that account for sea-level rise, storm surge, and coastal erosion

7. Aging Population Recreational Needs

With over one-quarter of the City's residents age 65 and older, the recreation system must continue to support and accommodate residents of all ages and abilities. Policies should emphasize:

- Increased provision of passive recreation amenities, such as shaded seating, overlooks, and walking loops
- Continued enhancement of ADA accessibility across the parks system
- Expansion of age-friendly recreation and low-impact programming
- Ensuring safe and accessible water access for passive and low-intensity activities

8. Post-Storm Recovery Capacity

Recent storm events have underscored the vulnerability of Gulf Breeze's coastal parks. Repeated damage strains maintenance budgets and threatens long-term usability. Future planning must incorporate:

- Nature-based shoreline stabilization strategies
- Resilient construction techniques for waterfront facilities
- Long-term capital planning for post-storm restoration
- Hazard mitigation strategies for vulnerable park assets

9. Other Desired Amenities per Public Feedback

Public feedback identified desired amenities to enhance the City's recreation system:

- Public Swimming Pool: Interest in a community pool with lap lanes for swim teams and recreational use.
- County initiatives for pool facilities were noted by City staff.
- Performing Arts Space: Noted the absence of a dedicated space for performances and larger gatherings. Schools and local groups must rely on sites outside the City or inadequate spaces, which are not always available.
- Outdoor Event Spaces: Interest in reviving farmers markets, outdoor music areas, and seasonal events previously held at the recreation center.

Together, these considerations establish a policy framework to guide future investment and ensure that Gulf Breeze continues to deliver a high-quality, resilient, and equitable parks, recreation, and open space system that sustains through the 2050 planning horizon and beyond.



08



PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FROM SHORELINE TO SKYLINE

[DRAFT JULY 2026]

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VIII. PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES

A. INTRODUCTION

Schools are foundational anchors of community life. They attract families and serve as places where learning, culture, and community connection unfold. Beyond their core role of educating new generations, schools foster civic life by hosting PTA meetings, performances, sporting events, and other gatherings that bring residents together.

School facility planning is the primary responsibility of the Santa Rosa County School District. Although the Public School Facilities Element (PSFE) is not a required component of Comprehensive Plans, the City of Gulf Breeze recognizes its responsibility to collaborate with the School District to address development impacts on school capacity and support educational facilities.

This Element provides an overview of the existing public school facilities. It also evaluates current and projected capacities, identifies planned improvements, and presents data and analyses intended to guide policy decisions. The Element concludes with opportunities and considerations to better align with the city's goals, objectives, and policies and the School District's long-term plans.

B. INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT

Section 163.31777(1), Florida Statutes (F.S.), requires counties and municipalities within a school district's geographic area to enter an interlocal agreement. This agreement must outline how the district's plans and processes will be coordinated across the county school board and local governments. This includes the review and approval of residential development to ensure that school capacity does not exceed the adopted level of service (LOS) standard.

Sections 163.31777(2) and (3), F.S., require local governments and school boards to collaborate on planning for population growth and student enrollment. These provisions ensure coordinated efforts related to school construction, closures, and renovations. They also require sharing information on school facilities, improvements, and development or redevelopment plans, as well as the participation of local governments in school district planning.

In 2003, the Santa Rosa County Commission, the City of Gulf Breeze, the City of Milton, the Town of Jay, and the Santa Rosa County School Board adopted the Interlocal Agreement for Public School Facility Planning. This agreement provides a coordinated approach to meeting the community's educational needs while effectively managing growth and resources. It contains provisions for coordination and information sharing; school capacity tracking; school site selection and facility renovations; local planning agency review and comprehensive plan amendments; co-location and shared use of facilities; dispute resolution; oversight; and procedures for amendment or termination.

C. INVENTORY & ANALYSIS OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) maintains official capacity and enrollment data for traditional public schools. School Districts generally maintain data for all school types within their systems, including traditional, virtual, magnet, and charter schools. The Santa Rosa County School District only operates traditional and virtual schools and does not currently operate charter or magnet schools. In addition to the traditional public school system, the School District serves a community of homeschooled students. While these students do not attend district-operated schools, they represent a meaningful portion of the District's overall K-12 population and contribute to the demand for community resources (e.g., parks, libraries, recreation programs, and other public facilities) that support learning and social development. This section summarizes the available data to support coordinated decision-making.

1. School Inventory

The Santa Rosa County School District currently operates 41 schools across the county, serving approximately 28,889 students. Of these, 3 schools are currently located within the Gulf Breeze city limits: Gulf Breeze Elementary School, Gulf Breeze Middle School, and Gulf Breeze High School. The distribution of schools throughout the district is shown in **Map VIII-1**, and **Table VIII-1** lists each school along with its location, type, and grade levels served. Located just outside the Gulf Breeze city limits, Soundside High School is the district's newest school and is scheduled to open in Fall 2026.

Table VIII-1. Santa Rosa County Schools

Type	Address	City/Community
Elementary Schools		
Bagdad Elementary School	4512 Forsyth Street	Milton
Bennett C. Russell Elementary School	3740 Excalibur Way	Milton
Berryhill Elementary School	4900 Berryhill Road	Milton
Chumuckla Elementary School	2312 Highway 182	Jay
East Milton Elementary School	5156 Ward Basin Road	Milton
Gulf Breeze Elementary School	549 Gulf Breeze Parkway	Gulf Breeze
Holley-Navarre Primary School	8019 Escola Street	Navarre
Holley-Navarre Intermediate School	1936 Navarre School Road	Navarre
Jay Elementary School	13833 Alabama Street	Jay
Oriele Beach Elementary School	1260 Oriole Beach Rd	Gulf Breeze
Pea Ridge Elementary School	4775 School Lane	Pace
S.S. Dixon Primary School	4560 Pace Patriot Boulevard	Pace
S.S. Dixon Intermediate School	5540 Education Drive	Pace
T.R. Jackson Pre-K Center	4950 Susan Street	Milton
W.H. Rhodes Elementary School	5563 Byrom Street	Milton
West Navarre Intermediate School	1970 Cotton Bay Ln	Navarre

Type	Address	City/Community
West Navarre Primary School	1955 Lowe Road	1955 Lowe Road Navarre
K-8 Schools		
East Bay K-8 School	2535 Elkhart Drive	Navarre
Wallace Lake K-8 School	3354 Wallace Lake Road	Pace
Middle Schools		
Avalon Middle School	5445 Arthurs Way	Milton
Gulf Breeze Middle School	649 Gulf Breeze Parkway	Gulf Breeze
Hobbs Middle School	5317 Glover Lane	Milton
Holley-Navarre Middle School	1976 Williams Creek Drive	Navarre
Martin Luther King Middle School	5928 Stewart Street	Milton
Thomas L. Sims Middle School	5500 Education Drive	Pace
Woodlawn Beach Middle School	1500 Woodlawn Way	Unincorporated
K-12 Schools		
Central School	6180 Central School Road	Milton
High Schools		
Gulf Breeze Senior High School	675 Gulf Breeze Parkway	Gulf Breeze
Jay High School	3741 School Street	Jay
Milton High School	5445 Stewart Street	Milton
Navarre High School	8600 High School Boulevard	Navarre
Pace High School	4065 Norris Road	Pace
Santa Rosa High	5332 Berry Hill Road	Milton
Soundside High School (opening Fall 2026)	5076 Gulf Breeze Parkway	Unincorporated
Specialized Schools		
ESE Development Center	6556 Firehouse Road	Milton
High Road School of Santa Rosa	4140 Berryhill Road	Pace
Home Education Program	6032 Highway 90	Milton
Radford Locklin Technical College	5330 Berryhill Road	Milton
Santa Rosa Acceleration Academy	5330 Berryhill Road	Milton
Santa Rosa Adult School	5334 Berryhill Road	Milton
Santa Rosa Virtual Franchise	6556 Firehouse Road	Milton

Source: Santa Rosa County School District, 2025

Per District Policy 8.31, the District provides transportation for students in their enrollment districts if they live more than 2 miles from school, as well as for students in foster care or those assigned to special programs, such as Exceptional Student Education (ESE).

While the School District is divided into enrollment districts (see **Map VII-1**), the District offers a few options to attend schools outside the assigned district.

a. School Choice Programs (Open Enrollment)

Students in Santa Rosa County are assigned to one of five school enrollment districts based on their place of residence. However, parents or guardians may request that their child attend a school outside their assigned district during the controlled open enrollment period, provided space is available. Some families choose this option to access special academic programs, career academies, or extracurricular opportunities that may not be offered in their enrollment district.

To request an out-of-zone placement, parents/guardians must complete either the "School Choice Form" or the "Request for Student Transfer" form and submit it to the appropriate School District Grade Level Director. The School District maintains a flexible transfer policy that allows transfers for a variety of reasons. Requests are reviewed by School District Staff and are approved or denied based on established criteria, such as capacity, program availability, and student need. Transfers are prioritized first for in-county requests, court-ordered placements, and military preference cases.

The School District does not provide transportation for students approved for transfer. Transportation is the responsibility of parents/guardians.

A new transfer request must be submitted whenever a student transitions from one school level to another, such as primary to elementary, elementary to middle, or middle to high school.

b. Stewart B. McKinney-Bruce Vento Act School of Origin

To reduce barriers for students eligible for services under the Florida Department of Children and Families or Stewart B. McKinney-Bruce Vento Act, Section 722(d)(2), the School District provides appropriate exceptions and accommodations, including the following:

- i. School of Origin: Whenever feasible, a student experiencing homelessness will remain enrolled in their school of origin. Exceptions may apply if the parent or guardian requests a different school, or if the School District's McKinney-Vento Liaison, in consultation with child welfare services, determines that remaining in the school of origin is not in the best interest of the student.
- ii. Right to Appeal: If a student is assigned to a school other than their school of origin, the School District must provide a written explanation to the student's parents or guardian regarding their right to appeal.

c. Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students

The Family Empowerment Scholarship Program provides additional educational opportunities for students with disabilities. Students and their parents/guardians may enroll their child in another public school, or receive a Personal Education Savings Account, which can be used for a variety of approved educational expenses, including private school tuition and fees; online learning programs; private tutoring; dual enrollment courses; higher education expenses. To be eligible, a student must:

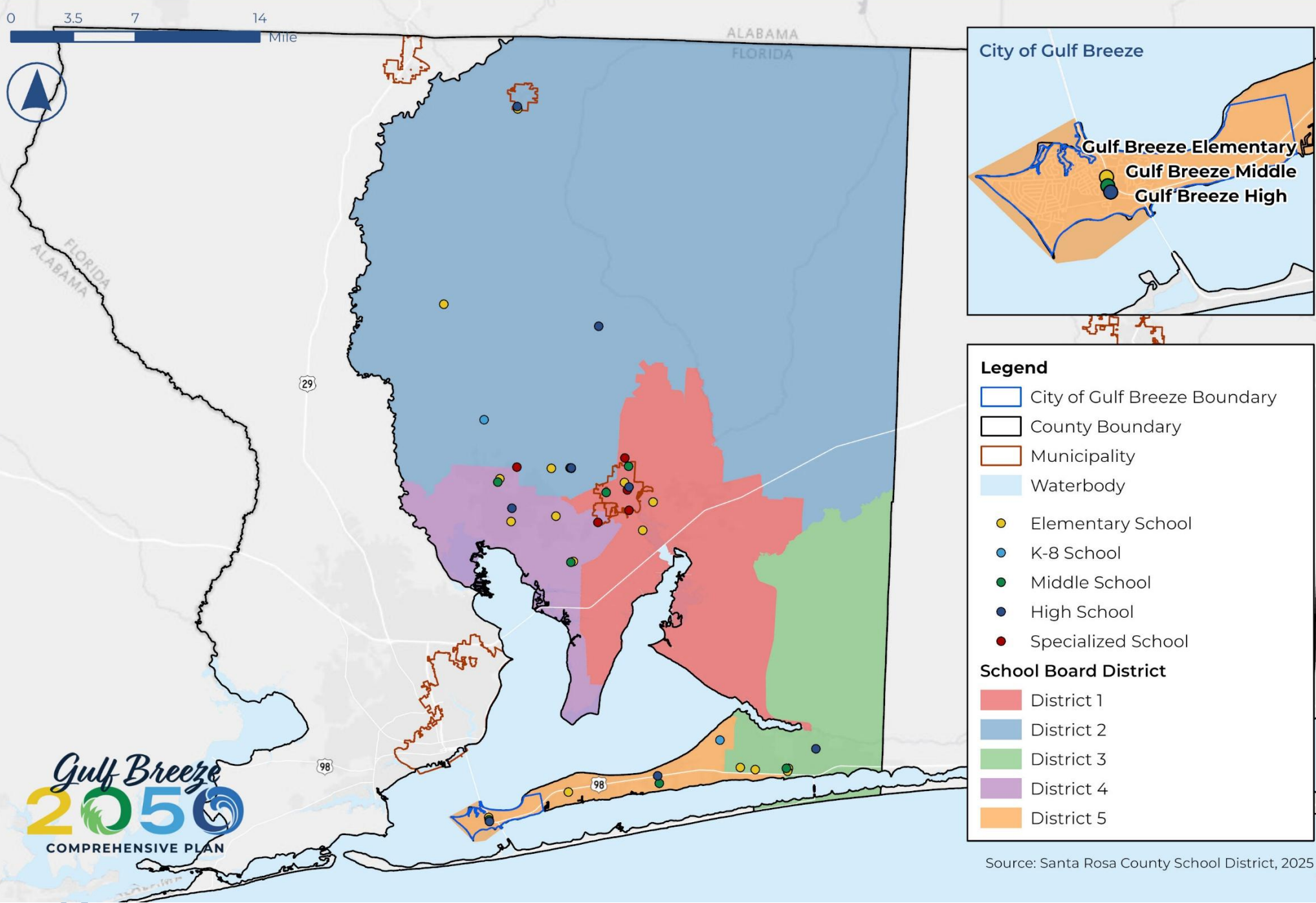
- i. Be a resident of Florida

- ii. Be 3 or 4 years old on or before September 1 or be eligible to enroll as a K-12 student
- iii. Have an Individualized Education Program written in Florida or another state, or have a documented diagnosis of a disability from a licensed Florida physician or psychologist, or from a physician licensed in another state or territory.
- iv. Have a disability, including but not limited to:
 - Intellectual disability
 - Speech impairments
 - Language impairments
 - Hearing impairments, including deafness
 - Visual impairment, including blindness
 - Dual sensory impairments
 - Orthopedic impairments
 - Emotional or behavioral disabilities
 - Specific learning disabilities, such as dyslexia or dyscalculia
 - Traumatic brain injury
 - Development delays
 - Autism spectrum disorder

Participation requires parents/guardians to apply to renew annually through an approved Scholarship Funding Organization (SFO).

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

0 3.5 7 14
Mile



2. School Enrollment and Capacity

This section outlines the current enrollment and capacity at the various schools serving the city residents. Derived from the Interlocal Agreement and the Comprehensive Plan, the following terms are commonly used in this section.

a. Available School Capacity (Surplus)

The circumstance where there is sufficient school capacity, based on adopted LOS standards, to accommodate the demand created by a proposed development.

b. Capacity

"Capacity" as defined in the Florida Inventory of School Houses (FISH) Manual. Capacity is the total number of students a school can accommodate, in both permanent and relocatable (temporary) facilities. The calculation considers classroom quantity and size, the type of educational programs offered, and the utilization rates of instructional spaces.

c. Capital Outlay Full-time Equivalent (COFTE)

A measure used to project the number of students for whom capital outlay funds are needed. This metric helps plan and allocate resources for school construction, renovation, and maintenance based on current and anticipated student enrollment.

d. Existing School Facilities

School facilities constructed and operational at the time an inquiry is initiated.

e. FISH Manual

The document entitled "Florida Inventory of School Houses (FISH)," current edition, that is published by the Florida Department of Education, Office of Educational Facilities.

f. Florida Inventory of School Houses (FISH)

The Department of Education's official system for maintaining and managing the inventory of all educational facilities and land parcels within each Florida school district. The system includes detailed reports, space charts, and architectural drawings published and on the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) website. FISH is essential for:

- Determining facility utilization and identifying overcrowding
- Reporting public school capacity
- Justifying the need for new construction or renovations
- Supporting maintenance, custodial, and related funding allocations
- Complying with the Educational Plant Survey and state requirements for educational facilities (SREF)

Each school district must certify the accuracy of its FISH data annually by April 1 using the Certification of Facilities Data (OEF Form FISH CERT).

g. Percentage Utilization

The ratio of the actual number of students enrolled to the school's capacity, expressed as a percentage. This metric helps determine how effectively a school's physical space is being used.

h. Permanent FISH Capacity

Capacity that is added by "permanent buildings," as defined in the FISH Manual.

i. Planned School Facilities

School facility capacity that will be in place or under actual construction within three years after the issuance of final subdivision or site plan approval, pursuant to the School Board's adopted 5-Year Work Program.

j. Previously Approved Development

Development approved as follows: Single family lots of record having received final plat approval; and multi-family residential development having received final site plan approval.

k. School Enrollment

School enrollment is the annual count of students at each school based on actual counts reported to the Department of Education each October.

l. Student Generation Rate

A student generation rate is the estimated number of students a residential unit is expected to generate, based on housing type and school level. In coordination with county and municipal staff, and consistent with the Interlocal Agreement, School District staff develop and apply student generation multipliers for different types of residential units and for each school level. These multipliers are based on historical student enrollment trends and are used to project future school enrollment. The School Board establishes and periodically updates the student generation rates using accepted methodologies, and the city adopts these rates into its Comprehensive Plan as needed.

m. Total School Facilities

Existing and planned school facilities.

n. Used Capacity

School facility capacity consumed by or reserved for preexisting development.

o. Work Program

The financially feasible 5-year School District Facilities Work Program adopted pursuant to Section 1013.35, Florida Statutes. Financial feasibility shall be determined using professionally accepted methodologies.

The collaboration between the School District and the city helps ensure the availability of school capacity is maintained. The City has adopted LOS standards for public school facilities that establish the maximum acceptable utilization of permanent FISH capacity by school type. As shown in **Table VIII-2**, the adopted LOS standard is 105% of permanent FISH capacity for elementary, middle, and high schools.

Table VIII-2. Level of Service Standards

Type of School	Level of Service Standards
Elementary	105% of permanent FISH capacity
Middle	105% of permanent FISH capacity
Combined Junior/Senior High	90% of permanent FISH capacity
High	105% of permanent FISH capacity

Source: City of Gulf Breeze, 2022

Table VIII-3 presents school capacity and utilization data for public schools located within the city. The data is derived from the School District's 2024-2025 Work Plan, dated December 2, 2024. At this time, the Florida Department of Education has not released the data required to finalize the District's 2025-2026 Work Plan.

The data shows that none of the three schools within the City of Gulf Breeze are experiencing overcrowding, as all schools are operating below the 100% utilization of permanent FISH capacity with rates ranging from 95% to 97%. While these schools are nearing capacity, current enrollment remains within the adopted LOS threshold for each school type.

Table VIII-3. School Capacity

Schools	2024 - 2025 Satisfactory Student Stations	Actual 2024- 2025 FISH Capacity	Actual 2023- 2024 COFTE	Actual 2024- 2025 Utilization
Gulf Breeze Elementary School	913	913	864	95%
Gulf Breeze Middle School	1,061	954	914	96%
Gulf Breeze Senior High School	1,953	1,855	1,768	97%

Source: Santa Rosa County School District, 2024-2025 Work Plan

3. Relocatable Classrooms (Portables)

The Florida Department of Education requires school districts to have plans for relocatable classrooms in their five-year work programs. The Santa Rosa County School District's 2024-2025 Work Plan identifies the number of relocatable classrooms serving the three schools located within the city. **Table VIII-4** shows the number of relocatable student stations (i.e., the number of students that are educated in relocatable units) at each school. While the School Choice Program allows students to attend schools outside the city, this table focuses on facilities located within Gulf Breeze.

The data indicates that Gulf Breeze Elementary School and Gulf Breeze Middle School currently do not have relocatable classrooms, while Gulf Breeze Senior High School has 400.

Table VIII-4. Relocatable Classrooms

Site	2024-2025	2025-2026
Gulf Breeze Elementary School Students	0	0
Gulf Breeze Middle School Students	0	0
Gulf Breeze Senior High School Students	400	400
Total Students in relocatable by year	1,995	1,995
Total number of COFTE students projected by year	28,236	28,375
Percent of students in relocatable by year	7%	7%

Source: Santa Rosa County School District, 2024

4. Shared Use Facilities

Section 6 of the Interlocal Agreement for Public School Facility Planning addresses the co-location and shared use of school facilities and civic facilities. It states the following:

6.1 *Co-location and shared use of facilities are important to both the School Board and local governments. The School Board will look for opportunities to co-locate and share use of school facilities and civic facilities when preparing the District Educational Facilities Plan. Likewise, co-location and shared use opportunities will be considered by the local governments when preparing the annual update to the comprehensive plan's schedule of capital improvements and when planning and designing new, or renovating existing, community facilities. For example, opportunities for co-location and shared use with public schools will be considered for libraries, parks, recreation facilities, community centers, auditoriums, learning centers, museums, performing arts centers, and stadiums. In addition, co-location and shared use of school and governmental facilities for health care and social services will be considered.*

6.2 *A separate agreement will be developed for each instance of co-location and shared use, which addresses legal liability, operating and maintenance costs, scheduling of use, and facility supervision or any other issues that may arise from co-location and shared use.*

Accordingly, the city adopted a policy in the Public Schools Facilities Element to continue that coordination.

5. Emergency Shelters

While most communities use school facilities for emergency shelters, that is not the case in Gulf Breeze. The entire peninsula, from Gulf Breeze to Navarre, could potentially be cut off by storm surge and become isolated. Policy 1.3.3 of the Comprehensive Plan states "Coordinate efforts to rehabilitate existing or build new school facilities and expansions that may serve as and provide emergency shelters as required by Section 163.3177, F.S., and coordinate with the School Board regarding emergency preparedness issues and plans" Since this policy was last adopted, legislation governing the use of

educational facilities as emergency shelters has been updated in Section 1013.372, Florida Statutes. Under this statute, any educational facility located or proposed to be located within a Category 1, 2, or 3 evacuation zone is exempt from the requirements of this subsection. According to the Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services of the School District, there are no emergency evacuation shelters located in the south end of Santa Rosa County (south of I-10) due to the proximity to the water.

D. Future Needs

The sections above present school capacity and utilization data for public schools located within the city, based on the School District's 2024-2025 Work Plan dated December 2, 2024. The information below provides projections of future school capacity.

1. Projected Capacity

Projections to 2028-2029 show Gulf Breeze Elementary School and Gulf Breeze Middle School operating near capacity at approximately 98% and 99% utilization, respectively. In contrast, Gulf Breeze Senior High School is projected to experience a substantial decline in utilization to approximately 71%. This reduction is primarily attributed to the anticipated opening of Soundside High School in Fall 2026, which is expected to absorb a portion of high school enrollment. Both projected COFTE and utilization rates for Gulf Breeze Senior High School decline significantly between the 2024-2025 and 2028-2029 school years.

Table VIII-5. Projected Inventory of Santa Rosa County School Capacity

Schools	Projected 2028-2029 COFTE	Projected 2028-2029 Utilization
Gulf Breeze Elementary School	896	98%
Gulf Breeze Middle School	948	99%
Gulf Breeze Senior High School	1,325	71%

Source: Santa Rosa County School District, 2025- 2025 Work Plan

2. Projected Relocatable Classrooms

The data below indicates that Gulf Breeze Elementary School and Gulf Breeze Middle School do not project to have students in relocatables through the year 2028-29. Gulf Breeze Senior High School, however, will have 400 students in relocatables throughout the same period.

Table VIII-6. Projected Relocatable Classrooms

Site	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	5 Year Average
Gulf Breeze Schools				
Gulf Breeze Elementary School	0	0	0	0
Gulf Breeze Middle School	0	0	0	0
Gulf Breeze Senior High School	400	400	400	400
Total students in relocatables by year	1,995	1,995	1,995	1,995

Site	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	5 Year Average
Total number of COFTE students projected by year	28,461	28,710	19,003	28,565
Percent in relocatable by year	7%	7%	7%	7%

Source: Santa Rosa County School District, 2024

3. Projected Enrollment

The City of Gulf Breeze is projected to have a total of 3,031 dwelling units by the year 2050. Based on housing type projections prepared by the Shimberg Center for Affordable Housing (Florida Housing Data Clearinghouse) and student generation rates used by the Santa Rosa School District, **Table VII-7** presents projected student populations for elementary, middle, and high schools over the 2050 planning horizon.

The current distribution of single-family and multifamily housing is 71% to 29%, respectively. Assuming this distribution remains consistent, approximately 2,152 households are projected to be in single-family homes and 879 in multifamily units by 2050. The projected number of housing units for each year was multiplied by the applicable student generation rates for elementary, middle, and high school students.

Based on this methodology, total projected student enrollment is expected to reach approximately 1,069 students by 2035 and 1,065 students by 2050, including about 471 elementary school students, 255 middle school students, and 339 high school students.

Table VIII-7. Projected Student Generation

School/Unit Type	Generation Rate	Students				
		2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Elementary						
SF	0.17593	379	381	382	281	380
MF	0.10447	91	91	91	91	91
Middle						
SF	0.09339	201	202	203	202	202
MF	0.06141	53	54	54	54	53
High						
SF	0.12951	279	281	281	280	280
MF	0.06729	59	59	59	59	59
Total Projected Students		1,063	1,069	1,069	1,067	1,065

Source: City of Gulf Breeze, Santa Rosa County, Santa Rosa County School District, 2024

Soundside High School is scheduled to open in Fall 2026 at 5076 Gulf Breeze Parkway, located on the south end of Santa Rosa County and ~~just~~ outside the Gulf Breeze city limits. Although no schools are planned to open within the city, the opening of Soundside High will help schools nearing capacity. The school encompasses 260,157 gross square feet and includes 83 classrooms with 1,809 student stations.

According to the Santa Rosa County School District 2024-2025 Work Plan, the District has secured sites for future schools, including elementary, middle, K-8, or high schools

in Milton, northern Pace/Chumuckla [area](#), and East Milton, as well as sites for future elementary, middle, and K-8 schools in the Navarre and Tiger Point areas. However, the specific locations are not specified.

The new high school in northern Pace/Chumuckla area is planned to have 30 classrooms. The funded portion of the project totals \$66,750,000, while the unfunded portion is \$45,000,000. A reserve for a future schools with a funded total of \$33,000,000 is also noted.

The School District's 2024-2025 Work Plan also identifies several capital outlay projects, including major renovations, remodeling, and additions, that do not increase school capacity. These improvements vary by school. These include:

- Correcting drainage
- Replacing water lines
- Adding covered walkways
- Striping or paving parking areas
- Repaving bus loops
- Renovating or expanding sites
- Removing and replacing buildings
- Building a new library
- Replacing windows
- Cover physical education play areas

E. FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

The Interlocal Agreement for Public School Facility Planning establishes the regulatory framework for coordination on public school planning and school concurrency. As the City of Gulf Breeze continues to evolve, ongoing collaboration with the Santa Rosa County School District will remain essential to maintaining adequate public school capacity. The Interlocal Agreement, which was adopted in 2003, warrants a thorough review and update. The City remains committed to working with the School District to update the agreement as needed to reflect current conditions and community needs.

While no new schools are planned within the City, the city will continue to coordinate with the Santa Rosa County School District to ensure that transportation networks, utilities, and other supporting infrastructure are adequate to serve existing and potential future school facilities, and that new development does not have a negative impact on school facilities.

At the stakeholder and public workshops, participants identified several opportunities to enhance educational and recreational resources within the City. The absence of a dedicated performing arts or large gathering space was noted, with schools and local groups relying on facilities outside the city or on spaces that are not always suitable. The city is committed to exploring and coordinating opportunities with the School District for shared-use or multi-purpose facilities to support school programs, community events, and extracurricular activities.

Pedestrian safety and school access were also highlighted as concerns. Incremental enhancements, such as improved sidewalks, crossings, and pedestrian pathways, could help ensure safe routes to school for students and families.

The impact of school activities on the US 98 traffic was another area of concern noted by the public at workshops. Congestion occurs during drop-off and pick-up periods at Gulf Breeze High School. Suggested potential improvements included opening the rear entrance to all vehicles, not just buses, and adding a traffic signal on the south side of the campus. These and other improvements will be evaluated in coordination with the School District.



09



INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FROM SHORELINE TO SKYLINE

[DRAFT JULY 2026]

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IX. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

A. INTRODUCTION

Effective intergovernmental coordination ensures that public services are delivered efficiently and that planning decisions remain consistent across jurisdictional boundaries. Local governments utilize interlocal agreements to share services, manage resources, and delegate responsibilities to improve service delivery and prevent unnecessary duplication.

Pursuant to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes (F.S.), the Intergovernmental Coordination Element (ICE) serves as the city's framework for collaboration with local, regional, state, and federal partners. The element identifies the City of Gulf Breeze's interlocal agreements, establishes procedures to implement the goals, objectives, and policies of the Comprehensive Plan, and provides considerations for future coordination efforts. Continued collaboration is essential to meeting the community's evolving needs.

B. INVENTORY OF COORDINATION MECHANISMS

1. Current Agreements

To ensure the adequate provision of services within and in relation to the city's boundaries, the City of Gulf Breeze must maintain strong coordination with its public and private partners. **Table IX-1** lists the adjacent local governments, regional state, and federal planning agencies, and other key partners the City coordinates with. **Table IX-2** summarizes the existing formal agreements that support this coordination.

Table IX-1. Partnerships

Agency/Entity
Local Governments and Agencies
Baldwin County
City of Destin
City of Fort Walton Beach
City of Mary Esther
City of Milton
City of Niceville
City of Orange Beach
City of Pensacola
City of Quincy
Escambia County
Escambia County Area Transit (ECAT)
Escambia County Utilities Authority (ECUA)
Okaloosa County
Santa Rosa County
Santa Rosa County Para Transit Service
Santa Rosa County Firefighters' Association

Agency/Entity
Santa Rosa County Midway Fire District
Santa Rosa County Supervisor of Elections
Santa Rosa County School Board
Santa Rosa County Sherriff's Office
Town of Jay
Town of Century
Walton County
Regional Agencies
Emerald Coast Regional Council (Formerly the West Florida Regional Planning Council and Pensacola-Escambia County Regional Planning Council [formerly the NW FL Regional Planning Council])
Fairpoint Regional Utility System (FRUS)
Holley-Navarre Water System
Florida-Alabama Transportation Planning Organization (TPO)
Midway Water System
Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD)
State Agencies
Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT)
Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)
Florida Division of Corporations
Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP)
Other
Florida Power & Light Company (FPL)
Waste Pro of Florida, Inc.
Naval Air Station Whiting Field
Midway Water Systems, Inc. (Private Water Utility in Santa Rosa County)

Source: City of Gulf Breeze, 2025

Table IX-2. Formal Agreement Inventory

Subject of Agreement	Partnership	Year Established/ Last Amended	Expiration Date
Local Governments			
Creation of the Walton/ Okaloosa/ Santa Rosa Regional Utility Authority (ILA)	City of Destin, City of Fort Walton Beach, City of Gulf Breeze, City of Mary Esther, City of Niceville, Santa Rosa County, Okaloosa County, and Walton County	1999	Indefinitely unless terminated
Perdido Bays Estuary Program (ILA)	City of Orange Beach, City of Pensacola, City of Milton, Town of Century, Baldwin County, Escambia County, Okaloosa County, Santa Rosa County	2023 (Res. 05-2023)	Indefinitely unless terminated
Radio Interoperability (MOU)	City of Pensacola, Escambia County, and Santa Rosa County	2016	Indefinitely unless terminated
City Authority for Construction Permitting and Inspections (ILA)	Santa Rosa County	1981	Indefinitely unless terminated
Establishment of the Gulf Breeze Tourist Advisory Committee and Tourist Development Tax Funds (ILA)	Santa Rosa County	2016	Indefinitely unless terminated. Budget is evaluated annually
Public School Facility Planning (ILA)	Santa Rosa County School Board, Town of Jay, and City of Milton	2003, Amended 2012	
School Resource Officer Agreement	Santa Rosa County School Board	1989, amended 2025	2026
Election Responsibilities (ILA)	Santa Rosa County Supervisor of Elections	1997, amended 2024	2028

Subject of Agreement	Partnership	Year Established/ Last Amended	Expiration Date
Mutual Aid Agreement	Santa Rosa County Firefighters' Association	2015	Indefinitely unless terminated
Regional Agencies			
Acceptance and Processing of Source Separated Recyclables (ILA)	Emerald Coast Utilities Authority (ECUA)	2016	2019
Reciprocal Emergency Water Usage Agreement Request	Emerald Coast Utilities Authority (ECUA)	2018	
Fairpoint Regional Utility System Water Supply Agreement	Fairpoint Regional Utility System, Holley-Navarre Water System, and Midway Water System	2001	2043
Regional Advanced Traffic Management System Agreement	Florida-Alabama Transportation Planning Organization, Escambia County, Santa Rosa County, City of Pensacola, City of Milton	2019	Indefinitely unless terminated
South Santa Rosa Reuse Initiative Agreement	Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWMD)	2025	2026
State Level			
Establish the Transportation Planning Organization	Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), Escambia County, Santa Rosa County, Baldwin County, Cities of Gulf Breeze, Pensacola, Milton, and Orange Beach, and Escambia County Area Transit	2004, amended 2015	Indefinitely unless terminated
Other			
Capital Trust Authority (ILA)	City of Quincy	2022	Indefinitely unless terminated
Streetlight Upgrade Agreement	Florida Power & Light Company (FPL)	2022	10 years from the date of installation of service



Subject of Agreement	Partnership	Year Established/ Last Amended	Expiration Date
Underground Utility Conversion	Florida Power & Light Company (FPL)	2022	As long as FPL or any successor or assign owns or operates the underground facilities
Waste Collection Franchise Agreement	Gulf Breeze and Waste Pro of Florida, Inc.	2023	2028
Electric Franchise Agreement	Gulf Power Company	2020 (Ord. 07-2020)	
<i>ILA: Interlocal Agreement; MOU: Memorandum of Understanding</i>			

Source: City of Gulf Breeze, 2025

2. Coordination by Service Type

By adopting and updating interlocal agreements, the City of Gulf Breeze, together with Santa Rosa County, neighboring local governments, and other agencies, can provide public services more efficiently and effectively. The following summarizes the services supported through the agreements listed above. While not all of the agreements are interlocal agreements, each reflects the City's ongoing coordination with partners at the city, county, regional, and state level.

a. Utilities

The City of Gulf Breeze maintains utility services through partnerships in the region. Through these partnerships, the City oversees the planning, delivery, and maintenance of water (reclaimed, wastewater, potable), solid waste, and other services as discussed below.

i. Regional Water Supply Authority

In 1999, the Walton/Okaloosa/Santa Rosa Regional Utility Authority (RUA) was established through a partnership among Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton counties and the cities of Gulf Breeze, Destin, Fort Walton Beach, Mary Esther, and Niceville. Formed at the request of the Northwest Coast Resource Planning and Management Committee, the RUA provides a regional approach to water supply planning and resource protection. It manages water drawn from the Floridian Aquifer and coordinates solid waste and treated effluent disposal. RUA's overarching purpose is to ensure a reliable long-term water supply and adequate disposal capacity for the region.

ii. Potable Water

The City of Gulf Breeze provides potable water to customers within its municipal boundaries and operates a water supply system serving portions of southern Santa Rosa County. Other utility entities in the region, such as Holley-Navarre Water System and Midway Water System, also provide potable water to southern Santa Rosa County.

The Fairpoint Regional Utility System (FRUS) was established to develop a regional source of potable water to support Gulf Breeze, Holley-Navarre, and Midway through the 2001 Water Supply Agreement, which was recently amended in 2023 and extended for another 20 years. As part of this agreement, FRUS commits to providing a specified supply of water to each utility (Gulf Breeze, Holley-Navarre, and Midway) and the utilities agree to purchase water from Fairpoint to meet their needs.

iii. Reclaimed Water

In southern Santa Rosa County, flash flooding, saltwater intrusion, and drought conditions affect water availability. Reclaimed water helps reduce demand on potable water supplies. This part of the county is served by multiple wastewater treatment facilities, including the County's plant on Navarre Beach, the Holley-Navarre Water System (HNWS) plant on Pepper Drive, and the City of Gulf

Breeze's plant on Circle Lane in Tiger Point. These facilities coordinate through interlocal agreements to manage wastewater effluent, maximize beneficial reuse, and support long-term water sustainability. The City of Gulf Breeze is in the process of expanding its wastewater treatment plant.

In 2020, Gulf Breeze, HNWS, and Santa Rosa County entered into a partnership to develop the Northwest Florida Beneficial Reuse Strategic Plan (BRSP). The memorandum of agreement supports a regional approach for the treatment, transfer, and reuse of highly treated reclaimed wastewater, including the use of rapid infiltration basins (RIBs) on property leased from Eglin Air Force Base. The partnership's goal is to eliminate effluent discharges into environmentally sensitive areas while ensuring sufficient disposal capacity to support growth in southern Santa Rosa County. HNWS works with the county and the city to design, permit, fund, construct, and operate the infrastructure needed to implement the BRSP.

Under the BRSP, Gulf Breeze receives a minimum of 5 million gallons per day of reclaimed water from HNWS to serve more than 8,500 customers for irrigation and other non-potable uses. The plan is being implemented in four phases, including wastewater treatment plant improvements, construction of transmission lines, and development of RIB infrastructure. Phase 3, which establishes the interconnect between HNWS and Gulf Breeze, is funded through a grant from the Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD), with the City acting as a subrecipient. Design and planning have been fully funded and completed by the city.

iv. Reciprocal Emergency Water Supply

In 2018, the City of Gulf Breeze entered into an agreement with the Emerald Coast Utility Authority (ECUA) to provide reciprocal emergency water supply in the event of an emergency or unexpected disruption to the primary water transmission line crossing the Pensacola Bay. Under this agreement, water can be routed through the City's transmission system as needed. ECUA is responsible for installing the necessary piping and metering equipment to receive water from the Fairpoint Regional Utility System (FRUS) from Gulf Breeze infrastructure. The City's and FRUS operators have final authority over the release of water. All usage is billed directly by FRUS.

In addition, the City has a customer account with the ECUA for the purpose of ensuring a redundant water supply should a disruption occur with the City's primary water source of FairPoint Regional Utility System (FRUS).

v. Solid Waste

The City of Gulf Breeze maintains an agreement with Waste Pro of Florida, Inc. for the provision of waste collection services within the city. For residential customers, this includes solid waste, vegetative waste, recycling collection, side-yard service upon request, and bulk trash collection as needed. For commercial customers, services include solid waste and recycling collection, along with bulk trash pickup on an as-needed basis.

In addition, the City of Gulf Breeze entered into an interlocal agreement with ECUA in 2016 for the acceptance and processing of source separated recyclables. ECUA constructed a municipal recycling facility in 2015 capable of processing these recyclables. Under this agreement, the City delivers all collected recyclables to ECUA's facility, where they are sorted, processed, and prepared for reuse.

vi. Electric

The City has prioritized the undergrounding of overhead utilities since 2012. In 2019, Dewberry completed a relocation study for the CRA corridor, which informed both a funding strategy and implementation plan for undergrounding utilities. In 2022, the City entered into an agreement with Florida Power & Light Company (FPL) to implement an underground utility conversion project along Interstate 98 from Shoreline Drive north to the city limits. The Utility Consultants of Florida, LLC serves as the project manager and consultant for the Utility Underground Conversion initiative.

Additionally, in 2020, the City renewed an electric power franchise agreement with Gulf Power, which grants the utility the right to use public rights-of-way in exchange for a fee. The agreement provides a revenue stream to support undergrounding efforts and strengthens protections over the City's right-of-way. Staff also drafted a right-of-way manual and updated the permitting process.

b. Transportation, Roads, and Lighting

Through partnerships, the city coordinates with regional and state agencies, neighboring municipalities, and utility providers to ensure that transportation systems are effectively planned, funded, and maintained to meet the needs of residents and the broader region.

i. Transportation Planning Organization

In 2015, an interlocal agreement established the Florida-Alabama Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), formerly the Pensacola MPO, to coordinate regional transportation planning for the Pensacola, FL-AL Urbanized Area. The agreement involves the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), Escambia and Santa Rosa counties in Florida, Baldwin County in Alabama, and the cities of Pensacola, Milton, and Gulf Breeze. The agreement formalizes cooperative participation in a continuing, comprehensive transportation planning process to ensure that highway facilities, mass transit, rail systems, airports, and other transportation infrastructure are properly planned, located, and developed to meet regional needs.

ii. Advanced Traffic Management

Another important transportation related agreement is the City of Gulf Breeze's participation in a regional agreement for the development, operation, and maintenance of an advanced traffic management system. The agreement, executed in 2020, involves the Florida-Alabama Transportation Planning Organization, Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties, and the cities of Pensacola and Milton. It builds on the 2016 support for a regional traffic management system

and transportation management center. A master plan for the project was completed in 2019, which provided the framework to request funding. To include the project in the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Work Program for construction on state and local roadways, the five participating municipalities needed to commit to funding their local share of the ongoing operations. Funding for the project was scheduled to begin in year 3 of the FDOT's Work Program.

iii. Street and Pathway Lighting

In 2022, the City of Gulf Breeze entered into an agreement with Florida Power & Light (FPL) to remove and replace 73 existing high-pressure sodium (HPS) streetlights along Fairpoint Drive and Shoreline Drive with energy-efficient light-emitting diode (LED) fixtures. The prior HPS lights were not optimal for illuminating the path. The upgrades support the new shared-use path, known as The Loop, which currently lacks dedicated streetscape lighting. The LED upgrades serve the shared-use path, potentially reducing the need for additional streetscape fixtures similar to those on Daniel Drive.

c. Environmental Management

The City of Gulf Breeze participates in regional partnerships to protect and manage shared environmental resources, such as estuaries and watersheds, that span multiple jurisdictions and state lines.

In 2018, the Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program (PPBEP) was established through an interlocal agreement to provide a formal management structure for the restoration and protection of these shared waters. The program serves as the successor to the former Bay Area Resource Council (BARC), which had been in place since 1989. PPBEP is a collaborative partnership among Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Baldwin (Alabama) counties, alongside the cities of Gulf Breeze, Pensacola, Milton, Orange Beach (Alabama), and the Town of Century. Including Alabama entities ensures coordinated, comprehensive management across the entirety of the shared watersheds.

The program successfully developed and adopted its ten-year Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) in October 2022 to guide science-based restoration efforts. In October 2023, following five years of administrative support from Escambia County, the Estuary Program Policy Board transitioned the program into a fully independent organization. It now operates under an amended interlocal agreement as a Florida not-for-profit corporation acting as an independent public agency. Further elevating its impact, the program achieved federal designation as an "Estuary of National Significance" in December 2024, enrolling it directly into the EPA's National Estuary Program to secure long-term funding and resources for the region.

d. Public Schools

The City of Gulf Breeze works closely with the Santa Rosa County School District to make sure school planning is coordinated with land use and development decisions.

Interlocal agreements facilitate alignment of school enrollment, capacity, and facility needs.

i. School Concurrency

The City of Gulf Breeze implements school concurrency in coordination with the School District through an interlocal agreement as required by Florida Statutes. This agreement, established in 2003, requires Gulf Breeze and the School District to coordinate and provide sufficient school capacity to serve students generated by new residential development. This agreement establishes a coordinated framework for addressing the community's educational needs while responsibly managing growth and public resources. It includes provisions for intergovernmental coordination and information sharing; monitoring school capacity; school site selection, expansion, and facility improvements; local planning agency review and comprehensive plan amendments; co-location and shared use of facilities; dispute resolution; oversight; and amendment or termination procedures.

ii. School Resource Officer

A School Resource Officer (SRO) Agreement was executed in 2025 between the Santa Rosa County School District and the City of Gulf Breeze. Under this agreement, the Gulf Breeze Police Department provides and manages the School District's School Resource Officer program for schools located within the city. The program includes three full-time School Resource Officers, along with the necessary vehicles, supplies, and equipment.

e. Public Safety

The City of Gulf Breeze is dedicated to protecting the well-being of its residents, businesses, and visitors. Public safety efforts focus on supporting emergency response, promoting safe and efficient traffic flow, and enhancing the overall quality of life and community well-being.

i. Police Department Communications

In 2016, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) was executed between Santa Rosa and Escambia counties and the police departments of Pensacola and Gulf Breeze. This agreement outlines the terms and conditions for sharing resources to enable radio interoperability and the use of shared talk groups to support mutual aid responses.

ii. Emergency Communications

In 2003, an interlocal agreement between Santa Rosa County and the City of Gulf Breeze established the city as a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) for local telephone subscribers. Over time, as 911 infrastructure transitioned to unified digital and wireless routing networks, primary administrative and technological responsibility for emergency communications services was consolidated back under the Santa Rosa County Emergency Communications system, with Gulf Breeze continuing to operate as a critical local dispatch partner.



iii. Firefighting Mutual Aid

In 2015, a mutual aid agreement was signed between the City of Gulf Breeze and multiple fire and emergency service providers, including Bagdad, Milton, Navy Fire and Emergency Services, Harold, Jay, Munson, Pace, Avalon, Berrydale, East Milton, Holley-Navarre, Midway, Navarre Beach, and Skyline, representing the Santa Rosa County Firefighters' Association. The agreement establishes cooperation at the scene of any fire or emergency and sets forth rules and regulations for coordinated response among all participating agencies.

f. Development and Permitting

The City of Gulf Breeze Community Services Department oversees development and construction activities to ensure compliance with the City's Land Development Code (LDC). The City coordinates with Santa Rosa County to streamline permitting, inspections, and related regulatory processes.

Pursuant to a 1981 interlocal agreement, Santa Rosa County is responsible for issuing building permits and conducting building inspections within the City limits. The County reviews plans and enforces compliance with the Florida Building Code, including applicable building, electrical, plumbing, gas, mechanical, swimming pool, and floodplain management provisions.

The City issues Development Orders and reviews projects for compliance with the City's Land Development Code, including zoning, setbacks, land use, site design, and other local development standards.

g. Conduit Programs

In 2022, the City of Gulf Breeze entered into an interlocal agreement with the City of Quincy to authorize the creation of a Capital Trust Authority. This authority oversees the issuance of bonds under a conduit program to finance public projects as needed. The agreement allows the city to participate in a coordinated approach to funding capital improvement projects.

h. Tourism

The City of Gulf Breeze recognizes tourism as a key driver of the local economy. To support this sector, the city established a tourist development tax (TDT) in 1997. In 2016, Santa Rosa County and the city entered into an interlocal agreement to govern the allocation and expenditure of the tax collected. Under the agreement, the county sends 90% of the TDT generated within the city to Gulf Breeze. The city maintains a separate budget for these funds to be used exclusively for tourism-related purposes and provides quarterly reports on their use.

i. Supervisor of Elections

In 2024, the City of Gulf Breeze and the Santa Rosa County Office of the Supervisor of Elections entered into an interlocal agreement to define election responsibilities. Under this agreement, the city and county conduct elections for candidates and issues affecting both jurisdictions, either concurrently or separately, to provide efficient services and meet the needs of the local community.

C. FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

As highlighted throughout this Element, the City of Gulf Breeze maintains partnerships with neighboring municipalities, regional planning organizations, state agencies, and other partners. Looking forward to 2050, there is significant opportunity to strengthen existing agreements and forge new partnerships to address emerging challenges and support long-term community goals. Gulf Breeze can leverage interlocal partnerships to address pressures in school, utilities, roads, and natural areas. By identifying challenge areas and forming targeted collaborative agreements, the City can implement innovative solutions while maintaining its goals for a livable, connected and resilient community aligned with the Comprehensive Plan and Most Livable City Plan.

1. Mobility and Transportation

The city prioritizes multimodal and sustainable transportation planning. Future efforts will strengthen regional coordination with FDOT to enhance safety and multimodal access along US Highway 98, and to pursue the implementation of the SUN Trail network through the city. These initiatives aim to improve mobility and pedestrian accessibility rather than simply adding more automobiles on the road.

2. Housing

While Gulf Breeze does not currently receive federal housing funding through programs like SHIP, addressing housing needs and affordability remains a priority. Future partnerships could support collaborative housing strategies with the county and other agencies to increase affordability and access.

3. Cultural and Recreation Facilities

The city will continue to be vigilant for opportunities to support preservation of the City's historical and natural heritage, including coordination with the National Seashore and other cultural resources.

Expanding recreation programming within City parks and maintaining shared-use agreements for school facilities will also enhance community services and quality of life.



10



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FROM SHORELINE TO SKYLINE

[DRAFT JULY 2026]

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X. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

A. INTRODUCTION

The Capital Improvements Element provides a roadmap for planning and investing in essential public infrastructure. It is a required element of the Comprehensive Plan, which guides the funding of public facilities and services identified in other Comprehensive Plan elements. The Capital Improvement Program (CIP), which is reviewed and updated annually, is the primary tool for implementing the CIE and ensuring that public facilities are available to meet adopted Level of Service (LOS) standards.

The CIP includes scheduled capital projects funded by both public and private sources. While state statutes only require the inclusion of capital projects necessary to maintain LOS, the city may also include additional projects that enhance public facilities without directly affecting LOS. For purposes of the CIE, capital improvements are projects that increase facility capacity or modify established LOS standards. This Element demonstrates the City of Gulf Breeze's capacity to fund needed improvements and addresses facilities subject to concurrency requirements, including transportation, sewer, potable water, solid waste, stormwater, and parks and recreation.

The following sections describe the capital improvements included in the FY 2025-26 through FY 2030-31.

1. Transportation

Gulf Breeze continues to implement ongoing and planned transportation improvements to support the efficient and safe movement of people, goods, and services through the Comprehensive Plan's 2050 planning horizon.

As outlined in the Transportation Element, the City needs to coordinate with regional, state, and federal agencies and focus on the following priorities:

- Coordination of transportation activities and improvements with the Future Land Use Map
- Provision of a safe, convenient, and energy-efficient multimodal transportation system
- Protection of existing and future rights-of-way
- Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions
- Implementation of quality level of service standards to identify needed multimodal improvements
- Implementation of improvements identified in the Most Livable City Plan

a. City Transportation Projects

Two trail projects have been identified. **Table X-2** provides details on scheduled costs and the following paragraphs provide a detailed description of each project.

- i. **Loop (Multi-Use Path Phase II)** - This project includes the construction of an additional 10-foot asphalt pathway, pedestrian bridge at the Daniel/Shoreline intersection, sidewalk, and high-intensity striping from Tall Pine Trail to the proposed multi-modal overpass above Highway 98.
- ii. **SUN Trail Improvements** - This project includes the construction of a 12-foot-wide asphalt shared-use path beginning at the future multi-use path (MUP) and US 98 overpass. The trail will follow US 98, bypass Harbourtown, and continue onto State Road 399, linking directly to Pensacola Beach and the Florida National Scenic Trail. The project also extends east toward Gulf Islands National Seashore and the Great Northwest Coastal Trail and features a raised crosswalk with rapid flashing beacons on SR 399 to enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety, accessibility, and enjoyment.

b. Long Range Transportation Plan

As outlined in the Florida-Alabama 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), several roadway improvement projects are currently underway or planned within Gulf Breeze. The 2050 LRTP update is ongoing and has not yet been finalized. **Table X-1** summarizes transportation projects scheduled for completion between 2025 and 2050. Three transportation projects are included.

Table X-1. LRTP Projects

Project	From	To	Year
Soundview Trail Path (SUN Trail Project)	Shoreline Dr / US 98	Bob Sikes Bridge / Gulf Islands National Seashore	2027-2031
US 98 Multimodal Overpass (Gulf Breeze)	N/A	N/A	2027-2031
US 98 Interchange	West of Bay Bridge Dr.	East of Bayshore R.	2027-2031

Source: Florida-Alabama TPO, 2025

2. Potable Water

Through the Gulf Breeze Regional Water System (GBRWS), the City of Gulf Breeze provides potable water to approximately 7,500 customers within the city limits and in unincorporated portions of Santa Rosa County east of the city. The City operates two water treatment plants, the East and West Water Plants.

The city also has a Water Purchase Agreement with the Fairpoint Regional Utility System (FRUS), which allows a maximum daily allocation of 2,874,447 gallons per day to the Gulf Breeze Regional Water System. As identified in the Infrastructure Element, this allocation provides enough capacity to meet current and projected potable water demand through 2050.

At this time, the City of Gulf Breeze does not plan to expand the potable water system capacity. However, the City has extended its water purchase agreement with FRUS for another 20 years. The most recent NFWFMD Region II Water Supply Plan noted three project options that the City may consider pursuing in order to better serve regional water demand. These include a National Seashore transmission main replacement, a

West Plan pump station replacement, and a West elevated tank replacement. When the City prepares a Water Supply Facilities Work Plan, the capital improvements schedule will be updated to be consistent with that plan and the regional water supply plan.

3. Sewer

The GBRWS currently serves roughly 9,500 sewer customers and 1,100 reclaimed water customers within the City of Gulf Breeze and unincorporated portions of Santa Rosa County east of the Naval Live Oaks Preserve. Presently, the city does not have enough wastewater treatment capacity to maintain its adopted LOS standard for existing customers.

To address this deficiency, the City plans to expand the wastewater treatment facility to a total capacity of 3.5 million gallons per day (MGD), which will be sufficient to maintain the adopted level of service standards through the 2050 planning horizon. Additional details regarding the wastewater treatment facility expansion are provided in **Table X-2** and in the FY 2026-FY 2035 Capital Improvement Plan.

In 2019, the city evaluated the feasibility of converting areas currently served by septic tanks to a centralized sewer system through its Septic Tank Elimination Program. The study focused on areas within the city limits and identified candidate projects for connection to the South Santa Rosa Utilities System's wastewater treatment facility. The city's current CIP includes multiple projects related to the Septic to Sewer Program, as summarized below and in **Table X-2**.

- a. **Eastern Collection System Capacity Improvements.** Based on the results of the system modeling project, the city will develop improvements to create master lift stations and increase the capacity of the existing pressurized collection and transmission system in the eastern part of the service area. The original master plan called for the construction of a second treatment facility. However, the city elected to purchase property to expand the existing facility. Improvements will be necessary to maximize the capacity of the existing infrastructure.
- b. **Bay Cliffs STS Area – Sewer Conversions.** The Bay Cliffs Septic-to-Sewer Conversion Project will transition residential properties in the Bay Cliffs Area, which is northeast of Gulf Breeze Parkway, from aging or failing septic systems to a centralized sanitary sewer system. This project seeks to improve environmental health, protect groundwater, reduce nutrient discharges to nearby waterways, enhance public health, and support long-term service reliability and sustainable development in the neighborhood.
- c. **Septic to Sewer Conversion in Other Parts of the City.** As of June 23, 2025, approximately 115 properties have been successfully connected to the city's centralized sewer collection and treatment system through the ongoing septic-to-sewer conversion, bringing the total number of active sewer connections within the city to 1,874. An estimated 874 properties within the City limits remain served by individual septic systems. The project focuses on converting the remaining septic properties to the centralized sewer system to improve public

health, protect water quality, and enhance infrastructure efficiency. FY 2026 funding includes \$1M from impact fees.

- d. **West Bay Shore (County STS).** This grant-funded project aims to provide central sewer service to the Santa Rosa Park area, which includes Reservation Road and West Bayshore Road, just outside city limits to the northeast.
- e. **Gulf Breeze Regional Water System Water Reclamation Facility Upgrade and Expansion.** This project upgrades and expands the GBRWS Water Reclamation Facility, increasing treatment capacity from 2.0 to 3.5 MGD to support future growth and meet regulatory requirements. The project replaces aging infrastructure and includes the installation of a new pumping system to improve reclaimed water delivery for irrigation. Constructed in 2000, with several major components dating back to pre-1987, modernizing the facility is critical for continued operational reliability. As of the current reporting period, the project is approximately 45% complete, with construction progressing two months ahead of schedule.

4. Solid Waste

The City of Gulf Breeze does not provide solid waste collection or disposal services directly. Instead, the city has a franchise agreement with Waste Pro of Florida for residential and commercial solid waste services. Residential services include collection and disposal of solid and vegetative waste, recyclables, and bulk waste. Commercial services include the collection and disposal of solid waste, recyclables, and bulk waste. All waste collected by Waste Pro is disposed of at the Santa Rosa County Central Landfill located in unincorporated Santa Rosa County near Milton.

5. Stormwater

The City of Gulf Breeze adopted a level-of-service standard for stormwater management in the Infrastructure Element and regulates stormwater through Article III of Chapter 23 of the Land Development Code. The city's CIP identifies 3 stormwater management projects, as summarized below and in **Table X-2**.

- a. **Navy Cove / Driftwood / Berry Stormwater Improvements.** This project constructs a gravity stormwater system to serve the Driftwood and Navy Cove areas. This project is funded with RESTORE Act grant funds, which are expected to be available in FY 2025. The grant requires a 50% match from the city.
- b. **Nightingale & Fairpoint Gravity System.** This project involves the design and construction of a gravity discharge to Hoffman Bayou to alleviate flooding issues on Nightingale Drive near Fairpoint Drive and provide drainage for runoff from Gulf Breeze Parkway. This area represents one of the remaining drainage issues following the installation of the gravity system serving Center Road, Dracena Way, Russ Drive, and Kevin Drive.
- c. **Shoreline Basin Project.** Miscellaneous drainage projects to enhance the Central District and reduce nuisance flooding

6. Recreation & Open Space

As outlined in the Recreation and Open Space Element, the City of Gulf Breeze maintains an extensive inventory of recreational facilities and is home to over 1,380 acres of the Naval Live Oaks Preserve in the Gulf Islands National Seashore. The city is projected to have sufficient recreational facilities to meet the adopted level of service standard of 5 acres per 1,000 City residents through the 2050 planning horizon. Despite having a surplus of recreational facilities, the city has three planned improvements to its recreational facilities, which are included in the CIP and outlined below and in **Table X-2**.

a. Recreational Fishing Improvements

- *Shoreline Park*. Expand the existing pier and add a floating small vessel boat launch featuring a dock, fish cleaning station, and a refreshment station equipped with ice, vending, and frozen bait machines.
- *Woodland Park*. Remove the existing dock/pier structure and install a floating small vessel boat launch featuring a floating dock, an Americans with Disability Act (ADA)-compliant restroom facility, and expanded parking and concrete walkways.

b. Shoreline Park South - Boardwalk Extension.

Extend the existing boardwalk approximately 550 feet east along the north side of the park, wrapping around the boat trailer parking lot to the Beach Dog Park east of the boat ramp. This extension will provide pedestrians with a safe and accessible pathway to Beach Dog Park and boat ramp amenities.

B. FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

The City of Gulf Breeze has a multitude of capital improvement projects outlined in the Fiscal Year 2026-2035 Capital Improvement Plan, which support maintaining adopted LOS standards through the 2050 planning horizon. To continue meeting these standards, the City will focus on the following activities:

1. Coordination

The City relies on a variety of public and private entities to ensure residents have access to essential infrastructure and services (E.g. Waste pro for solid waste, Fairpoint Regional Utility System for potable water, Santa Rosa County District Schools for public education, etc.). To ensure continued access, the City will continue to coordinate with these entities.

2. Annual Update to the CIP

To ensure adequate provision, coordination, and maintenance of infrastructure, the City will continue to update the Capital Improvement Plan on an annual basis.

Table X-2. Capital Improvements Schedule FY 2025-26 through FY 2030-31*

Project Description	Funding Source	Total Cost	FY 25-26	FY 26-27	FY 27-28	FY 29-30	FY 30-31
TRANSPORTATION							
Loop (Multi-Use Path Phase II)	CRA Fund	\$853,714	\$790,461	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
SUN Trail Improvements	CRA Fund	\$3,427,402	\$0	\$678,779	\$1,000,000	\$1,427,402	\$0
RECREATION							
Recreational Fishing Improvements- Shoreline Park & Woodland Park	NRDA Grant	\$1,564,230	\$1,564,230	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Shoreline Park South - Boardwalk Extension	General Fund	\$500,000	\$0	\$500,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
WATER & SEWER							
Eastern Collection System Capacity Improvements	Water, Sewer, WWTP Fund	\$550,000	\$550,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
City Septic to Sewer Conversion		\$34,652,365	\$7,503,378	\$3,759,574	\$5,000,000	\$8,958,689	\$0
West Bay Shore (County STS)		\$6,000,000	\$6,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Bay Cliffs STS Area – Sewer Conversions		\$5,200,000	\$4,747,260	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Gulf Breeze Regional Water System Water Reclamation Facility Upgrade and Expansion		\$63,677,117	\$23,800,000	\$6,006,952	\$0	\$0	\$0
STORMWATER							
Navy Cove / Driftwood / Berry Stormwater Improvements	Stormwater Utility Fund	\$1,834,476	\$0	\$250,000	\$1,584,476	\$0	\$0
Nightingale & Fairpoint Gravity System		\$175,000	\$0	\$175,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Shoreline Basin Project		\$4,294,992	\$0	\$4,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$0

Source: City of Gulf Breeze, 2025