

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-03

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA, RELATING TO COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT; MAKING FINDINGS; ADOPTING A COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT PLAN; REPEALING RESOLUTIONS IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the Florida Legislature duly enacted Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes (the "Community Redevelopment Act") establishing the conditions and procedures for the establishment of community redevelopment areas and agencies.

WHEREAS, a community redevelopment plan as contemplated by Part III, Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, has been prepared which addresses the redevelopment needs in the Community Redevelopment Area.

WHEREAS, on April 19, 2022, the City adopted Resolution No. R-03-2022 by which the City (1) ascertained, determined and declared certain Finding of Necessity as required by law; and determined that the Redevelopment Area constituted a "blighted area" as defined in Section 163.340(8), Florida Statutes, (2) expressed the need for the creation of the Green Cove Springs Community Redevelopment Agency to be created to carry out the Community Redevelopment contemplated by Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes. and (3) sought approval from Clay County that the Redevelopment Area meets the criteria described in Section 163.340(8) and 163.355, Florida Statutes and requested delegation of authority to create the Agency, adopt a Community Redevelopment Plan and establish a Redevelopment Trust Fund.

WHEREAS, on May 26, 2022, the City submitted the Finding of Necessity to Create a Redevelopment Agency attached hereto in Exhibit "A", to the County for review and approval; and requested delegation of authority to create the Redevelopment Area.

WHEREAS, on August 9, 2022, the County found and determined that the establishment of the Redevelopment Area would serve a public purpose and would be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the Local Comprehensive Plan, and will otherwise be consistent with

the controlling provisions of State law. Pursuant to Section 163.410, Florida Statutes, the County adopted Resolution No. 2021-2022-56 which delegates to the City limited power to the creation of a CRA Redevelopment plan to be reviewed by the City and the County.

WHEREAS, on October 27, 2022, the newly created Community Redevelopment Agency had their initial meeting, with the composition of the Board members being two members chosen by the City Council, two chosen by the County Commission. The Board, subsequently voted on adding a then voted on the 5th member as required by the County Resolution No.2021-2022-56.

WHEREAS, on November 29, 2022, the City Planning and Zoning Commission, as the Local Planning Agency, unanimously approved the CRA Redevelopment Plan and Interlocal Agreement.

WHEREAS, on January 10, 2023, the Community Redevelopment Agency approved the the CRA Redevelopment Plan and Interlocal Agreement.

WHEREAS, the City found within the Community Redevelopment Area that the rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment, or a combination thereof, of such area or areas is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals, or welfare of the residents of the City.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA:

Section 1. Finding of Conformance with Comprehensive Plan.

Based upon the evidence, data, analysis and facts presented to it, the City Commission hereby determines and declares that the community redevelopment plan conforms to the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Section 2. Adoption of Community Redevelopment Plan.

The City Council hereby adopts the Community Redevelopment Plan attached hereto in Exhibit "A" as the community redevelopment plan for the City of Green Cove Springs Community Redevelopment Area, subject to County and authorizes and directs the Green Cove Springs Redevelopment Agency to proceed with the implementation of the Plan, subject to County approval.

Section 3. Severability.

If any provision of this Resolution or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of the

City of Green Cove
Springs, Florida
Resolution No. 2023-03

Resolution, which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this Resolution, are declared severable.

Section 4. Repeal of Conflicting Resolutions.

All resolutions or parts of resolutions in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

Section 5. Effective Date.

This resolution shall take effect upon approval by Clay County.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GREEN
COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA, THIS 4TH DAY OF APRIL, 2023.**

Daniel M Johnson., Mayor

ATTEST:

Erin West, City Clerk

Approved as to form:

L.J. Arnold, City Attorney

EXHIBIT A

GREEN COVE

Springs



CRA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

January 11, 2023



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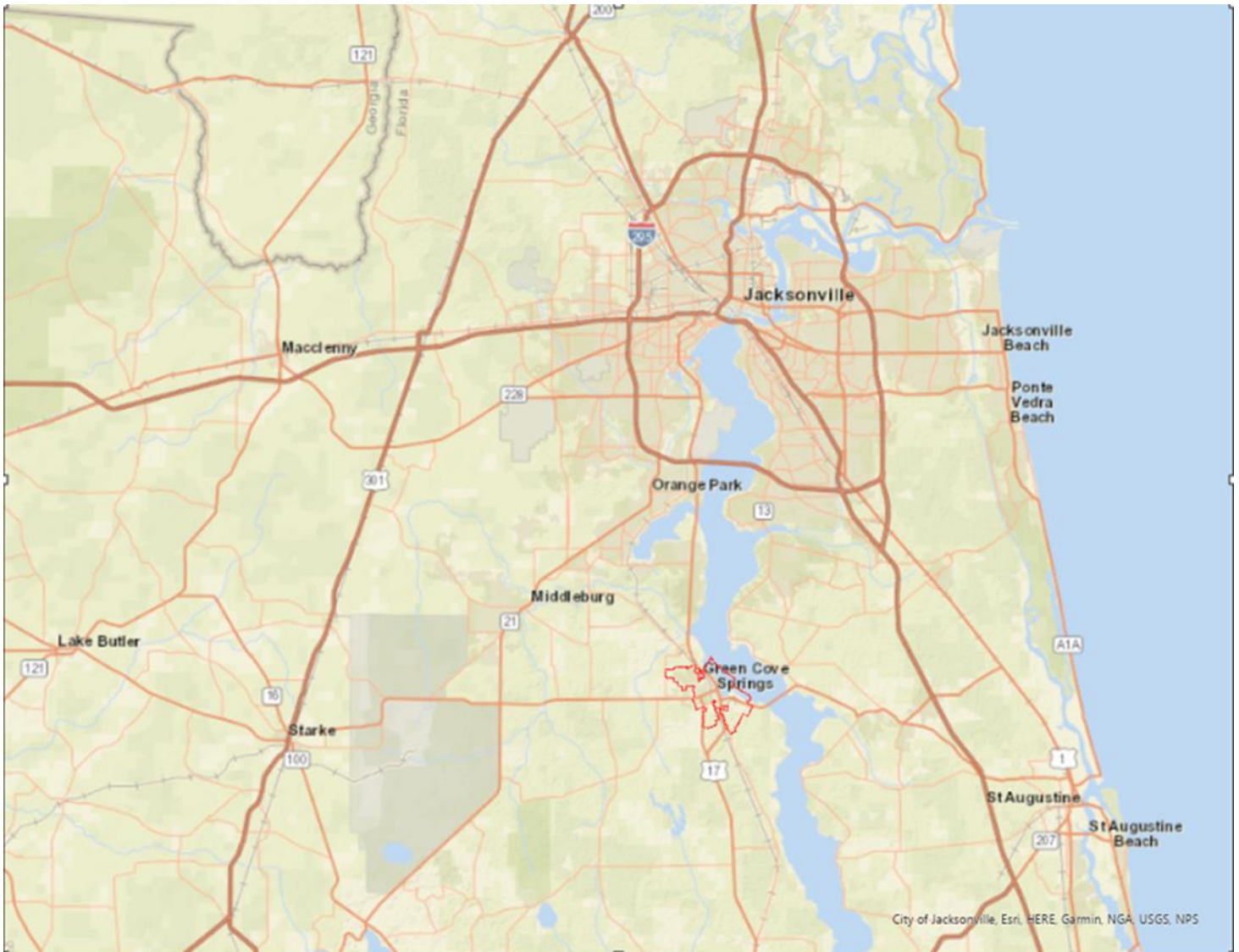
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY / FINDING OF NECESSITY

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Map I-1. Green Cove Springs



I. FINDING OF NECESSITY



In the 1850s, the area was often referred to as White Sulfur Springs before being renamed to Green Cove Springs in 1866. 'Green' refers to the lush, green vegetation in the area and the natural spring in the City, while 'Cove' refers to the bend of the St. Johns River on which the City was established. Continuing the timber legacy of George Clarke, Green Cove Springs' economy was sustained and amplified by the live oak harvesting industry. Moreover, livestock and hunting activities were increasingly prevalent within the area during the mid-1800s. However, the area's main attractor of early settlers and tourists was the area's warm springs, which quickly grew in popularity with both Florida residents and traveling northerners in late 19th century. As a testament to the area's early tourism industry, several historic full-service hotels from this era continue to line the St. Johns River.

Shortly after this period, a third industry grew into significance: dairy farming. Gustafson's Farm opened in 1908, eventually becoming one of the largest privately-owned dairies in the southeast region of the United States. In 2004, the operation was purchased by Southeast Milk and changes in consumer taste forced the company to close its century Green Cove Springs doors in 2013, which caused a significant loss of local jobs and revenue. Dairy farming was not the only economic stronghold to suffer. The great winter freeze of 1894-1895 inspired railroad owner Henry Flagler to extend his tracks further south towards what is now known as the City of Miami. After Henry Flagler's Florida East Coast (FEC) Railway offered northern Americans access to south Florida locations, such as Palm Beach and Miami, tourism activity greatly declined within Green Cove Springs.

Even with the success of the Gustafson Farm, Green Cove Springs suffered greatly from the American Great Depression of the early 1930s. Fortunately, the military installations, Benjamin Lee Field (renamed Naval Air Station Green Cove Springs) and Camp Blanding, encouraged economic recovery towards the end of the 1930s. The Naval Air Station was purchased by the City after its 1961 decommission but was eventually sold to Louis Reynolds for the construction of the Reynolds Industrial Park with hopes for substantial job creation. The Park remains an important part of the City's future growth.

Green Cove Springs has served as the County Seat of Government for Clay County, Florida since 1871, preceding its incorporation as a town on November 2, 1874. Green Cove's last Comprehensive Plan update was in 2011. In 2020, the Census-recorded population was just under 10,000 residents and has grown nearly 16% through 2020. Activity and population increases are anticipated with the completion of the First Coast Expressway (Florida 23) - estimated to begin its final construction phase in 2023. Phase 2, which runs through Clay County, is currently under construction.

As with many small towns across the country, Green Cove Springs's downtown area has witnessed a decline over the years as new developments began to spring up outside of the urban core. This slow decline is true for both commercial and residential areas. As a result, the increase over time of taxable values has not kept up with "newer" areas of town. As shown in table 1 below, the CRA area has shown some redevelopment in the past five years but overall has failed to appreciably increase its aggregate assessed value (AAV) as compared to the City as a whole.

1. Plan Funding

The redevelopment of the Green Cove Springs Community Redevelopment Area will require a substantial financial investment on the part of the CRA. As provided for by Florida's Community Redevelopment



Act, Florida Statutes Chapter 163, Part III, the principal source of funding for the CRA will be through Tax Increment Revenue from the City of Green Cove Springs and Clay County. Additionally, the CRA and the City may utilize other City, County, State, and Federal funding sources, as appropriate and available, to carry out the provisions of the Redevelopment Plan.

As required by F.S. 163.362(10), the Green Cove Springs Redevelopment Plan provides a time certain for completing all redevelopment financed by increment revenues. F.S. 163.362(10)(a) allows the Green Cove Springs CRA to use increment revenue for up to 40 total years after the year the initial Redevelopment Plan was adopted. The initial Green Cove Springs CRA Redevelopment Plan shall be adopted in 2022, therefore the maximum life permitted by statute would be until December 13, 2062.

This Redevelopment Plan contains Goals and Initiatives designed to address slum/blight conditions in the CRA district and attract private sector investment back into the urban core of the City. The projected total increment over the 30-year time horizon of the CRA is between \$18,995,996 to \$36,171,916.

a. **Organization of the Plan**

This Redevelopment Plan Amendment is organized into several sections, briefly described as follows:

Section 1 – Executive Summary / Finding of Necessity (Need for a Community Redevelopment Agency) - a Finding of Necessity (FON) in accordance with the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969, Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes is required to determine if slum and / or blight exist within the Study Area

Section 2 – Authority to Undertake Community Redevelopment - provides a summary of certain statutory requirements of the Community Redevelopment Act, as provided for in Florida Statutes 163, Part III

Section 3 – Interlocal Agreement with Clay County - provides the framework for creation of the Green Cove Springs CRA.

Section 4 – Redevelopment Vision, Objectives & Strategies - introduces ten (10) Objectives for Redevelopment with Corresponding strategies for each Objective

Section 5 – Financial Information - contains financial projections, plan cost and timeline

Section 6 – Legal Description - outlines the boundaries of the Green Cove Springs CRA

Section 7 – Powers of a CRA - identifies the powers of the CRA in regards of utilization of funding

Section 8 – Appendices

B. **FINDING OF NECESSITY OBSERVED CONDITIONS**

This study has been prepared to fulfill the requirements for a Finding of Necessity (FON) in accordance with the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969, Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes. This report has reviewed data from multiple sources including the Clay County Property Appraiser and field observations, which lead to analysis to determine if conditions of slum and / or blight exist within the study area. This report represents the first step in creating a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) which will use Tax Increment Financing to invest in the area and improve its conditions. There are three statutory conditions that may be evaluated to



determinate a slum condition and fourteen statutory conditions that may be evaluated to determine a blight condition. For a slum condition, only one of the three is required to be met to make a finding of slum. For a blight condition, only two of the fourteen are required to be met to make a finding of blight.

One of three factors of slum was identified as being met, and seven of fourteen factors of blight were determined as being met, satisfying the statutory requirements to determine the Study Area is a slum area as well as a blighted area. With the adoption of this FON, the City Council of Green Cove Springs may designate a Community Redevelopment Area.

Table I-1. Slum Factors

Factor	Met?
(a) Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces;	No
(b) High density of population, compared to the population density of adjacent areas within the county or municipality; and overcrowding, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies and the requirements of the Florida Building Code;	No
(c) The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes.	Yes

Table I-2. Blight Factors

Factor	Met?
(a) Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, bridges, or public transportation facilities.	Yes
(b) Aggregate assessed values of real property in the area for ad valorem tax purposes have failed to show any appreciable increase over the 5 years prior to the finding of such conditions.	Yes
(c) Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness.	Yes
(d) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions.	Yes
(e) Deterioration of site or other improvements.	Yes
(f) Inadequate and outdated building density patterns.	Yes
(g) Falling lease rates per square foot of office, commercial, or industrial space compared to the remainder of the county or municipality.	Data unavailable



(h) Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land.	Not analyzed
(i) Residential and commercial vacancy rates higher in the area than in the remainder of the county or municipality.	Yes
(j) Incidence of crime in the area higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality.	Not analyzed
(k) Fire and emergency medical service calls to the area proportionately higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality.	Not analyzed
(l) A greater number of violations of the Florida Building Code in the area than the number of violations recorded in the remainder of the county or municipality.	Not analyzed
(m) Diversity of ownership or defective or unusual conditions of title which prevent the free alienability of land within the deteriorated or hazardous area.	Not analyzed
(n) Governmentally owned property with adverse environmental conditions caused by a public or private entity.	N/A
(o) A substantial number or percentage of properties damaged by sinkhole activity which have not been adequately repaired or stabilized.	N/A

1. Recommendations

The Study Area meets the criteria established in Section 163.340, Florida Statutes. It is staff recommendation that the City of Green Cove Springs adopt this Finding of Necessity by resolution per F.S. 163.355 and create a Community Redevelopment Agency for the Study Area as defined herein.

C. FINDING OF NECESSITY STUDY

The City of Green Cove Springs seeks to determine the feasibility of designating the Downtown and US 17 Corridor as a Community Redevelopment Area through the development of a Finding of Necessity and would also like to implement redevelopment in this area through the adoption of a Redevelopment Area Plan.

1. Background

Green Cove Springs is a city located along the west bank of the historic St. Johns River and since 1971 has served as the County Seat of Government for Clay County. The 2020 Census identified the population count to be 9,786, a 41.66% increase from the 2010 Census.

The city's name originates from the three physical characteristics. "Green" refers to the perennially green vegetation characterized by its tree scape and foliage. "Cove" refers to a bend in the St. Johns River creating a safe area for mooring of boats during inclement weather periods. "Springs" refers to the natural spring (one of 600 in Florida), originating from the Floridan Aquifer with an estimated flow rate of approximately 2,200 gallons per minute. The spring water flows into the west side of the municipal



swimming pool and then flows out the east side forming a stream eventually emptying into the St. Johns River.

The first inhabitants of the area were attracted to it because of the warm mineral spring, known as “The Boil.” The medicinal qualities of the spring and its location along the St. Johns River served as major contributors to the community’s development as a prominent attraction and destination for tourists during the 19th Century.

Green Cove Springs has a storied history. It was home to Gustafson’s Farm, a family dairy operation owned by Frank and Agnes Gustafson that began in 1908. In the 1930s, the federal government located Benjamin Lee Field within the City. The United States Department of the Navy opened a flight training facility. In the 1950s, major American automakers had dealerships in Green Cove Springs along US 17, which led to the City being known as “the Little Detroit.”

The City grew economically and geographically, annexing land to include Magnolia Point Golf and Country Club and Magnolia West to the northwestern end, Cove Plaza on the southern end, and to the southeastern edge, FCT-granted land proposed to be the Ed Gustafson Regional Park as well as 560 acres intended to develop as a 2,100 unit residential subdivision.

In 2005, the City of Green Cove Springs adopted “Tomorrow’s Vision” as the guiding vision document for the future of the city. This document established goals for the City such as: maintain the small-town character; provide affordable housing; promote redevelopment in the corridors (US 17 / SR 16); improve traffic circulation; expand recreational opportunities; promote a business-friendly environment; strengthen Code Enforcement. One implementation mechanism included in the visioning document was the potential for a Community Redevelopment Agency. In 2014, the City adopted a Finding of Necessity, but the Community Redevelopment Agency was unable to come to fruition at that time.

Since then, the City has experienced additional growth and undergone further planning activities. In February 2021, the City began the process of updating the comprehensive plan, which was adopted a year later in February 2022. The 2045 Comprehensive Plan is designed to prepare the City for upcoming growth. The Future Land Use Map was amended from 13 categories to 6 categories: Neighborhood (NBD), Downtown (DT), Mixed Use (MU), Mixed-Use Reynolds Park (MURP), Industrial (IND), and Public (PUB). Further, the Future Land Use element established an objective to continue to redevelop and invest in blighted areas of the City, with Policy 1.6.1 directing the City to explore the creation of a Community Redevelopment Agency / Area.

Additionally, the Future Land Use elements directs the City in Policy 1.6.2 to develop a Downtown Master Plan and assess Walnut Street to determine how to increase safety and attractiveness of the streetscape. The Walnut Street assessment was completed in late 2021 and the Downtown Master Plan is underway, with a goal of adopting the plan by mid-April 2022.

2. Study Purpose

This Finding of Necessity will determine if the Study Area meets the statutory criteria to be designated as a Community Redevelopment Area. With this, the City aims to establish said area in an attempt to halt and reverse the decline within it in order to encourage new development and redevelopment to



improve the overall quality of the area, leading to improved economic conditions, increased vibrancy, and a more established sense of place in the area.

If the Study Area meets the statutory criteria, the City will adopt this Finding of Necessity and seek to move forward with adopting a Redevelopment Plan.

3. **Community Redevelopment Act Overview¹**

The Florida Legislature enacted the Community Redevelopment Act (Act) in 1969. The legislature created the law to allow local governments to improve declining areas, as defined in the Act and detailed in subsections below. Such areas are detrimental to the health, safety, and welfare of residents as well as being a nuisance to growth and the provision of adequate infrastructure and housing; the Act provides a way for the local governments to create a Redevelopment Area and fund redevelopment within it.

The Statute defines community redevelopment as local government or community redevelopment agency lead projects in an established community redevelopment area "for the elimination and prevention of the development or spread of slums and blight, or for the reduction or prevention of crime, or for the provision of affordable housing." This may include slum clearance, redevelopment, rehabilitation, or conservation in a community redevelopment area, or any combination or part thereof, pursuant to the community redevelopment plan.

The Act establishes that powers granted by the Act are "for public uses and purposes" which involve the spending of public money and the potential exercise of police power, for which reason public interest, meaning a legitimate concern for general health, safety, and welfare within the area, is a requirement to implement the Act.

The Act further establishes the legitimacy of tax increment financing (TIF) as a method of successfully preserving and enhancing the tax base of an area, which will then serve to increase tax revenues for all taxing authorities for the area, enabling them to carry out their respective objectives more effectively. A redevelopment trust fund may be established by ordinance after the approval of a Community Redevelopment Plan to allow for the deposit of funds to be used by the agency to finance or refinance redevelopment. This fund must be established prior to receipt of any increment revenues. The statutes further state:

"The annual funding of the redevelopment trust fund shall be in an amount not less than the increment in the income, proceeds, revenues, and funds of each taxing authority derived from or held in connection with the undertaking and carrying out of community redevelopment under this part. Such increment shall be determined annually and shall be that amount equal to 95% of the difference between:

1. The amount of ad valorem taxes levied each year by each taxing authority, exclusive of any amount from any debt service millage, on taxable real property contained within the geographic boundaries of a community redevelopment area; and
2. The amount of ad valorem taxes which would have been produced by the rate upon which the tax is levied each year by or for each taxing authority, exclusive of any debt service millage, upon the

¹ The 2022 Florida Statutes, Title XI Chapter 163, Part III



total of the assessed value of the taxable real property in the community redevelopment area as shown upon the most recent assessment roll used in connection with the taxation of such property by each taxing authority prior to the effective date of the ordinance providing for the funding of the trust fund."

Florida Statutes additionally require counties or municipalities seeking to exercise the power granted by the Act to adopt by a resolution "supported by data and analysis, which makes a legislative finding that the conditions in the area meet the criteria" of a slum or blighted area, detailed in 163.340(7) and 163.340(8) and defined below in subsections 2.3.1 and 2.3.2. To make this legislative finding, governing bodies draft a Finding of Necessity (FON), which supports this legislative finding through in-depth analysis of the study area. The analysis contained in this report evaluates the existing conditions and identifies the existence, if any, of a slum or blighted area. This FON will be used by the City in designating and creating the Community Redevelopment Area, if it is determined the area meets the statutory requirements to be classified as a slum or blighted area.

4. Definitions of Slum Area

According to the Florida Statute Section 163.340(7), "slum area" is an area having physical or economic conditions conducive to disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, poverty, or crime because there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, whether residential or nonresidential, which are impaired by reason of dilapidation, deterioration, age, or obsolescence, and exhibiting one or more of the following factors:

- (a) "Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces;
 - (b) High density of population, compared to the population density of adjacent areas within the county or municipality; and overcrowding, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies and the requirements of the Florida Building Code;
- or
- (c) The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes."

5. Definitions of Blighted Area

According to the Florida Statute Section 163.340(8), "blighted area" means:

an "area in which there are a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures; in which conditions, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies, endanger life or property or are leading to economic distress; and in which two or more of the following factors are present:

- (a) Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, bridges, or public transportation facilities.
- (b) Aggregate assessed values of real property in the area for ad valorem tax purposes have failed to show any appreciable increase over the 5 years prior to the finding of such conditions.
- (c) Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness.
- (d) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions.



- (e) Deterioration of site or other improvements.
- (f) Inadequate and outdated building density patterns.
- (g) Falling lease rates per square foot of office, commercial, or industrial space compared to the remainder of the county or municipality.
- (h) Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land.
- (i) Residential and commercial vacancy rates higher in the area than in the remainder of the county or municipality.
- (j) Incidence of crime in the area higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality.
- (k) Fire and emergency medical service calls to the area proportionately higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality.
- (l) A greater number of violations of the Florida Building Code in the area than the number of violations recorded in the remainder of the county or municipality.
- (m) Diversity of ownership or defective or unusual conditions of title which prevent the free alienability of land within the deteriorated or hazardous area.
- (n) Governmentally owned property with adverse environmental conditions caused by a public or private entity.
- (o) A substantial number or percentage of properties damaged by sinkhole activity which have not been adequately repaired or stabilized."

The term "blighted area" may also be used for any area in which at least one of the factors identified in paragraphs (a) through (o) is present and all taxing authorities subject to 163.387(2)(a) agree, by interlocal agreement or by resolution, that the area is blighted.

6. Assessment Process

City Staff assessed the Study Area through a multitude of resources, including but not limited to existing data, especially that included in the Green Cove Springs GeoHub; data collected from other departments, especially Public Works and Police; desktop reviews of the area; in person / walking review of the area. Staff assessed the area for many aspects of blight as defined in the Florida Statutes, and this report describes the existing conditions as they relate to these factors.

7. Study Area

The specified Study Area encompasses ± 172.8 acres and is known as the Downtown and US 17 Corridor. The corridor spans Orange Avenue from Governor Street on the north end to Oak Street on the south end. The Corridor lies between St. Johns Avenue and Magnolia Avenue on its eastern edge and Pine Avenue on its western edge. The Downtown portion reaches slightly farther to the west and east. On the western side, it is bound by Palmer Street, Green Street, and Bay Street. On the eastern side, it expands diagonally eastward from Magnolia starting at Center Street, culminating at the river's edge with Spring Park property. The area is shown in Map 1.

The Study Area contains primarily commercial and institutional uses. Well known locations within the Study Area include: churches such as Springs Baptist Church, First Presbyterian Church, Doxa Church, and United Methodist Church; County government buildings including the Courthouse, Jail, Supervisor

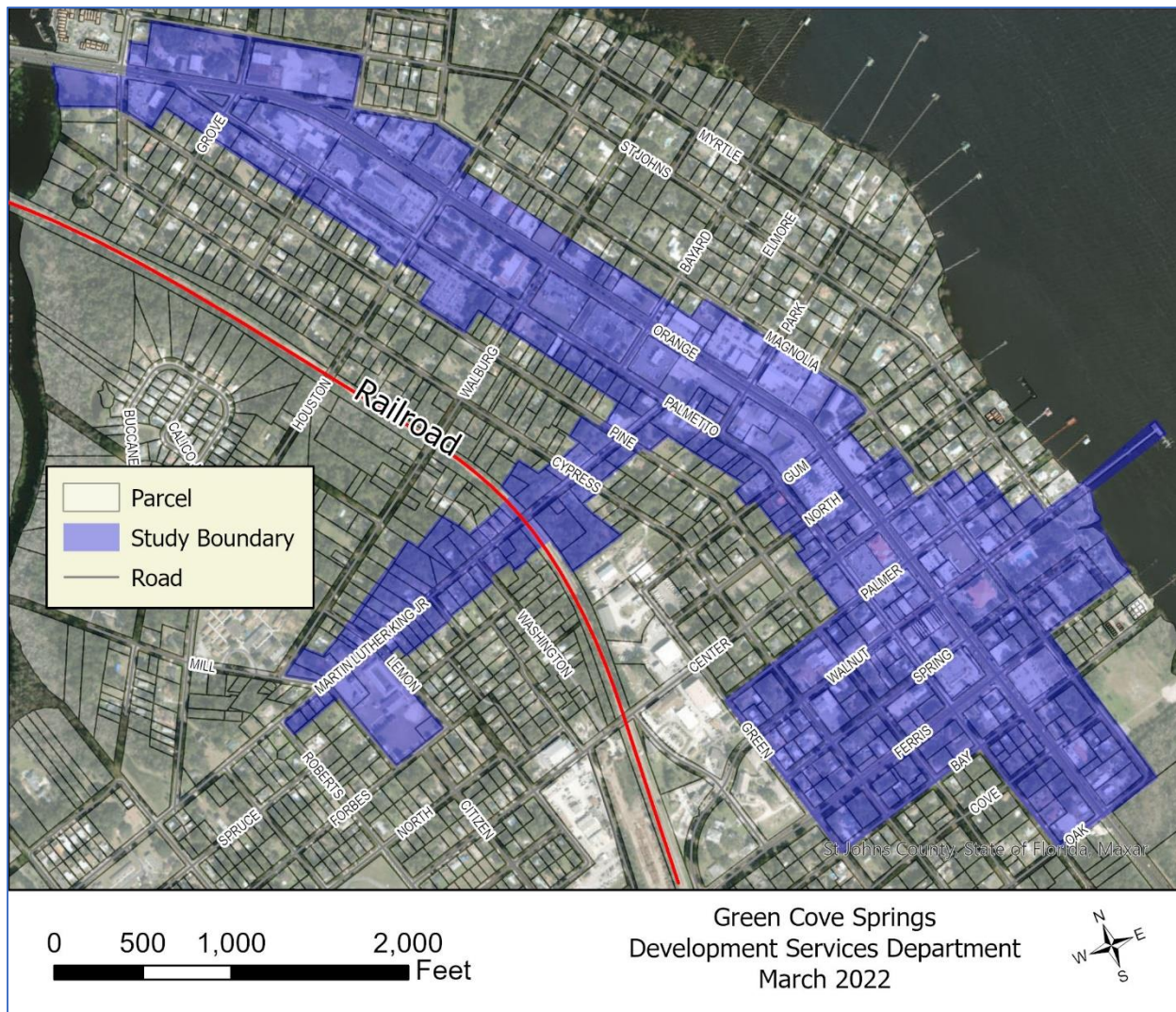


of Elections, and Administration Building; food / beverage service businesses such as Spring Park Coffee, Dunkin' Donuts, Burger King, La Casita, and Sweet Sensations; financial institutions, including Wells Fargo and VyStar Credit Union; automobile sales lots such as Green Cove Auto and Good Guys Motors as well as service businesses like Jesse's Auto Services and Darren's Custom & Restorations; retail uses like CVS, The Treasure Box, Walgreens, SS Something Special, and Green Cove Liquors; office uses including Exit Magnolia Realty, Vallencourt Construction, and Action Medical Staffing; and an event venue, Clay Theatre. Additionally, there are numerous vacant properties, including the recently demolished 1050 N Orange Ave, which previously housed an abandoned automobile sales lot, as well as the corner of North Street and Orange Avenue, which once housed two buildings and businesses. The Study Area also contains Spring Park, a well-known and loved park featuring the natural spring, a public spring-fed pool, walking trails, swinging benches, play structures, and great views of the St. Johns River. The foregoing list is not meant to be exhaustive but instead meant to provide a feel of the activity within the Study Area.

The expanse around the Study Area is primarily residential in nature, with some exception specifically along Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, which features some commercial spaces, as well as east of Green Street, which features County School Board property and related uses.

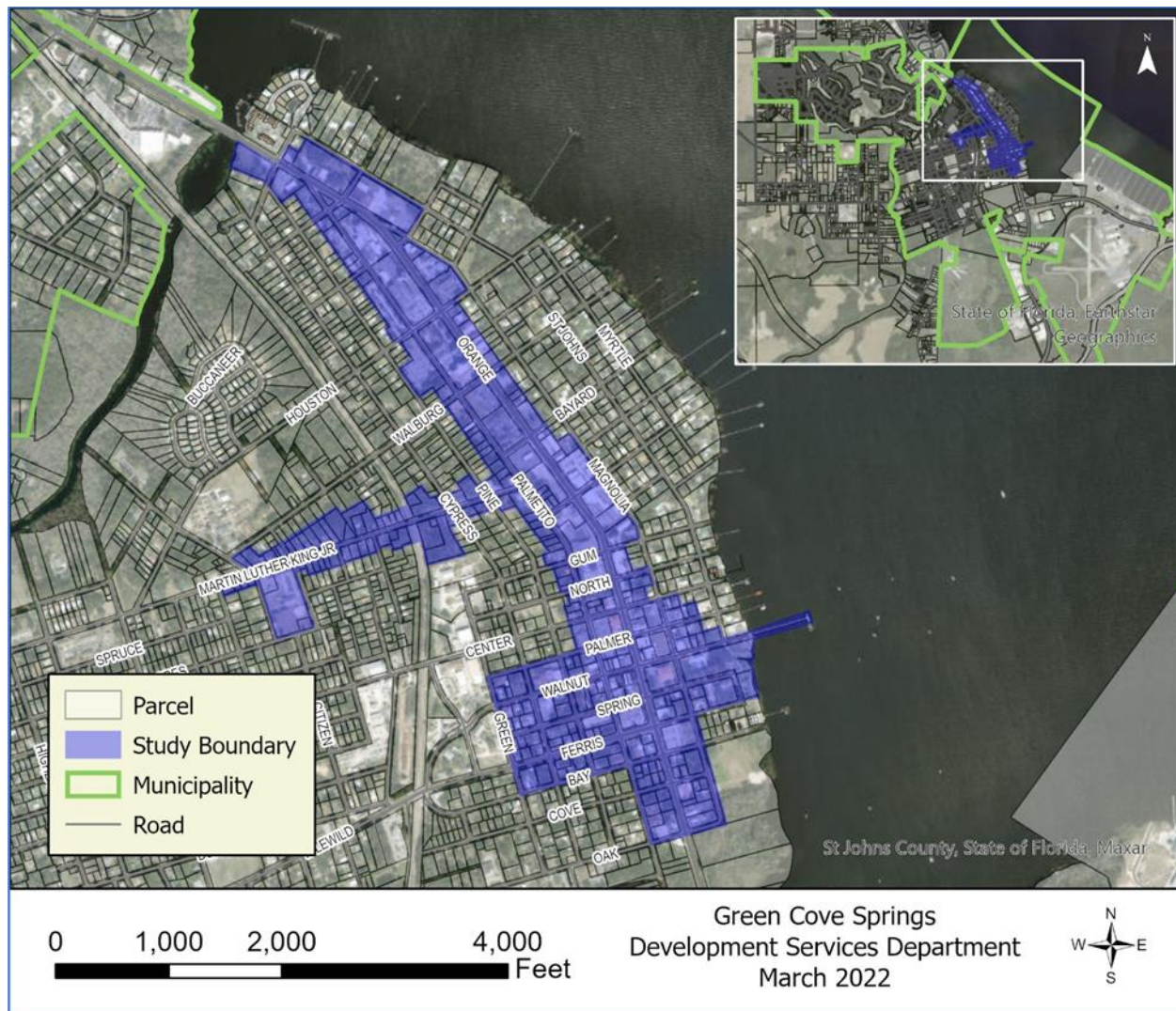
Within the Study Area, there are some planned or potential improvements. These include a proposed freestanding emergency medical facility operated by St. Vincent's as well as the Palmetto Trail project which will see an eight-foot multi-use path constructed along Palmetto Avenue from its southern end up to the Governors Creek Bridge. As part of the Walnut Street assessment, the City is also planning improvements to Walnut Street, particularly the block between Palmetto Avenue and Orange Avenue.

Map I-2. Study Area



The Study Area is located somewhat centrally within the City, particularly for commercial development. Its location within the boundaries of the City can be viewed in Map 2. The northwest portion of the City consists of two subdivisions and the southeastern portion of the City consists of Reynolds Park / Clay Port – a future mixed-use development operating as an industrial site at present. The Study Area is contained within what is referred to as the Core City. The western portion of the Core City is dominated by residential development with a smattering of institutional development, namely School Board related properties. US 17 / Orange Avenue, Martin Luther King Blvd, and Palmetto Avenue, all within the Study Area, feature commercial development with some residential development as well.

Map I-3. Study Area in Reference to the City



D. SLUM AND BLIGHTED AREA ANALYSIS

City Staff reviewed the Study Area in relation to the statutory requirements for an area to be determined a slum area or a blighted area.

1. Slum

The condition of slum in the Study Area is met under the following criteria:

- (c) The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes.

Documentation of existing conditions provided in subsequent sections in this analysis indicates life and / or properties are endangered, specifically by dilapidation; unsecured inhabitable properties; deteriorating roadways, sidewalks, and accessibility features; abandoned homes; and overall deterioration of the Study Area.



2. Defective or inadequate public transportation facilities

The City of Green Cove Springs does not have locally operated public transportation facilities. Public transportation within Clay County, called Clay Community Transportation, is operated by the Jacksonville Transportation Authority.² Of 4 available lines, 2 lines travel through Green Cove Springs. These lines operate from 6am to 7pm Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. The lines do include a flex service option wherein customers can call a reservation line to schedule a pick-up from their location that will be accommodated when time allows. The deviation will go as far as a ¾ mile off the route.

The Blue Line (Map 3) has one stop within the Study Area, the Clay County Courthouse (825 N Orange Ave), and one other stop within City Limits, at the Clay County Health Department. There are two stops moderately close to City Limits – the Pier Station stop west of town on State Road 16 and the Challenge Enterprises stop on Enterprise Way just north of town. There is two to three hours between pickups at the local stops, excluding Challenge Enterprises which only has one pickup time and one drop-off time.

The Green Line (Map 4) has one stop within the Study Area (and the City at large), the Clayton and Mildred Revels Senior Center (604 Walnut St). There are three hours between pickups at this stop, and similarly three hours between drop-offs to the location.

There are no options for local transit from residential to commercial or recreational areas of town. Additionally, the sidewalk and roadway conditions through the Study Area are in a poor state. Many streets show deterioration, especially with top layers breaking down, revealing the older brick streets beneath, which creates uneven surfaces. Sidewalks show significant deterioration as well with the following conditions being regularly observed throughout the Study Area:

- Cracking: Locations where the paved surface of the sidewalk has cracked or crumbled
- Uplift: A vertical change in height along a sidewalk (generally where “panels” of the sidewalk meet or where cracking has occurred)
- Fixed Obstructions: Anchored objects (such as utility poles) that reduce sidewalk width
- Non-Fixed Obstruction: Vegetation, non-anchored objects, or uncleanness that reduces sidewalk width or walkability
- Spalling: Surface deterioration that appears as small indentations in the surface
- Standing Water: Locations where there is or there is evidence of standing water on the sidewalk
- Loss: Locations where a piece or pieces of the sidewalk were removed, whether purposefully for work or through erosion.

Examples of the above defined items are provided in the figures below.

Further, there are many places in the Study Area completely lacking sidewalks, primarily on local streets or only on one side of the street and often without excellent road crossing conditions to get from sidewalk to sidewalk as needed.

² Jacksonville Transit Authority, <https://www.jtafla.com/ride-jta/regional-services/clay-community-transportation/> accessed 3/14/2022

Such road and sidewalk conditions reduce the ability of the community to safely traverse the Study Area on foot, by micromobility³ device (bicycle, scooter, skateboard, et cetera) or by motorized vehicle.

Figure I-1. Sidewalk Cracking, Palmer St, near 14 N Magnolia Ave



Figure I-2. Sidewalk Cracking & Loss, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd



Figure I-3. Deteriorating accessibility feature, Corner of Orange Ave & Center St



³ Institute for Transportation & Development Policy, <https://www.itdp.org/multimedia/defining-micromobility/> accessed 4/7/2022

Figure I-4. Deteriorating accessibility feature, Southwest Corner of Orange Ave & Palmer St



Figure I-5. Road Disrepair, Walnut St





Figure I-6. Intersection of Green St & Walnut St





Figure I-7. Non-Fixed Obstruction, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd



Figure I-8. Non-Fixed Obstruction, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd





Figure I-9. Sidewalk Spalling, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd



Figure I-10. Sidewalk – Standing Water, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.





Figure I-11. Sidewalk Uplift & Spalling, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd

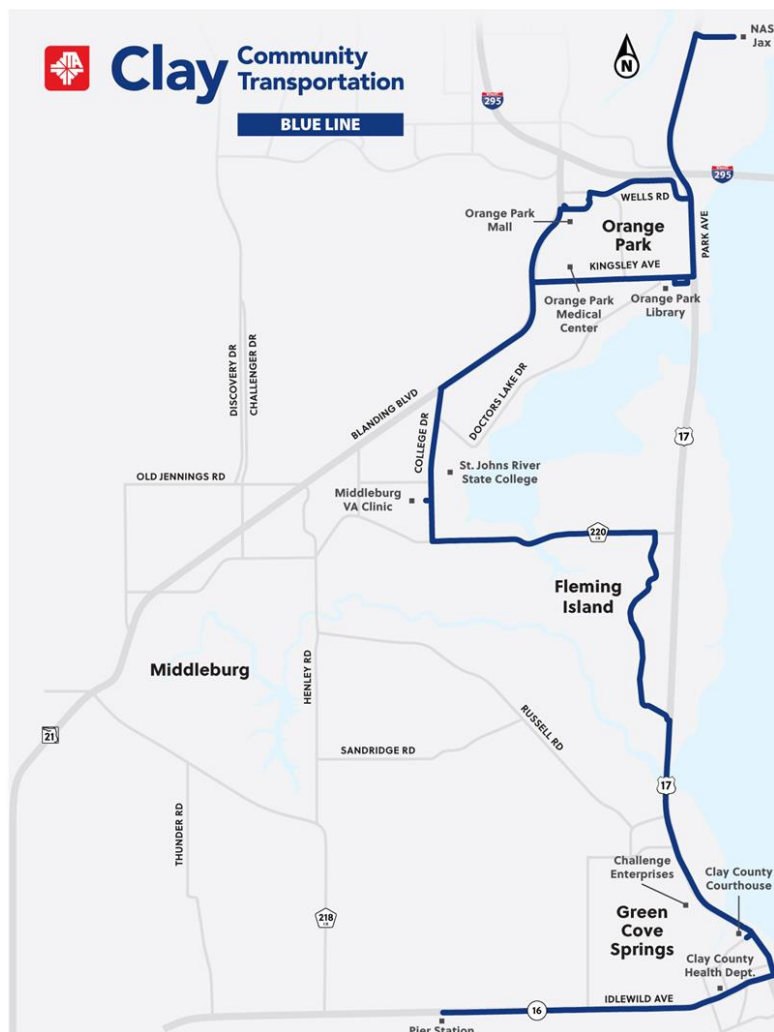


Figure I-12. Sidewalk Loss, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd





Map I-4. Bus Route – Blue Line⁴



⁴ Jacksonville Transportation Authority, <https://www.jtafla.com/ride-jta/regional-services/clay-community-transportation/clay-blue-line/>



Map I-5. Bus Route – Green Line⁵



3. Aggregate assessed values do not show appreciable increase over past 5 years

The Study Area has experienced some redevelopment in the past five years, but the deterioration present, as shown in later sections, has prevented the Study Area from seeing an appreciable increase in its aggregate assessed value (AAV) as compared to the City as a whole. In Table 1, it is demonstrated that the City as a whole has experienced an increased AAV of 50.71% while the Study Area has only seen an increase of 20.53%.

Table I-3. Aggregate Assessed Value Comparison

Year	Study Area	City
2017	\$ 85,088,819.00	\$590,524,531.00
2018	\$88,913,992.00	\$642,232,893.00
2019	\$95,646,152.00	\$802,652,764.00
2020	\$95,809,061.00	\$802,652,764.00
2021	\$102,557,978.00	\$890,001,640.00
% Increase	20.53%	50.71%

⁵ Jacksonville Transportation Authority, <https://www.jtafla.com/ride-jta/regional-services/clay-community-transportation/clay-green-line/>



4. Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness

Within the Study Area, approximately 25.6% of the lots could be considered faulty (Map 4). The criteria for this determination were as follows:

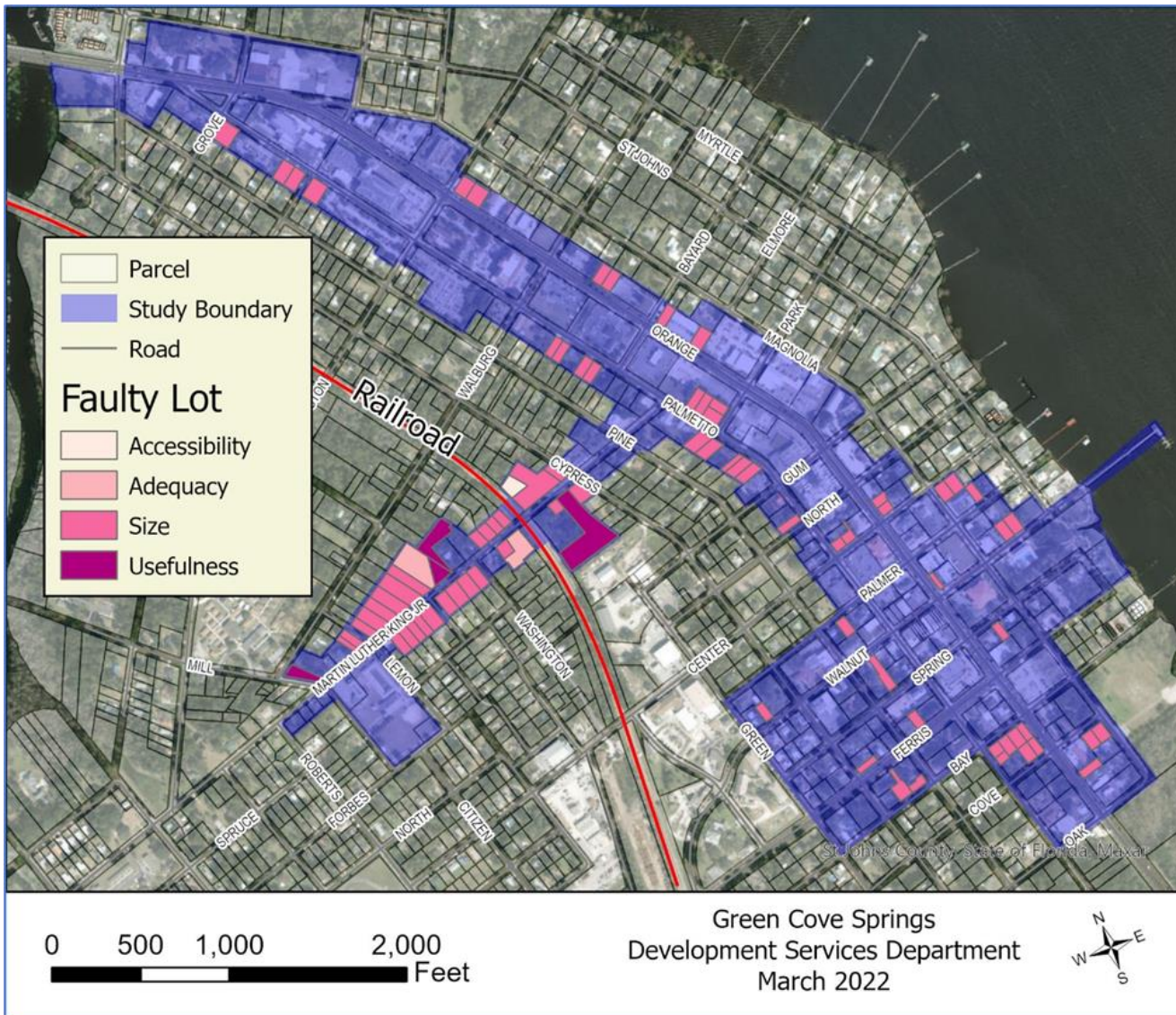
- Size: Commercially zoned lots with less than approximately 75 feet of frontage and approximately 100 feet of depth – despite the zoning code identifying no minimum lot requirements in commercial districts, the size of these lots is not suited for adequate commercial development, assuming they are developed individually given the diversity of ownership.
- Adequacy: Lots deemed inadequate are shaped in a manner which decreases their developability.
- Usefulness: Lots deemed less than useful are shaped in a manner which will likely completely prevent or deter their development or redevelopment.
- Accessibility: Lots deemed inaccessible are landlocked.

The City does permit residential development within many commercially zoned areas, and some of the identified lots have historically or recently been developed residentially as a consequence. Ideally, as identified in the Future Land Use Map, these lots would develop commercially or with a mix of uses to better support the neighborhood.

Recent development exemplifies the difficulties with developing commercially on narrow or otherwise small lots. Between 2019 and 2020, Dunkin Donuts constructed a new location within the Study Area – 610 N Orange Ave. The site is approximately 250ft along Orange Avenue (the primary roadway) by 125ft deep. The development received a variance from the City's Zoning Code requirements, which require parking to be to the side or back of a building in the Gateway Commercial Corridor. Due to the depth of the property and the type of development (drive-thru fast food), the lot layout was inadequate to permit development without a variance.

On the basis of the plight of Dunkin Donuts and the criteria identified above, additional lots are truly eligible to be considered faulty within the Study Area, but being that they are already commercially developed, at this time, they are not being considered faulty.

Map I-6. Faulty Lots



5. Unsanitary or unsafe conditions

There are several sites with unsafe or unsanitary conditions located within the Study Area. Figures 13-29 (following) demonstrate the conditions for a portion of these properties.

Field inspection and Google StreetView inspection of the Study Area identified sites with deteriorating or damaged structures which pose a threat to building occupants, condemned or abandoned buildings, incomplete construction projects, lack of sidewalks or blocked rights-of-way (ROW[s]), as well as brownfield sites. There are unsafe commercial spaces where there is either a lack of defined pedestrian versus vehicular space or a lack of maintenance that would keep the area safe for traversing to and from a business.

These figures represent some of the many deteriorating, unsafe, and at times abandoned structures in the area.

Figure I-13. Unsafe, Deteriorating Roof, 116 N Magnolia Ave



Figure I-14. Unsafe, Condemned Building, 428 N Orange Ave



Figure I-15. Unsafe, Boarded Openings, 115 N Magnolia Ave



Figure I-16. Unsafe and unsanitary, Openings / Junk Storage, 115 N Magnolia



Figure I-17. Unsafe, No Sidewalk, ROW used for RV Parking, 327 N Orange Ave



Figure I-18. Unsafe, No Sidewalk, across from Figure 5, 425 N Orange Ave



Figure I-19. Unsanitary, Discontinued Gas Pumps, 201 N Orange Ave



Figure I-20. Unsafe, Collapsed Canopy, Petroleum Contamination Site⁶, 100 N Orange Ave



Figure I-21. Unsafe, Low hanging power lines, concrete drive in disrepair, south of 25 N Orange Ave



⁶ FL Department of Environmental Protection's Contamination Locator Map, <https://prodenv.dep.state.fl.us/DepClnup>



Figure I-22. Unsafe, ROW in disrepair, business parks in ROW, 3 S Palmetto Ave



Figure I-23. Unsafe, Lack of signage, marked parking spaces, pedestrian safety, 24 Green St



Figure I-24. Unsafe area in front of active commercial building, 1100 Martin Luther King



Figure I-25. Unsafe Structure / Abandoned, 1007 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd



Figure I-26. Unsafe Structure / Abandoned Structure, 1001 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd



Figure I-27. Unsafe Structure / Abandoned Structure, 713 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd



Figure I-28. Unsafe Structure / Abandoned Structure, 613 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd



Figure I-29. Unsafe Structure / Abandoned Structure, 612 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd



6. Deterioration of site or other improvements

In addition to the deterioration of site improvements shown in section 3.5, within the Study Area, there are multiple occurrences of deteriorating improvements, especially access points or paved areas in surrounding buildings. Paving is wearing away or cracking creating hazardous conditions for drivers using the lots to park



or maneuver the site and pedestrians crossing the access points. Figures below provide examples of this type of wear and tear in the corridor.

Figure I-30. Deteriorating Drive / Sidewalk, 220 Palmer



Figure I-31. Deteriorating Drive, 327 N Orange Ave



Figure I-32. Parking lot disrepair, between 604 & 500 Walnut St



Figure I-33. Sidewalk disrepair, between 604 & 500 Walnut St



7. Inadequate and outdated building density patterns

The applicable zoning districts for the Study Area generally include: Central Business District, Gateway Corridor Commercial, Gateway Corridor Neighborhood, and C-1 Neighborhood Commercial. The heart of the Study Area is where the Central Business District is located – also known as the Downtown area. The Gateway districts are located along the “corridor” area, notably US 17 or Orange Ave. The Martin Luther King Blvd corridor is zoned as neighborhood commercial but features primarily low density residential development including active and abandoned residential structures, churches, vacant lots, concrete block commercial buildings lacking transparency and activation.



Figure I-34. Outdated building pattern, 208 N Orange Ave, Food Store



Figure I-35. Outdated building pattern, 425 N Orange Ave, Wells Fargo



Figure I-36. Outdated building pattern, 327 N Orange Ave, Rick Baker's RV



Figure I-37. Low Density Development, 606 Spring St



Figure I-38. Low Density Development, 627 Spring St



Figure I-39. Low Density Development, Not Fronting Street, 702 Ferris St / 709 Spring St



Figure I-40. Undeveloped, Gustafson Property, Pine St (behind house on Walnut St)



8. Vacancy rates

17.1% of properties within the Study Area are classified as vacant by the Clay County Property Appraiser. This level of vacancy within the Study Area is 44.9% higher than that of the rest of the municipality, which has an 11.8% rate of vacancy.

Many of these lots, shown in the figures below, are prime locations that once housed a local business which has since been removed. The lots have yet to have been redeveloped despite their prime locations in the commercial areas of the City.



Figure I-41. Vacant Lot, Previously 208 N Orange Ave



Figure I-42. Vacant Lot, East of 604 Walnut St



Figure I-43. Vacant Lot, BROWNFIELD⁷, south of 535 N Orange Ave



Figure I-44. Vacant Lot at the northeast corner of Orange Ave & Walburg St



⁷ FL Department of Environmental Protection's Contamination Locator Map, <https://prodenv.dep.state.fl.us/DepClnup>



Figure I-45. Vacant Lot at the northwest corner of Orange Ave & Governor St





Map I-7. Vacancy Rates



E. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Study Area meets the criteria established in Section 163.340, Florida Statutes (F.S.). It is staff recommendation that the City of Green Cove Springs adopt this Finding of Necessity by resolution per Section 163.355, F.S., and create a Community Redevelopment Agency for the Study Area as defined herein. This will enable redevelopment of the area which is necessary for the safety and economic welfare of the community

02

AUTHORITY TO
UNDERTAKE
COMMUNITY
REDEVELOPMENT

GREEN COVE
Springs



II. AUTHORITY TO UNDERTAKE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT

A. AUTHORITY TO UNDERTAKE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT, CREATION, POWERS

This document has been prepared under the direction of the Green Cove Springs Community Redevelopment Agency in accordance with the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969, F.S. 163, Part III. In recognition of the need to prevent and eliminate slum and blighted conditions within the community, the Act confers upon counties and municipalities the authority and powers to carry out "Community Redevelopment". For the purposes of this Community Redevelopment Plan, the following definition, taken from the Florida State Statutes, Section 163.340, shall apply:

"Community redevelopment" or "redevelopment" means undertakings, activities, or projects of a county, municipality, or community redevelopment agency in a community redevelopment area for the elimination and prevention of the development or spread of slums and blight, or for the reduction or prevention of crime, or for the provision of affordable housing, whether for rent or for sale, to residents

of low or moderate income, including the elderly, and may include slum clearance and redevelopment in a community redevelopment area or rehabilitation and revitalization of coastal resort and tourist areas that are deteriorating and economically distressed, or rehabilitation or conservation in a community redevelopment area, or any combination or part thereof, in accordance with a community redevelopment plan and may include the preparation of such a plan.

The ability of a county or municipality to utilize the authority granted under the Act is predicated upon the adoption of a "Finding of Necessity" by the governing body which was approved by Resolution R-03-2022 on April 14, 2022.

1. Creation of the Community Redevelopment Agency

Upon the adoption of a "Finding of Necessity" by the governing body and upon further finding that there is a need for a Community Redevelopment Agency to function in the county or municipality to carry out community redevelopment purposes, any county or municipality may create a public body corporate and politic to be known as a "Community Redevelopment Agency". The Agency shall be constituted as a public instrumentality, and the exercise by the Agency of the powers conferred by Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes shall be deemed and held to be the performance of an essential public function (Section 163.356(1) Florida Statutes).

2. Powers of the Community Redevelopment Agency

The Community Redevelopment Act confers a wide array of redevelopment powers to counties and municipalities with home rule charters, as specified in Florida Statute 163.410. As a charter county, Clay County has retained those powers, except as delegated (the "conveyed powers") to the City of Green Cove Springs through incorporation in an Interlocal Agreement to carry out redevelopment activities. The City then, has delegated the conveyed powers to the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA).

3. Community Redevelopment Area

Pursuant to Statutes, a community redevelopment area must be a slum area, a blighted area, or an area in which there is a shortage of housing that is affordable to residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly.



The Green Cove Springs Community Redevelopment Area generally consists of the older central core of the City and surrounding neighborhoods, which have become deteriorated due to age, obsolescence, and the lack of investment. Unfortunately, a deteriorating area is self-propagating, and as conditions worsen, residents and private businesses become less willing to put their financial resources into the area. This cycle severely limits the ability of private enterprise to stop the spread of slum and blight without public assistance.

Map II-1.



4. The Community Redevelopment Plan

All redevelopment activities expressly authorized by the Community Redevelopment Act and funded by tax increment revenue must be in accordance with a Redevelopment Plan, which shall be approved by the CRA Board, the City of Green Cove Springs and the Clay County Commission. Like the City's Comprehensive Plan, the Community Redevelopment Plan is an evolving document, which may be evaluated and amended on a regular basis to accurately reflect changing conditions and community objectives.



The CRA Plan provides for effective implementation of redevelopment Goals and Initiatives to remove slum and blighted conditions within the CRA district as provided by Florida Statutes.

03

INTERLOCAL
AGREEMENT WITH
CLAY COUNTY

GREEN COVE
Springs



III. INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH CLAY COUNTY

The Green Cove Springs CRA, Green Cove Springs City Council and the Clay County Commission entered into a negotiated Interlocal Agreement that established the terms under which the City of Green Cove Springs could establish a Community Redevelopment Agency. A summary of the terms of the agreement are as follows (see full copy of the Agreement in Section 9, Appendix):

- 1) The initial term of the Green Cove Springs CRA shall begin on January 1, 2023 and continue for 30 years from that date;
- 2) The City may extend the CRA Plan based on an affirmative vote of the City of Green Cove Springs and County Commission;
- 3) The "base year taxable property assessment roll, used to calculate the tax increment to be deposited into the CRA trust fund, shall be 2023;
- 4) The CRA Redevelopment Plan must be approved by affirmative vote of the County Commission and City Council;
 - a. The Redevelopment Plan and any amendments shall meet all requirements of state statutes, and contain a detailed statement of the projected costs of redevelopment;
 - b. Funds shall be used to fund all CRA projects included in the Redevelopment Plan;
 - c. Redevelopment activities and projects in the Plan must be designed to mitigate slum/blight conditions which were the basis of the Finding of Necessity;
- 5) The City shall deposit 95% of an amount based on the calculation of increment using the City's millage in that year into the CRA trust fund, unless otherwise provided by the Agreement. The remaining 5% is an administration fee for the City.
- 6) The CRA may sell bonds and execute notes, and enter other forms of debt or leveraging, as well as collateral documents, to finance capital improvements deemed necessary by the CRA for redevelopment purposes. However, no debts may extend beyond the expiration date of the CRA Plan;
- 7) The CRA shall abide by all provisions of the Community Redevelopment Act;
- 8) The County shall, by resolution, delegate to the City all the powers for redevelopment in the Community Redevelopment Act;
- 9) If the City chooses to establish a CRA and complies with all of the provisions of statute and this agreement to establish the CRA trust fund, the County shall deposit 95% of an amount based on the calculation of increment using the City's millage in that year into the CRA trust fund;
- 10) The County shall abide by all provisions of the Community Redevelopment Act.

Once the Redevelopment Plan is approved by the CRA, it will be required to be ratified by the City of Green Cove Springs and the Clay County Commission. In addition to the approval of the Redevelopment Plan, the City and County shall also be required to ratify an interlocal agreement pursuant to Section 163.410, Florida Statutes, the Clay County Commission delegated the authority to exercised community redevelopment powers to the City of Green Cove Springs via Resolution 2021/22-56, subject to the conditions in the interlocal agreement- see copy of Resolution 2021/22-56 in Sections 5,6,7 and 8, in Appendix.

04

REDEVELOPMENT VISION, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES



IV. REDEVELOPMENT VISION, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

A. APPROACH

This Chapter presents the vision for the Redevelopment Area. In addition, this Chapter identifies potential objectives and strategies, and lays a foundation for the programs and projects to be considered by the City of Green Cove Springs, Clay County, the CRA, and private enterprise in implementing this vision.

Projects, costs, or budgets provided in the Redevelopment Plan are estimated, and will be refined as additional research, plans, and documents are prepared to implement the particular objectives, strategies, resulting programs, and projects. The costs given for budgeting purposes establish the framework for the financial planning analysis.

Costs or budgets should not be construed as exclusively the burden of the public sector. Costs or budgets are intended to be total costs with potential allocations to the public and private sectors assigned on the basis of the encouragement of private enterprise as a tool to carry out a significant portion of this Plan and apparent benefit, value, revenues, or other relevant factors.

B. VISION FOR THE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA

The vision for the Redevelopment Area focuses on creating a vibrant multimodal mixed-use corridor that offer residents and visitors a high-quality destination featuring active uses, pedestrian connections, a safe transportation network, and inviting public spaces in a manner that promotes and accommodates growth while continuing to honor the City's rich small-town charm and history. At the same time, redevelopment efforts shall be complimented with maintaining affordable housing options for residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly. The CRA will support infrastructure and not impact the City's ability to provide an adequate level of service within the Redevelopment Area.

The development of certain segments of the subject corridors will lead to the conversion of the existing, non-sustainable, haphazard development pattern that has occurred along the corridors. The CRA will be treated with improved infrastructure intended to promote area rehabilitation and ultimately the highest and best use of structures. Gateways and wayfinding signage will be developed at key locations as identified in the Downtown Master Plan to identify entry to serve as focal points for the Community Redevelopment Area. Linear features will be beautified with landscape improvements and hardscapes.

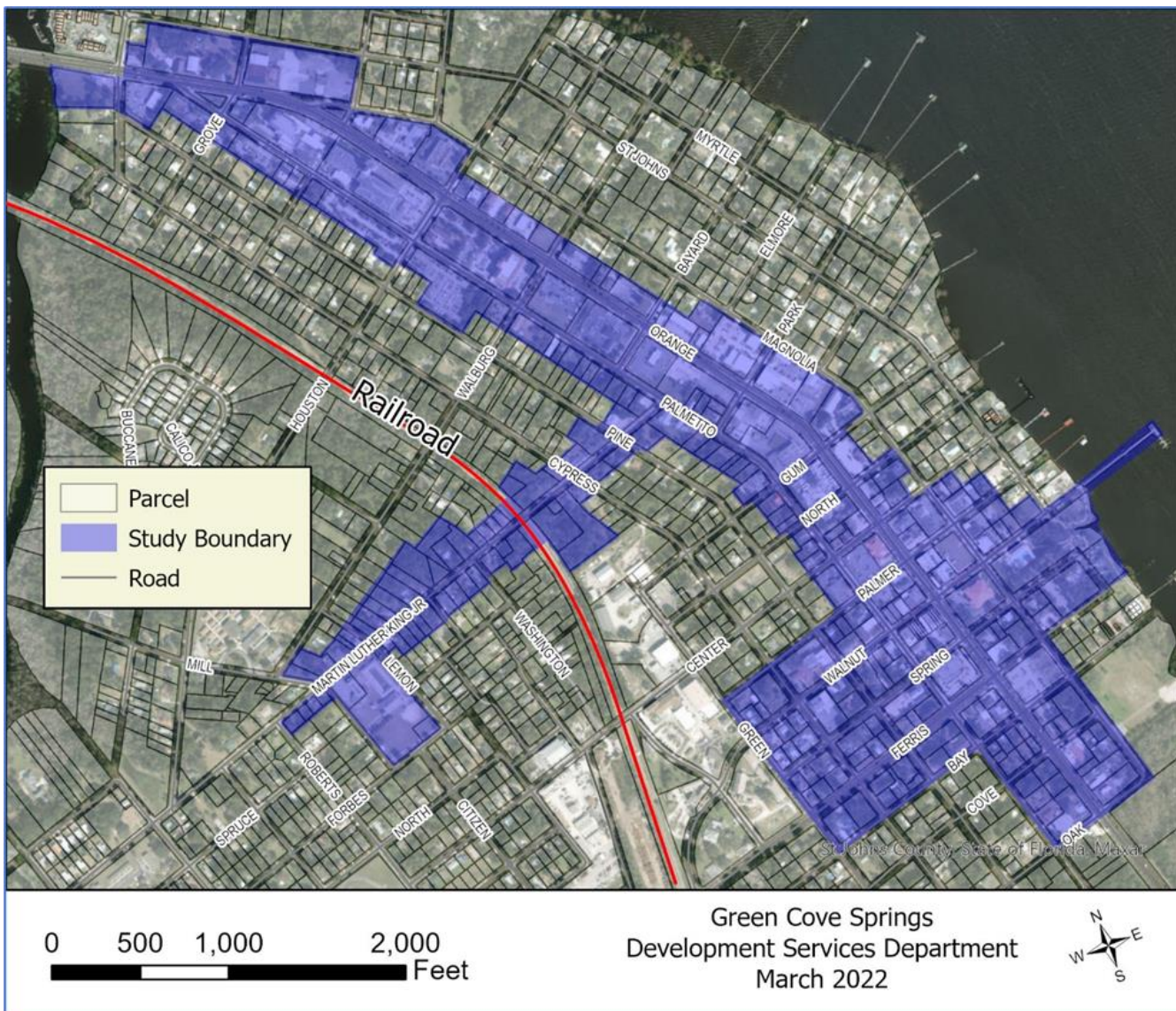
The intent of this Plan is to serve as a framework for guiding development and redevelopment in the Redevelopment Area. This Plan identifies redevelopment objectives and lays the foundation for programs and capital projects to be undertaken, which will reverse and remove blight documented in the Findings of Necessity. This Plan addresses implementation strategies that were adopted as part of the Downtown Master Plan. These programs, projects, funding, and administrative opportunities will continue to be refined as they are implemented. It is clearly understood that grants and other revenues (impact fees, general revenue, grants etc.) need to be used in conjunction with available increment revenues to achieve these stated goals. While based on the most accurate data available, the various strategies and costs identified in this Plan will require additional study as specific programs and projects are initiated, refined, and implemented.



The focus of the Plan is the mitigation or correction of the various blighted area conditions documented in the adopted Finding of Necessity Report and the implementation strategies identified in the 2022 Downtown Master Plan. Changing social, physical, and economic conditions could warrant the modification of this Plan. If the Plan is modified, the CRA must comply with Section 163.361, Florida Statutes and applicable County Resolutions.

As the redevelopment process unfolds, a Conceptual Diagram will be generated to illustrate specific improvements planned. The elements shown in the Conceptual Diagram may be relocated or realigned as part of future planning initiatives, so long as modifications are generally consistent with the vision articulated in this Plan. The City Land Development Code (LDC) shall address the redevelopment area's urban design framework.

Map IV-1. Study Area





C. REDEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

In partnership with private enterprise and the County, the redevelopment initiative embodied in this Plan will reverse and remove the observed blighted conditions within the Redevelopment Area by leveraging public assets to improve the overall economic condition and the physical condition of the Redevelopment Area. Creating safe, vibrant and pedestrian friendly corridors along US 17 and downtown roadways / featuring more attractive mixed use and commercial opportunity will greatly enhance the quality of life not only for the residents but the population of the City and County at large.

Strategic initiatives are to be identified and placed into action to address, reverse, and remove the blighted area conditions, which have substantially impaired reinvestment activity within the Redevelopment Area; and ultimately will be substantially redeveloped and revitalized as a community focal point to the benefit of City and County residents, businesses, property owners, and visitors through the implementation of this Redevelopment Plan.

Objectives have been identified and placed into action to address, reverse, and remove the blighted area conditions, which have substantially impaired reinvestment activity within the Redevelopment Area; and ultimately will be redeveloped and revitalized as a community focal point for the benefit of City and County residents, businesses, property owners and visitors through the implementation of the plan.

1. Objectives and Strategies

Objective 1: Improve transportation facilities within the Redevelopment Area including sidewalks, crosswalks, bike paths, and other multi-modal options to enhance regional connection. These strategies will correct the blighted conditions of defective or inadequate public transportation facilities (Figures 1-12 and Map 3 & 4 of the Finding of Necessity Report).

1. Sidewalk Repair and obstruction relocation as set forth along Magnolia Avenue, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Orange, Palmer and Center Streets as shown in figures 1-4 , and 7-8,
2. Repair the deterioration of Walnut Street between Green Street and Pine Avenue as shown in figures 5-6 of the Finding of Necessity Report. This will improve safety, traffic flow and access.
3. Provide for updated surveys of downtown roadways to determine right of way widths and obstructions to determine where additional multimodal improvements are viable such as:
 - a. roadway, sidewalk, and lighting improvements on appropriate streets, and provide safe pedestrian routes.
 - b. roadway and streetscape improvements based on a phasing plan which emphasizes visual impact in addition to improved access and circulation.



c. Provide the ability for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists to access an enhanced internal transportation network which connects, if applicable, the neighborhoods to services and commercial corridors.

d. Develop and incorporate landscape and lighting design standards to create a safe and inviting environment.

e. Integrate traffic calming techniques throughout the internal roadway system to enhance safety and facilitate a pedestrian/bicycle friendly environment. Traffic calming techniques may include the use of pavers or decorative concrete, raised pavement, roundabouts, change of landscape treatment, and the creation of pedestrian nodes at major intersection, mid-block crossings and other locations where potential conflicts exist between vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists.

f. Traffic lights, crosswalks, and regulatory/wayfinding signage will be used to enhance the safety of vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists in key locations throughout the Redevelopment Area

4. Add curb extensions, and narrow travel lanes and add decorative pedestrian crossings to reduce the pedestrian crossing distance across Orange Avenue at the intersection with Walnut Street. This will improve pedestrian safety and provide a clear sense of arrival into the Downtown and serve to effectively bridge the eastern and western portions of the downtown.

5. Coordinate with the Florida Department of Transportation to reduce travel lane widths, provide and expand landscape buffers, install street trees, and widen sidewalks along the US 17 Corridor to enhance pedestrian comfort, safety and a greater sense of arrival to Green Cove Springs as set forth as implementation phase 1, #11 in the GCS Downtown Master Plan.

6. Promote the Redevelopment Area through designing and implementing a signage and wayfinding system directing traffic to and from the major connectors, and destinations in the region, as set forth in implementation phase 1, #3 of the GCS Downtown Master Plan.

Objective 2: Create a vibrant Downtown area with a mixed-use, multimodal development pattern. These strategies will correct the blighted conditions of faulty lot layout (Figures of the Finding of Necessity Report); unsafe conditions (Pgs. 19 and 21 - 25 of the Finding of Necessity Report); and deterioration of site or other improvements (Pgs. 16, 17, 20 and 24 of the Finding of Necessity Report). In addition, this objective addresses the implementation strategies set forth in the Downtown Master Plan.

1. Implement a Form Based Code with mixed use urban design/development standards for the Downtown Core as set forth in implementation step phase 1, # 4 in the GCS Downtown Master Plan.



The standards will address the incorporation of parking lot layout, building design, landscaping, signage, pedestrian connections, and linkages between land uses through a functional cross access system.

2. Implement the branding and wayfinding plan set forth in the GCS Downtown Master Plan Implementation Phase 1, Step #3. The wayfinding plan will help to establish the unique place the downtown area has within the City and region.

3. Reposition the Green Cove Springs downtown through marketing initiatives to attract targeted uses/industries retain existing businesses and improve the quality of life within the CRA.

4. Provide public art along Walnut Street and Spring Park in coordination with the Clay County Tourism Strategic Plan.

5. Provide the following incentive programs to encourage and support private sector investment and encourage targeted retail development:

a. Anchor Tenant Incentive Program

The Anchor Tenant Incentive Program provides loan-to-grant funding to commercial property owners and/or commercial tenants to assist with interior building improvements and business start-up costs. The goal of the program is primarily to incentivize anchor restaurants and breweries (food and drink establishments), and hotels to establish in Downtown, which in turn will help stimulate the local economy and improve the quality of life for Green Cove Springs residents and visitors. Eligible participants may receive loan-to-grant funding for 35% of the total interior building improvement and business start-up costs, up to a maximum of \$75,000. Loan-to-grant funding may exceed \$75,000 and be made available to businesses outside the food and drink category if the City is presented with a unique 'catalyst' project. A catalyst project is generally defined as a business that is first-to-market and anticipated to have a catalytic impact that will promote the City of Green Cove Springs Downtown Master Plan vision for a thriving Downtown where people can live, work and play. The term of the loan will be five years from the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. For each year the business is open and operating, 20% of the loan will be forgiven. If after five years the business is open and operating, the loan will be forgiven entirely and converted into a grant. Properties that pay no Ad-valorem taxes or are otherwise tax exempt are not eligible. In cases where a portion of a property is tax-exempt, funding may be made only to the taxable portion/percentage of the property. Loan-to-grant funds may be disbursed to a program participant on a reimbursement basis. The City and program



participant would create a payment schedule based on project milestones. The Incentive Program can also be used for payment of mobility and impact fees.

b. Rental Subsidy Program

The proposed Rental Subsidy Program would provide an 18-month partial rental subsidy (up to \$25,000) to qualifying targeted businesses. The funding award would be administered over an 18 consecutive month period. The award recipient would be paid the rent subsidy as agreed upon in an executed performance agreement between the applicant and the City. The applicant must have an executed multi-year lease (two-year minimum) with the owner. A copy of the lease, or binding or proposed multi-year commercial lease agreement must be provided to the city.

c. Business Façade Grant

The Business Façade Grant Program provides a matching grant to commercial property owners and/or commercial tenants, located in the targeted area, to assist with eligible exterior building and site improvements. Eligible applicants include both commercial property owners and business lessees with written authorization of the property owner. Eligible businesses must be from a small business industry sector targeted by the City and may be an individually owned franchise as long as it meets all other criteria. The façade grant award would be a 50% reimbursement of total projects costs with a maximum award of \$15,000. Up to \$4,000 of the total available may be spent on outdoor furniture and dining fixtures. The grant award amount will decline over time rewarding projects completed in a timely manner. If an awarded project is not started within one year of award, the award will be withdrawn.

d. Tax Increment Fund Rebate

Refunding a portion of City tax revenue generated by on-site/building improvements or new construction (increment) could be another potential incentive to encourage targeted retail development in Downtown Green Cove Springs. The refunded amount would be paid out over a five (5) year period with a declining scale of refunds to be determined by the City. The applicant would enter into a Performance Agreement with the City detailing the proposed capital investment and improvements to be made and the proposed increment rebate amounts and periods. The grant is a reimbursement of a portion of City Ad-Valorem taxes paid by the applicant. The CRA shall utilize the Tax Increment Fund of the Community Redevelopment Agency to provide the tax increment rebate proposed in addition to other



incentives and CRA programming and redevelopment powers as authorized by F.S. 163.360, Part III.

6. When feasible, the City should encourage acquisition and subsequent redevelopment by the private market. Other related activities that may be undertaken by the City include:

- a. Map and index all commercial properties in the Redevelopment Area to provide detailed information on parcel boundaries, sizes, and ownership.
- b. Identify and inventory all relevant substandard properties.
- c. Document and analyze parking demands and infrastructure constraints throughout the Redevelopment Area.
- d. Document site criteria for modern mixed-use developments by business type to facilitate the understanding of contemporary developer site and parking requirements.
- e. The City may facilitate aggregation and redevelopment of "problem" or constrained parcels or groups of parcels.
- f. The City may assist in the purchase, sale, negotiation, and coordination of land assembly. However, the City shall not use eminent domain to acquire land that will be ultimately used or transferred for private development.
- g. Identify catalyst sites such as the City property at Walnut and St Johns Avenue to serve as important strategic assets to cause an early and precedent-setting change in the community redevelopment area and to spur other growth.

Objective 3: Increase the Downtown Parking Supply

1. Provide additional parking spaces within City owned property at the Palmetto Avenue and Spring Street intersection, GCS Downtown Master Plan Implementation Phase 1, #7C.
2. Provide Festival Street Parking along Magnolia Avenue between Walnut and Spring Street, GCS Downtown Master Plan Implementation Phase 1, #7D.
3. Provide on-street parking on Magnolia Avenue between Spring and Ferris Street, GCS Downtown Master Plan Implementation Phase 1, #7E.
4. Provide on-street parking along Magnolia Avenue between Oak Street and Ferris Street. (GCS Parking Study Recommendation).



Objective 4: Incorporate housing revitalization through housing maintenance programs and rehabilitation services. These strategies funded through the SHIP and CDBG programs will help correct the blighted conditions of unsanitary or unsafe conditions Unsanitary or unsafe conditions (Figures 13-29 of the Finding of Necessity Report), associated with residential uses; and deterioration of site or other improvements (Figures 30-33 of the Finding of Necessity Report).

1. By addressing the problems associated with substandard and dilapidated housing, the City/CRA will mitigate contributing blight conditions within the Redevelopment Area.
2. In the same manner, redevelopment efforts shall be complimented with efforts to provide affordable/workforce housing to residents of low to moderate income, including the elderly.
3. Promote programs for homeowners to rehabilitate their homes. Such programs include zero interest loans or information on other funding sources for the repair of single and multi-family homes depending on the applicant's income.
4. Assist low-income households through the SHIP program with down payment and closing costs assistance. The assistance may be for the purchase of an existing structure.
5. Infrastructure improvements such as roadway improvements, stormwater, wastewater, and potable water make properties more conducive for development. The City may undertake infrastructure improvements in partnership with private entities. If determined improving the infrastructure of certain properties is beneficial to the City for housing revitalization and blight mitigation within the Redevelopment Area, the CRA may undertake capital improvements on these individual properties.
6. Work with the private sector and Non-Government Organizations to create programs that improve the availability of affordable workforce housing for low to moderate income residents
7. Work with the City of Green Cove Springs and Clay County to encourage development and renovation of Mixed-Use, Affordable, Workforce, and Mixed-Income Housing.

Objective 5: Establish a creative, equitable, efficient and practical funding and financing mechanism to properly implement this Plan. These strategies will correct the blighted conditions of identified in the Finding of Necessity Report and the Implementation steps identified in the Downtown Master Plan.

1. It is important the City/CRA identify and secure all effective sources of funding including, but not necessarily limited to, increment revenues, non-ad valorem assessments, and grant funding revenue.
2. The City/CRA shall be willing to contemplate the issuance of bonds, secure other financial instruments, seek and utilize grants, and seek out other sources and alternatives to aid in implementing this Plan.



Objective 6: Ensure the Redevelopment Area is safe and clean over a period of time. These strategies will correct the blighted conditions of unsanitary or unsafe conditions (Figures 13-29 of the Finding of Necessity Report), associated with residential uses; and deterioration of site or other improvements (Figures 30-33 of the Finding of Necessity Report).

1. The City will identify, execute, and coordinate special maintenance standards and programs for public facilities, roadways, open space areas, entries, and commercial uses along the three corridors.
2. The Community Redevelopment Act encourages "community policing innovations." This concept is defined as policing techniques or strategies designed to decrease crime by reducing opportunities for, and increasing the perceived risks of engaging in, criminal activity through visible presence of law enforcement in the community, including, but not limited to, community mobilization, neighborhood watch programs, citizen patrol, foot patrol, or intensified motorized patrol. The City will review these programs to improve the actual and perceived security, building safety, and appearance of the Redevelopment Area.

Objective 7: The City may plan, design, and deliver additional infrastructure improvements or services within the Redevelopment Area, if deemed those improvements enhance the quality or attractiveness of the Redevelopment Area especially with regard to public amenities. These strategies will correct the blighted conditions of unsanitary or unsafe conditions (Pgs. 18, 23 and 24 of the Finding of Necessity Report); and deterioration of site or other improvements (Pgs. 18, 23 and 24 of the Finding of Necessity Report).

1. Such additional infrastructure may include undergrounding utilities in certain areas to achieve a desired visual impact, upgrading technology, and telecommunications availability to attract businesses or the enhancement of landscape areas. Such additional improvements will complement the redevelopment plans for the Redevelopment Area.
2. Additional services may include extraordinary right-of-way or other public area maintenance, planning, and implementing cultural, charitable or place-making activities, events and related services which showcase the Redevelopment Area.
3. The CRA shall acquire land and create / expand regional stormwater retention areas and conveyance systems as needed to accommodate proposed growth

Objective 8: Historic Preservation

1. Support programs that contribute to the renovation and preservation of historic structures and the downtown historic district.
2. Restoration of the Rivers House located at Spring Street and Magnolia Avenue. Provide additional funding to upgrade the Rivers House to address site and building code violations and to approve the visual appeal of a vital community landmark.

**Objective 9: Parks/Public Spaces**

1. Provide support, including funding, for construction of facilities for Spring Park that will draw visitors to the CRA commercial district while simultaneously building a sense of, "Place," in the downtown area.
2. Work to improve pedestrian access from in the downtown area to Spring Park.
3. Design and construct City Hall Park between City Hall and US 17 (Implementation step #12, Downtown Master Plan).

Objective 10: Redevelopment Administration

As provided for in Florida Statute 163, Part III, the Green Cove Springs Community Redevelopment Agency will utilize Incremental Tax Revenues to fund administration, overhead or any other expenses encumbered to achieve the Redevelopment Goals identified within this CRA Plan, including:

1. Redevelopment planning, surveys, and financial analysis.
2. Acquisition of real property in the CRA District.
3. Clearance and preparation of areas for redevelopment.
4. Repayment of borrowed funds.
5. All expenses related to bonds and other indebtedness.
6. Development of affordable and workforce housing.
7. Provide funding for legal and professional services as needed.

05

FINANCIAL
INFORMATION

GREEN COVE
Springs



V. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

A. BASE-YEAR PROPERTY VALUES

The base-year for the Green Cove Springs CRA is 2023, as defined in the interlocal agreement between the Green Cove Springs CRA, the City of Green Cove Springs and the Clay County Commission, and the first contributions to the Green Cove Springs CRA Trust Fund will begin after January 1, 2024. Implementation of the CRA Plan is projected to generate approximately \$9.7 million in net new property taxes between FY 2023 and 2053. The distribution of these net new taxes is provided in the following estimates. This estimate assumes an annual average growth of TIF of 1.5%.

Table V-1. Project Green Cove Springs CRA TIF Revenues (3% Growth Rate)

	City TIF	County TIF	Total TIF
2024	5,798	9,508	15,306
2025	11,770	19,302	31,072
2026	17,921	29,389	47,310
2027	24,256	39,779	64,036
2028	30,782	50,481	81,263
2029	37,503	61,504	99,007
2030	44,427	72,857	117,284
2031	51,557	84,551	136,109
2032	58,902	96,596	155,498
2033	66,467	109,002	175,469
2034	74,259	121,781	196,040
2035	82,285	134,942	217,227
2036	90,551	148,499	239,050
2037	99,066	162,462	261,528
2038	107,835	176,845	284,680
2039	116,869	191,658	308,527
2040	126,173	206,916	333,089
2041	135,756	222,632	358,388
2042	145,626	238,819	384,446
2043	155,793	255,492	411,285
2044	166,265	272,665	438,930
2045	177,051	290,354	467,404
2046	188,160	308,573	496,733
2047	199,603	327,338	526,941
2048	211,389	346,667	558,055
2049	223,528	366,575	590,103
2050	236,032	387,080	623,113
2051	248,911	408,201	657,112
2052	262,176	429,956	692,132
2053	275,840	452,363	728,202
Total	\$ 3,672,550	\$ 6,022,789	\$ 9,695,338

06

LEGAL
DESCRIPTION

GREEN COVE
Springs



VI. LEGAL DESCRIPTION

GREEN COVE SPRINGS CRA DESCRIPTION

A PORTION OF SECTION 38, TOWNSHIP 6 SOUTH, RANGE 26 EAST, CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA TOGETHER WITH PORTIONS OF THE NORTH SUBURBS OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, AS SHOWN ON MAP RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 2, PAGE 1 OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF SAID COUNTY AND BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

FOR A POINT OF REFERENCE, COMMENCE AT THE INTERSECTION OF THE SOUTHEASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF GOVERNOR STREET (A 60 FOOT RIGHT-OF-WAY) WITH THE SOUTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF ST. JOHNS AVENUE (A 60 FOOT RIGHT-OF-WAY) AND THENCE RUN SOUTHEASTERLY ALONG SAID SOUTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF ST. JOHNS AVENUE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHEASTERLY LINE OF LOT 15, BLOCK 3, AFORESAID NORTH SUBURBS OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS AND THE POINT OF BEGINNING; THENCE CONTINUE SOUTHEASTERLY ALONG SAID SOUTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF LAMONT STREET; THENCE SOUTHWESTERLY ALONG SAID NORTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF NORTH MAGNOLIA AVENUE; THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF HOUSTON STREET; THENCE SOUTHWESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHWESTERLY PROLONGATION OF THE NORTHEASTERLY LINE OF LOT 22, BLOCK 13, SAID NORTH SUBURBS OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS; THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY ALONG SAID PROLONGATION AND ALONG SAID NORTHEASTERLY LINE OF SAID LOT 22 BLOCK 13 AND THE SOUTHEASTERLY PROLONGATION THEREOF TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHEASTERLY LINE OF THE NORTHWESTERLY 30 FEET OF LOT 6, BLOCK 11, BORDEN PLACE, AS RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 2, PAGE 57 OF AFORESAID PUBLIC RECORDS. ALSO BEING THE MOST SOUTHERLY CORNER OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 1576, PAGE 2016 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE NORTHEASTERLY ALONG THE SOUTHEASTERLY LINE OF LAST SAID LANDS TO THE SOUTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF NORTH MAGNOLIA AVENUE; THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN ANGLE POINT; THENCE SOUTHERLY ALONG THE WESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF SAID NORTH MAGNOLIA AVENUE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF GUM STREET; THENCE WESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHERLY PROLONGATION OF THE EASTERLY LINE OF LOT 2, BLOCK 35, GREEN COVE SPRINGS, AS RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 1, PAGES 9 AND 10 AND ALSO IN SAID PLAT BOOK 2, PAGE 1; THENCE SOUTHERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE AND ALONG THE EASTERLY LINE OF LOTS 2 AND 3, SAID BLOCK 35 TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF NORTH STREET; THENCE EASTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH SAID WESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF NORTH MAGNOLIA AVENUE; THENCE SOUTHERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF LOT 1, BLOCK 32, SAID NORTH SUBURBS OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS; THENCE WESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE WESTERLY LINE OF THE EASTERLY 80 FEET OF LOT 4, SAID BLOCK 32; THENCE SOUTHERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE AND THE SOUTHERLY PROLONGATION THEREOF TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF CENTER STREET; THENCE EASTERLY ALONG SAID SOUTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF CENTER STREET TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE EASTERLY LINE OF LOT 3, BLOCK 8, SAID NORTH SUBURBS OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS; THE SOUTHERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO THE SOUTHEASTERLY CORNER OF SAID LOT 3; THENCE EASTERLY ALONG THE NORTHERLY LINE OF LOT 5, SAID BLOCK 8 TO THE NORTHEASTERLY CORNER

OF SAID LOT 5; THENCE SOUTHERLY ALONG THE EASTERLY LINE OF SAID LOT 5, BLOCK 8 AND THE SOUTHERLY PROLONGATION THEREOF TO THE SOUTHWESTERLY CORNER OF LOT 1, BLOCK 7, SAID NORTH SUBURBS OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS; THENCE EASTERLY ALONG THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF SAID LOT 1, BLOCK 7 TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE WESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF ST. JOHNS AVENUE; THENCE SOUTHERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF WALNUT STREET; THENCE EASTERLY ALONG SAID NORTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF WALNUT STREET TO THE WATERS OF THE ST. JOHNS RIVER; THENCE SOUTHERLY ALONG THE MEAN HIGH WATER LINE OF THE ST. JOHNS RIVER TO THE SUBMERGED LANDS OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA SURROUNDING THE CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS PIER; THENCE EASTERLY, NORTHERLY, EASTERLY, SOUTHERLY, WESTERLY, NORTHERLY AND WESTERLY ALONG SAID SUBMERGED LANDS FOR GREEN COVE SPRINGS PIER TO SAID MEAN HIGH WATER LINE; THENCE SOUTHERLY ALONG SAID WATERS OF THE ST. JOHNS RIVER TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF WATER LOT "A", AS PER PLAT RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 1, PAGE 40 OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF SAID COUNTY; THENCE WESTERLY ALONG SAID SOUTHERLY LINE OF LOT "A" AND ALONG THE NORTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF FERRIS STREET TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE EASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF SOUTH MAGNOLIA AVENUE; THENCE SOUTHERLY ALONG SAID EASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF SOUTH MAGNOLIA AVENUE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF OAK STREET; THENCE WESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE WESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF SOUTH PALMETTO AVENUE; THENCE NORTHERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF BAY STREET; THENCE WESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE WESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF GREEN STREET; THENCE NORTHERLY ALONG SAID WESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF GREEN STREET TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF PALMER STREET; THENCE EASTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE EASTERLY LINE OF LOT 3, BLOCK 11, SAID NORTH SUBURBS OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS; THENCE NORTHERLY ALONG SAID EASTERLY LINE OF LOT 3, BLOCK 11 AND THE NORTHERLY PROLONGATION THEREOF TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 2540, PAGE 267 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE EASTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE EASTERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 2465, PAGE 1852 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE NORTHERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE AND THE NORTHERLY PROLONGATION THEREOF TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF NORTH STREET; THENCE WESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE WESTERLY LINE OF LOT 4, BLOCK 37, SAID NORTH SUBURBS OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS; THENCE NORTHERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE AND THE NORTHERLY PROLONGATION THEREOF TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF GUM STREET; THENCE WESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE EASTERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 3291, PAGE 1137 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE NORTHERLY ALONG SAID EASTERLY LINE OF OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 3291, PAGE 1137 TO THE NORTHEASTERLY CORNER THEREOF; THENCE EASTERLY ALONG THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF LOT 1, BLOCK 20, SAID NORTH SUBURBS OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE EASTERLY LINE OF THE WEST ONE-HALF OF SAID BLOCK 20; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHERLY LINE OF LOT 4, BLOCK 20, SAID NORTH SUBURBS OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS; THENCE WESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHEASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF PINE AVENUE; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE EASTERLY PROLONGATION OF THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF LOT 4, ANNIE JONES SUBDIVISION, AS RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 1, PAGE 25 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE WESTERLY ALONG SAID PROLONGATION AND ALONG THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF LOTS 4 AND 5, ANNIE JONES SUBDIVISION TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHEASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF NORTH CYPRESS AVENUE; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE EASTERLY PROLONGATION OF THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 3330, PAGE 916 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE WESTERLY ALONG SAID PROLONGATION AND ALONG SAID SOUTHERLY LINE OF OFFICIAL RECORDS

BOOK 3330, PAGE 916 TO THE SOUTHWEST CORNER THEREOF; THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY ALONG THE NORTHEASTERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 337, PAGE 131 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 1247, PAGE 283 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE WESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHEASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF A.C.L. RAILROAD; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE BEING THE ARC OF A CURVE CONCAVE SOUTHWESTERLY TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE EASTERLY PROLONGATION OF THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 3243, PAGE 1356 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE WESTERLY ALONG SAID PROLONGATION AND ALONG SAID SOUTHERLY LINE OF OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 3243, PAGE 1356 TO THE SOUTHWESTERLY CORNER THEREOF; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG THE SOUTHWESTERLY LINE OF LAST SAID LANDS TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 3243, PAGE 1356 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE WESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE AND THE WESTERLY PROLONGATION THEREOF TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE WESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF WASHINGTON LANE; THENCE SOUTHERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF LOT 1, BLOCK 3, OF S.G. BERRIAN'S SUBDIVISION OF LOT 2, BLOCK 28, SAID NORTH SUBURBS OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS; THENCE WESTERLY ALONG THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF LOTS 1, 3, 5 AND 7, SAID BLOCK 3 OF S.G. BERRIAN'S SUBDIVISION TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE EASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF FRANKLIN STREET; THENCE SOUTHERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE EASTERLY PROLONGATION OF THE NORTHERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 717, PAGE 19 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE WESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE AND THE WESTERLY PROLONGATION THEREOF TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE WESTERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 1383, PAGE 908 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE NORTHERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 3687, PAGE 622 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE WESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE AND THE WESTERLY PROLONGATION THEREOF TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE WESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF LEMON STREET; THENCE SOUTHERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF FORBES STREET; THENCE WESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE EASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF BELLE AVENUE; THENCE NORTHERLY ALONG SAID EASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF BELLE AVENUE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE EASTERLY PROLONGATION OF THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL BOOK 4242, PAGE 2055 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE WESTERLY ALONG SAID PROLONGATION AND ALONG SAID SOUTHERLY LINE OF OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 4242, PAGE 2055 AND THE WESTERLY PROLONGATION THEREOF TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE EASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF NORTH ROBERTS STREET; THENCE NORTHERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF MARTIN LUTHER KING JR BOULEVARD; THENCE EASTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHEASTERLY PROLONGATION OF THE NORTHEASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF MILL STREET; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG SAID PROLONGATION AND ALONG SAID NORTHEASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF MILL STREET TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHEASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF WALBURG STREET; THENCE NORTHEASTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE EASTERLY LINE OF LOT 4 OF L.E. CARTER SUBDIVISION OF LOT 12, BLOCK 29, GREEN COVE SPRINGS, AS RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 1, PAGE 41 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY ALONG SAID EASTERLY LINE OF LOT 4 TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 1415, PAGE 1724 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE NORTHEASTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO THE NORTHEASTERLY CORNER THEREOF, SAID POINT LYING ON THE WESTERLY LINE OF LOT 2 OF SAID L.E. CARTER SUBDIVISION OF LOT 12, BLOCK 29; THENCE NORTHERLY ALONG SAID WESTERLY LINE OF LOT 2 TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER THEREOF; THENCE NORTHEASTERLY ALONG THE NORTHWESTERLY LINE OF SAID LOT 2 AND THE NORTHEASTERLY PROLONGATION THEREOF TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHEASTERLY

RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF LEMON STREET; THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHEASTERLY LINE OF LOT D OF LOT 11, BLOCK 29 OF SAID NORTH SUBURBS OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS; THENCE NORTHEASTERLY ALONG THE SOUTHEASTERLY LINE OF LOTS A, B, C AND D OF SAID LOT 11, BLOCK 29 TO THE SOUTHEASTERLY CORNER OF SAID LOT A; THENCE NORTHEASTERLY ALONG THE SOUTHEASTERLY LINE OF LOT 9, SAID BLOCK 29 AND THE NORTHEASTERLY PROLONGATION THEREOF TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHEASTERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 1077, PAGE 22 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHEASTERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 1374, PAGE 366 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE NORTHEASTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE AND ALONG THE SOUTHEASTERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 4690, PAGE 1488 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS TO THE SOUTHEASTERLY CORNER THEREOF; THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY ALONG THE SOUTHWESTERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL BOOK 4459, PAGE 356 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS TO THE SOUTHWESTERLY CORNER THEREOF; THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY ALONG THE SOUTHWESTERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL BOOK 1213, PAGE 320 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS TO THE SOUTHWESTERLY CORNER THEREOF; THENCE EASTERLY ALONG THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF SAID LANDS RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 1213, PAGE 320 TO THE SOUTHEASTERLY CORNER THEREOF; THENCE CONTINUE EASTERLY ALONG THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 186, PAGE 273 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS AND THE EASTERLY PROLONGATION THEREOF TO AN INTERSECTION WITH SAID NORTHEASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF A.C.L. RAILROAD; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE BEING THE ARC OF A CURVE CONCAVE SOUTHWESTERLY TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHWESTERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 475, PAGE 665 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE NORTHEASTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE AND ALSO ALONG THE NORTHWESTERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 1712, PAGE 188 TO THE MOST NORTHERLY CORNER THEREOF; THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY ALONG THE NORTHEASTERLY LINE OF LAST SAID LANDS TO THE SOUTHWESTERLY CORNER OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 4571, PAGE 1586 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE EASTERLY ALONG THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF LAST SAID LANDS AND THE EASTERLY PROLONGATION THEREOF TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHEASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF NORTH CYPRESS AVENUE; THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 1767, PAGE 740 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE EASTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO THE SOUTHEASTERLY CORNER THEREOF; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG THE SOUTHWESTERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 3770, PAGE 1809 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS TO THE NORTHWESTERLY CORNER THEREOF; THENCE NORTHEASTERLY ALONG THE NORTHWESTERLY LINE OF LAST SAID LANDS TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF NORTH PINE AVENUE; THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE WESTERLY PROLONGATION OF THE SOUTHERLY LINE OF LOT 6, BLOCK 21, SAID NORTH SUBURBS OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS; THENCE EASTERLY ALONG SAID PROLONGATION AND ALONG SAID SOUTHERLY LINE OF LOT 6, BLOCK 21 TO THE SOUTHEAST CORNER THEREOF; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG THE NORTHEASTERLY LINE OF SAID LOT 6, BLOCK 21 AND THE NORTHWESTERLY PROLONGATION THEREOF TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHWESTERLY LINE OF THE SOUTHEASTERLY ONE-HALF OF LOT 4, BLOCK 22, SAID NORTH SUBURBS OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS; THENCE SOUTHWESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHEASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF NORTH PINE AVENUE; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHEASTERLY LINE OF THE NORTHWESTERLY ONE-HALF OF LOT 10, BLOCK 22, SAID NORTH SUBURBS OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS; THENCE NORTHEASTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHEASTERLY LINE OF SAID LOT 10, BLOCK 22; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE AND THE NORTHWESTERLY PROLONGATION THEREOF TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF HOUSTON STREET; THENCE SOUTHWESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE

TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHEASTERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 4280, PAGE 977 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE A DISTANCE OF 100 FEET; THENCE NORTHEASTERLY, PARALLEL WITH SAID NORTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF HOUSTON STREET, A DISTANCE OF 25 FEET; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG THE NORTHEASTERLY LINE OF LOT 2, BLOCK 23, NORTH SUBURB, IN THE CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, AS RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 1, PAGE 40 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS AND THE NORTHWESTERLY PROLONGATION THEREOF TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHEASTERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 464, PAGE 103 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS, SAID POINT ALSO BEING THE NORTHEASTERLY CORNER OF LOT 10, BLOCK 52, SAID NORTH SUBURBS OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS AS RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 2, PAGE 1; THENCE SOUTHWESTERLY ALONG THE NORTHWESTERLY LINE OF SAID LOT 10, BLOCK 52 TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHEASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF NORTH PINE AVENUE; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG LAST SAID LINE AND THE NORTHWESTERLY PROLONGATION THEREOF TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHEASTERLY PROLONGATION OF THE SOUTHWESTERLY LINE OF THOSE LANDS DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 4040, PAGE 911 OF SAID PUBLIC RECORDS; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG SAID PROLONGATION AND ALONG SAID SOUTHWESTERLY LINE OF OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 4040, PAGE 911 TO THE SHORELINE OF GOVERNOR'S CREEK AS DESCRIBED IN SAID OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK 4040, PAGE 911; THENCE NORTHEASTERLY ALONG SAID SHORELINE OF GOVERNOR'S CREEK TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF NORTH ORANGE AVENUE (U.S. HIGHWAY 17 / STATE ROAD 15); THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY ALONG SAID SOUTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF NORTH ORANGE AVENUE TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHEASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF GOVERNOR STREET; THENCE NORTHEASTERLY, DEPARTING SAID SOUTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE, TO THE INTERSECTION OF THE NORTHEASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF NORTH ORANGE AVENUE WITH THE SOUTHEASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF GOVERNOR STREET; THENCE NORTHEASTERLY ALONG SAID SOUTHEASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF GOVERNOR STREET TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE NORTHEASTERLY LINE OF LOT 18, BLOCK 3, SAID NORTH SUBURBS OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS; THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY ALONG SAID NORTHEASTERLY LINE OF LOT 18, BLOCK 3 AND ALONG THE NORTHEASTERLY LINE OF LOT 16, SAID BLOCK 3, TO THE NORTHEASTERLY CORNER OF SAID LOT 16, BLOCK 3, ALSO BEING THE SOUTHEASTERLY CORNER OF SAID LOT 15, BLOCK 3, NORTH SUBURBS OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS; THENCE NORTHEASTERLY ALONG THE SOUTHEASTERLY LINE OF SAID LOT 15, BLOCK 3 TO AN INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF ST. JOHNS AVENUE AND THE POINT OF BEGINNING.

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POWERS OF A CRA

GREEN COVE
Springs



VII. CHAPTER 163.370 POWERS

A. 163.370 POWERS; COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES; COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCIES.

1. Counties and municipalities may not exercise the power of eminent domain for the purpose of preventing or eliminating a slum area or blighted area as defined in this part; however, counties and municipalities may acquire property by eminent domain within a community redevelopment area, subject to the limitations set forth in ss. 73.013 and 73.014 or other general law.

2. Every county and municipality shall have all the powers necessary or convenient to carry out and effectuate the purposes and provisions of this part, including the following powers in addition to others herein granted:

a. To make and execute contracts and other instruments necessary or convenient to the exercise of its powers under this part.

b. To disseminate slum clearance and community redevelopment information.

c. To undertake and carry out community redevelopment and related activities within the community redevelopment area, which may include:

1. Acquisition of property within a slum area or a blighted area by purchase, lease, option, gift, grant, bequest, devise, or other voluntary method of acquisition.

2. Demolition and removal of buildings and improvements.

3. Installation, construction, or reconstruction of streets, utilities, parks, playgrounds, public areas of major hotels that are constructed in support of convention centers, including meeting rooms, banquet facilities, parking garages, lobbies, and passageways, and other improvements necessary for carrying out in the community redevelopment area the community redevelopment objectives of this part in accordance with the community redevelopment plan.

4. Disposition of any property acquired in the community redevelopment area at its fair value as provided in s. 163.380 for uses in accordance with the community redevelopment plan.

5. Carrying out plans for a program of voluntary or compulsory repair and rehabilitation of buildings or other improvements in accordance with the community redevelopment plan.

6. Acquisition by purchase, lease, option, gift, grant, bequest, devise, or other voluntary method of acquisition of real property in the community redevelopment area which, under the community redevelopment plan, is to be repaired or rehabilitated for dwelling use or related facilities, repair or rehabilitation of the structures for guidance purposes, and resale of the property.

7. Acquisition by purchase, lease, option, gift, grant, bequest, devise, or other voluntary method of acquisition of any other real property in the community redevelopment area when necessary to eliminate unhealthful, unsanitary, or unsafe conditions; lessen density; eliminate obsolete or other uses detrimental to the public



welfare; or otherwise to remove or prevent the spread of blight or deterioration or to provide land for needed public facilities.

8. Acquisition, without regard to any requirement that the area be a slum or blighted area, of air rights in an area consisting principally of land in highways, railway or subway tracks, bridge or tunnel entrances, or other similar facilities which have a blighting influence on the surrounding area and over which air rights sites are to be developed for the elimination of such blighting influences and for the provision of housing (and related facilities and uses) designed specifically for, and limited to, families and individuals of low or moderate income.

9. Acquisition by purchase, lease, option, gift, grant, bequest, devise, or other voluntary method of acquisition of property in unincorporated enclaves surrounded by the boundaries of a community redevelopment area when it is determined necessary by the agency to accomplish the community redevelopment plan.

10. Construction of foundations and platforms necessary for the provision of air rights sites of housing (and related facilities and uses) designed specifically for, and limited to, families and individuals of low or moderate income.

d. To provide, or to arrange or contract for, the furnishing or repair by any person or agency, public or private, of services, privileges, works, streets, roads, public utilities, or other facilities for or in connection with a community redevelopment; to install, construct, and reconstruct streets, utilities, parks, playgrounds, and other public improvements; and to agree to any conditions that it deems reasonable and appropriate which are attached to federal financial assistance and imposed pursuant to federal law relating to the determination of prevailing salaries or wages or compliance with labor standards, in the undertaking or carrying out of a community redevelopment and related activities, and to include in any contract let in connection with such redevelopment and related activities provisions to fulfill such of the conditions as it deems reasonable and appropriate.

e. Within the community redevelopment area:

1. To enter into any building or property in any community redevelopment area in order to make inspections, surveys, appraisals, soundings, or test borings and to obtain an order for this purpose from a court of competent jurisdiction in the event entry is denied or resisted.

2. To acquire by purchase, lease, option, gift, grant, bequest, devise, or other voluntary method of acquisition any personal or real property, together with any improvements thereon.

3. To hold, improve, clear, or prepare for redevelopment any such property.

4. To mortgage, pledge, hypothecate, or otherwise encumber or dispose of any real property.

5. To insure or provide for the insurance of any real or personal property or operations of the county or municipality against any risks or hazards, including the power to pay premiums on any such insurance.

6. To enter into any contracts necessary to effectuate the purposes of this part.



7. To solicit requests for proposals for redevelopment of parcels of real property contemplated by a community redevelopment plan to be acquired for redevelopment purposes by a community redevelopment agency and, as a result of such requests for proposals, to advertise for the disposition of such real property to private persons pursuant to s. 163.380 prior to acquisition of such real property by the community redevelopment agency.

f. To invest any community redevelopment funds held in reserves or sinking funds or any such funds not required for immediate disbursement in property or securities in which savings banks may legally invest funds subject to their control and to redeem such bonds

as have been issued pursuant to s. 163.385 at the redemption price established therein or to purchase such bonds at less than redemption price, all such bonds so redeemed or purchased to be canceled.

g. To borrow money and to apply for and accept advances, loans, grants, contributions, and any other form of financial assistance from the Federal Government or the state, county, or other public body or from any sources, public or private, for the purposes of this part and to give such security as may be required and to enter into and carry out contracts or agreements in connection therewith; and to include in any contract for financial assistance with the Federal Government for or with respect to community redevelopment and related activities such conditions imposed pursuant to federal laws as the county or municipality deems reasonable and appropriate which are not inconsistent with the purposes of this part.

h. To make or have made all surveys and plans necessary to the carrying out of the purposes of this part; to contract with any person, public or private, in making and carrying out such plans; and to adopt or approve, modify, and amend such plans, which plans may include, but are not limited to:

1. Plans for carrying out a program of voluntary or compulsory repair and rehabilitation of buildings and improvements.

2. Plans for the enforcement of state and local laws, codes, and regulations relating to the use of land and the use and occupancy of buildings and improvements and to the compulsory repair, rehabilitation, demolition, or removal of buildings and improvements.

3. Appraisals, title searches, surveys, studies, and other plans and work necessary to prepare for the undertaking of community redevelopment and related activities.

i. To develop, test, and report methods and techniques, and carry out demonstrations and other activities, for the prevention and the elimination of slums and urban blight and developing and demonstrating new or improved means of providing housing for families and persons of low income.

j. To apply for, accept, and utilize grants of funds from the Federal Government for such purposes.



k. To prepare plans for and assist in the relocation of persons (including individuals, families, business concerns, nonprofit organizations, and others) displaced from a community redevelopment area and to make relocation payments to or with respect to such persons for moving expenses and losses of property for which reimbursement or compensation is not otherwise made, including the making of such payments financed by the Federal Government.

l. To appropriate such funds and make such expenditures as are necessary to carry out the purposes of this part; to zone or rezone any part of the county or municipality or make exceptions from building regulations; and to enter into agreements with a housing authority, which agreements may extend over any period, notwithstanding any provision or rule of law to the contrary, respecting action to be taken by such county or municipality pursuant to any of the powers granted by this part.

m. To close, vacate, plan, or replan streets, roads, sidewalks, ways, or other places and to plan or replan any part of the county or municipality.

n. To organize, coordinate, and direct the administration of the provisions of this part, as they may apply to such county or municipality, in order that the objective of remedying slum and blighted areas and preventing the causes thereof within such county or municipality may be most effectively promoted and achieved and to establish such new office or offices of the county or municipality or to reorganize existing offices in order to carry out such purpose most effectively.

o. To develop and implement community policing innovations.

3. The following projects may not be paid for or financed by increment revenues:

a. Construction or expansion of administrative buildings for public bodies or police and fire buildings, unless each taxing authority agrees to such method of financing for the construction or expansion, or unless the construction or expansion is contemplated as part of a community policing innovation.

b. Installation, construction, reconstruction, repair, or alteration of any publicly owned capital improvements or projects if such projects or improvements were scheduled to be installed, constructed, reconstructed, repaired, or altered within 3 years of the approval of the community redevelopment plan by the governing body pursuant to a previously approved public capital improvement or project schedule or plan of the governing body which approved the community redevelopment plan unless and until such projects or improvements have been removed from such schedule or plan of the governing body and 3 years have elapsed since such removal or such projects or improvements were identified in such schedule or plan to be funded, in whole or in part, with funds on deposit within the community redevelopment trust fund.

c. General government operating expenses unrelated to the planning and carrying out of a community redevelopment plan.

4. With the approval of the governing body, a community redevelopment agency may:



- a. Prior to approval of a community redevelopment plan or approval of any modifications of the plan, acquire real property in a community redevelopment area by purchase, lease, option, gift, grant, bequest, devise, or other voluntary method of acquisition; demolish and remove any structures on the property; and pay all costs related to the acquisition, demolition, or removal, including any administrative or relocation expenses.
 - b. Assume the responsibility to bear any loss that may arise as the result of the exercise of authority under this subsection, in the event that the real property is not made part of the community redevelopment area.
5. A community redevelopment agency shall procure all commodities and services under the same purchasing processes and requirements that apply to the county or municipality that created the agency.

08

APPENDICES

GREEN COVE
Springs



VIII. APPENDICES

City – County interlocal Agreement

City Finding of Necessity Resolution

County CRA Delegation Resolution

Green Cove Springs Downtown Master Plan

**INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT
BETWEEN CLAY COUNTY AND CITY OF GREEN COVE
SPRINGS**

This Interlocal Agreement (hereinafter "Agreement") by and between Clay County, a charter county and political subdivision of the State of Florida by and through its Board of County Commissioners (hereinafter "County") and the City of Green Cove Springs, a Florida municipality, (hereinafter "City"), is made and entered into on the ____ day, of 2023, and shall be effective on the date of execution.

WHEREAS, on April 19, 2022, the City approved Resolution R-03-2022 finding the existence blight in an area of the City; making certain findings and determinations; finding a need for creating a Community Redevelopment Agency pursuant to Chapter 163 Part III, Florida Statutes; and

WHEREAS, the County, as a charter county, is vested with all of the powers under the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969; and

WHEREAS, the County may, in its discretion, delegate the exercise of powers to municipalities within the boundaries of the County; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, authorizes public agencies to enter into agreements to provide services and to exercise jointly any power, privilege, or authority they share in common and which each might exercise separately; and

WHEREAS, on August 9, 2022, the County approved Resolution R-2021/22 – 56 declaring and finding a need to create a Community Redevelopment Agency for a certain geographic area of the City; delegating the exercise of certain powers to create and adopt a Plan of Redevelopment; and

WHEREAS, on October 27, 2022, the newly created Community Redevelopment Agency had their initial meeting, with the composition of the Board members being two members chosen by the City Council, two chosen by the County Commission. The Board, subsequently voted on adding a voted on the 5th member as required by the County Resolution No.2021-2022-56.

WHEREAS, on November 29, 2022, the City Planning and Zoning Commission, as the Local Planning Agency, unanimously approved the CRA Redevelopment Plan and Interlocal Agreement.

WHEREAS, on January 10, 2023, the Community Redevelopment Agency approved the the CRA Redevelopment Plan and Interlocal Agreement.

WHEREAS, the City and the County wish to enter into an interlocal agreement as set forth in the statute; and

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants declared herein and other good and valuable consideration each Party agrees as follows:

Section 1. Intent of Parties.

It is the intent of the Parties that provisions in this Agreement which conflict with provisions of the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969, as amended, shall control. The County and City intend to bind themselves and any community redevelopment agency the City may establish (hereinafter "CRA") to the terms and obligations of this Agreement.

Section 2. Term of Agreement.

The Parties agree that:

- 1) Pursuant to the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969 and the terms of this Agreement, the City may adopt a Community Redevelopment Plan for 30 years beginning January 2023 (hereinafter "initial term").
- 2) The City may amend its plan to extend the Community Redevelopment Plan (hereinafter "Plan") only with an affirmative vote of the County Commission.
- 3) The "base year" taxable property assessment roll, used for the calculation in Sec. 163.387(1), Fla. Stat., shall be the values used for taxation in calendar year 2023.

Section 3. CRA, City and County Obligations.

The City and the CRA shall comply with all of the provisions of the Florida statute to establish the CRA trust fund as follows:

- 1) Redevelopment Plan:
 - a. The CRA shall provide the Redevelopment Plan and any amendments to the Redevelopment Plan to the City and County for approval by an affirmative vote of the County Commission prior to the City's adoption of the Redevelopment Plan and any amendments.
 - b. The Plan and all amendments to the Plan shall meet all the requirements of the applicable statutes, including the requirement that the plan contain a detailed statement of the projected costs of redevelopment, "including the amounts to be expended on publicly funded capital projects in the redevelopment area and any indebtedness of the community redevelopment agency... if such indebtedness is to be repaid with increment revenues." See Sec. 163.362(9), Fla. Stat.
 - c. The City and County shall deposit 95% of an amount based on the calculation of increment using the City and County's millage in that year into the CRA Trust Fund.

- d. The monies in the CRA trust fund shall be used to fund the CRA projects identified in the Redevelopment Plan without a plan amendment. Neither the City nor the CRA shall substantially deviate from the projects set forth in the Plan without a plan amendment.
 - e. The CRA shall review the plan annually and update it at least every five years.
 - f. Redevelopment activities and projects in the Redevelopment Plan shall be designed to mitigate the slum/blighted conditions of the redevelopment area that are the basis for the Finding of Necessity approved by the City.
- 2) The City and the CRA may sell bonds and execute notes, and enter other forms of debt or leveraging, as well as collateral documents, to finance capital improvements deemed necessary by the CRA for redevelopment purposes.
 - 3) The City and the CRA shall abide by all provisions of the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969 (currently codified as Florida Statutes, Title IX, Chapter 163, Part III) and any implementing regulation, or its successor statutes or regulations, as amended from time to time, so long as those provisions are not inconsistent with this Agreement.
 - 4) The Composition of the CRA Board shall consist of two (2) members appointed by the City, two (2) members appointed by the Board of County Commissioners and one (1) at-large member appointed by the other four (4) members,

Section 5. Entire Agreement. This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement, including all attachments, and supersedes all prior written or oral agreements, understandings or representations.

Section 6. Default and Termination. This Agreement shall be effective on the effective date above and remain in effect until terminated as follows:

- A. If any Party fails to fulfill its obligations under this Agreement in a timely and satisfactory manner, or if any Party breaches any of the provisions, covenants or stipulations under this Agreement, another party may give a written notice to all Parties stating the failure or breach and provide a reasonable time period for correction of same. In the event the correction is not made in the allotted time, the Administrating Officials of all Parties, or their designee, shall meet to resolve the dispute.
- B. If the Administrating Officials, or their designees, are unable to resolve the dispute, the parties agree to mediate any dispute. If mediation is unsuccessful, a non-breaching party may terminate this Agreement upon affirmative vote of the respective Commission for a material breach. The termination would then be effective at the time the next payment to the CRA trust fund by the non-breaching party is due. If at the time of a termination, caused by a material breach by the County that cannot be cured, the CRA has outstanding bonds or is in other ways in debt, the termination shall not take effect until after the terms of the indebtedness are fulfilled. If at the time of a termination, caused by a material breach by the City that cannot be cured, the County is relieved from its obligation to continue to pay on the CRA debt service.
- C. If any unallocated funds remain in the CRA trust fund at the termination of the CRA, the funds shall be divided equally between the County and the City.

Section 7. Indemnification. Each Party hereby assumes responsibility for, and hereby agrees to indemnify and hold the other Parties harmless from any and all liability, claims or damages imposed on another Party up to the monetary limits provided in Sec. 768.28, Fla. Stat., arising out of or in connection with the negligent acts, omissions or misconduct of the Parties, and their agents or employees relating to the responsibilities of the Parties under this Agreement.

Section 8. Liability. Each Party shall be solely responsible for the negligent acts or omissions of its employees, volunteers and agents which in any way relate to or arise out of this Agreement. Nothing contained herein shall be construed as consent to be sued by third parties in any matter arising out of this Agreement or constitute a waiver by any Party of its sovereign immunity or

provisions of Sec. 768.28, Fla. Stat. This Agreement does not create any relationship with, or any rights in favor of any third party.

Section 9. Filing of Agreement. The County, upon execution of this Agreement, shall file the same with the Clerk of the Circuit Court in the Official Records of Clay County, as required by Sec. 163.01(11), Fla. Stat.

Section 10. Project Records. Each Party shall meet the requirements of Chapter 119, Fla. Stat., for retaining public records and transfer, at no cost, to any other requesting Party, copies of all public records regarding the subject of this Agreement which are in the possession of the Party. All records stored electronically shall be provided to the requesting Party in a format that is compatible with the information technology systems of the requesting Party.

Section 11. Applicable Law. The laws of the State of Florida shall govern this Agreement, and the venue is Clay County, Florida, for any legal actions arising hereunder.

Section 12. Notices. Except as otherwise provided herein, any notice, acceptance, request or approval from any Party to any other Party shall be in writing and, sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, to all Parties and shall be deemed to have been received when either deposited in a United States Postal Service mailbox or personally delivered with signed proof of delivery. For the purposes of this Agreement, the Parties' representatives are:

COUNTY
County Manager
Clay County, Florida
PO Box 1366
Green Cove Springs, Fl 32043

With a copy to:
Clerk of the Court
825 N Orange Avenue
Green Cove Springs, Fl 32043

With a copy to:
County Attorney
PO Box 1366
Green Cove Springs, Fl 32043

CITY
City Manager
321 Walnut Street
Green Cove Springs, Florida 32043
City Attorney

321 Walnut Street
Green Cove Springs, Florida 32043

Development Services Director
321 Walnut Street
Green Cove Springs, Florida 32043

Section 13. Non-Waiver. Waiver or breach of any provision of this Agreement shall not be deemed to be a waiver of any other breach and shall not be construed to be a modification of the terms of this Agreement.

Section 14. Amendment. The Parties may amend this Agreement only by a mutual written agreement.

Section 15. Severability. If any provisions of this Agreement shall be declared illegal, void, or unenforceable the other provisions shall not be affected but shall remain in full force and effect.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this agreement to be executed on the day and year first written above.

Clay County, Florida

By: _____
Chair, Board of County Commissioners

Clay County Clerk

Approved as to form:

Clay County Attorney

City of Green Cove Springs

By: _____
Daniel M Johnson, Mayor

Erin West, City Clerk

Approved as to Form

Jim Arnold, City of Green
Cove Springs Attorney

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be executed on the day and year first written above.

Clay County, Florida

RESOLUTION NO. R-03-2022

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA, RELATING TO COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT; FINDING THE EXISTENCE OF BLIGHT IN AN AREA OF THE CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA; MAKING CERTAIN FINDINGS AND DETERMINATIONS; FINDING A NEED FOR CREATING A COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 163, PART III, FLORIDA STATUTES; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Green Cove Springs ("City Council") expressed its intention to consider the creation of a community redevelopment area, authorized a study to consider whether a finding of necessity resolution should be adopted, and defined a proposed redevelopment study area within the City of Green Cove Springs ("City"); and

WHEREAS, a study has been done, and shall be identified as Exhibit B, supported by data and analysis, of the conditions in that part of the City, known and referred to as the Green Cove Springs Redevelopment Area, depicted in Exhibit "A" hereof (such area being referred to herein as the "Area" or the "Redevelopment Area"); and

WHEREAS, the results of the study have been presented to the City Council for its consideration and included in the public record; and

WHEREAS, after having considered the study's determinations and the facts and evidence of the conditions in the Area and having received and considered such other evidence of the conditions in the Area as have been presented to it, the City Council has determined that the conditions in the Area meet the criteria described in Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes; and

WHEREAS, the City seeks approval from Clay County that the Area meets the criteria described in Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes, and requests delegation of authority to create a Community Redevelopment Agency, adopt a Community Redevelopment Plan, and establish a Redevelopment Trust Fund.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. FINDINGS OF CONDITIONS. Based upon the evidence, data, analysis, and facts presented to it, the City Council does hereby find that the following conditions are present in the Area of the City to be considered a "Blighted area" as specified in Section 163.340(7)©, Florida Statutes (2021):

- (C) the existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes. (Sec. 163.340(8)(a), F.S.);*

SECTION 2. FINDINGS OF CONDITIONS. Based upon the evidence, data, analysis, and facts presented to it, the City Council does hereby find that the following conditions are present in the Area of the City to be considered a “Blighted area” as specified in Section 163.340(7)(c), Florida Statutes (2021):

- A. Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, bridges, or public transportation facilities.
- B. *Aggregate assessed values of real property in the area for ad valorem tax purposes have failed to show any appreciable increase over the 5 years prior to finding of such conditions (Sec. 163.340(8)(b), F.S.);*
- C. *Deterioration of site or other improvements (Sec. 163.340(8)(e), F.S.);*
- D. *Inadequate and outdated building density patterns (Sec. 163.340(8)(f), F.S.);*
- E. *Residential and commercial vacancy rates higher in the area than in the remainder of the municipality (Sec. 163.340(8)(i), F.S.);*

SECTION 3. FINDING OF NECESSITY. The City Council does hereby make a legislative finding that the conditions of the Area meet the criteria described in Section 163.340(8), Florida Statutes (2021) and the following:

- A. *One or more slum or blighted areas, or one or more areas in which there is a shortage of housing affordable to residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly, exist in the City; and,*
- B. *The rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment, or combination thereof, of such area or areas, including, if appropriate, the development of housing which residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly, can afford, is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals, or welfare of the residents of the City.*

SECTION 4. COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA. Based upon the facts presented and contained in the public record, the City does hereby find the Area contains conditions of blight as defined in Section 163.340, Florida Statutes (2021), and that such Area constitutes a Community Redevelopment Area as defined in Section 163.340(10), Florida Statutes (2021).

SECTION 5. COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY. The City Council does hereby expressly find that it is necessary, appropriate, proper, and timely that a Community Redevelopment Agency be created to carry out the community redevelopment contemplated by Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes (2021), to further cause, promote, and encourage rehabilitation, conservation, and redevelopment in the Area.

SECTION 6. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY. The City Council seeks approval from Clay County that the Area meets the criteria described in Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes (2021), and requests delegation of authority to create a Community Redevelopment Agency, adopt a Community Redevelopment Plan, and establish a Redevelopment Trust Fund.

SECTION 7. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its passage.

DONE AND RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA, IN REGULAR SESSION THIS 19TH DAY OF APRIL, 2022.

CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA



Edward R. Gaw, Mayor

ATTEST:



Erin West, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



L. J. Arnold, III, City Attorney

Exhibit “A”



0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

Green Cove Springs
Development Services Department
March 2022





Through this, we encourage new development and redevelopment to improve quality of life, enhance economic conditions, increase vibrancy, and better realize the sense of place in key districts of the City.

Downtown / US 17 Finding of Necessity

City of Green Cove Springs, FL

Heather Glisson, Planning Technician



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1. Executive Summary

This study has been prepared to fulfill the requirements for a Finding of Necessity (FON) in accordance with the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969, Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes. This report has reviewed data from multiple sources including the Clay County Property Appraiser and field observations, which lead to analysis to determine if conditions of slum and / or blight exist within the study area. This report represents the first step in creating a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) which will use Tax Increment Financing to invest in the area and improve its conditions. There are three statutory conditions that may be evaluated to determinate a slum condition and fourteen statutory conditions that may be evaluated to determine a blight condition. For a slum condition, only one of the three is required to be met to make a finding of slum. For a blight condition, only two of the fourteen are required to be met to make a finding of blight.

One of three factors of slum was identified as being met, and seven of fourteen factors of blight were determined as being met, satisfying the statutory requirements to determine the Study Area is a slum area as well as a blighted area. With the adoption of this FON, the City Council of Green Cove Springs may designate a Community Redevelopment Area.

Table 1. Slum Factors

Factor	Met?
(a) Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces;	No
(b) High density of population, compared to the population density of adjacent areas within the county or municipality; and overcrowding, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies and the requirements of the Florida Building Code;	No
(c) The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes.	Yes

Table 2. Blight Factors

Factor	Met?
(a) Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, bridges, or public transportation facilities.	Yes
(b) Aggregate assessed values of real property in the area for ad valorem tax purposes have failed to show any appreciable increase over the 5 years prior to the finding of such conditions.	Yes
(c) Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness.	Yes
(d) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions.	Yes
(e) Deterioration of site or other improvements.	Yes



(f) Inadequate and outdated building density patterns.	Yes
(g) Falling lease rates per square foot of office, commercial, or industrial space compared to the remainder of the county or municipality.	Data unavailable
(h) Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land.	Not analyzed
(i) Residential and commercial vacancy rates higher in the area than in the remainder of the county or municipality.	Yes
(j) Incidence of crime in the area higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality.	Not analyzed
(k) Fire and emergency medical service calls to the area proportionately higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality.	Not analyzed
(l) A greater number of violations of the Florida Building Code in the area than the number of violations recorded in the remainder of the county or municipality.	Not analyzed
(m) Diversity of ownership or defective or unusual conditions of title which prevent the free alienability of land within the deteriorated or hazardous area.	Not analyzed
(n) Governmentally owned property with adverse environmental conditions caused by a public or private entity.	N/A
(o) A substantial number or percentage of properties damaged by sinkhole activity which have not been adequately repaired or stabilized.	N/A

Recommendations

The Study Area meets the criteria established in Section 163.340, Florida Statutes. It is staff recommendation that the City of Green Cove Springs adopt this Finding of Necessity by resolution per F.S. 163.355 and create a Community Redevelopment Agency for the Study Area as defined herein.

2. Introduction

The City of Green Cove Springs seeks to determine the feasibility of designating the Downtown and US 17 Corridor as a Community Redevelopment Area through the development of a Finding of Necessity and would also like to implement redevelopment in this area through the adoption of a Redevelopment Area Plan.



2.1. Background

Green Cove Springs is a city located along the west bank of the historic St. Johns River and since 1971 has served as the County Seat of Government for Clay County. The 2020 Census identified the population count to be 9,786, a 41.66% increase from the 2010 Census.

The city's name originates from the three physical characteristics. "Green" refers to the perennially green vegetation characterized by its tree scape and foliage. "Cove" refers to a bend in the St. Johns River creating a safe area for mooring of boats during inclement weather periods. "Springs" refers to the natural spring (one of 600 in Florida), originating from the Floridan Aquifer with an estimated flow rate of approximately 2,200 gallons per minute. The spring water flows into the west side of the municipal swimming pool and then flows out the east side forming a stream eventually emptying into the St. Johns River.

The first inhabitants of the area were attracted to it because of the warm mineral spring, known as "The Boil." The medicinal qualities of the spring and its location along the St. Johns River served as major contributors to the community's development as a prominent attraction and destination for tourists during the 19th Century.

Green Cove Springs has had a storied history. It was home to Gustafson's Farm, a family dairy operation owned by Frank and Agnes Gustafson that began in 1908. In the 1930s, the federal government located Benjamin Lee Field within the City. The United States Department of the Navy opened a flight training facility. In the 1950s, major American automakers had dealerships in Green Cove Springs along US 17, which led to the City being known as "the Little Detroit."

The City grew economically and geographically, annexing land to include Magnolia Point Golf and Country Club and Magnolia West to the northwestern end, Cove Plaza on the southern end, and to the southeastern edge, FCT-granted land proposed to be the Ed Gustafson Regional Park as well as 560 acres intended to develop as a 2,100 unit residential subdivision.

In 2005, the City of Green Cove Springs adopted "Tomorrow's Vision" as the guiding vision document for the future of the city. This document established goals for the City such as: maintain the small-town character; provide affordable housing; promote redevelopment in the corridors (US 17 / SR 16); improve traffic circulation; expand recreational opportunities; promote a business-friendly environment; strengthen Code Enforcement. One implementation mechanism included in the visioning document was the potential for a Community Redevelopment Agency. In 2014, the City adopted a Finding of Necessity, but the Community Redevelopment Agency was unable to come to fruition at that time.

Since then, the City has experienced additional growth and undergone further planning activities. In February 2021, the City began the process of updating the comprehensive plan, which was adopted a year later in February 2022. The 2045 Comprehensive Plan is designed to prepare the City for upcoming growth. The Future Land Use Map was amended from 13 categories to 6 categories: Neighborhood (NBD), Downtown (DT), Mixed Use (MU), Mixed-Use Reynolds Park (MURP), Industrial (IND), and Public (PUB).



Further, the Future Land Use element established an objective to continue to redevelop and invest in blighted areas of the City, with Policy 1.6.1 directing the City to explore the creation of a Community Redevelopment Agency / Area.

Additionally, the Future Land Use elements directs the City in Policy 1.6.2 to develop a Downtown Master Plan and assess Walnut Street to determine how to increase safety and attractiveness of the streetscape. The Walnut Street assessment was completed in late 2021 and the Downtown Master Plan is underway, with a goal of adopting the plan by mid-April 2022.

2.2. Study Purpose

This Finding of Necessity will determine if the Study Area meetings the statutory criteria to be designated as a Community Redevelopment Area. With this, the City aims to establish said area in an attempt to halt and reverse the decline within it in order to encourage new development and redevelopment to improve the overall quality of the area, leading to improved economic conditions, increased vibrancy, and a more established sense of place in the area.

If the Study Area meets the statutory criteria, the City will adopt this Finding of Necessity and seek to move forward with adopting a Redevelopment Plan.

2.3. Community Redevelopment Act Overview¹

The Florida Legislature enacted the Community Redevelopment Act (Act) in 1969. The legislature created the law to allow local governments to improve declining areas, as defined in the Act and detailed in subsections below. Such areas are detrimental to the health, safety, and welfare of residents as well as being a nuisance to growth and the provision of adequate infrastructure and housing; the Act provides a way for the local governments to create a Redevelopment Area and fund redevelopment within it.

The Statute defines *community redevelopment* as local government or community redevelopment agency lead projects in an established community redevelopment area “for the elimination and prevention of the development or spread of slums and blight, or for the reduction or prevention of crime, or for the provision of affordable housing.” This may include slum clearance, redevelopment, rehabilitation, or conservation in a community redevelopment area, or any combination or part thereof, pursuant to the community redevelopment plan.

The Act establishes that powers granted by the Act are “for public uses and purposes” which involve the spending of public money and the potential exercise of police power, for which reason public interest, meaning a legitimate concern for general health, safety, and welfare within the area, is a requirement to implement the Act.

The Act further establishes the legitimacy of tax increment financing (TIF) as a method of successfully preserving and enhancing the tax base of an area, which will then serve to increase tax revenues for all taxing authorities for the area, enabling them to carry out

¹ The 2021 Florida Statutes, Title XI Chapter 163, Part III



their respective objectives more effectively. A redevelopment trust fund may be established by ordinance after the approval of a Community Redevelopment Plan to allow for the deposit of funds to be used by the agency to finance or refinance redevelopment. This fund must be established prior to receipt of any increment revenues. The statutes further state:

“The annual funding of the redevelopment trust fund shall be in an amount not less than the increment in the income, proceeds, revenues, and funds of each taxing authority derived from or held in connection with the undertaking and carrying out of community redevelopment under this part. Such increment shall be determined annually and shall be that amount equal to 95% of the difference between:

1. The amount of ad valorem taxes levied each year by each taxing authority, exclusive of any amount from any debt service millage, on taxable real property contained within the geographic boundaries of a community redevelopment area; and
2. The amount of ad valorem taxes which would have been produced by the rate upon which the tax is levied each year by or for each taxing authority, exclusive of any debt service millage, upon the total of the assessed value of the taxable real property in the community redevelopment area as shown upon the most recent assessment roll used in connection with the taxation of such property by each taxing authority prior to the effective date of the ordinance providing for the funding of the trust fund.”

Florida Statutes additionally require counties or municipalities seeking to exercise the power granted by the Act to adopt by a resolution “supported by data and analysis, which makes a legislative finding that the conditions in the area meet the criteria” of a slum or blighted area, detailed in 163.340(7) and 163.340(8) and defined below in subsections 2.3.1 and 2.3.2. To make this legislative finding, governing bodies draft a Finding of Necessity (FON), which supports this legislative finding through in-depth analysis of the study area. The analysis contained in this report evaluates the existing conditions and identifies the existence, if any, of a slum or blighted area. This FON will be used by the City in designating and creating the Community Redevelopment Area, if it is determined the area meets the statutory requirements to be classified as a slum or blighted area.

2.3.1. Definitions of Slum Area

According to the Florida Statute Section 163.340(7), “slum area” is an area having physical or economic conditions conducive to disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, poverty, or crime because there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, whether residential or nonresidential, which are impaired by reason of dilapidation, deterioration, age, or obsolescence, and exhibiting one or more of the following factors:

- (a) “Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces;
- (b) High density of population, compared to the population density of adjacent areas within the county or municipality; and overcrowding, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies and the requirements of the Florida Building Code;



or

(c) The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes.”

2.3.2. Definitions of Blighted Area

According to the Florida Statute Section 163.340(8), “blighted area” means:

an “area in which there are a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures; in which conditions, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies, endanger life or property or are leading to economic distress; and in which two or more of the following factors are present:

- (a) Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, bridges, or public transportation facilities.
- (b) Aggregate assessed values of real property in the area for ad valorem tax purposes have failed to show any appreciable increase over the 5 years prior to the finding of such conditions.
- (c) Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness.
- (d) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions.
- (e) Deterioration of site or other improvements.
- (f) Inadequate and outdated building density patterns.
- (g) Falling lease rates per square foot of office, commercial, or industrial space compared to the remainder of the county or municipality.
- (h) Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land.
- (i) Residential and commercial vacancy rates higher in the area than in the remainder of the county or municipality.
- (j) Incidence of crime in the area higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality.
- (k) Fire and emergency medical service calls to the area proportionately higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality.
- (l) A greater number of violations of the Florida Building Code in the area than the number of violations recorded in the remainder of the county or municipality.
- (m) Diversity of ownership or defective or unusual conditions of title which prevent the free alienability of land within the deteriorated or hazardous area.
- (n) Governmentally owned property with adverse environmental conditions caused by a public or private entity.
- (o) A substantial number or percentage of properties damaged by sinkhole activity which have not been adequately repaired or stabilized.”



The term “blighted area” may also be used for any area in which at least one of the factors identified in paragraphs (a) through (o) is present and all taxing authorities subject to 163.387(2)(a) agree, by interlocal agreement or by resolution, that the area is blighted.

2.3.2. Assessment Process

City Staff assessed the Study Area through a multitude of resources, including but not limited to existing data, especially that included in the Green Cove Springs GeoHub; data collected from other departments, especially Public Works and Police; desktop reviews of the area; in person / walking review of the area. Staff assessed the area for many aspects of blight as defined in the Florida Statutes, and this report describes the existing conditions as they relate to these factors.

2.4. Study Area

The specified Study Area encompasses ±172.8 acres and is known as the Downtown and US 17 Corridor. The corridor spans Orange Avenue from Governor Street on the north end to Oak Street on the south end. The Corridor lies between St. Johns Avenue and Magnolia Avenue on its eastern edge and Pine Avenue on its western edge. The Downtown portion reaches slightly farther to the west and east. On the western side, it is bound by Palmer Street, Green Street, and Bay Street. On the eastern side, it expands diagonally eastward from Magnolia starting at Center Street, culminating at the river's edge with Spring Park property. The area is shown in Map 1.

The Study Area contains primarily commercial and institutional uses. Well known locations within the Study Area include: churches such as Springs Baptist Church, First Presbyterian Church, Doxa Church, and United Methodist Church; County government buildings including the Courthouse, Jail, Supervisor of Elections, and Administration Building; food / beverage service businesses such as Spring Park Coffee, Dunkin' Donuts, Burger King, La Casita, and Sweet Sensations; financial institutions, including Wells Fargo and VyStar Credit Union; automobile sales lots such as Green Cove Auto and Good Guys Motors as well as service businesses like Jesse's Auto Services and Darren's Custom & Restorations; retail uses like CVS, The Treasure Box, Walgreens, SS Something Special, and Green Cove Liquors; office uses including Exit Magnolia Realty, Vallencourt Construction, and Action Medical Staffing; and an event venue, Clay Theatre. Additionally, there are numerous vacant properties, including the recently demolished 1050 N Orange Ave, which previously housed an abandoned automobile sales lot, as well as the corner of North Street and Orange Avenue, which once housed two buildings and businesses. The Study Area also contains Spring Park, a well-known and loved park featuring the natural spring, a public spring-fed pool, walking trails, swinging benches, play structures, and great views of the St. Johns River. The foregoing list is not meant to be exhaustive but instead meant to provide a feel of the activity within the Study Area.

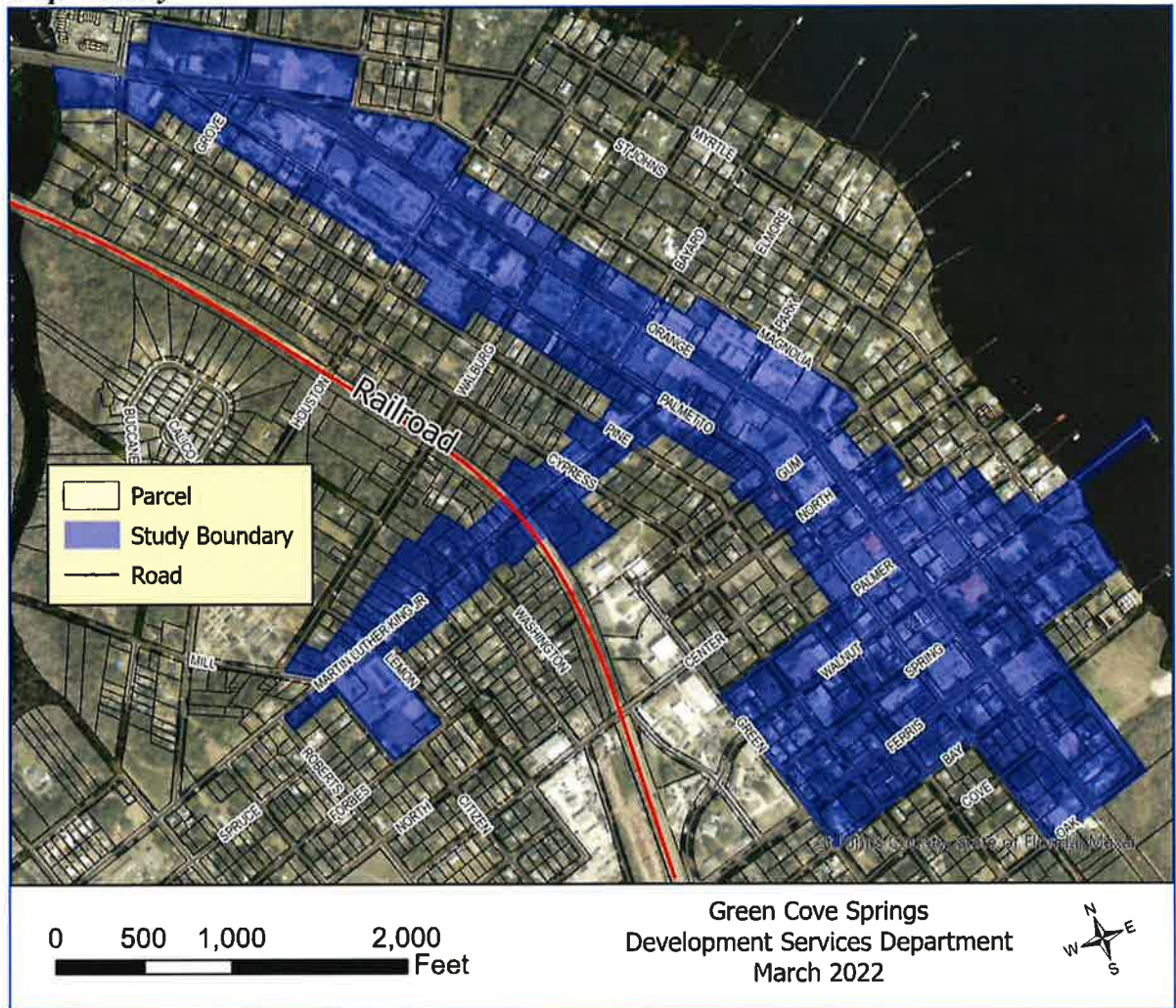
The expanse around the Study Area is primarily residential in nature, with some exception specifically along Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, which features some commercial spaces, as well as east of Green Street, which features County School Board property and related uses.

Within the Study Area, there are some planned or potential improvements. These include a proposed freestanding emergency medical facility operated by St. Vincent's as well as



the Palmetto Trail project which will see an eight-foot multi-use path constructed along Palmetto Avenue from its southern end up to the Governors Creek Bridge. As part of the Walnut Street assessment, the City is also planning improvements to Walnut Street, particularly the block between Palmetto Avenue and Orange Avenue.

Map 1. Study Area

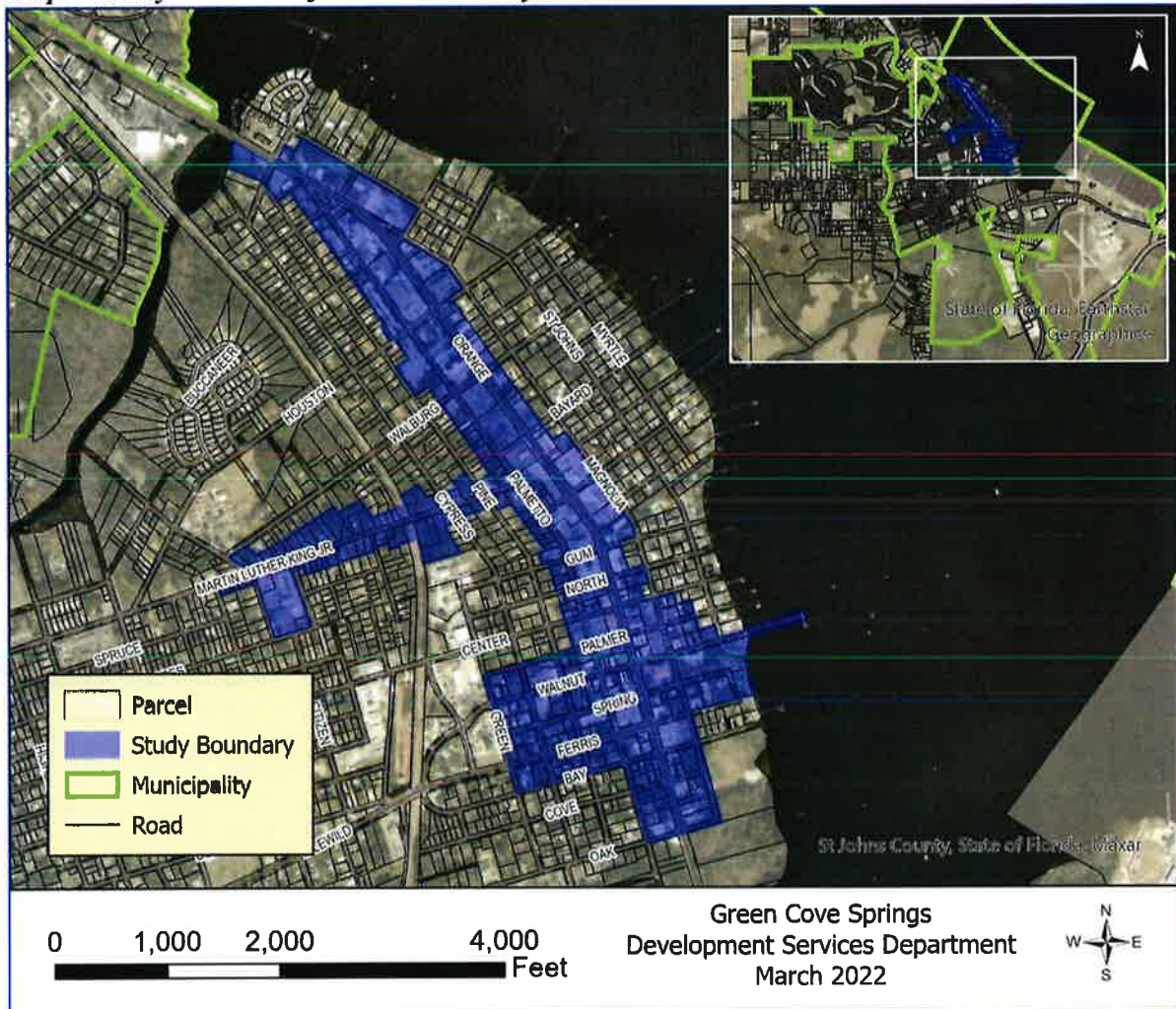


The Study Area is located somewhat centrally within the City, particularly for commercial development. Its location within the boundaries of the City can be viewed in Map 2. The northwest portion of the City consists of two subdivisions and the southeastern portion of the City consists of Reynolds Park / Clay Port – a future mixed-use development operating as an industrial site at present. The Study Area is contained within what is referred to as the Core City. The western portion of the Core City is dominated by residential development with a smattering of institutional development, namely School Board related properties. US 17 / Orange Avenue, Martin Luther King Blvd, and Palmetto



Avenue, all within the Study Area, feature commercial development with some residential development as well.

Map 2. Study Area in Reference to the City



3. Slum and Blighted Area Analysis

City Staff reviewed the Study Area in relation to the statutory requirements for an area to be determined a slum area or a blighted area.

3.1. Slum

The condition of slum in the Study Area is met under the following criteria:

(c) The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes.

Documentation of existing conditions provided in subsequent sections in this analysis indicates life and / or properties are endangered, specifically by dilapidation; unsecured inhabitable properties; deteriorating roadways, sidewalks, and accessibility features; abandoned homes; and overall deterioration of the Study Area.



3.2. Defective or inadequate public transportation facilities

The City of Green Cove Springs does not have locally operated public transportation facilities. Public transportation within Clay County, called Clay Community Transportation, is operated by the Jacksonville Transportation Authority². Of 4 available lines, 2 lines travel through Green Cove Springs. These lines operate from 6am to 7pm Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. The lines do include a flex service option wherein customers can call a reservation line to schedule a pick-up from their location that will be accommodated *when time allows*. The deviation will go as far as a ¾ mile off the route.

The Blue Line (Map 3) has one stop within the Study Area, the Clay County Courthouse (825 N Orange Ave), and one other stop within City Limits, at the Clay County Health Department. There are two stops moderately close to City Limits – the Pier Station stop west of town on State Road 16 and the Challenge Enterprises stop on Enterprise Way just north of town. There is two to three hours between pickups at the local stops, excluding Challenge Enterprises which only has one pickup time and one drop-off time.

The Green Line (Map 4) has one stop within the Study Area (and the City at large), the Clayton and Mildred Revels Senior Center (604 Walnut St). There are three hours between pickups at this stop, and similarly three hours between drop-offs to the location.

There are no options for local transit from residential to commercial or recreational areas of town. Additionally, the sidewalk and roadway conditions through the Study Area are in a poor state. Many streets show deterioration, especially with top layers breaking down, revealing the older brick streets beneath, which creates uneven surfaces. Sidewalks show significant deterioration as well with the following conditions being regularly observed throughout the Study Area:

- **Cracking:** Locations where the paved surface of the sidewalk has cracked or crumbled
- **Uplift:** A vertical change in height along a sidewalk (generally where “panels” of the sidewalk meet or where cracking has occurred)
- **Fixed Obstructions:** Anchored objects (such as utility poles) that reduce sidewalk width
- **Non-Fixed Obstruction:** Vegetation, non-anchored objects, or uncleanness that reduces sidewalk width or walkability
- **Spalling:** Surface deterioration that appears as small indentations in the surface
- **Standing Water:** Locations where there is or there is evidence of standing water on the sidewalk
- **Loss:** Locations where a piece or pieces of the sidewalk were removed, whether purposefully for work or through erosion.

Examples of the above defined items are provided in the figures below.

² Jacksonville Transit Authority, <https://www.jtafla.com/ride-jta/regional-services/clay-community-transportation/> accessed 3/14/2022

Further, there are many places in the Study Area completely lacking sidewalks, primarily on local streets or only on one side of the street and often without excellent road crossing conditions to get from sidewalk to sidewalk as needed.

Such road and sidewalk conditions reduce the ability of the community to safely traverse the Study Area on foot, by micromobility³ device (bicycle, scooter, skateboard, et cetera) or by motorized vehicle.

Figure 1. Sidewalk Cracking, Palmer St, near 14 N Magnolia Ave



Figure 2. Sidewalk Cracking & Loss, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd



Figure 3. Deteriorating accessibility feature, Corner of Orange Ave & Center St



Figure 4. Deteriorating accessibility feature, Southwest Corner of Orange Ave & Palmer St



³ Institute for Transportation & Development Policy, <https://www.itdp.org/multimedia/defining-micromobility/> accessed 4/7/2022

Figure 5. Road Disrepair, Walnut St



Figure 6. Road Disrepair, Intersection of Green St & Walnut St



Figure 7. Non-Fixed Obstruction, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd



Figure 8. Non-Fixed Obstruction, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd



Figure 9. Sidewalk Spalling, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd



Figure 10. Sidewalk – Standing Water, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.



Figure 11. Sidewalk Uplift & Spalling, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd

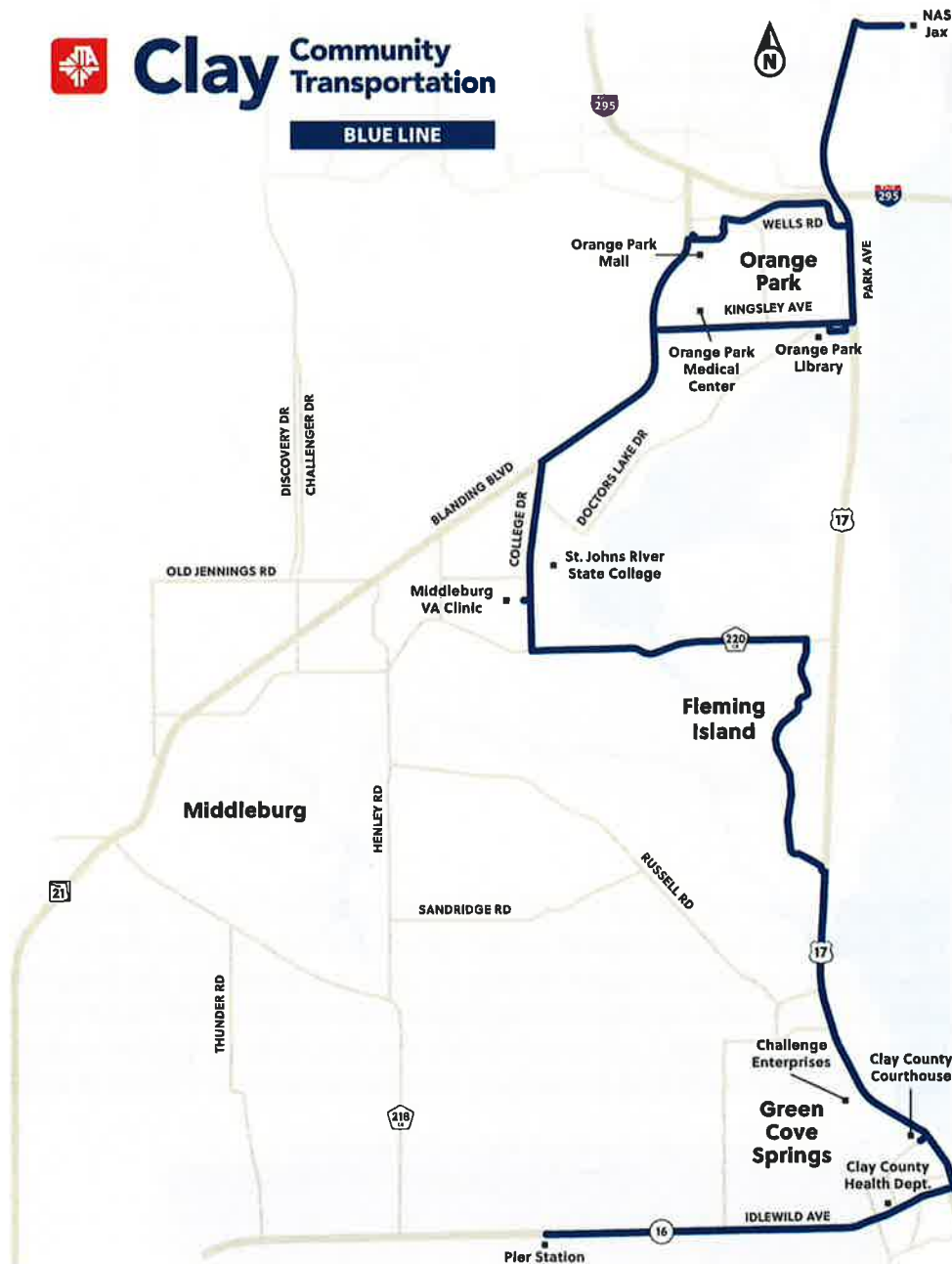


Figure 12. Sidewalk Loss, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd





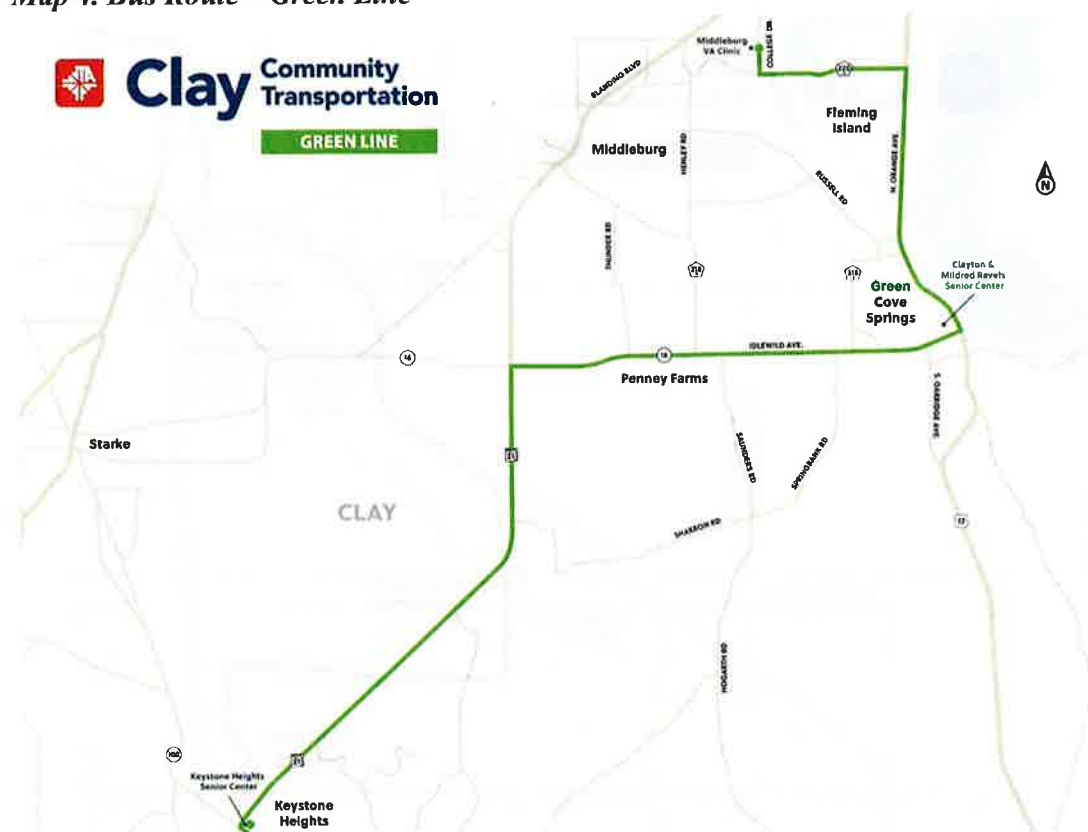
Map 3. Bus Route – Blue Line⁴



⁴ Jacksonville Transportation Authority, <https://www.jtafla.com/ride-jta/regional-services/clay-community-transportation/clay-blue-line/>



Map 4. Bus Route – Green Line⁵



- 3.3. Aggregate assessed values do not show appreciable increase over past 5 years
- The Study Area has experienced some redevelopment in the past five years, but the deterioration present, as shown in later sections, has prevented the Study Area from seeing an appreciable increase in its aggregate assessed value (AAV) as compared to the City as a whole. In Table 1, it is demonstrated that the City as a whole has experienced an increased AAV of 50.71% while the Study Area has only seen an increase of 20.53%.

Table 3. Aggregate Assessed Value Comparison

Year	Study Area	City
2017	\$ 85,088,819.00	\$590,524,531.00
2018	\$88,913,992.00	\$642,232,893.00
2019	\$95,646,152.00	\$802,652,764.00
2020	\$95,809,061.00	\$802,652,764.00
2021	\$102,557,978.00	\$890,001,640.00
% Increase	20.53%	50.71%

⁵ Jacksonville Transportation Authority, <https://www.jtafla.com/ride-jta/regional-services/clay-community-transportation/clay-green-line/>



3.4. Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness

Within the Study Area, approximately 25.6% of the lots could be considered faulty (Map 4). The criteria for this determination were as follows:

- **Size:** Commercially zoned lots with less than approximately 75 feet of frontage and approximately 100 feet of depth – despite the zoning code identifying no minimum lot requirements in commercial districts, the size of these lots is not suited for adequate commercial development, assuming they are developed individually given the diversity of ownership.
- **Adequacy:** Lots deemed inadequate are shaped in a manner which decreases their developability.
- **Usefulness:** Lots deemed less than useful are shaped in a manner which will likely completely prevent or deter their development or redevelopment.
- **Accessibility:** Lots deemed inaccessible are landlocked.

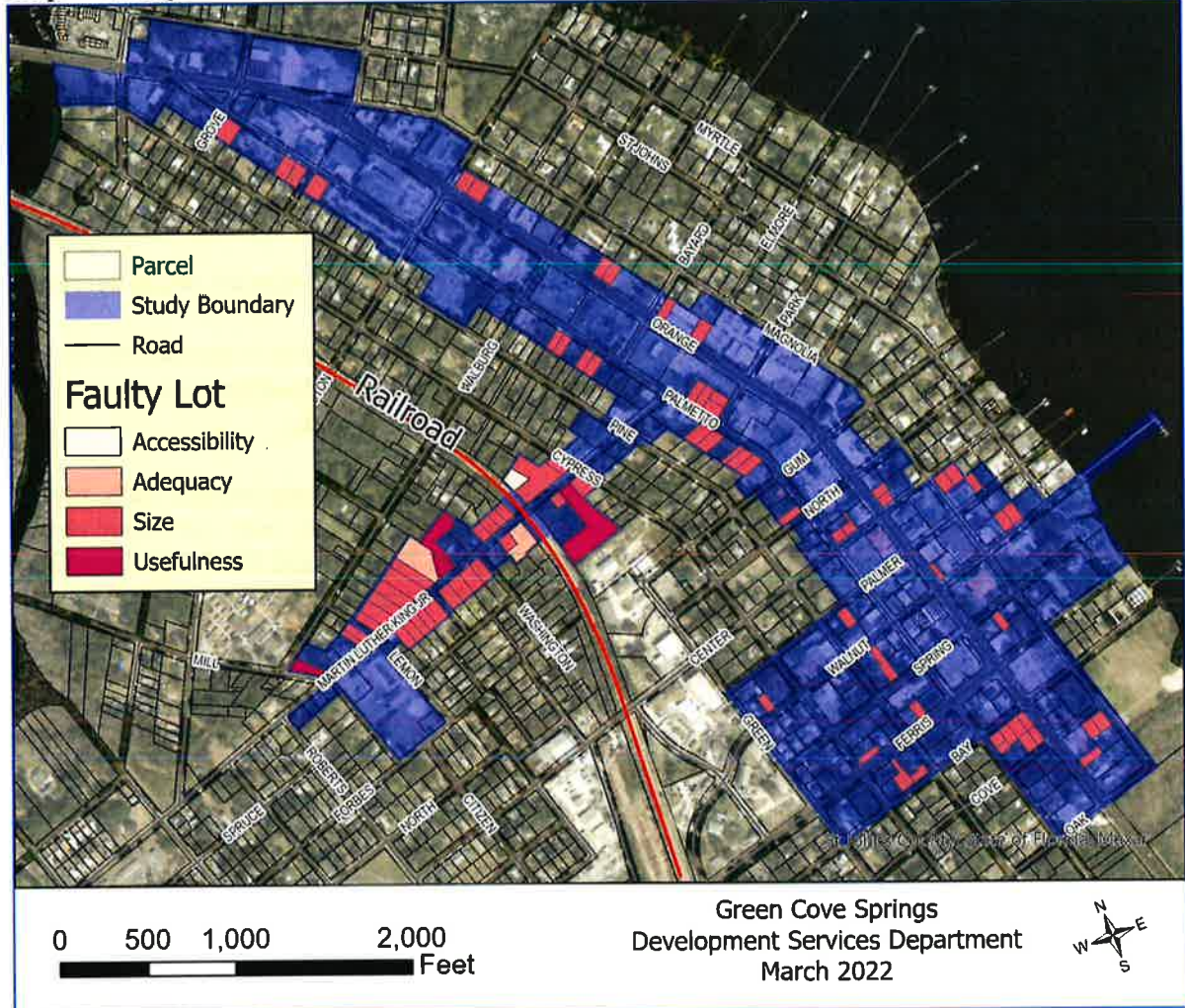
The City does permit residential development within many commercially zoned areas, and some of the identified lots have historically or recently been developed residentially as a consequence. Ideally, as identified in the Future Land Use Map, these lots would develop commercially or with a mix of uses to better support the neighborhood.

Recent development exemplifies the difficulties with developing commercially on narrow or otherwise small lots. Between 2019 and 2020, Dunkin Donuts constructed a new location within the Study Area – 610 N Orange Ave. The site is approximately 250ft along Orange Avenue (the primary roadway) by 125ft deep. The development received a variance from the City's Zoning Code requirements, which require parking to be to the side or back of a building in the Gateway Commercial Corridor. Due to the depth of the property and the type of development (drive-thru fast food), the lot layout was inadequate to permit development without a variance.

On the basis of the plight of Dunkin Donuts and the criteria identified above, additional lots are truly eligible to be considered faulty within the Study Area, but being that they are already commercially developed, at this time, they are not being considered faulty.



Map 5. Faulty Lots



3.5. Unsanitary or unsafe conditions

There are several sites with unsafe or unsanitary conditions located within the Study Area. Figures 13-29 (following) demonstrate the conditions for a portion of these properties.

Field inspection and Google StreetView inspection of the Study Area identified sites with deteriorating or damaged structures which pose a threat to building occupants, condemned or abandoned buildings, incomplete construction projects, lack of sidewalks or blocked rights-of-way (ROW[s]), as well as brownfield sites. There are unsafe commercial spaces where there is either a lack of defined pedestrian versus vehicular space or a lack of maintenance that would keep the area safe for traversing to and from a business.



These figures represent some of the many deteriorating, unsafe, and at times abandoned structures in the area.

Figure 13. Unsafe, Deteriorating Roof, 116 N Magnolia Ave



Figure 14. Unsafe, Condemned Building, 428 N Orange Ave



Figure 15. Unsafe, Boarded Openings, 115 N Magnolia Ave



Figure 16. Unsafe and unsanitary, Openings / Junk Storage, 115 N Magnolia



Figure 17. Unsafe, No Sidewalk, ROW used for RV Parking, 327 N Orange Ave



Figure 18. Unsafe, No Sidewalk, across from Figure 5, 425 N Orange Ave





Figure 19. Unsanitary, Discontinued Gas Pumps, 201 N Orange Ave



Figure 20. Unsafe, Collapsed Canopy, Petroleum Contamination Site⁶, 100 N Orange Ave



Figure 21. Unsafe, Low hanging power lines, concrete drive in disrepair, south of 25 N Orange Av



Figure 22. Unsafe, ROW in disrepair, busines parks in ROW, 3 S Palmetto Ave



Figure 23. Unsafe, Lack of signage, marked parking spaces, pedestrian safety, 24 Green St



⁶ FL Department of Environmental Protection's Contamination Locator Map, <https://prodenv.dep.state.fl.us/DepClnup>

Figure 24. Unsafe area in front of active commercial building, 1100 Martin Luther King



Figure 25. Unsafe Structure / Abandoned, 1007 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd



Figure 26. Unsafe / Abandoned Structure, 1001 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd



Figure 27. Unsafe / Abandoned Structure, 713 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd

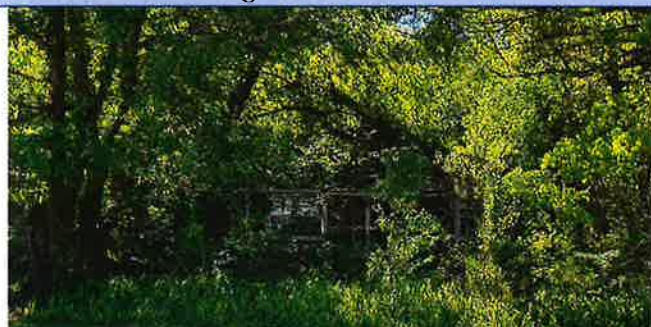


Figure 28. Unsafe / Abandoned Structure, 613 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd



Figure 29. Unsafe Structure, 612 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd



3.6. Deterioration of site or other improvements

In addition to the deterioration of site improvements shown in section 3.5, within the Study Area, there are multiple occurrences of deteriorating improvements, especially access points or paved areas in surrounding buildings. Paving is wearing away or cracking creating hazardous conditions for drivers using the lots to park or maneuver the site and pedestrians crossing the access points. Figures below provide examples of this type of wear and tear in the corridor.

Figure 30. Deteriorating Drive / Sidewalk, 220 Palmer



Figure 31. Deteriorating Drive, 327 N Orange Ave



Figure 32. Parking lot disrepair, between 604 & 500 Walnut St



Figure 33. Sidewalk disrepair, between 604 & 500 Walnut St



3.7. Inadequate and outdated building density patterns

The applicable zoning districts for the Study Area generally include: Central Business District, Gateway Corridor Commercial, Gateway Corridor Neighborhood, and C-1 Neighborhood Commercial. The heart of the Study Area is where the Central Business District is located – also known as the Downtown area. The Gateway districts are located along the “corridor” area, notably US 17 or Orange Ave. The Martin Luther King Blvd corridor is zoned as neighborhood commercial but features primarily low density residential development including active and abandoned residential structures, churches, vacant lots, concrete block commercial buildings lacking transparency and activation.

Figure 36. Outdated building pattern, 208 N Orange Ave, Food Store



Figure 37. Outdated building pattern, 425 N Orange Ave, Wells Fargo



Figure 38. Outdated Building Pattern, 327 N Orange Ave, Rick Baker's RV





Figure 39. Low Density Development, 606 Spring St



Figure 40. Low Density Development, 627 Spring St



Figure 41. Low Density Development, Not Fronting Street, 702 Ferris St / 709 Spring St



Figure 42. Undeveloped, Gustafson Property, Pine St (behind house on Walnut St)



3.8. Vacancy rates

17.1% of properties within the Study Area are classified as vacant by the Clay County Property Appraiser. This level of vacancy within the Study Area is 44.9% higher than that of the rest of the municipality, which has an 11.8% rate of vacancy.

Many of these lots, shown in the figures below, are prime locations that once housed a local business which has since been removed. The lots have yet to have been redeveloped despite their prime locations in the commercial areas of the City.



Figure 43. Vacant Lot, Previously 208 N Orange Ave



Figure 44. Vacant Lot, East of 604 Walnut St



Figure 45. Vacant Lot, BROWNFIELD⁷, south of 535 N Orange Ave



Figure 46. Vacant Lot at the northeast corner of Orange Ave & Walburg St



Figure 47. Vacant Lot at the northwest corner of Orange Ave & Governor St



⁷ FL Department of Environmental Protection's Contamination Locator Map, <https://prodenv.dep.state.fl.us/DepClnup>



Map 6. Vacancy Rates



4. Recommendations

The Study Area meets the criteria established in Section 163.340, Florida Statutes (F.S.). It is staff recommendation that the City of Green Cove Springs adopt this Finding of Necessity by resolution per Section 163.355, F.S., and create a Community Redevelopment Agency for the Study Area as defined herein. This will enable redevelopment of the area which is necessary for the safety and economic welfare of the community.

RESOLUTION NO. 2021/2022-56

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA DECLARING AND FINDING A CERTAIN GEOGRAPHIC AREA IN THE CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA TO BE SLUM OR BLIGHTED; FINDING A NEED FOR THE CREATION OF A COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY; DELEGATING THE EXERCISE OF CERTAIN POWERS TO CREATE A COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY WITH THE POWER TO PREPARE AND ADOPT A PLAN OF REDEVELOPMENT AS CONFERRED UPON CLAY COUNTY REGARDING COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE INCORPORATED LIMITS OF THE CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS TO THE CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS IN ACCORDANCE WITH CHAPTER 163, PART III, FLORIDA STATUTES; PROVIDING FOR NO SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the Florida Legislature during its 1969 Legislative Session enacted the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969 which is presently codified at Part III, Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, as amended (the “Act”); and

WHEREAS, section 163.410 of the Act provides, in part, “the governing body of any ... county which has adopted a home rule charter may, in its discretion, by resolution delegate the exercise of the powers conferred upon the county by [the Act] within the boundaries of a municipality to the governing body of such a municipality;” and

WHEREAS, the Act further provides that “[s]uch a delegation to a municipality shall confer only such powers upon a municipality as shall be specifically enumerated in the delegating resolution;” and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Green Cove Springs adopted Resolution No. R-03-2022 (the “Resolution”), which is attached hereto as Attachment A and incorporated herein

by reference, and which, among other things, declared an area within the municipal boundaries of the City of Green Cove Springs (the “City”), generally described as the downtown and US 17 corridor and referred to as the Green Cove Springs Redevelopment Area (the “Area”), to be a “slum or blighted area”; and

WHEREAS, the City Council further made a finding of necessity as to the rehabilitation, conservation or redevelopment, or a combination of each, with respect to the Area; and

WHEREAS, this Board has considered the “Finding of Necessity” Study, which is attached to the City’s Resolution as Exhibit B, concerning the existence of slum or blighted areas within the boundaries of the Area; and

WHEREAS, this Board agrees with the City Council’s findings as set forth in the Study and finds that one or more slum or blighted areas, as defined in section 163.340(7) and (8), respectively, of the Act exist within the Area; and

WHEREAS, this Board finds that rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment, or a combination thereof, of said slum or blighted area is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals, and welfare of the residents of the City and of Clay County; and

WHEREAS, accordingly this Board finds that there is a need for a community redevelopment agency to carry out the community redevelopment purposes of the Act; and

WHEREAS, the City, pursuant to section 163.410 of the Act, requested that the County delegate powers to the City to create a community redevelopment agency; and

WHEREAS, this Board finds that at this time the City has met its obligations as set forth in section 163.410 of the Act, including, but not limited to, submitting all documentation required by the County; and

WHEREAS, this Board desires to delegate certain limited community redevelopment powers as set forth herein to the City pursuant to the Act.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Clay County, Florida, as follows:

Section 1. The foregoing recitations are incorporated as a part of the Resolution by reference.

Section 2. Pursuant to Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes (the “Act”), specifically, section 163.355, Florida Statutes, this Board finds and declares, that based on findings of the City and the Study a slum or blighted area, as defined by section 163.340(7) and (8), respectively, of the Act, exists in an area of the City described generally as the downtown and US 17 corridor, which is specifically described in the Study and is referred to as the Green Cove Springs Redevelopment Area (the “Area”).

Section 3. This Board finds and declares that the rehabilitation, conservation and redevelopment, or a combination thereof, of the Area is necessary and in the best interest of the public health, safety, morals, and welfare of the residents of the City and of Clay County as a whole.

Section 4. This Board finds there is a need for a community redevelopment agency to function in the Area to carry out the community redevelopment purposes of the Act.

Section 5. This Board delegates to the City the limited power to create a community redevelopment agency pursuant to the Act, provided that (1) the composition of the community redevelopment agency shall consist of two members appointed by the City, two members appointed by the Board, and one at-large member appointed by the other four members, and (2) the sole power initially delegated to the community redevelopment agency is to prepare and adopt a plan of redevelopment for the Area, which plan shall then be submitted to the City and the County for review and upon the completion of their respective reviews, be submitted to the Council and thereafter the Board for approval after notice.

Section 6. This Board shall consider the delegation of additional community redevelopment powers to the community redevelopment agency in the form of an interlocal agreement by subsequent resolution of this Board.

Section 7. The community redevelopment agency created by the City shall cease to exist within 12 months from the adoption of this Resolution if: (1) the City has not approved a redevelopment plan and interlocal agreement acceptable to the County; and (2) the County has not approved same in accordance with the Act and this Resolution, and the delegation of powers hereunder shall be deemed to be void and to have no further force and effect.

Section 8. This Resolution and the delegation of the powers hereunder shall not be deemed or construed to create any obligation on the part of the Board or the County to enter into an agreement or adopt a resolution.

Section 9. The provisions of this Resolution are not severable. If any part of this Resolution is held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, this Resolution shall be deemed void and of no further effect.

Section 10. This Resolution shall become effective upon adoption.

DULY ADOPTED by the Board of County Commissioners of Clay County, Florida, this
9th day of August, 2022.



ATTEST:

Tara S. Green
Clay County Clerk of Court and Comptroller
Ex Officio Clerk to the Board

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: [WFBolla \(Aug 11, 2022 14:37 EDT\)](#)
Wayne Bolla, Its Chairman

ATTACHMENT A

RESOLUTION NO. R-03-2022

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA, RELATING TO COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT; FINDING THE EXISTENCE OF BLIGHT IN AN AREA OF THE CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA; MAKING CERTAIN FINDINGS AND DETERMINATIONS; FINDING A NEED FOR CREATING A COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 163, PART III, FLORIDA STATUTES; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Green Cove Springs ("City Council") expressed its intention to consider the creation of a community redevelopment area, authorized a study to consider whether a finding of necessity resolution should be adopted, and defined a proposed redevelopment study area within the City of Green Cove Springs ("City"); and

WHEREAS, a study has been done, and shall be identified as Exhibit B, supported by data and analysis, of the conditions in that part of the City, known and referred to as the Green Cove Springs Redevelopment Area, depicted in Exhibit "A" hereof (such area being referred to herein as the "Area" or the "Redevelopment Area"); and

WHEREAS, the results of the study have been presented to the City Council for its consideration and included in the public record; and

WHEREAS, after having considered the study's determinations and the facts and evidence of the conditions in the Area and having received and considered such other evidence of the conditions in the Area as have been presented to it, the City Council has determined that the conditions in the Area meet the criteria described in Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes; and

WHEREAS, the City seeks approval from Clay County that the Area meets the criteria described in Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes, and requests delegation of authority to create a Community Redevelopment Agency, adopt a Community Redevelopment Plan, and establish a Redevelopment Trust Fund.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. FINDINGS OF CONDITIONS. Based upon the evidence, data, analysis, and facts presented to it, the City Council does hereby find that the following conditions are present in the Area of the City to be considered a "Blighted area" as specified in Section 163.340(7)©, Florida Statutes (2021):

(C) the existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes. (Sec. 163.340(8)(a), F.S.);

SECTION 2. FINDINGS OF CONDITIONS. Based upon the evidence, data, analysis, and facts presented to it, the City Council does hereby find that the following conditions are present in the Area of the City to be considered a “Blighted area” as specified in Section 163.340(7)(c), Florida Statutes (2021):

- A. Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, bridges, or public transportation facilities.
- B. *Aggregate assessed values of real property in the area for ad valorem tax purposes have failed to show any appreciable increase over the 5 years prior to finding of such conditions (Sec. 163.340(8)(b), F.S.);*
- C. *Deterioration of site or other improvements (Sec. 163.340(8)(e), F.S.);*
- D. *Inadequate and outdated building density patterns (Sec. 163.340(8)(f), F.S.);*
- E. *Residential and commercial vacancy rates higher in the area than in the remainder of the municipality (Sec. 163.340(8)(i), F.S.);*

SECTION 3. FINDING OF NECESSITY. The City Council does hereby make a legislative finding that the conditions of the Area meet the criteria described in Section 163.340(8), Florida Statutes (2021) and the following:

- A. *One or more slum or blighted areas, or one or more areas in which there is a shortage of housing affordable to residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly, exist in the City; and,*
- B. *The rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment, or combination thereof, of such area or areas, including, if appropriate, the development of housing which residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly, can afford, is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals, or welfare of the residents of the City.*

SECTION 4. COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA. Based upon the facts presented and contained in the public record, the City does hereby find the Area contains conditions of blight as defined in Section 163.340, Florida Statutes (2021), and that such Area constitutes a Community Redevelopment Area as defined in Section 163.340(10), Florida Statutes (2021).

SECTION 5. COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY. The City Council does hereby expressly find that it is necessary, appropriate, proper, and timely that a Community Redevelopment Agency be created to carry out the community redevelopment contemplated by Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes (2021), to further cause, promote, and encourage rehabilitation, conservation, and redevelopment in the Area.

SECTION 6. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY. The City Council seeks approval from Clay County that the Area meets the criteria described in Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes (2021), and requests delegation of authority to create a Community Redevelopment Agency, adopt a Community Redevelopment Plan, and establish a Redevelopment Trust Fund.

SECTION 7. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its passage.

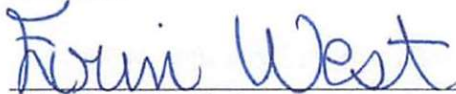
DONE AND RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA, IN REGULAR SESSION THIS 19TH DAY OF APRIL, 2022.

CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA



Edward R. Gaw, Mayor

ATTEST:



Erin West, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



L. J. Arnold, III, City Attorney

Exhibit "A"





Through this, we encourage new development and redevelopment to improve quality of life, enhance economic conditions, increase vibrancy, and better realize the sense of place in key districts of the City.

Downtown / US 17 Finding of Necessity

City of Green Cove Springs, FL

Heather Glisson, Planning Technician



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1. Executive Summary

This study has been prepared to fulfill the requirements for a Finding of Necessity (FON) in accordance with the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969, Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes. This report has reviewed data from multiple sources including the Clay County Property Appraiser and field observations, which lead to analysis to determine if conditions of slum and / or blight exist within the study area. This report represents the first step in creating a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) which will use Tax Increment Financing to invest in the area and improve its conditions. There are three statutory conditions that may be evaluated to determinate a slum condition and fourteen statutory conditions that may be evaluated to determine a blight condition. For a slum condition, only one of the three is required to be met to make a finding of slum. For a blight condition, only two of the fourteen are required to be met to make a finding of blight.

One of three factors of slum was identified as being met, and seven of fourteen factors of blight were determined as being met, satisfying the statutory requirements to determine the Study Area is a slum area as well as a blighted area. With the adoption of this FON, the City Council of Green Cove Springs may designate a Community Redevelopment Area.

Table 1. Slum Factors

Factor	Met?
(a) Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces;	No
(b) High density of population, compared to the population density of adjacent areas within the county or municipality; and overcrowding, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies and the requirements of the Florida Building Code;	No
(c) The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes.	Yes

Table 2. Blight Factors

Factor	Met?
(a) Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, bridges, or public transportation facilities.	Yes
(b) Aggregate assessed values of real property in the area for ad valorem tax purposes have failed to show any appreciable increase over the 5 years prior to the finding of such conditions.	Yes ?
(c) Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness.	Yes
(d) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions.	Yes ?
(e) Deterioration of site or other improvements.	Yes



(f) Inadequate and outdated building density patterns.	Yes
(g) Falling lease rates per square foot of office, commercial, or industrial space compared to the remainder of the county or municipality.	Data unavailable
(h) Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land.	Not analyzed
(i) Residential and commercial vacancy rates higher in the area than in the remainder of the county or municipality.	Yes
(j) Incidence of crime in the area higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality.	Not analyzed
(k) Fire and emergency medical service calls to the area proportionately higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality.	Not analyzed
(l) A greater number of violations of the Florida Building Code in the area than the number of violations recorded in the remainder of the county or municipality.	Not analyzed
(m) Diversity of ownership or defective or unusual conditions of title which prevent the free alienability of land within the deteriorated or hazardous area.	Not analyzed
(n) Governmentally owned property with adverse environmental conditions caused by a public or private entity.	N/A
(o) A substantial number or percentage of properties damaged by sinkhole activity which have not been adequately repaired or stabilized.	N/A

Recommendations

The Study Area meets the criteria established in Section 163.340, Florida Statutes. It is staff recommendation that the City of Green Cove Springs adopt this Finding of Necessity by resolution per F.S. 163.355 and create a Community Redevelopment Agency for the Study Area as defined herein.

2. Introduction

The City of Green Cove Springs seeks to determine the feasibility of designating the Downtown and US 17 Corridor as a Community Redevelopment Area through the development of a Finding of Necessity and would also like to implement redevelopment in this area through the adoption of a Redevelopment Area Plan.



2.1. Background

Green Cove Springs is a city located along the west bank of the historic St. Johns River and since 1971 has served as the County Seat of Government for Clay County. The 2020 Census identified the population count to be 9,786, a 41.66% increase from the 2010 Census.

The city's name originates from the three physical characteristics. "Green" refers to the perennially green vegetation characterized by its tree scape and foliage. "Cove" refers to a bend in the St. Johns River creating a safe area for mooring of boats during inclement weather periods. "Springs" refers to the natural spring (one of 600 in Florida), originating from the Floridan Aquifer with an estimated flow rate of approximately 2,200 gallons per minute. The spring water flows into the west side of the municipal swimming pool and then flows out the east side forming a stream eventually emptying into the St. Johns River.

The first inhabitants of the area were attracted to it because of the warm mineral spring, known as "The Boil." The medicinal qualities of the spring and its location along the St. Johns River served as major contributors to the community's development as a prominent attraction and destination for tourists during the 19th Century.

Green Cove Springs has had a storied history. It was home to Gustafson's Farm, a family dairy operation owned by Frank and Agnes Gustafson that began in 1908. In the 1930s, the federal government located Benjamin Lee Field within the City. The United States Department of the Navy opened a flight training facility. In the 1950s, major American automakers had dealerships in Green Cove Springs along US 17, which led to the City being known as "the Little Detroit."

The City grew economically and geographically, annexing land to include Magnolia Point Golf and Country Club and Magnolia West to the northwestern end, Cove Plaza on the southern end, and to the southeastern edge, FCT-granted land proposed to be the Ed Gustafson Regional Park as well as 560 acres intended to develop as a 2,100 unit residential subdivision.

In 2005, the City of Green Cove Springs adopted "Tomorrow's Vision" as the guiding vision document for the future of the city. This document established goals for the City such as: maintain the small-town character; provide affordable housing; promote redevelopment in the corridors (US 17 / SR 16); improve traffic circulation; expand recreational opportunities; promote a business-friendly environment; strengthen Code Enforcement. One implementation mechanism included in the visioning document was the potential for a Community Redevelopment Agency. In 2014, the City adopted a Finding of Necessity, but the Community Redevelopment Agency was unable to come to fruition at that time.

Since then, the City has experienced additional growth and undergone further planning activities. In February 2021, the City began the process of updating the comprehensive plan, which was adopted a year later in February 2022. The 2045 Comprehensive Plan is designed to prepare the City for upcoming growth. The Future Land Use Map was amended from 13 categories to 6 categories: Neighborhood (NBD), Downtown (DT), Mixed Use (MU), Mixed-Use Reynolds Park (MURP), Industrial (IND), and Public (PUB).



Further, the Future Land Use element established an objective to continue to redevelop and invest in blighted areas of the City, with Policy 1.6.1 directing the City to explore the creation of a Community Redevelopment Agency / Area.

Additionally, the Future Land Use elements directs the City in Policy 1.6.2 to develop a Downtown Master Plan and assess Walnut Street to determine how to increase safety and attractiveness of the streetscape. The Walnut Street assessment was completed in late 2021 and the Downtown Master Plan is underway, with a goal of adopting the plan by mid-April 2022.

2.2. Study Purpose

This Finding of Necessity will determine if the Study Area meetings the statutory criteria to be designated as a Community Redevelopment Area. With this, the City aims to establish said area in an attempt to halt and reverse the decline within it in order to encourage new development and redevelopment to improve the overall quality of the area, leading to improved economic conditions, increased vibrancy, and a more established sense of place in the area.

If the Study Area meets the statutory criteria, the City will adopt this Finding of Necessity and seek to move forward with adopting a Redevelopment Plan.

2.3. Community Redevelopment Act Overview¹

The Florida Legislature enacted the Community Redevelopment Act (Act) in 1969. The legislature created the law to allow local governments to improve declining areas, as defined in the Act and detailed in subsections below. Such areas are detrimental to the health, safety, and welfare of residents as well as being a nuisance to growth and the provision of adequate infrastructure and housing; the Act provides a way for the local governments to create a Redevelopment Area and fund redevelopment within it.

The Statute defines *community redevelopment* as local government or community redevelopment agency lead projects in an established community redevelopment area "for the elimination and prevention of the development or spread of slums and blight, or for the reduction or prevention of crime, or for the provision of affordable housing." This may include slum clearance, redevelopment, rehabilitation, or conservation in a community redevelopment area, or any combination or part thereof, pursuant to the community redevelopment plan.

The Act establishes that powers granted by the Act are "for public uses and purposes" which involve the spending of public money and the potential exercise of police power, for which reason public interest, meaning a legitimate concern for general health, safety, and welfare within the area, is a requirement to implement the Act.

The Act further establishes the legitimacy of tax increment financing (TIF) as a method of successfully preserving and enhancing the tax base of an area, which will then serve to increase tax revenues for all taxing authorities for the area, enabling them to carry out

¹ The 2021 Florida Statutes, Title XI Chapter 163, Part III



their respective objectives more effectively. A redevelopment trust fund may be established by ordinance after the approval of a Community Redevelopment Plan to allow for the deposit of funds to be used by the agency to finance or refinance redevelopment. This fund must be established prior to receipt of any increment revenues. The statutes further state:

"The annual funding of the redevelopment trust fund shall be in an amount not less than the increment in the income, proceeds, revenues, and funds of each taxing authority derived from or held in connection with the undertaking and carrying out of community redevelopment under this part. Such increment shall be determined annually and shall be that amount equal to 95% of the difference between:

1. The amount of ad valorem taxes levied each year by each taxing authority, exclusive of any amount from any debt service millage, on taxable real property contained within the geographic boundaries of a community redevelopment area; and
2. The amount of ad valorem taxes which would have been produced by the rate upon which the tax is levied each year by or for each taxing authority, exclusive of any debt service millage, upon the total of the assessed value of the taxable real property in the community redevelopment area as shown upon the most recent assessment roll used in connection with the taxation of such property by each taxing authority prior to the effective date of the ordinance providing for the funding of the trust fund."

Florida Statutes additionally require counties or municipalities seeking to exercise the power granted by the Act to adopt by a resolution "supported by data and analysis, which makes a legislative finding that the conditions in the area meet the criteria" of a slum or blighted area, detailed in 163.340(7) and 163.340(8) and defined below in subsections 2.3.1 and 2.3.2. To make this legislative finding, governing bodies draft a Finding of Necessity (FON), which supports this legislative finding through in-depth analysis of the study area. The analysis contained in this report evaluates the existing conditions and identifies the existence, if any, of a slum or blighted area. This FON will be used by the City in designating and creating the Community Redevelopment Area, if it is determined the area meets the statutory requirements to be classified as a slum or blighted area.

2.3.1. Definitions of Slum Area

According to the Florida Statute Section 163.340(7), "slum area" is an area having physical or economic conditions conducive to disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, poverty, or crime because there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, whether residential or nonresidential, which are impaired by reason of dilapidation, deterioration, age, or obsolescence, and exhibiting one or more of the following factors:

- (a) "Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces;
- (b) High density of population, compared to the population density of adjacent areas within the county or municipality; and overcrowding, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies and the requirements of the Florida Building Code;



or

(c) The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes."

2.3.2. Definitions of Blighted Area

According to the Florida Statute Section 163.340(8), "blighted area" means:

an "area in which there are a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures; in which conditions, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies, endanger life or property or are leading to economic distress; and in which two or more of the following factors are present:

(a) Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, bridges, or public transportation facilities.

(b) Aggregate assessed values of real property in the area for ad valorem tax purposes have failed to show any appreciable increase over the 5 years prior to the finding of such conditions.

(c) Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness.

(d) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions.

(e) Deterioration of site or other improvements.

(f) Inadequate and outdated building density patterns.

(g) Falling lease rates per square foot of office, commercial, or industrial space compared to the remainder of the county or municipality.

(h) Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land.

(i) Residential and commercial vacancy rates higher in the area than in the remainder of the county or municipality.

(j) Incidence of crime in the area higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality.

(k) Fire and emergency medical service calls to the area proportionately higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality.

(l) A greater number of violations of the Florida Building Code in the area than the number of violations recorded in the remainder of the county or municipality.

(m) Diversity of ownership or defective or unusual conditions of title which prevent the free alienability of land within the deteriorated or hazardous area.

(n) Governmentally owned property with adverse environmental conditions caused by a public or private entity.

(o) A substantial number or percentage of properties damaged by sinkhole activity which have not been adequately repaired or stabilized."



The term "blighted area" may also be used for any area in which at least one of the factors identified in paragraphs (a) through (o) is present and all taxing authorities subject to 163.387(2)(a) agree, by interlocal agreement or by resolution, that the area is blighted.

2.3.2. Assessment Process

City Staff assessed the Study Area through a multitude of resources, including but not limited to existing data, especially that included in the Green Cove Springs GeoHub; data collected from other departments, especially Public Works and Police; desktop reviews of the area; in person / walking review of the area. Staff assessed the area for many aspects of blight as defined in the Florida Statutes, and this report describes the existing conditions as they relate to these factors.

2.4. Study Area

The specified Study Area encompasses ± 172.8 acres and is known as the Downtown and US 17 Corridor. The corridor spans Orange Avenue from Governor Street on the north end to Oak Street on the south end. The Corridor lies between St. Johns Avenue and Magnolia Avenue on its eastern edge and Pine Avenue on its western edge. The Downtown portion reaches slightly farther to the west and east. On the western side, it is bound by Palmer Street, Green Street, and Bay Street. On the eastern side, it expands diagonally eastward from Magnolia starting at Center Street, culminating at the river's edge with Spring Park property. The area is shown in Map 1.

The Study Area contains primarily commercial and institutional uses. Well known locations within the Study Area include: churches such as Springs Baptist Church, First Presbyterian Church, Doxa Church, and United Methodist Church; County government buildings including the Courthouse, Jail, Supervisor of Elections, and Administration Building; food / beverage service businesses such as Spring Park Coffee, Dunkin' Donuts, Burger King, La Casita, and Sweet Sensations; financial institutions, including Wells Fargo and VyStar Credit Union; automobile sales lots such as Green Cove Auto and Good Guys Motors as well as service businesses like Jesse's Auto Services and Darren's Custom & Restorations; retail uses like CVS, The Treasure Box, Walgreens, SS Something Special, and Green Cove Liquors; office uses including Exit Magnolia Realty, Vallencourt Construction, and Action Medical Staffing; and an event venue, Clay Theatre. Additionally, there are numerous vacant properties, including the recently demolished 1050 N Orange Ave, which previously housed an abandoned automobile sales lot, as well as the corner of North Street and Orange Avenue, which once housed two buildings and businesses. The Study Area also contains Spring Park, a well-known and loved park featuring the natural spring, a public spring-fed pool, walking trails, swinging benches, play structures, and great views of the St. Johns River. The foregoing list is not meant to be exhaustive but instead meant to provide a feel of the activity within the Study Area.

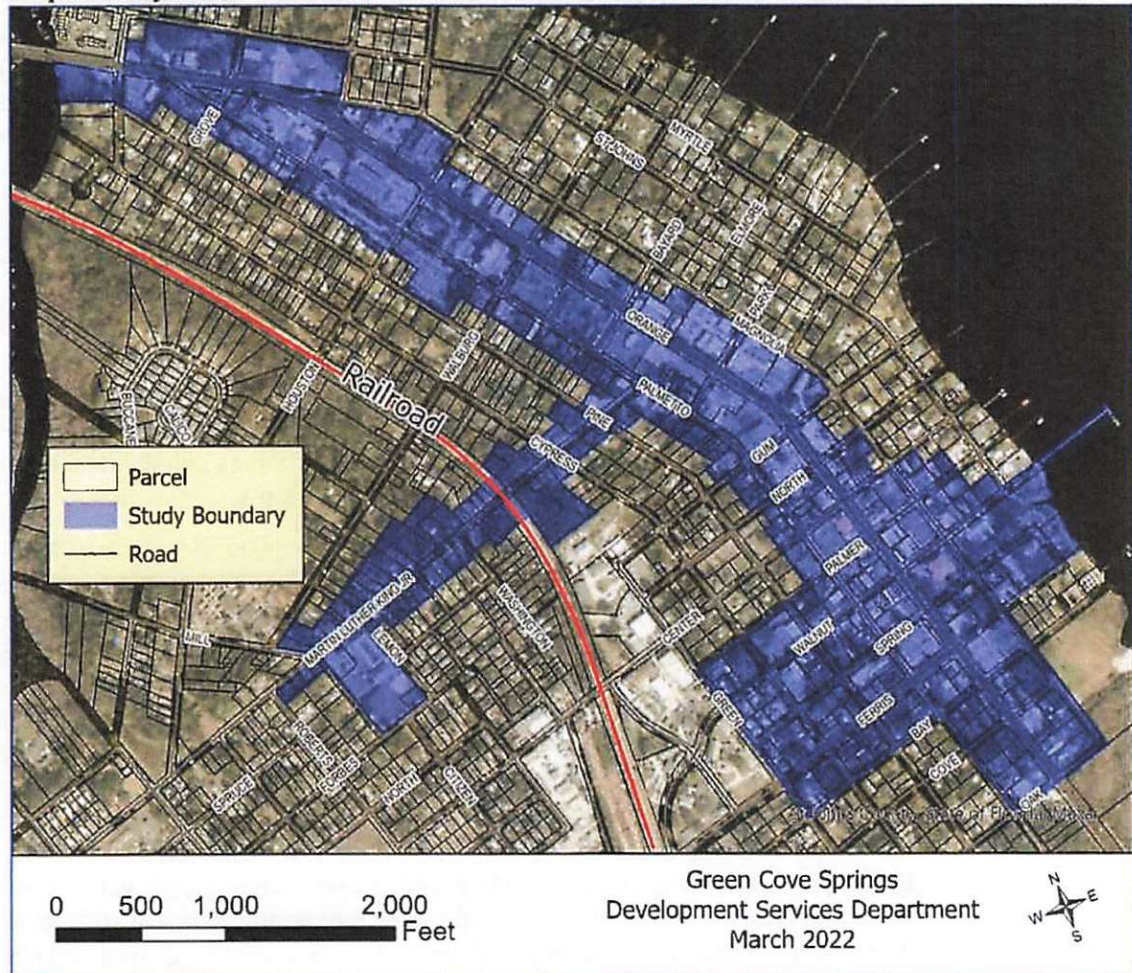
The expanse around the Study Area is primarily residential in nature, with some exception specifically along Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, which features some commercial spaces, as well as east of Green Street, which features County School Board property and related uses.

Within the Study Area, there are some planned or potential improvements. These include a proposed freestanding emergency medical facility operated by St. Vincent's as well as



the Palmetto Trail project which will see an eight-foot multi-use path constructed along Palmetto Avenue from its southern end up to the Governors Creek Bridge. As part of the Walnut Street assessment, the City is also planning improvements to Walnut Street, particularly the block between Palmetto Avenue and Orange Avenue.

Map 1. Study Area

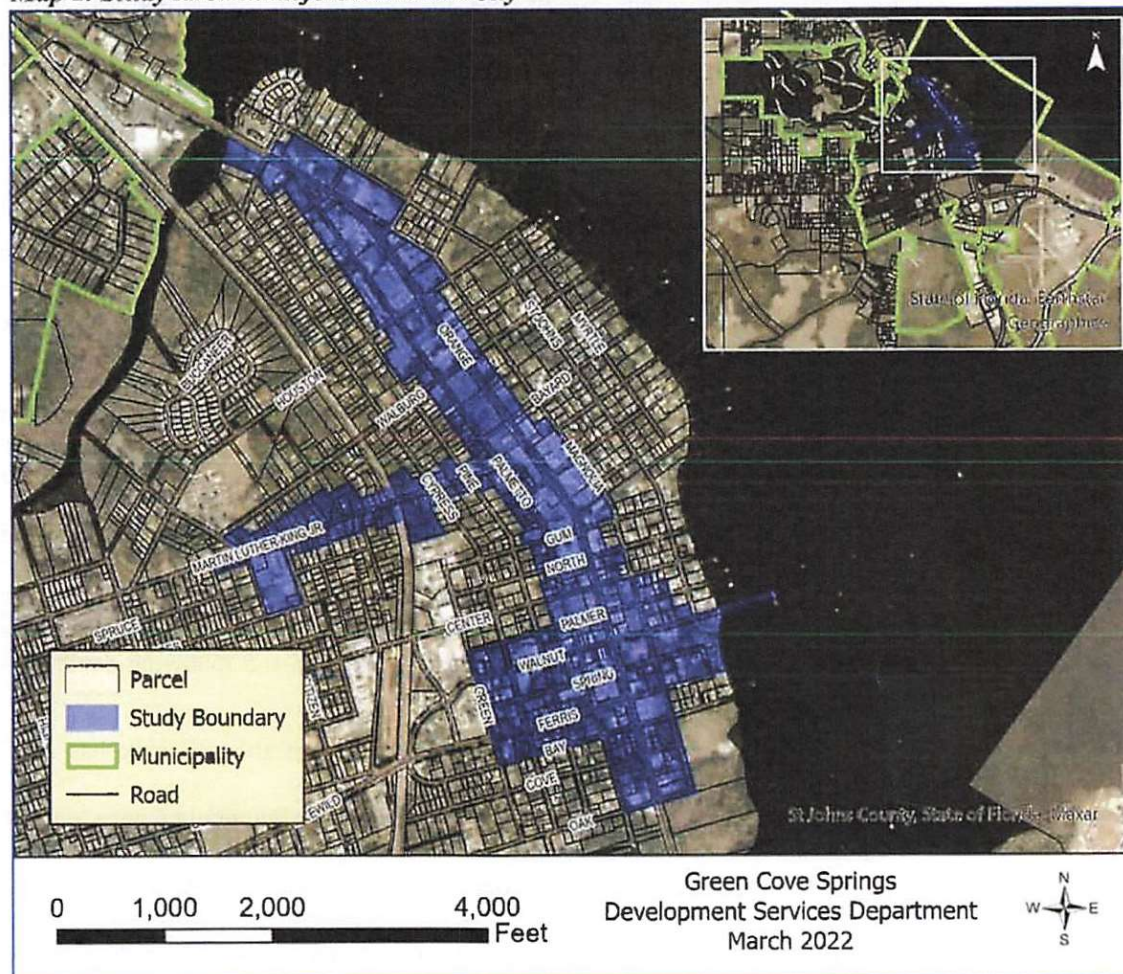


The Study Area is located somewhat centrally within the City, particularly for commercial development. Its location within the boundaries of the City can be viewed in Map 2. The northwest portion of the City consists of two subdivisions and the southeastern portion of the City consists of Reynolds Park / Clay Port – a future mixed-use development operating as an industrial site at present. The Study Area is contained within what is referred to as the Core City. The western portion of the Core City is dominated by residential development with a smattering of institutional development, namely School Board related properties. US 17 / Orange Avenue, Martin Luther King Blvd, and Palmetto



Avenue, all within the Study Area, feature commercial development with some residential development as well.

Map 2. Study Area in Reference to the City



3. Slum and Blighted Area Analysis

City Staff reviewed the Study Area in relation to the statutory requirements for an area to be determined a slum area or a blighted area.

3.1. Slum

The condition of slum in the Study Area is met under the following criteria:

(c) The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes.

Documentation of existing conditions provided in subsequent sections in this analysis indicates life and / or properties are endangered, specifically by dilapidation; unsecured inhabitable properties; deteriorating roadways, sidewalks, and accessibility features; abandoned homes; and overall deterioration of the Study Area.



3.2. Defective or inadequate public transportation facilities

The City of Green Cove Springs does not have locally operated public transportation facilities. Public transportation within Clay County, called Clay Community Transportation, is operated by the Jacksonville Transportation Authority². Of 4 available lines, 2 lines travel through Green Cove Springs. These lines operate from 6am to 7pm Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. The lines do include a flex service option wherein customers can call a reservation line to schedule a pick-up from their location that will be accommodated *when time allows*. The deviation will go as far as a ¾ mile off the route.

The Blue Line (Map 3) has one stop within the Study Area, the Clay County Courthouse (825 N Orange Ave), and one other stop within City Limits, at the Clay County Health Department. There are two stops moderately close to City Limits – the Pier Station stop west of town on State Road 16 and the Challenge Enterprises stop on Enterprise Way just north of town. There is two to three hours between pickups at the local stops, excluding Challenge Enterprises which only has one pickup time and one drop-off time.

The Green Line (Map 4) has one stop within the Study Area (and the City at large), the Clayton and Mildred Revels Senior Center (604 Walnut St). There are three hours between pickups at this stop, and similarly three hours between drop-offs to the location.

There are no options for local transit from residential to commercial or recreational areas of town. Additionally, the sidewalk and roadway conditions through the Study Area are in a poor state. Many streets show deterioration, especially with top layers breaking down, revealing the older brick streets beneath, which creates uneven surfaces. Sidewalks show significant deterioration as well with the following conditions being regularly observed throughout the Study Area:

- **Cracking:** Locations where the paved surface of the sidewalk has cracked or crumbled
- **Uplift:** A vertical change in height along a sidewalk (generally where “panels” of the sidewalk meet or where cracking has occurred)
- **Fixed Obstructions:** Anchored objects (such as utility poles) that reduce sidewalk width
- **Non-Fixed Obstruction:** Vegetation, non-anchored objects, or uncleanliness that reduces sidewalk width or walkability
- **Spalling:** Surface deterioration that appears as small indentations in the surface
- **Standing Water:** Locations where there is or there is evidence of standing water on the sidewalk
- **Loss:** Locations where a piece or pieces of the sidewalk were removed, whether purposefully for work or through erosion.

Examples of the above defined items are provided in the figures below.

² Jacksonville Transit Authority, <https://www.jtafla.com/ride-jta/regional-services/clay-community-transportation/> accessed 3/14/2022



Further, there are many places in the Study Area completely lacking sidewalks, primarily on local streets or only on one side of the street and often without excellent road crossing conditions to get from sidewalk to sidewalk as needed.

Such road and sidewalk conditions reduce the ability of the community to safely traverse the Study Area on foot, by micromobility³ device (bicycle, scooter, skateboard, et cetera) or by motorized vehicle.

Figure 1. Sidewalk Cracking, Palmer St, near 14 N Magnolia Ave



Figure 2. Sidewalk Cracking & Loss, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd



Figure 3. Deteriorating accessibility feature, Corner of Orange Ave & Center St



Figure 4. Deteriorating accessibility feature, Southwest Corner of Orange Ave & Palmer St



³ Institute for Transportation & Development Policy, <https://www.itdp.org/multimedia/defining-micromobility/> accessed 4/7/2022

Figure 5. Road Disrepair, Walnut St



Figure 6. Road Disrepair, Intersection of Green St & Walnut St





Figure 7. Non-Fixed Obstruction, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd



Figure 8. Non-Fixed Obstruction, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd



Figure 9. Sidewalk Spalling, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd



Figure 10. Sidewalk – Standing Water, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.



Figure 11. Sidewalk Uplift & Spalling, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd



Figure 12. Sidewalk Loss, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd



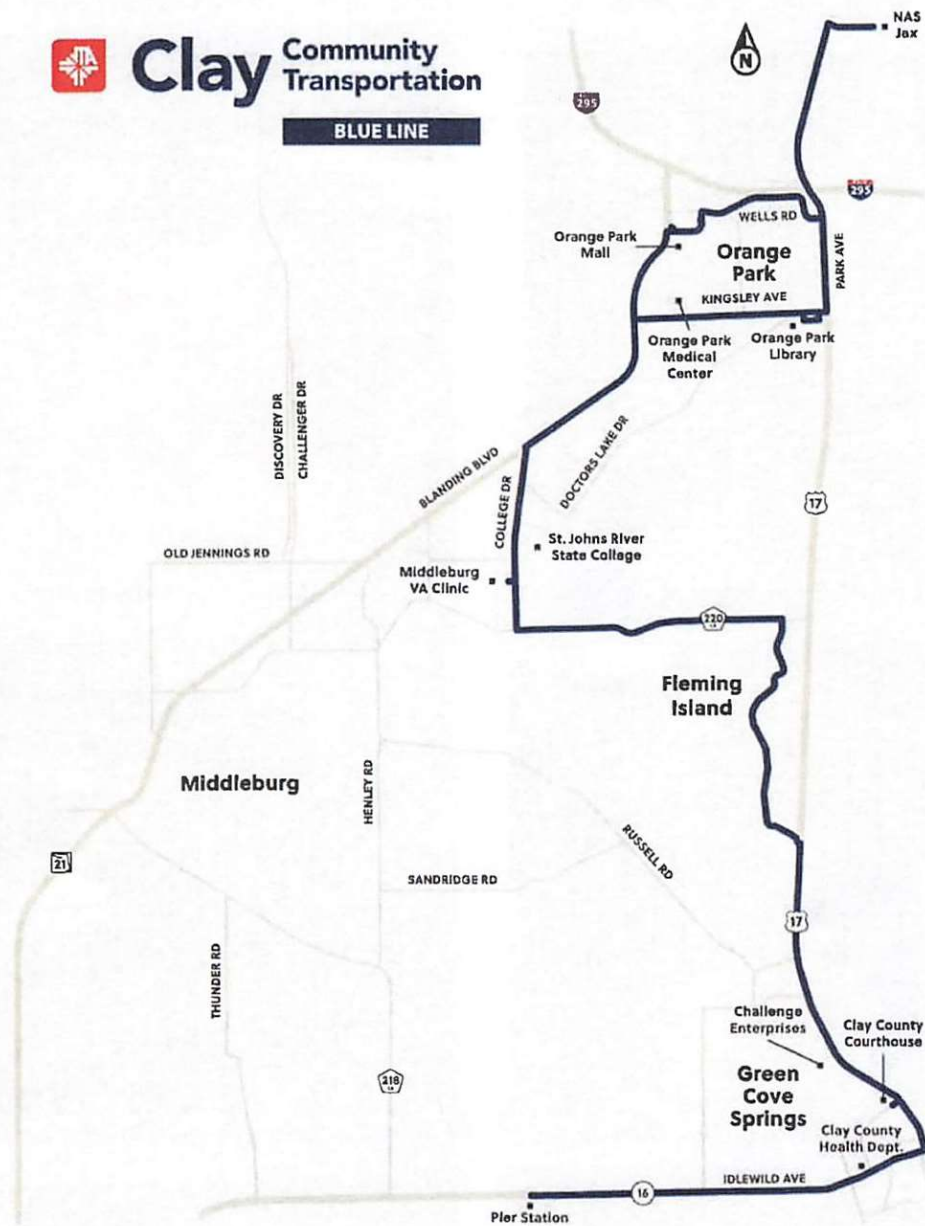


Map 3. Bus Route – Blue Line⁴



Clay Community
Transportation

BLUE LINE



⁴ Jacksonville Transportation Authority, <https://www.jtafla.com/ride-jta/regional-services/clay-community-transportation/clay-blue-line/>



Map 4. Bus Route – Green Line⁵



- 3.3. Aggregate assessed values do not show appreciable increase over past 5 years
- The Study Area has experienced some redevelopment in the past five years, but the deterioration present, as shown in later sections, has prevented the Study Area from seeing an appreciable increase in its aggregate assessed value (AAV) as compared to the City as a whole. In Table 1, it is demonstrated that the City as a whole has experienced an increased AAV of 50.71% while the Study Area has only seen an increase of 20.53%.

Table 3. Aggregate Assessed Value Comparison

Year	Study Area	City
2017	\$85,088,819.00	\$590,524,531.00
2018	\$88,913,992.00	\$642,232,893.00
2019	\$95,646,152.00	\$802,652,764.00
2020	\$95,809,061.00	\$802,652,764.00
2021	\$102,557,978.00	\$890,001,640.00
% Increase	20.53%	50.71%

⁵ Jacksonville Transportation Authority, <https://www.jtafla.com/ride-jta/regional-services/clay-community-transportation/clay-green-line/>



3.4. Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness

Within the Study Area, approximately 25.6% of the lots could be considered faulty (Map 4). The criteria for this determination were as follows:

- **Size:** Commercially zoned lots with less than approximately 75 feet of frontage and approximately 100 feet of depth – despite the zoning code identifying no minimum lot requirements in commercial districts, the size of these lots is not suited for adequate commercial development, assuming they are developed individually given the diversity of ownership.
- **Adequacy:** Lots deemed inadequate are shaped in a manner which decreases their developability.
- **Usefulness:** Lots deemed less than useful are shaped in a manner which will likely completely prevent or deter their development or redevelopment.
- **Accessibility:** Lots deemed inaccessible are landlocked.

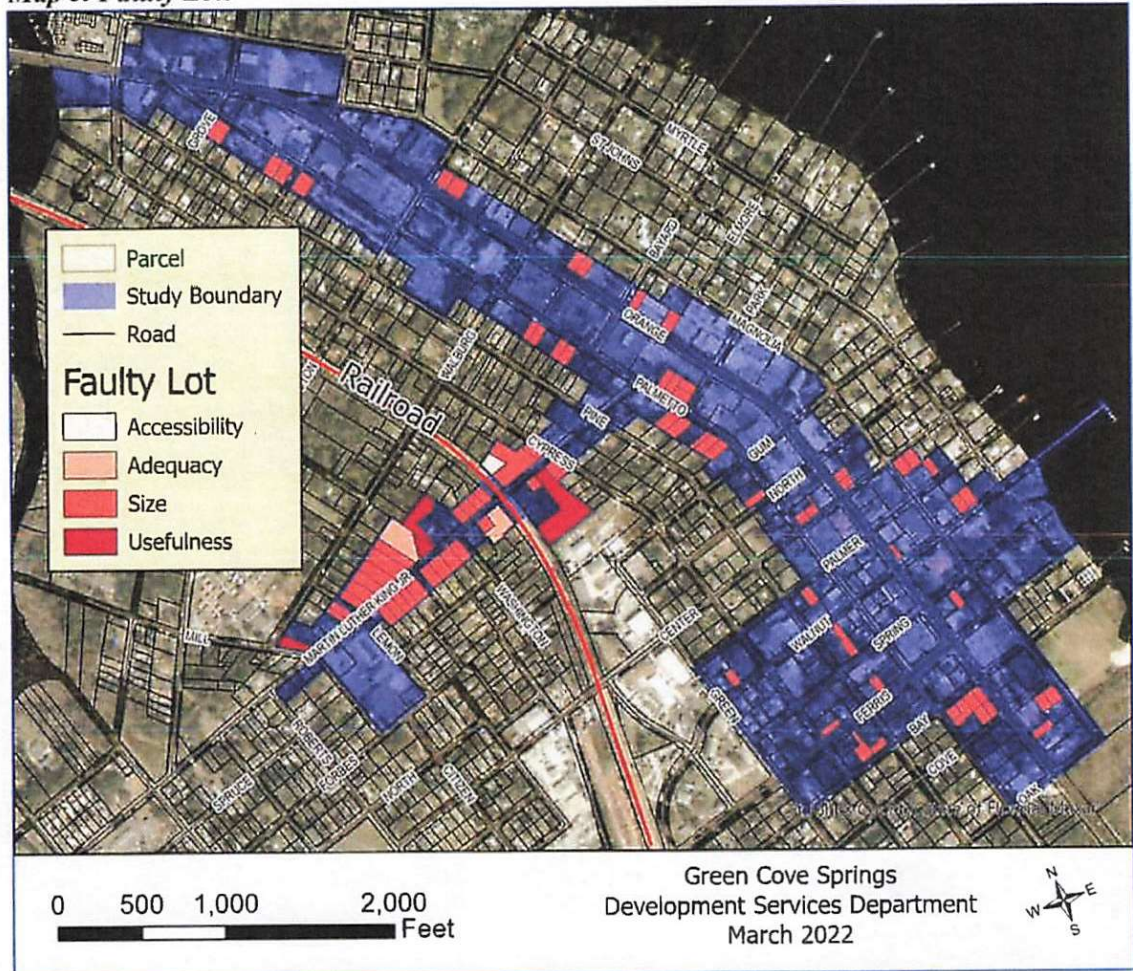
The City does permit residential development within many commercially zoned areas, and some of the identified lots have historically or recently been developed residentially as a consequence. Ideally, as identified in the Future Land Use Map, these lots would develop commercially or with a mix of uses to better support the neighborhood.

Recent development exemplifies the difficulties with developing commercially on narrow or otherwise small lots. Between 2019 and 2020, Dunkin Donuts constructed a new location within the Study Area – 610 N Orange Ave. The site is approximately 250ft along Orange Avenue (the primary roadway) by 125ft deep. The development received a variance from the City's Zoning Code requirements, which require parking to be to the side or back of a building in the Gateway Commercial Corridor. Due to the depth of the property and the type of development (drive-thru fast food), the lot layout was inadequate to permit development without a variance.

On the basis of the plight of Dunkin Donuts and the criteria identified above, additional lots are truly eligible to be considered faulty within the Study Area, but being that they are already commercially developed, at this time, they are not being considered faulty.



Map 5. Faulty Lots



3.5. Unsanitary or unsafe conditions

There are several sites with unsafe or unsanitary conditions located within the Study Area. Figures 13-29 (following) demonstrate the conditions for a portion of these properties.

Field inspection and Google StreetView inspection of the Study Area identified sites with deteriorating or damaged structures which pose a threat to building occupants, condemned or abandoned buildings, incomplete construction projects, lack of sidewalks or blocked rights-of-way (ROW[s]), as well as brownfield sites. There are unsafe commercial spaces where there is either a lack of defined pedestrian versus vehicular space or a lack of maintenance that would keep the area safe for traversing to and from a business.



These figures represent some of the many deteriorating, unsafe, and at times abandoned structures in the area.

Figure 13. Unsafe, Deteriorating Roof, 116 N Magnolia Ave



Figure 14. Unsafe, Condemned Building, 428 N Orange Ave



Figure 15. Unsafe, Boarded Openings, 115 N Magnolia Ave



Figure 16. Unsafe and unsanitary, Openings / Junk Storage, 115 N Magnolia



Figure 17. Unsafe, No Sidewalk, ROW used for RV Parking, 327 N Orange Ave



Figure 18. Unsafe, No Sidewalk, across from Figure 5, 425 N Orange Ave





Figure 19. Unsanitary, Discontinued Gas Pumps, 201 N Orange Ave



Figure 20. Unsafe, Collapsed Canopy, Petroleum Contamination Site⁶, 100 N Orange Ave



Figure 21. Unsafe, Low hanging power lines, concrete drive in disrepair, south of 25 N Orange Av



Figure 22. Unsafe, ROW in disrepair, businesses parks in ROW, 3 S Palmetto Ave



Figure 23. Unsafe, Lack of signage, marked parking spaces, pedestrian safety, 24 Green St



⁶ FL Department of Environmental Protection's Contamination Locator Map, <https://prodenv.dep.state.fl.us/DepClnup>



Figure 24. Unsafe area in front of active commercial building, 1100 Martin Luther King



Figure 25. Unsafe Structure / Abandoned, 1007 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd



Figure 26. Unsafe / Abandoned Structure, 1001 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd



Figure 27. Unsafe / Abandoned Structure, 713 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd



Figure 28. Unsafe / Abandoned Structure, 613 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd



Figure 29. Unsafe Structure, 612 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd





3.6. Deterioration of site or other improvements

In addition to the deterioration of site improvements shown in section 3.5, within the Study Area, there are multiple occurrences of deteriorating improvements, especially access points or paved areas in surrounding buildings. Paving is wearing away or cracking creating hazardous conditions for drivers using the lots to park or maneuver the site and pedestrians crossing the access points. Figures below provide examples of this type of wear and tear in the corridor.

Figure 30. Deteriorating Drive / Sidewalk, 220 Palmer

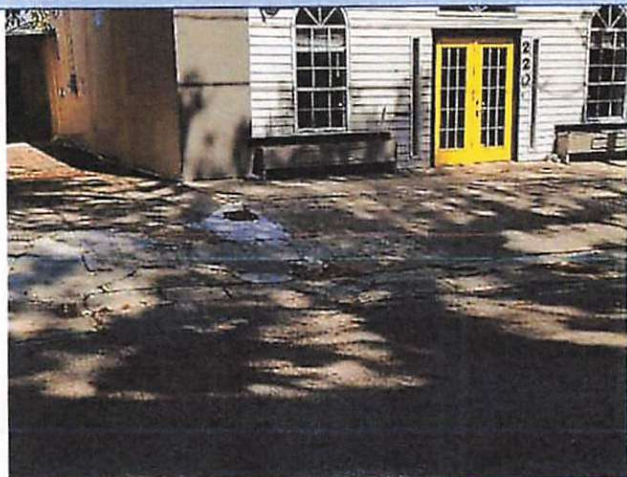


Figure 31. Deteriorating Drive, 327 N Orange Ave



Figure 32. Parking lot disrepair, between 604 & 500 Walnut St



Figure 33. Sidewalk disrepair, between 604 & 500 Walnut St





3.7. Inadequate and outdated building density patterns

The applicable zoning districts for the Study Area generally include: Central Business District, Gateway Corridor Commercial, Gateway Corridor Neighborhood, and C-1 Neighborhood Commercial. The heart of the Study Area is where the Central Business District is located – also known as the Downtown area. The Gateway districts are located along the “corridor” area, notably US 17 or Orange Ave. The Martin Luther King Blvd corridor is zoned as neighborhood commercial but features primarily low density residential development including active and abandoned residential structures, churches, vacant lots, concrete block commercial buildings lacking transparency and activation.

Figure 36. Outdated building pattern, 208 N Orange Ave, Food Store



Figure 37. Outdated building pattern, 425 N Orange Ave, Wells Fargo



Figure 38. Outdated Building Pattern, 327 N Orange Ave, Rick Baker's RV





Figure 39. Low Density Development, 606 Spring St



Figure 40. Low Density Development, 627 Spring St



Figure 41. Low Density Development, Not Fronting Street, 702 Ferris St / 709 Spring St



Figure 42. Undeveloped, Gustafson Property, Pine St (behind house on Walnut St)



3.8. Vacancy rates

17.1% of properties within the Study Area are classified as vacant by the Clay County Property Appraiser. This level of vacancy within the Study Area is 44.9% higher than that of the rest of the municipality, which has an 11.8% rate of vacancy.

Many of these lots, shown in the figures below, are prime locations that once housed a local business which has since been removed. The lots have yet to have been redeveloped despite their prime locations in the commercial areas of the City.



Figure 43. Vacant Lot, Previously 208 N Orange Ave



Figure 44. Vacant Lot, East of 604 Walnut St



Figure 45. Vacant Lot, BROWNFIELD⁷, south of 535 N Orange Ave



Figure 46. Vacant Lot at the northeast corner of Orange Ave & Walburg St



Figure 47. Vacant Lot at the northwest corner of Orange Ave & Governor St



⁷ FL Department of Environmental Protection's Contamination Locator Map, <https://prodenv.dep.state.fl.us/DepCleanup>


2021-2022-56 Resolution- Declaring the Need - Creation of the Green Cove Springs CRA BCC #11

Final Audit Report


2022-08-11

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DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

Green Cove Springs, Florida



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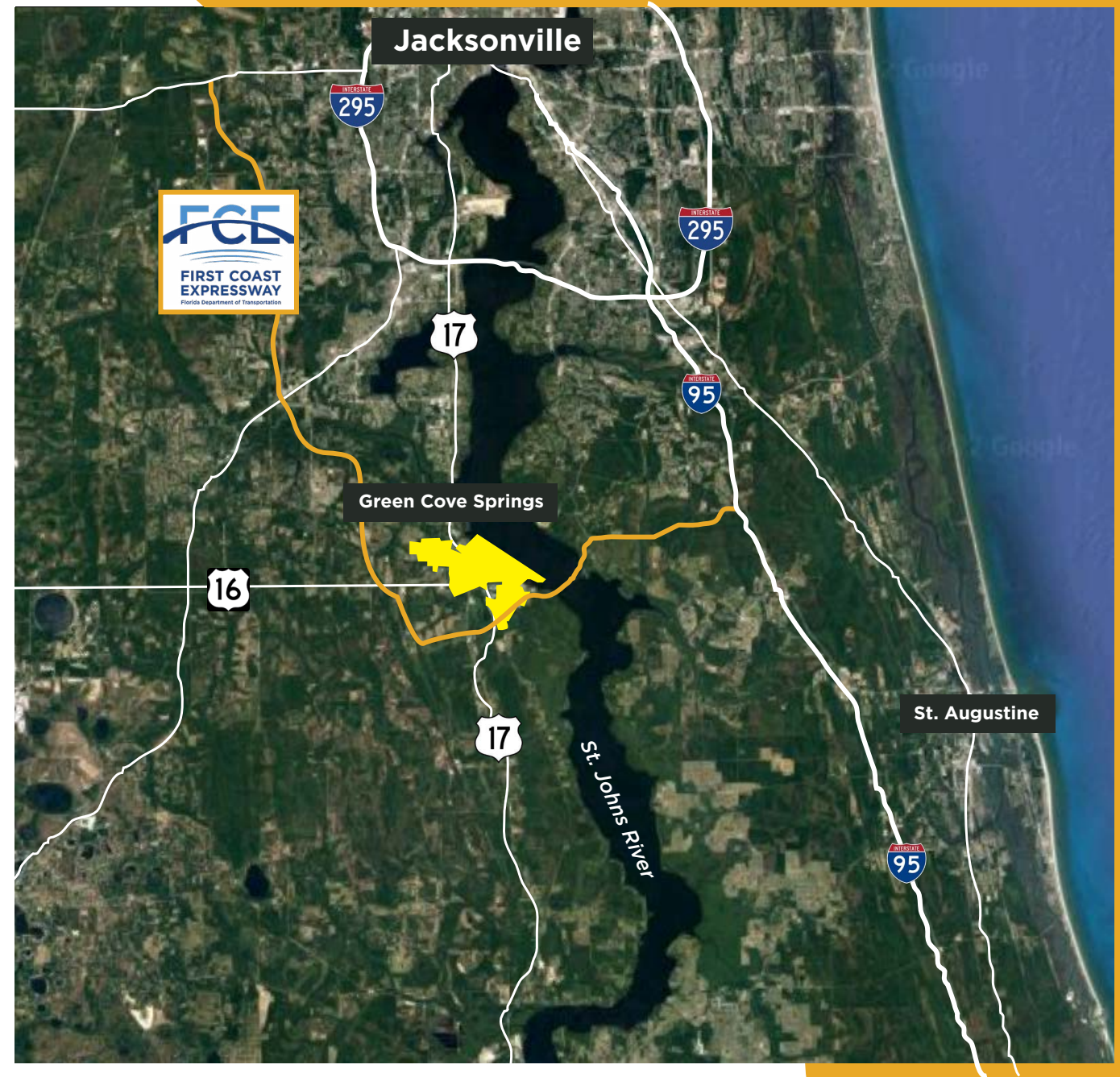
- A** Public Engagement Summary
- B** Existing Conditions Analysis
- C** Demographics & Market Analysis
- D** Retail Action Plan



PREFACE

Located in Northeast Florida, approximately 25 miles south of Jacksonville and 25 miles west of St. Augustine, the City of Green Cove Springs is the County Seat of Clay County. The City is located on the western bank of the St. Johns River and registered a population of 9,786 residents in the 2020 Census.

A thriving town during the river and railroad heydays of the late 1800s, the City has suffered from a lack of regional connectivity as the interstate highway system expanded in other areas of the region. Downtown Green Cove Springs is more than 19 miles from the nearest I-95 exit and approximately 14 miles from the nearest I-295 exit, either destination is greater than a 20-minute drive.



EVOLUTION OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS



In 1854 Clarke develops the land as White Sulfur Springs. It was renamed in 1866 as **Green Cove Springs** and became the county seat in 1871.



A railroad route from Jacksonville to Palatka includes a stop to West Toco, south of Green Cove Springs, which helped bring tourists from the North down to the area.

1816



George J.F. Clarke, is granted 22,000 acres of timbered land from the Spanish to develop a sawmill along the St. Johns River in eastern Florida.

1884

The first Federated Women's Club of Florida is founded in Green Cove Springs.



TOURISM GROWTH

1890



Green Cove Springs attracts many visitors from the north, as an authentic Florida destination along the St. Johns River. People flock to the natural spring and several hotels capitalize on the visitors like the The Qui-Si-Sana Hotel (left) and St. Clair Hotel.

FARMING GROWTH

James Cash Penney establishes "Penney Farms" west of the City and plans to develop a farming community.

Gustafson's Farm is established by Agnes and Frank Gustafson, bringing a large dairy farming industry to the area.

1895

Henry Flagler's Railroad to St. Augustine sparks a steady decline in tourism after the St. Johns Railroad closes.

1908

1930

The City begins to recover from the great depression, receiving funding from the Works Progress Administration (WPA).

1940

MILITARY GROWTH

The Federal Government builds the Naval base **Benjamin Lee Field** in Green Cove Springs and **Camp Blanding** 20 miles west of the City, bringing a large military community to the area.



1940 Green Cove Springs Naval Base

The City earns the nickname “Little Detroit” as a result of many thriving car dealerships that served the Naval families.



1950

Spring Square, what would become known as **Spring Park**, is purchased by the City from Foremost Properties, Inc.

1961

Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson closes the Naval Base and moves the “Mothball Fleet” to Texas.

The City purchases the base in hopes of developing it for industrial use.

City sells the base to the J. Louis Reynolds Corporation for development of a premier Industrial Park.

1970

Clinton designates Historic St. Johns River as an “American Heritage River.”

1989

2 National Register Districts are designated containing 70 to 75 contributing historic structures, including the Clay County Courthouse, County Jail, Spring Park and more.

1998

2004

2009



2013



Gustafson Dairy Farm closes.

2015

2017

2018

First Coast Expressway construction begins which will enhance connection into the City.

2022

The **Augusta Savage Library and Mentoring Center** anticipated opening.

The City acquires the Dunbar High school, built in 1942, and begins converting it to the **Augusta Savage Arts and Community Center** in honor of Augusta Savage—artist, educator, activist, and community leader—who was born in Green Cove Springs in 1892.

Women’s Club celebrates 100 years at their dedicated building on Palmetto Ave.



NEW CIVIC SPACES

TODAY

Source: <https://www.greencovesprings.com/history-of-green-cove-springs>



Spring Park Pool



Judge Rivers House

INVESTING IN THE HISTORIC PAST

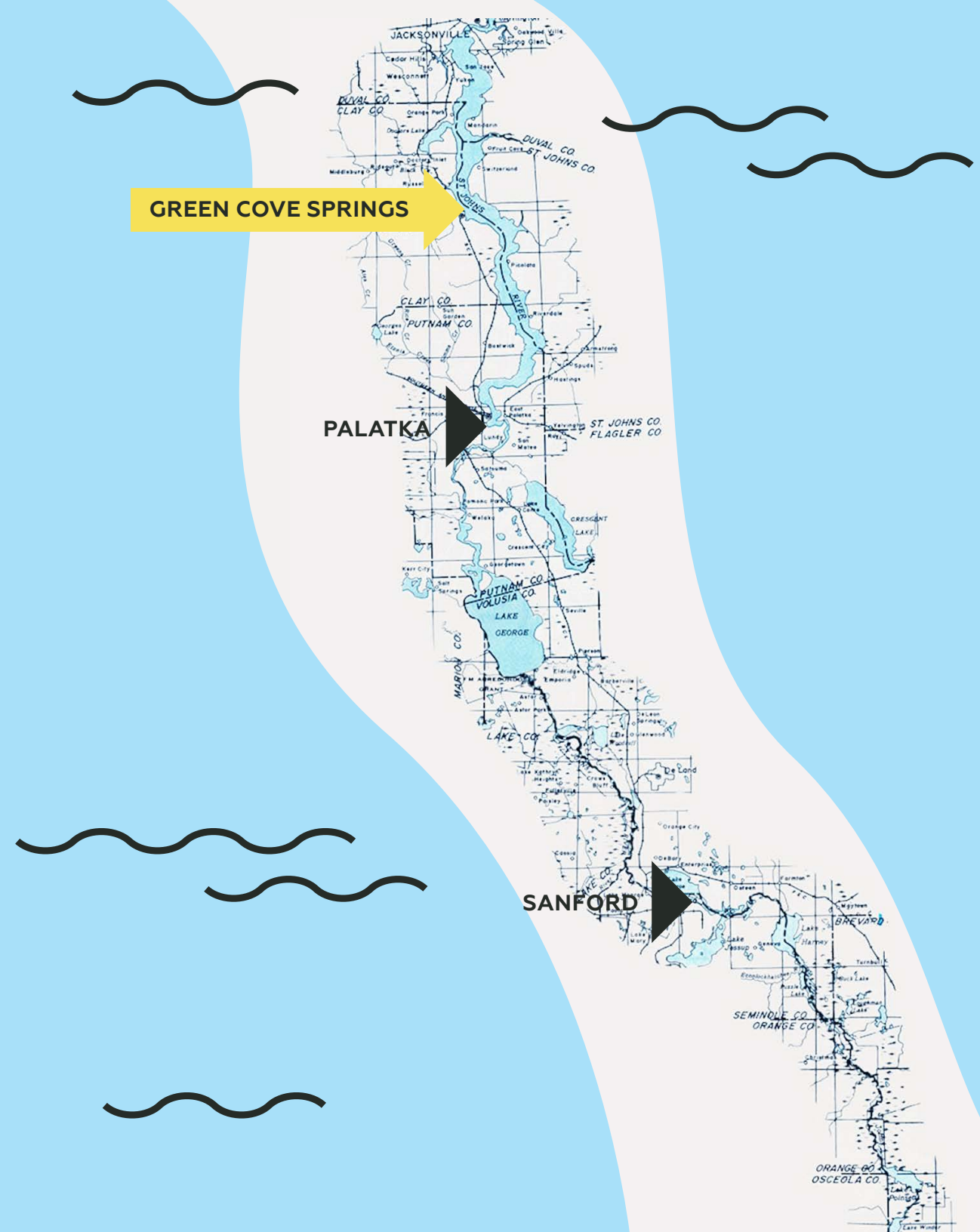
INTRODUCTION

Land use and transportation systems are inextricably linked. Navigable waterways were the primary system of regional transportation for thousands of years, which is why so many of the nation's most historic and prolific cities were located along riverbanks and ocean shores.

The City of Green Cove Springs, the Clay County seat, lies along the St. Johns River similar to other county seats across the region, including Palatka in Putnam County and Sanford in Seminole County. The St. Johns River was an active waterway in the late 1800s and early 1900s and functioned as a crucial artery of commerce and tourism. As a result, river towns began to emerge in quick succession along many of Florida's navigable waterways—several of which also became popular tourism destinations due to the area's warmer climate and wealth of pristine waterbodies. Despite the proliferation of new waterfront cities seeking to capitalize on Florida's emerging tourism industry, Green Cove Springs stood alone as the region's predominant tourism destination because of its rich natural springs, visitor accommodations, and southern hospitality, which helped the City earn its nickname as the “Saratoga of the South.”

Yet, cruising along the St. Johns River was not the City's only option available for travel throughout the region, as the late 1800s also ushered in the era of the steam locomotive. The region received its first rail route in 1884 with a stop located south of Green Cove Springs, thus providing another pathway for commerce and tourism to make its way to the City.

Nearly half a century later, the end of World War II brought economic prosperity throughout the United States. The combination of the development of the Interstate Highway System in the 1950s, new financing opportunities for homebuyers and builders, and the proliferation of the personal automobile allowed growth within the region to flourish—particularly along the I-295 beltway, which is located approximately 14 miles north of Green Cove Springs. Over the last 40 years the population of Clay County has increased by more than 150,000 residents.



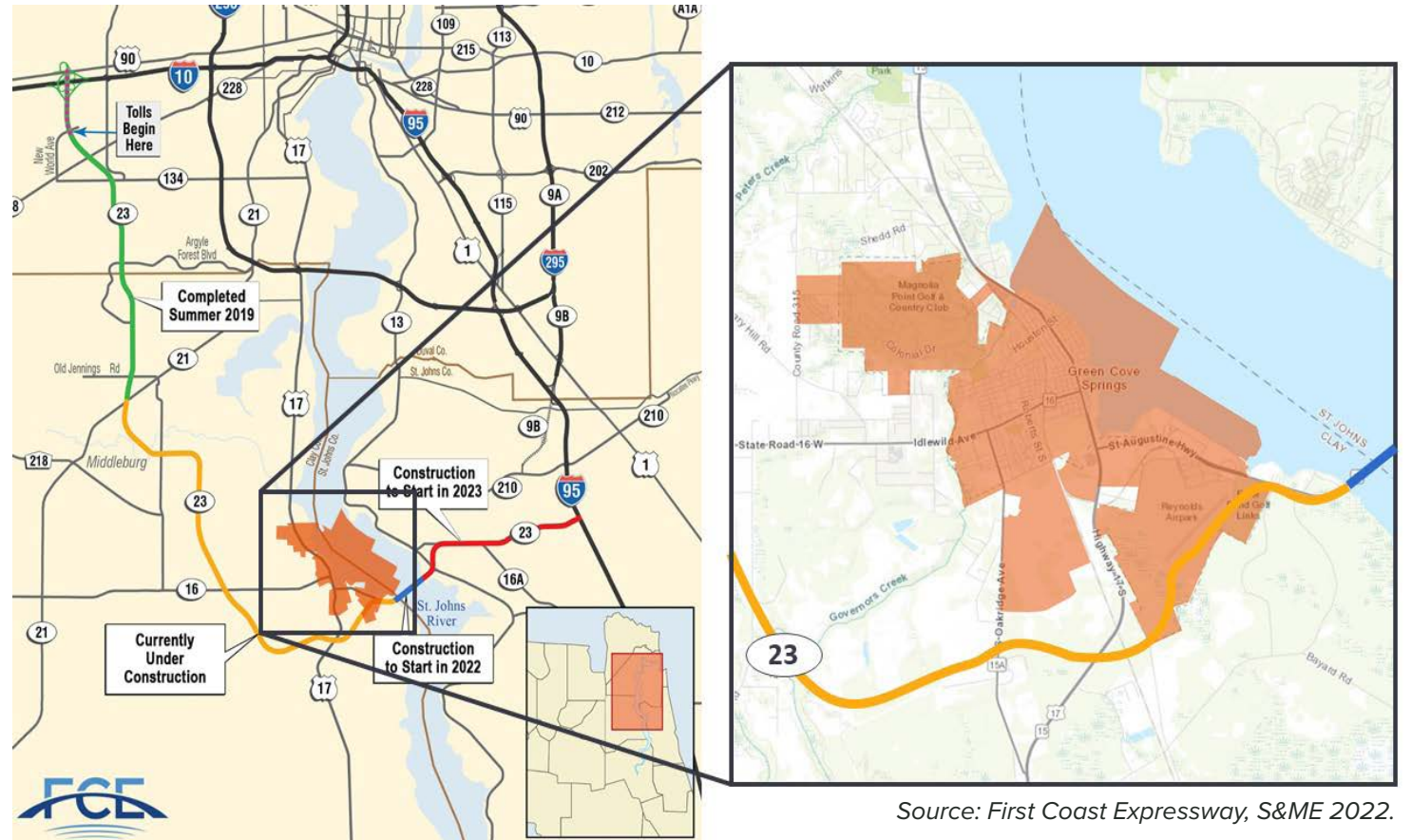
THE TIME IS NOW

The First Coast Expressway, already under construction, will provide a new connection between I-95 and I-10. This 46-mile, multi-lane toll road will serve as a Jacksonville bypass. Like the establishment of the St. Johns River route and the establishment of Florida's rail network in the 1800s, this new regional connection is likely to usher in another era of substantial growth for the City, bringing with it a wealth of new opportunities for Green Cove Springs and its Downtown.

In addition to the City's rich natural amenities, the expansion of the river and rail networks allowed Green Cove Springs to become one of Florida's preeminent destinations for tourism and commerce. With the construction of the First Coast Expressway set to be completed within the next few years, the City will be presented with a wealth of new opportunities for growth.

This community-driven Master Plan provides a roadmap for the City to successfully accommodate and incentivize the growth of its Downtown communities, businesses, and amenities, while continuing to honor the City's rich small-town charm and history. This plan identifies the issues and opportunities facing Downtown and recommends strategic investments and projects to advance toward the community's vision for Downtown Green Cove Springs as

***a thriving convergence
of commerce, history,
and community.***



DRAFT

WHAT DOES
GREEN COVE SPRINGS
MEAN TO ME?

"IT'S HOME"

- COUNCIL MEMBER VAN ROYAL

PROCESS



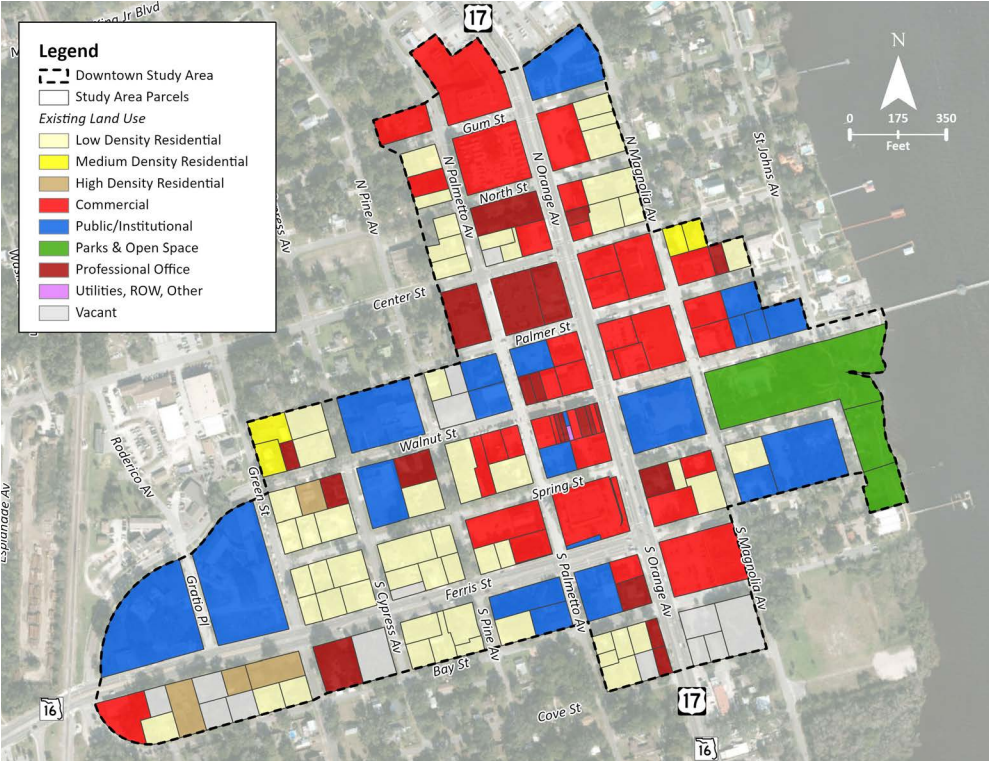
EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

The Project Team analyzed the **land use, zoning, infrastructure, mobility, parking, parks,** and **open space conditions** within the Study Area using data provided by the City, Clay County, regional and state organizations such as the St. Johns River Water Management District and Florida Department of Transportation, and national agencies like the Federal Emergency Management Agency. This analysis allowed the Project Team to verify and support the insights provided by the public during the community outreach process while also discovering new details that would help further contextualize and inform this master planning effort. This assessment is detailed in the Existing Conditions Report accompanying the Plan.

The Project Team also sought to understand the socioeconomic and market conditions facing Downtown Green Cove Springs so that the Master Plan can provide clear and context-sensitive recommendations on the programs and projects necessary to energize the local economy. The conditions examined during this analysis included population, age, gender, race and ethnicity, education, employment, income, and industry leakages and surpluses for local retail and dining. This analysis can be found in the Demographic and Market Characteristics Report, which also includes additional recommendations specifically addressing the retail environment within the Study Area.

The four primary themes which surfaced during these analyses are summarized as follows:

- Improve **connectivity and walkability** within the Study Area by addressing the automobile-oriented nature of US 17, the safety issues present at the Walnut Street / US 17 intersection, and the lack of pedestrian accommodations throughout the Study Area.
- Transition site design requirements for **future development** from suburban (e.g., front-loaded parking, significant setbacks) to more urban standards, such as requiring rear-loaded parking lots, minimal setbacks, pedestrian-oriented entranceways, etc.
- Capitalize on the **small-town charm and history** of the community by establishing a gateway and wayfinding signage program throughout the Study Area, promoting a new and unique brand for Downtown, and celebrating the City’s wealth of cultural and historical landmarks.
- Encourage **infill and redevelopment opportunities** to address issues of vacancies, underutilized developments, and blighted properties.



RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS

A market analysis, a component of the master planning effort of Downtown Green Cove Springs, was conducted to identify the existing supply of and demand for specific retail industry sectors. The methodology of this analysis included an evaluation of the market conditions within three areas; the 5, 10 and 15-minute drive times around Downtown Green Cove Springs, as shown on the map included on this page. The utilization of drive times to define market areas is the industry-standard, with the 15-minute drive time as the primary market area limit. Distances longer than a 15-minute drive are considered to be outside the local market area as consumers are less inclined to make a “special trip” that is longer than 15 minutes.

The 5-minute drive area has one of the region’s lower median household income levels at \$48,182. The median household incomes increase in the 10- and 15-minute drive areas to \$60,018 and \$67,380, respectively. Income levels and the number of households increase significantly from the 5-minute drive area to the 15-minute drive area.

With greater population and disposable income available in the 10 and 15-minute drive areas, improving Downtown Green Cove Springs as a destination could spur redevelopment across a variety of industry sectors. Currently unmet market demands, including a variety of retail shops and services, were identified in each of three areas as detailed in the supplemental report Retail Market Analysis. For Green Cove Springs to capitalize on opportunities that would foster redevelopment in downtown, it will be necessary to facilitate the development of an “anchor-use” that will attract visitors from the 10 and 15-minute drive areas.

5-Minute Drive

Population	7,389
Households	2,572
Median HH Income	\$48,182

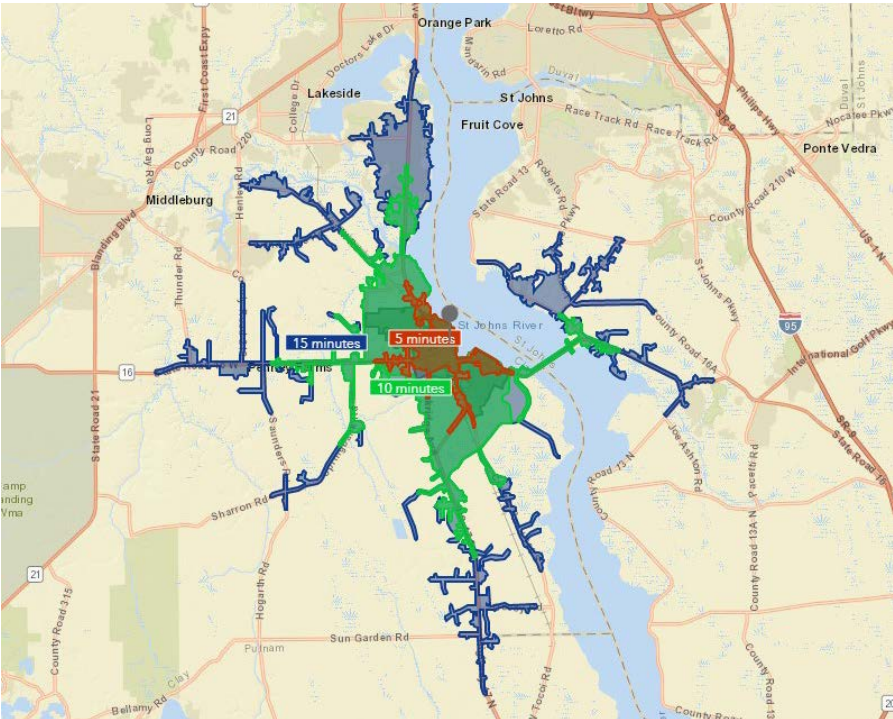
10-Minute Drive

Population	19,315
Households	7,097
Median HH Income	\$60,018

15-Minute Drive

Population	35,973
Households	13,444
Median HH Income	\$67,380

5-10-15 Minute Drive Market Area



Source: ESRI, BAO, 2022. S&ME 2022.

GCS Restaurant Potential

As shown in exhibit to the right, there is a high demand (over \$3,524,353 in unmet annual demand) in the 15-minute drive market area for Drinking Places (Alcoholic Beverages). There is an unmet demand in the 5 and 10-minute drive area’s as well. We recognize that multiple stand-alone bars in Downtown may change the existing small-town character, which the community wants to preserve. Alternatively, this market opportunity could be fulfilled as part of a full-service restaurant. The 10-minute drive area shows a demand for restaurants that exceeds available supply.

Dining out is a timeless experience. People are willing to drive for a great meal and waterfront views enhance the draw. Leveraging the unmet demand for Drinking Places to develop a destination/anchor restaurant would help attract more customers to Downtown and help to spur additional reinvestment. The opportunity for restaurants in downtown can be seen firsthand with the success of the City’s Food Truck Friday events.

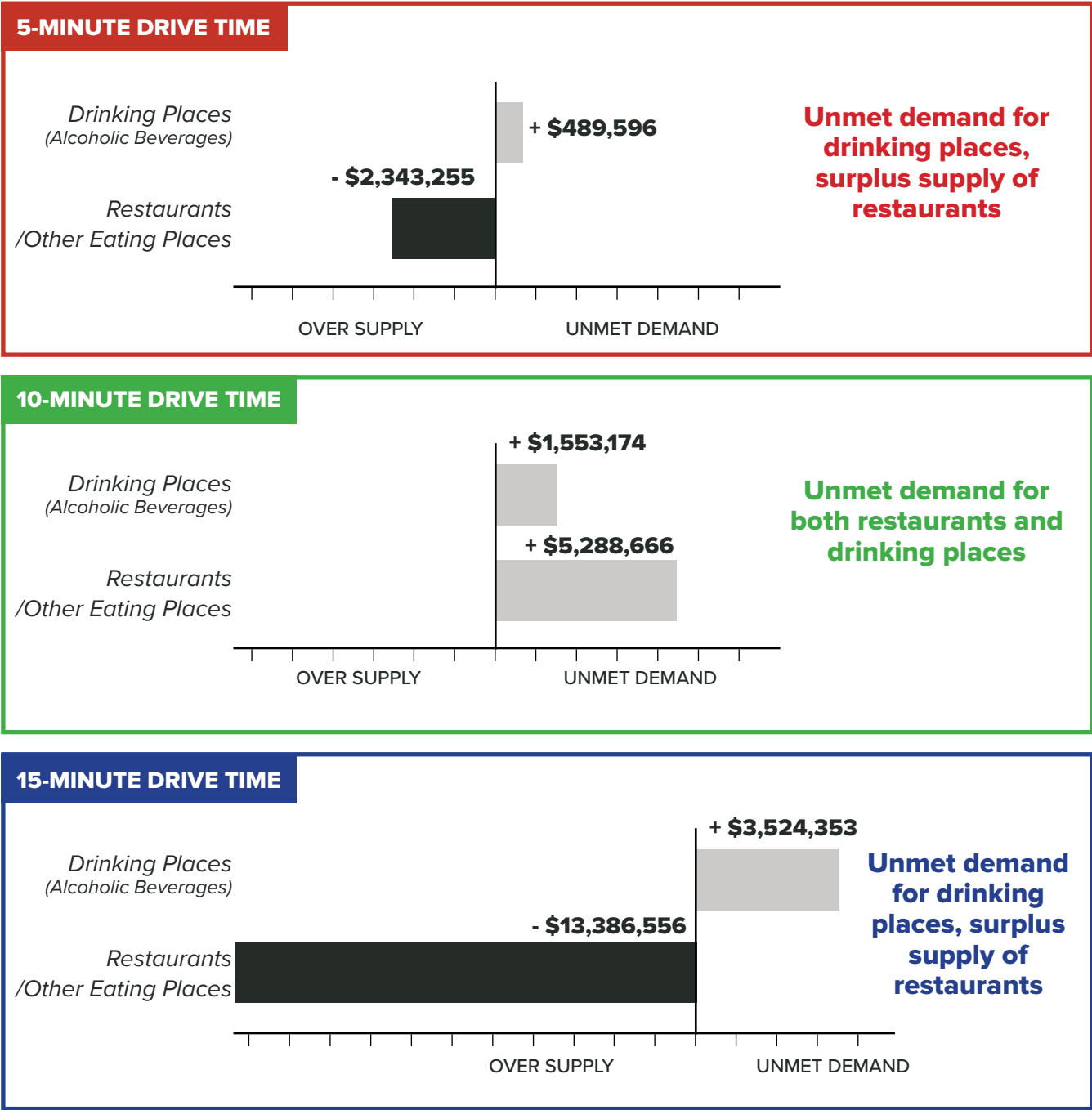
The following tables demonstrate the unmet demand for food and drink services within 10-minute drive time market area and the unmet demand for Drinking Places within the entire (5-10-15-minute) market area.

The unmet demand for Food Drink services within the 10-minute drive time coupled with the annualized sales per square feet for ‘full-service’ restaurants (\$275 per square foot) yield a retail development potential of over 24,000 square feet to accommodate unmet annual demand for Food and Drink services. The average size for a “Family-Style” restaurant ranges from ~4,000 sq. ft. on the smaller end to ~8,000 sq. ft. on the larger end. The Downtown Green Cove Springs 10-minute drive time market area, may accommodate the development of several (2-3) full-service, family style restaurants.

Restauraunt Development Potential within 10-Minute Drive Market Area		
Unmet Annual Sales Demand	Annual Sales (per Sq. Ft.)	Restauraunt Development Potential
\$6,841,840	\$275	24,879 Sq. Ft.

Source: National Restaurant Association, Sales per Square Foot, Full Service Restaurant, February 8, 2022.

Retail Market Supply & Demand: Food & Drink



Source: ESRI, BAO, 2022. S&ME 2022.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Before drafting the Master Plan for Downtown Green Cove Springs, the Project Team sought to cultivate a rich and profound understanding of the issues and opportunities facing the Study Area. To realize this goal, two primary research methods were undertaken. The first was an Existing Conditions Analysis. The second was an intensive community outreach process which included both in-person and online engagement options, such as a project website, stakeholder interviews, and a five-day design charrette. The results of these research methods are summarized as follows and are further detailed in Supplemental Documents A (Public Engagement Summary), B (Existing Conditions Analysis), and C (Demographics & Market Analysis) of this Plan.

- Early in the project's lifespan, the Project Team **established a website** for the Downtown Master Planning effort utilizing the Social Pinpoint platform (smeinc.mysocialpinpoint.com/downtown_gcs_master_plan). In addition to hosting a wealth of project-related information, the project website also hosted an **online survey** and an **interactive comment map** where visitors could provide location-specific thoughts, perspectives, and opinions on how the Downtown should grow in the decades ahead. Over the course of the project website's lifespan, the site was visited over 1,800 times by nearly 600 unique viewers.
- The second community outreach tool utilized for the project was an intensive **five-day charrette** within City Hall between Monday, January 24th and Friday, January 28th, 2022. Monday's schedule included interviews with various Downtown stakeholders, a walking audit of the Study Area, and a **Public Kick-Off and Visioning Session** with the community. The following day involved a series of additional stakeholder interviews, a presentation to the Planning & Zoning Board, and beginning to draft the community's vision for Downtown. This vision was advanced further on Wednesday and presented to the public that evening at the **Community Visioning and Design Workshop**. Using the feedback provided from the public, the Project Team began developing the first master plan concept on Thursday and presented this plan at the **Vision & Design Unveiling Open House** on Friday. After the presentation concluded, meeting attendees overwhelmingly expressed their approval of the proposed master plan and wished to be notified when the document was completed to see the final vision.

expertise throughout the community outreach process which greatly informed this master planning effort. The three most reoccurring themes which emerged from the public during this time are summarized as follows:

- Identify ways in which to **leverage Spring Park and the waterfront** to cultivate authentic ecotourism opportunities, attract new and expanded events, and spur economic development within the Downtown
- Address the need for **new development** projects which enhance the vibrancy, volume, and diversity of activities Downtown (such as restaurants, shops, and lodging) without sacrificing the **small-town charm and history** that is unique to Green Cove Springs
- Improve the public realm to safely support and accommodate a wide variety of motorized and non-motorized transportation options which will **connect residents and visitors alike to Downtown** restaurants, shops, amenities, and services.



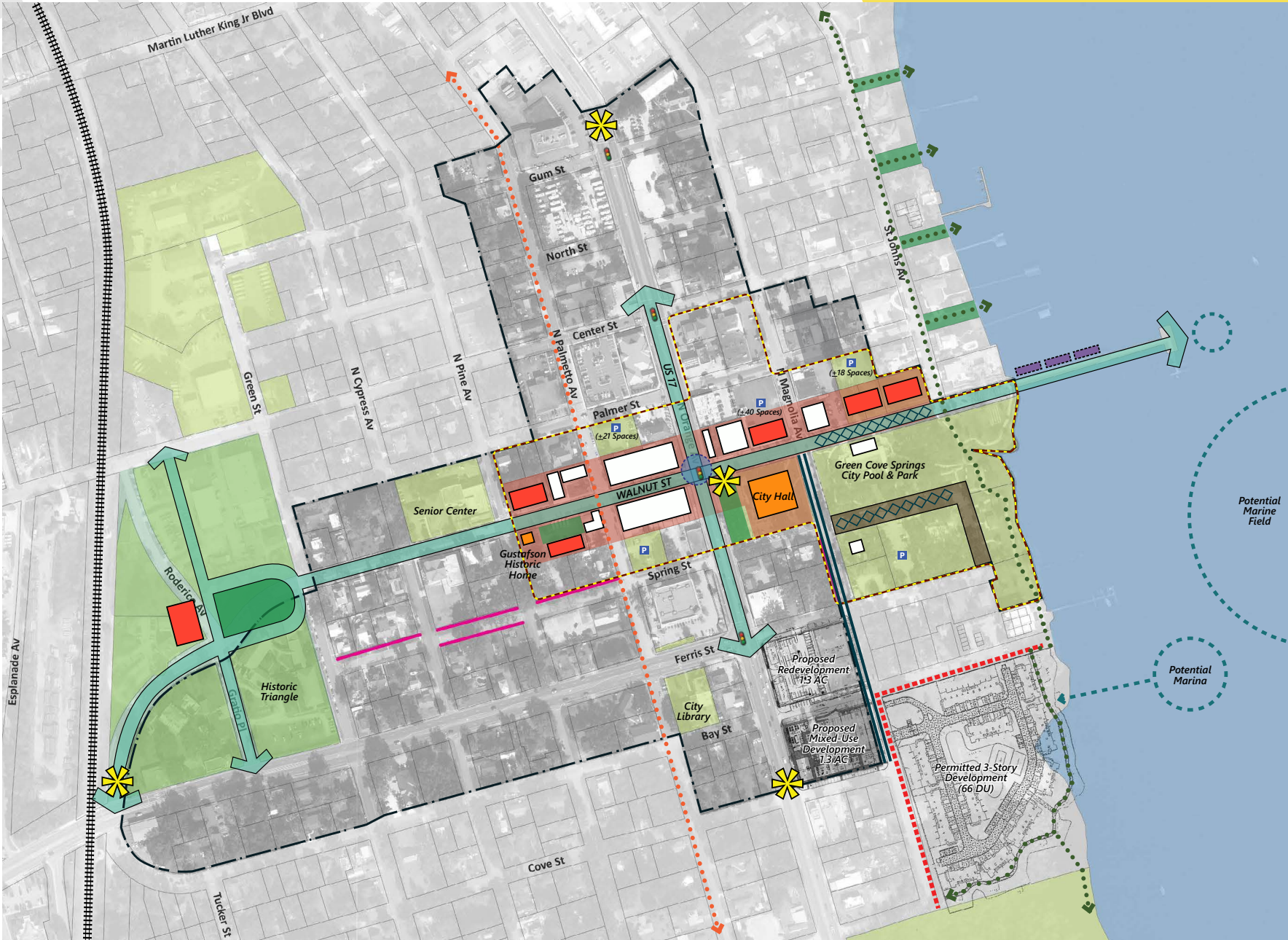
Whether participating online or in-person, the public provided a wealth of local

OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

The ideas and perspectives provided by the public during the Community Outreach process and the assessment conducted during the Existing Conditions Analysis helped set the stage for drafting the Downtown Master Plan by clearly inventorying opportunities and constraints within the Study Area. These items are represented graphically in the map presented on this page and are strategically addressed within this Plan through a series of context-sensitive projects. These projects are discussed in the following section of this document and are further detailed in the Implementation Strategy.

KEY

- Study Area (83.3 AC)
- Public Land (15.8 AC)
- Signalized Intersection
- Existing Public Parking (± 155 Spaces)
- Gateways
- "Main Street" Improvement
- 8' Multi-Use Trail under Construction
- Potential Multi-Use Trail/Pedestrian Connection
- Focus Area
- Existing Building
- Potential Restaurant/Retail Building
- Potential Pocket Park/Open Space
- Activity Barges
- Intersection Improvement
- Potential Street Closure
- Proposed Underground Utility
- Existing Monthly Food Truck Event Location
- Potential On-Street Parking
- Potential Sidewalk



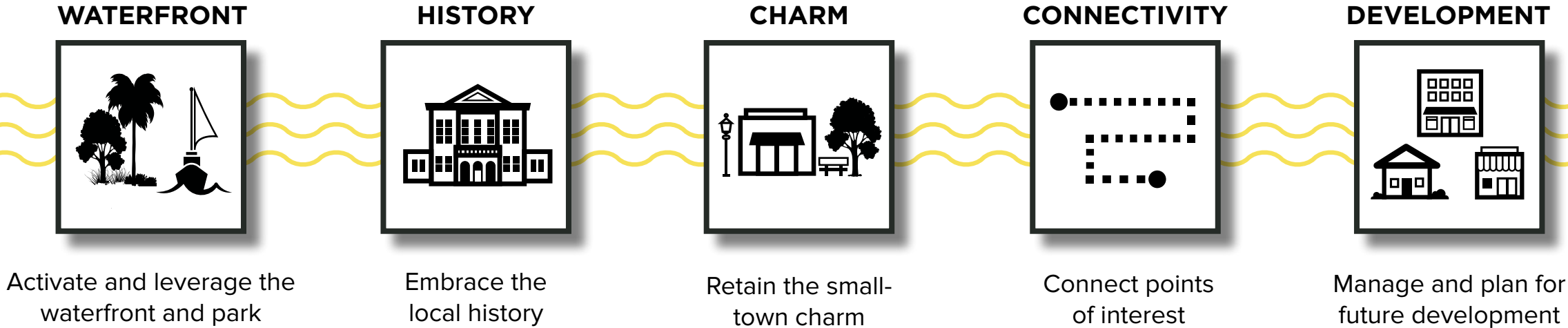
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Guiding Principles outlined below were identified based on extensive community engagement and the clear consensus to balance the preservation of the City’s history and character with compatible economic development.

Over the next twenty years, there will be significant development throughout Clay County to meet the demands of a growing population. The principles of **Waterfront**, **History**, and **Charm** speak to the current attributes of Downtown Green Cove Springs. These are unique attributes that cannot be replicated. The Downtown Master Plan will seek to enhance these existing assets.

The principle of **Connectivity** seeks to further strengthen these assets by linking points of interest to create synergies.

The final principle of **Development** is realized through strengthening and connecting existing assets. It is embodied by desired real estate investment in Downtown that will complement the existing character and foster enhanced commerce and a greater sense of community.



**"YOU KNOW WHAT I THINK
DOWNTOWN NEEDS? MORE PLACES TO
PLAY AND
STAY"**

- TRACY SMITH, OWNER OF SOMETHING SPECIAL ANTIQUES

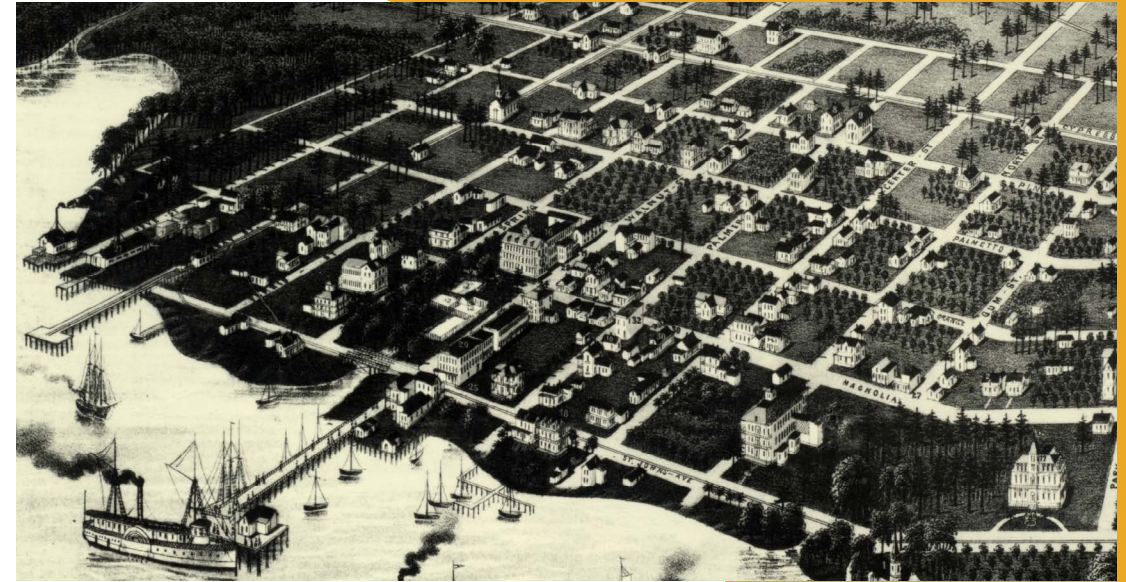
FOCUS AREA



THE CRITICAL START

This master planning process was conducted utilizing the Downtown Study Area boundary provided by the City. The ideas and perspectives provided by the public during the Community Outreach process and supplemented by the Project Team's existing conditions analysis helped identify redevelopment needs throughout Downtown. However, these needs are extensive and cannot be addressed overnight. Many master plans, filled with great ideas and designs, often fail to address the long-term needs of their respective communities because they lack a clear starting point.

Therefore, although this Master Plan provides a long-term, 20-year vision for the Study Area, this Plan places the greatest amount of detail, attention, and guidance to the critical first phase of implementation. Projects proposed in Phase 1 are focused almost entirely within the City's urban core. This 'Focus Area', generally defined within this Plan as the portion of the Study Area found east of Pine Avenue between Palmer and Spring Street, contains many of the City's most prized assets, including the Walnut Street 'main street' corridor, Spring Park, and the St. Johns River. The value of these highly concentrated assets is enduring and, with the right plan, can once again be leveraged to generate increased activity, commerce, and energy to Downtown Green Cove Springs for decades to come. As such, the implementation of this Plan begins within this critical geographical area.



Source: Green Cove Springs, City Hall.



VISUALIZING THE PLAN

By establishing a smaller focus area, the implementation becomes more feasible and clear. To further articulate the reality of the proposed Plan, four illustrative perspectives were developed. The following 3-D visualizations showcase several key project sites proposed in the crucial Phase 1 and help communicate the reality of what is most achievable within the 20-year timeframe outlined in this Plan. These illustrations document some of the details proposed and effectively communicate the spaces and usability.

Perspective 1

Showcases the proposed US 17 streetscape improvements that enhance the sense of arrival into Downtown Green Cove Springs.

Perspective 2

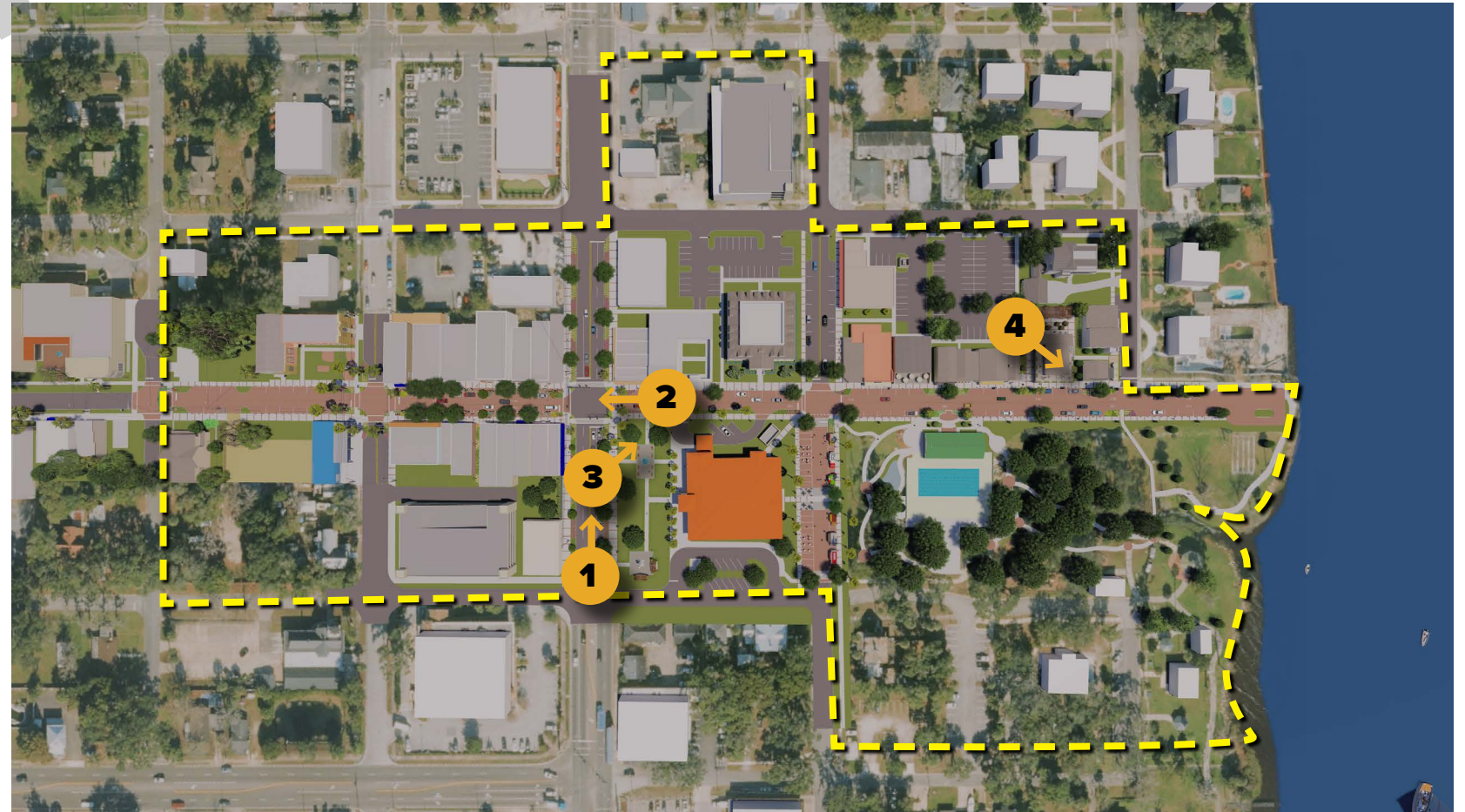
Exhibits 3 key Phase 1 projects: the re-imagined US 17 / Walnut Street intersection, City Hall Park, and the Walnut Street Corridor upgrades.

Perspective 3

Previews a new civic space in front of City Hall which both celebrates and contributes to Downtown's iconic parks and open space system.

Perspective 4

Visualizes a Destination Restaurant that capitalizes on pristine views afforded by the proximity of the site to the waterfront and Spring Park.



1. US 17

Looking north towards
Walnut Street



2. Intersection

Looking west along
Walnut Street



3. City Hall Park

Looking northeast
towards the park space



4. Restaurant

Looking southeast
towards waterfront





**"I SEE GREEN COVE SPRINGS'
DOWNTOWN AS
CHARMING AND
HOPEFUL"**

- ANDREA VALLENCOURT, OWNER OF CLAY THEATRE

IMPLEMENTATION



PHASE 1

WATERFRONT



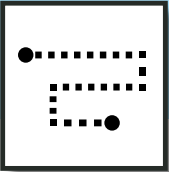
HISTORY



CHARM



CONNECTIVITY



DEVELOPMENT



The master planning process for Downtown Green Cove Springs yielded numerous opportunities and capital improvement projects. One of the most common obstacles to implementation of these types of plans are the lack of a clear starting point.

This 20-Year Vision for the future of Downtown Green Cove Springs begins by implementing the projects and improvements outlined in Phase 1. These projects are listed by order of importance within the Phase 1 Table and are shown spatially on the following page. The key objectives for Phase 1 are to set the stage for current and future growth by capitalizing on Downtown's **WATERFRONT** vistas via a destination restaurant, establish a Downtown brand which captures the **HISTORY** and **CHARM** of the Study Area, identify funding and regulatory mechanisms to support future **DEVELOPMENT** projects within the public and private realm, and seek to coordinate (and lead as necessary) roadway improvement projects which enhance **CONNECTIVITY** between existing and future Downtown assets.

Phase 1 (1-5 Years)		
1	Leverage City-owned Catalyst Site to attract a Destination Restaurant	\$\$\$
2	Establish a Downtown Community Redevelopment Agency	\$
3	Adopt Downtown Brand and Logo	\$
4	Establish & Adopt Form-Based Code	\$
5	Pursue grants for restoration of the Judge Rivers House	\$
6	Identify use for unfinished/unoccupied rooms in City Hall	\$\$
7	Increase Downtown Parking Supply (within Focus Area)	\$\$\$
8	US 17 and Walnut Street Intersection Enhancement	\$\$\$\$
9	Improve Walnut Street Corridor (From Palmetto Ave. to the River)	\$\$\$\$
10	Magnolia Avenue - Festival Street	\$\$\$
11	FDOT Improvements to US 17 Corridor (Oak Street to Governor's Creek)	\$\$\$\$
12	Design and Construct City Hall Park	\$\$\$
EST. COST: \$ = <\$100,000 \$\$ = \$100,000-\$1 Million \$\$\$ = \$1-5 Million \$\$\$\$ = >\$5 Million		



PHASE 1 OVERVIEW

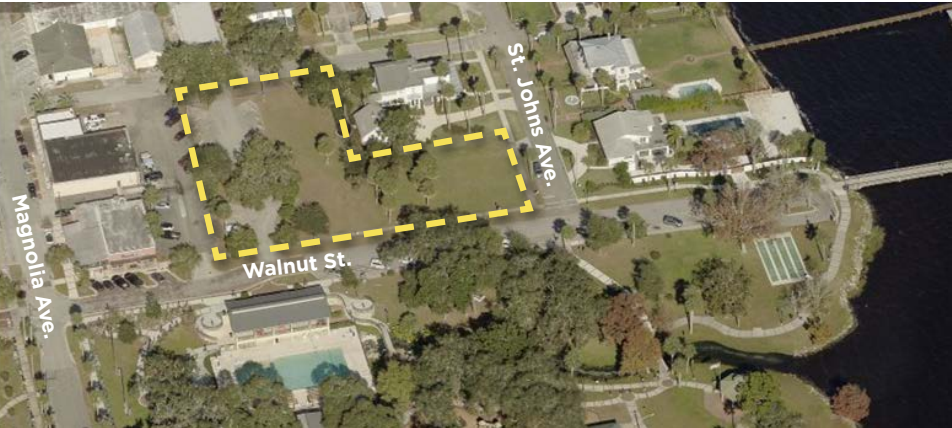
1. Leverage City-owned Catalyst Site to attract a Destination Restaurant

Walnut Street, between North Orange Avenue and the St. Johns River, is the original commercial Main Street of Green Cove Springs. Today, there are only two operating commercial uses along this segment: the Clay Theatre and Ronnie’s Wings. Re-establishing the urban form and function of this corridor, in an architectural style and massing compatible with the community character, should be the fundamental first step in restoring the historic vitality of Downtown Green Cove Springs.

The City owns four contiguous parcels totaling approximately .92 acres along Walnut Street just north of Spring Park. This property is well-positioned for a destination restaurant that could offer convenient onsite parking and beautiful waterfront vistas.

The City was recently awarded a \$400,000 grant from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. This grant would help to fund Low Impact Development (LID) stormwater measures such as pervious parking spaces, tree boxes and bioswales on this property and along Walnut Street from the River to Magnolia Avenue.

Utilizing the state authorized redevelopment tools provided through the establishment of a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), the City should position the property as a ‘pad-ready’ site with parking and solicit proposals for development that would include a destination restaurant. Preparation of the property should include appropriate site civil, geotechnical and environmental analyses as well as a conceptual design for parking and stormwater.



Utilizing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ), instead of a Request for Proposals (RFP), would allow the City to select a development partner and work collaboratively towards establishing a commercially viable project that complements the rich character of Downtown Green Cove Springs.

Development of the site should be of traditional urban form and compatible with the existing architectural styles in Downtown Green Cove Springs. Consistent with an anticipated form-based code, the site provides the opportunity for the development of two or three buildings fronting Walnut Street. The buildings should be limited to no more than three stories with a maximum setback of ten feet, as measured from building face to the northern edge of sidewalk/right-of-way line. Parking should be behind the buildings. The City should also retain the right to approve the architecture of the building to ensure that the development complements the existing character of the community.

The revitalization of the entire Walnut Street corridor is an important long-term objective of this Downtown Master Plan. This segment (between North Orange Avenue and the River), with its proximity to the popular Spring Park, was prioritized in order to spur additional redevelopment within the Study Area.



Catalyst Site Development Process

1. Identify potential development partners to invite to respond
2. Prepare and issue a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a development partner that clearly states the City's vision for the property
3. Review, short-list, and interview the top three respondents; make selection
4. Negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (City/Developer) to establish a process and schedule for the creation of a development plan
5. Advance the following site planning efforts:
 - a. Developer performs their due diligence and commences planning efforts
 - b. City performs environmental and geotechnical investigations of the site
 - c. City identifies relevant City investments affecting the project site (e.g., streetscapes, park enhancements and other capital improvements)
 - d. City identifies potential assistance that may be available to the Developer (e.g., design assistance, grants, TIF rebates, fee waivers and/or discounts)
 - e. Developer proposes a development plan and requests incentives
 - f. City and Developer negotiate terms of a Development Agreement
6. Prepare and execute Development Agreement
7. Commence Construction



2. Establish a Downtown Community Redevelopment Agency

The establishment of a Community Redevelopment Agency is a critical first step towards revitalization and the implementation of the Downtown Master Plan.

Community Redevelopment Agencies are authorized by Chapter 163, Part III of the Florida Statutes. Under Chapter 163, Part III, local governments are able to designate areas as Community Redevelopment Areas where “slum and blight” exist. Examples of conditions that can support the creation of a Community Redevelopment Area include, but are not limited to: the presence of substandard or inadequate structures, a shortage of affordable housing, inadequate infrastructure, insufficient roadways, and inadequate parking.

To determine if those conditions exist, the City would evaluate the proposed redevelopment area and prepare a Finding of Necessity report. If the Finding of Necessity determines that the required conditions exist, the City may create a Community Redevelopment Agency to provide the tools needed to foster and support redevelopment of the targeted area.

The activities and programs offered within a Community Redevelopment Area are administered by the Community Redevelopment Agency, a five to seven member CRA “Board” created by the City that directs the agency. The Community Redevelopment Agency is responsible for developing and implementing the Community Redevelopment Plan that addresses the unique needs of the targeted area.

The plan includes the overall goals for redevelopment in the area, as well as identifying the types of projects planned for the area. Potential projects and programming contained in CRA Plan include: streetscape and roadway improvements, building renovations, new building construction, water and sewer improvements, parking lots and garages, neighborhood parks, streetscape, sidewalks and street tree plantings. The CRA Plan can also include redevelopment incentives such as grants and loans for such things as façade improvements, building stabilization, business recruitment and business retention programs.

Many of the proposed strategic investments and projects within the Green Cove Springs Downtown Master Plan are typical of the those contained within a Community Redevelopment Plan. As such, this Master Plan could easily serve as the base document for the creation the Green Cove Springs Community Redevelopment Plan.

CRA Establishment Process

1. Coordinate redevelopment goals and objectives with Clay County
2. Prepare and adopt a Findings of Necessity report to identify conditions of slum and blight within the targeted area
3. Develop and adopt the Community Redevelopment Plan to address the unique needs of the targeted area via the identification of goals, objectives, and projects
4. Receive Delegation of Authority Resolution from the County
5. Establish the Community Redevelopment Agency and its Board
6. Create a Redevelopment [Tax Increment] Trust Fund to direct the increase in real property tax revenues back into the targeted area

3. Adopt Downtown Brand & Logo

The inspiration for the branding of Green Cove Springs started with an assessment of the character and personality of the City. Through interviews, a walking audit, and branding research, it was clear to see the rich history and natural beauty deserving of celebration within the logo for the Downtown.

The physical elements of the City that are showcased in the final logo composition include oak trees, charming brick streets, decorative lamp posts, and the re-imagined historic buildings along Walnut Street. The spring and river elements are honored in the waves below and “Cove” is emphasized in the City name above. The badge design compliments the City seal and the colors reflect a cohesive brand approach.

The objective of this branding initiative was to establish the Downtown area as a unique place within the City. This guided the emphasis of “Downtown” in the final design. The tagline speaks to the geographic significance of the City along the St. Johns River and nods to the residents’ cherished Floridian lifestyle—Where Cove Life Happens.

Full-color logo



3-color logo variations

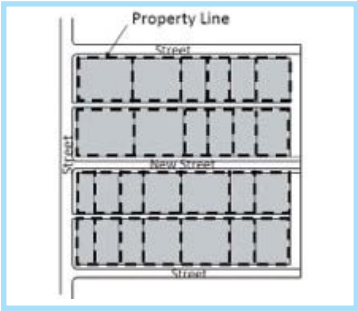


4. Establish & Adopt Form-Based Code

The Land Development Code and Zoning Map are the most important tools for implementing the vision for Downtown. Most sites in the Downtown are zoned Central Business District (CBD), the north and south gateways into downtown (US 17) are zoned Gateway Corridor Commercial (GCC), and the south side of the Ferris Street corridor and the west side of Palmetto Avenue are zoned Gateway Corridor Neighborhood (GCN). There are a few sites on Magnolia Avenue zoned R-1. Public sites are zoned Institutional (INS). While the current zoning standards have tried to address infill, redevelopment, and quality of design, transitioning to a Form-Based Code for the Downtown area and the US 17 and SR 16 commercial corridors as they enter the downtown would be the best option to achieve the vision.

The intent of the Form-Based Code (FBC) will be to preserve the existing character of the Downtown, while promoting quality infill and redevelopment in a walkable and mixed-use urban environment. The new FBC will contribute to streamlining the current zoning and development review process and provide developers, builders and residents with a more predictable and transparent process for development and redevelopment. Implementation of a form-based code would also lead to greater interest in the city for new investment and economic growth that would be fueled by the creation of a richer and more vibrant urban environment in the heart of Green Cove Springs.

Recommendations for implementing a Form-Based Code within the City are detailed within Supplemental Document B.



Block Layout / Connectivity

Block size is key to achieving good urban form and transportation connectivity. Shorter blocks improve the pedestrian experience as well as foster a street network that supports the efficient distribution of traffic. The urban core gridded network shall be maintained and improved.



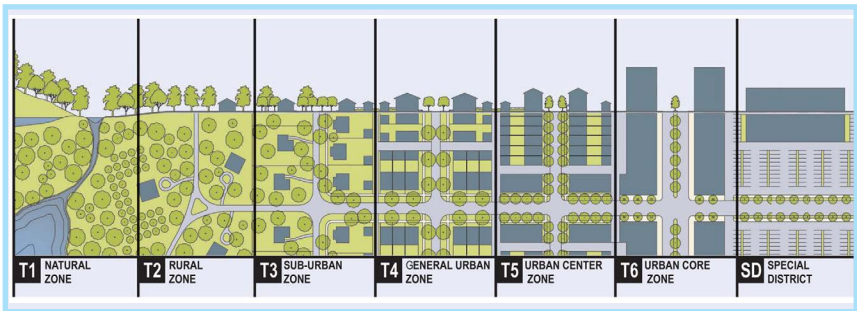
Building Placement / Orientation

The placement of a building on a site is critical to creating a vital and coherent public realm. Buildings must be oriented to the street; parking areas must be placed behind the buildings. Building orientation can also be defined by locating prominent entrances along the principal street.



Public Realm

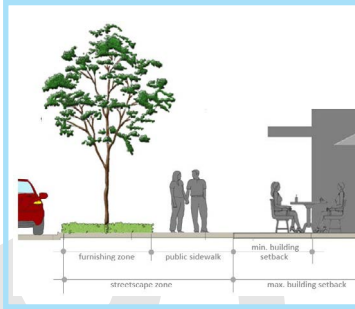
Sidewalks in commercial areas must be wide enough to accommodate pedestrian activity, landscaping and streetscape furniture. Due to the lack of right-of-way along certain corridors, some sites may need to dedicate an easement to the city to accommodate such elements.



Regulating Plan

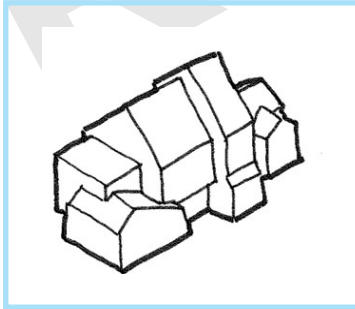
The organizing principle of a FBC is the regulating plan, a two-dimensional graphic that depicts the geographic distribution of the transect zones. Generally, the T-Zones range from T-1 to T-6, depending on the local context but not all FBCs include all 6.

Source: Form-Based Codes Institute



Building Frontage and Setbacks

Minimum building frontage (the length of the façade along the street) and consistent front setbacks are important to creating a continuous urban form. Buildings need to be constructed close to the streets and sidewalks but not so close that the public realm is diminished.



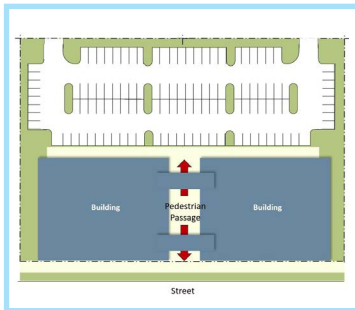
Building Form, Massing and Scale

Standards must be adopted to ensure buildings have certain components (e.g., base, middle and top) and large building volumes are divided to appear as smaller volumes grouped together. Volume breaks may be achieved by volume projections and recesses, and varying heights and roof lines.



Façade Articulation & Fenestration

Facades must be designed to reduce the monolithic appearance of large unadorned walls. Fenestration (the arrangement of windows and doors along a façade) is a critical part of façade articulation. The percentage of fenestration shall be regulated to ensure transparency and adequate façade design.



Circulation, Access & Parking

Vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian traffic must be addressed. Curb cuts along primary streets should be minimized. Rear alleys, secondary roadways or joint use driveways should be used instead. Parking flexibility is needed in the core, especially if the city is committed to providing public parking in the Downtown.



Landscaping, Lighting and Drainage

Landscaping standards should focus less on buffers and use separation and more on providing shade and accentuating buildings and public spaces. Lighting should focus on safety and compatibility. Low Impact Development practices (e.g., green roofs, rain gardens, rain cisterns, or other design techniques) should be encouraged.



Signage, Wayfinding & Murals

Sign regulations must ensure redevelopment and infill projects have adequate signage in line with the vision for Downtown. Standards must also address storefront signage location, materials, and size to ensure a consistent environment. Murals and wayfinding should be addressed separately from the Code and instead be managed the city.



Public Art / Murals

Art (sculptures and murals) are an important part of urban life. Vibrant downtowns are made more unique when sprinkled with local art. The city should consider adopting an art program that would allow sculptures and murals throughout the core. Murals should not be regulated as signs as they are not intended as advertisement but rather as works of art. They should be allowed as part of a program managed by the city. Many cities in Florida have established their own programs and include requirements such as prior experience of the artist, size and placement limitations.

5. Pursue grants and other funding sources for restoration of the Judge Rivers House

The Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, offers *Special Category Matching Grants* up to \$500,000 on an annual basis. Development projects with the mission of Preservation, Restoration, Rehabilitation or Reconstruction of historic properties that are both owned by local governments and are regularly open to the public are eligible for this grant.

A formal announcement of the City’s intent to preserve and restore the Judge Rivers House can help galvanize community support for this effort. A local non-profit organization, formed by supporters, could help raise funds for restoration and foster momentum for the project.



6. Identify use for unfinished/unoccupied rooms in City Hall

The combination of City Hall’s classical architecture and prominent location on the corner of Walnut Street and Orange Avenue render this important civic facility as one of Downtown’s most prolific symbols of local character, history, and beauty. However, much like the Downtown itself, City Hall is full of underutilized potential. With a wealth of arched windows overlooking Downtown Green Cove Springs, two of the facility’s most prominent rooms in the building are amongst its most beautiful, yet these spaces are currently being used for storage. The City should seek to immediately remedy this issue by identifying and cultivating strategic partnerships to finish and activate these spaces. Potential uses for these rooms should be those which seek to further enhance the vibrancy and activity within Downtown, as identified below.



COMMUNITY MEETING SPACE | SMALL BUSINESS INCUBATOR | ART GALLERY



7. Increase Downtown Parking Supply (within Focus Area)

THA Consulting completed a parking study in 2022 which examined existing and projected parking conditions within the greater Downtown area of Green Cove Springs. During their analysis, THA Consulting found that the City currently possesses a parking surplus within the overall Parking Study Area on both weekdays and weekends. However, when the firm examined conditions within the Core Sub-Area (loosely defined as the area west of US 17 between Palmer and Ferris St.), it found that although the weekday parking supply was sufficient, the Core Sub-Area experienced a shortage of 41 spaces during the weekend. Furthermore, projected parking demand for the overall Parking Study Area (based upon 2031 population projections) was not expected to exceed the Area’s current supply by 2031, but the existing weekend parking deficiency within the Core Sub-Area is expected to marginally increase throughout the next nine years.

The City should begin the process of incrementally increasing the parking supply Downtown. Five potential parking improvements (three on-street and two off-street) are proposed for Phase 1, which are identified in the following Table and illustrated on the Phase 1 Parking Map. These potential parking improvements were selected based on their potential to increase the area’s total supply for parking, their location to major parking generators (e.g., Spring Park, the Walnut Street business corridor), and their estimated feasibility based upon the properties’ current ownership status (*note: Projects A and C will require the acquisition of private property*).

As Downtown Green Cove Springs further develops and the projects identified within Phases 1, 2, and 3 of this Master Plan continue to be implemented, the City should remain vigilant of the Study Area’s changing parking demands before moving forward with additional parking improvements (particularly if they would hinder walkability within the Study Area or fail to consider alternative modes of travel, such as bikes, scooters, transit, ride-sharing apps, etc.). However, if the demand for vehicular parking clearly escalates within the Study Area to such a degree that it effectively discourages further private sector investment, two potential locations for structured parking have been identified in Phase 3.

Phase 1 Proposed Parking Improvements (Est.)

Parking Type & Location		EXISTING Spaces	PROPOSED Spaces	Net Change
A	Mid-Block Palmer Street Parking Lot (Between Magnolia & St. Johns Ave.)	18 spaces (60°)	48 spaces (90°)	30 spaces
B	Walnut Street On-Street Parking (East of Magnolia Ave.)	22 spaces (30° & 60°)	41 spaces (30° & 90°)	19 spaces
C	Palmetto Ave. & Spring St. Intersection Parking Lot (Northeast Quadrant)	22 spaces (90°)	60 spaces (90°)	38 spaces
D	Magnolia Ave. Festival Street Parking (Between Walnut & Spring Street)	0 spaces	29 spaces (90° & Parallel)	29 spaces
E	Magnolia Ave. On-Street Parking (Between Spring & Ferris St.)	0 spaces	21 spaces (Parallel)	21 spaces
F	City Hall Off-Street Parking (See City Hall Park Project)	26 spaces (45° & 90°)	12 spaces (45°)	-14 spaces
G	Walnut Street On-Street Parking (Between Orange Ave. and Palmetto Ave.)	20 spaces (Parallel)	10 spaces (Parallel)	-10 spaces
Total Increase				113 spaces

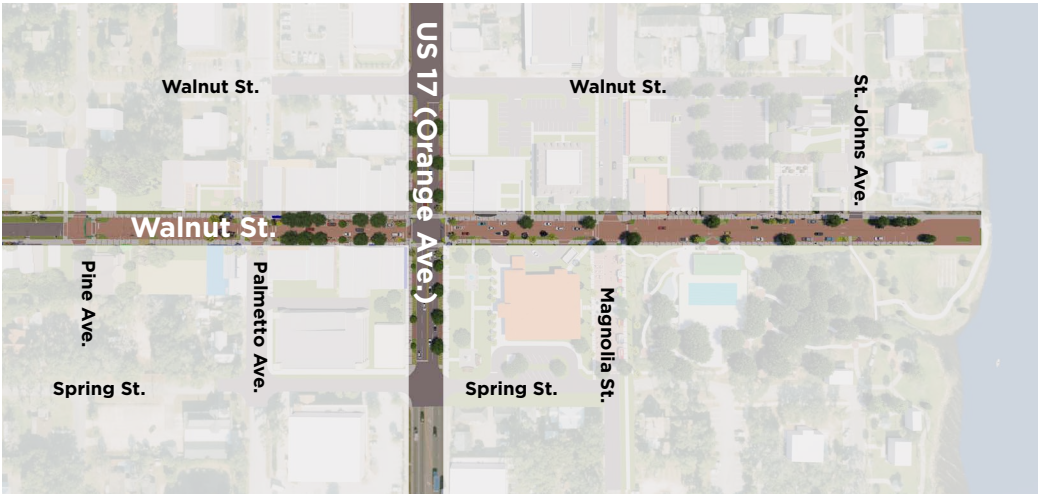


PHASE 1 PARKING

8. US 17 & Walnut Street Intersection Enhancement

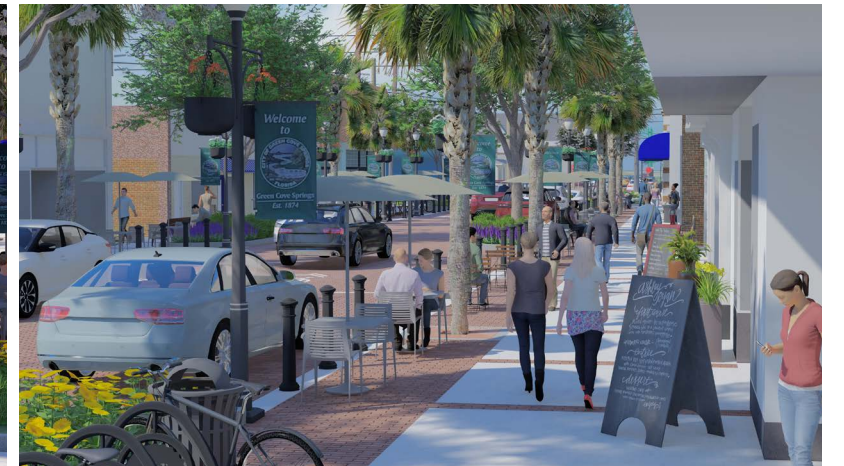
Approximately 25,000 cars per day cross Walnut Street via US 17 and this amount is expected to double by the year 2045 with the completion of the First Coast Expressway. How many people in these vehicles realize they are driving through Historic Green Cove Springs, the Clay County seat? Furthermore, how do these fast-moving cars serve as a divide to pedestrian movement from the east to the west side of the City?

As part of the Walnut Street Conceptual Design Project, we identified Connectivity, Improved Access, and Use for Pedestrians as key design drivers for the corridor. Our proposed improvements for the intersection include removing the center turn lanes, adding curb extensions, and narrowing travel lanes—all of which reduce the pedestrian crossing distance across US 17 and also provide traffic calming. Other proposed improvements include landscape areas and street trees which provide shade and natural beauty and also provide additional traffic calming. Installing new mast arms and pedestrian signals enhances safety and reduces overhead wires. These proposed improvements will not only make this intersection more pedestrian-friendly, but will also provide a clear sense of arrival into Downtown and serve to effectively bridge the eastern and western portions of the Downtown.



9. Improve Walnut Street Corridor (from Palmetto Avenue to the River)

Walnut Street has served as the primary civic and commercial area within Downtown since the City's founding. As part of the Walnut Street Conceptual Design Project, we identified the need to create a 'sense of place' that would activate the corridor and encourage redevelopment and revitalization. The proposed design would create a flexible curbless street with expanded sidewalks and on-street parallel parking on the north side of the street. Expanded sidewalks can accommodate outdoor seating as well as provide areas for streetscape improvements such as furnishing zones for bike racks, litter receptacles and benches. Pedestrian-scale light poles create opportunities for hanging baskets and banners along the corridor, providing additional beautification. Planter pots and landscape areas are proposed to soften the streetscape environment and create a comfortable and welcoming pedestrian experience perfect for window shopping, outdoor dining, boutiques, and other types of activated retail spaces. Removable bollards can be placed at the end of each block to close down specific areas for evening and weekend events creating a true festival street experience. Underscoring the importance of connectivity and walkability, the Walnut Street Conceptual Design proposed landscape and lighting improvements to the existing paseo (pedestrian connection) from Walnut Street to the City-owned parking lot to the south of the corridor.



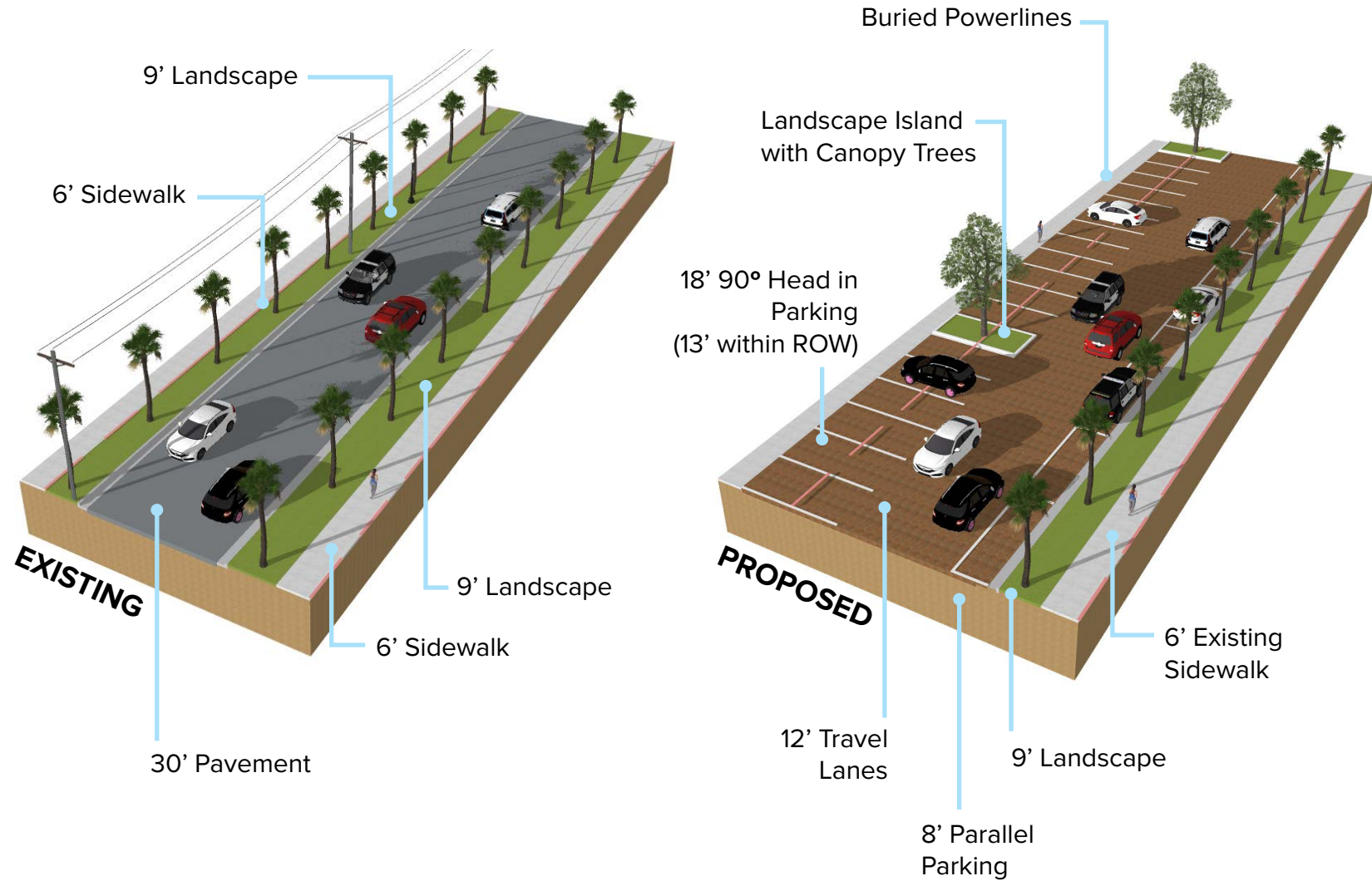
10. Magnolia Avenue - Festival Street

Magnolia Avenue is a north-south local collector which acts as Springs Park’s western-most boundary. Today, this 52-foot right-of-way features two lanes of travel with no opportunities for on-street parking—indicating to drivers that the corridor (and the buildings and amenities which line the roadway) is something to travel through rather than a destination in of itself.

As such, this Plan proposes to transition a critical portion of Magnolia Avenue located between Walnut and Spring Street into a ‘festival street’, which are roadway segments designed to allow for frequent and temporary closures of vehicular traffic for pedestrian-oriented events and activities. By implementing this project, the City could effectively expand the size of Spring Park and thus, increase the capacity and programming for Downtown events such as Food Truck Friday and 3rd Saturday Market in the Park.

As shown on the PROPOSED typical street section, the conversion of Magnolia Avenue into a festival street would render the sidewalk flush with the street, install landscape treatments, equip the roadway with removable bollards, underground utilities (as part of the City’s CIP), and provide both angled and parallel parking to increase the supply of parking within the Study Area.

MAGNOLIA AVENUE - Festival Street
(Looking North)
60’ R.O.W. with 90° & Parallel Parking



ENHANCED FOOD TRUCK PARK



FLOWER BEDS



ADDITIONAL PARKING



REMOVABLE BOLLARDS



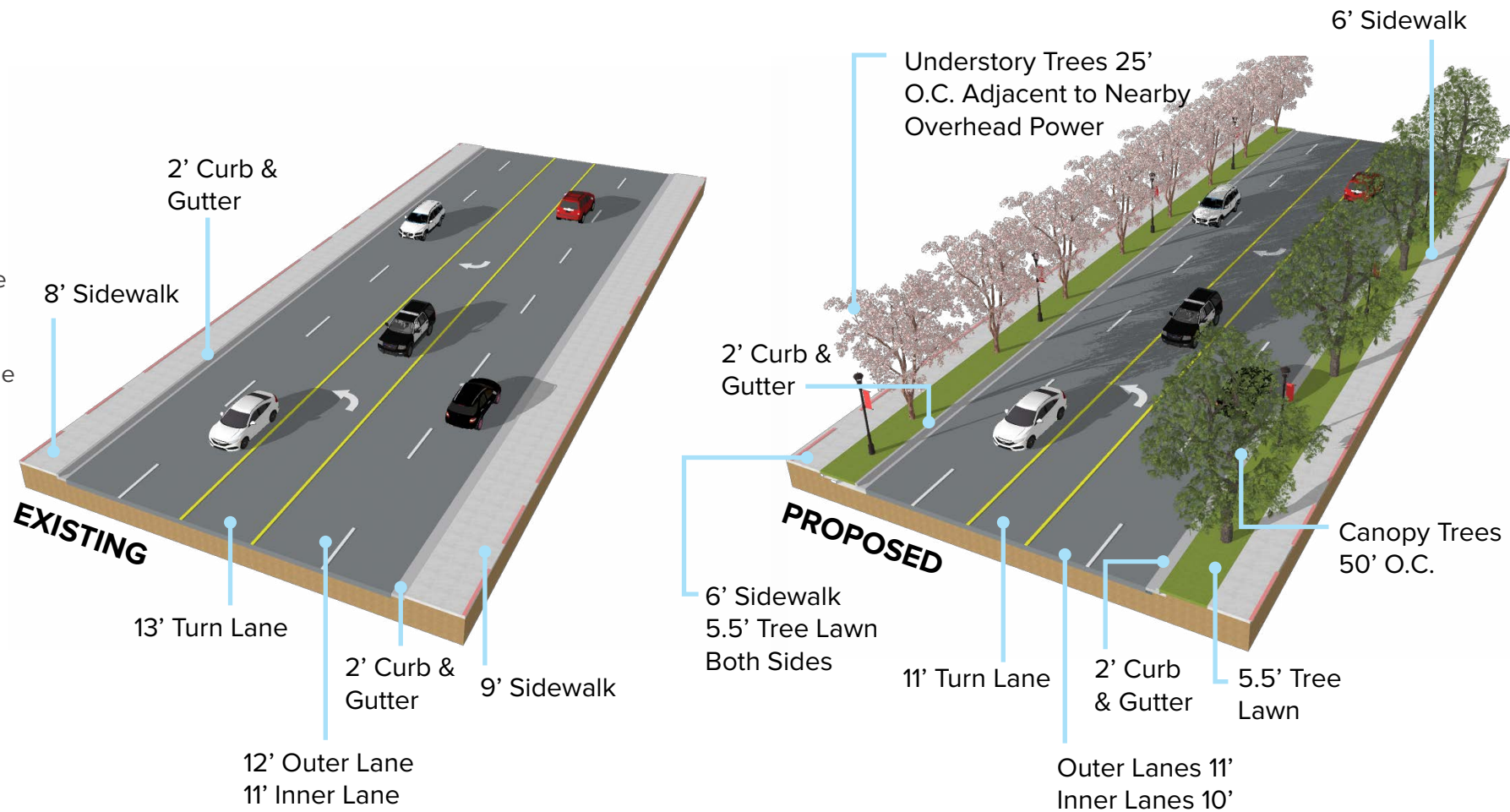
11. FDOT Improvements to US 17 Corridor (Oak Street to Governor’s Creek)

The FDOT Context Classification of US 17 from just south of Oak Street to the Sheriff’s Office driveway north of Governor’s Creek is C4 – Urban General.

Walking along Orange Avenue (US 17) in Downtown Green Cove Springs, where the sidewalk extends directly to the curb, can be a harrowing experience as cars barrel past the posted 30 mile-per-hour speed limit. This is an uncomfortable and potentially unsafe condition that should be improved.

As shown in the PROPOSED typical section, this classification provides the opportunity to reduce travel lane widths, provide and expand landscape buffers, install street trees and provide sidewalks with a six foot minimum width. These improvements will serve to enhance pedestrian comfort, safety, community aesthetics and provide a greater sense of arrival to Green Cove Springs.

ORANGE AVENUE
(Looking North)
80’ R.O.W.



12. Design and Construct City Hall Park

City Hall, with its architectural integrity and prominent location, serves as an important and compelling structure within Downtown Green Cove Springs. Unfortunately, the surface parking spaces along the front of the building undermine the property's full potential as a welcoming civic gateway.

The proposed design seeks to relocate parking spaces to the rear of the building and redevelop the front of City Hall as a small park/ plaza. This design would seek to reinforce the improvements to the US 17/Walnut Street intersection; improving the pedestrian experience and accentuating a sense of arrival into Downtown Green Cove Springs.



PHASE 2

WATERFRONT



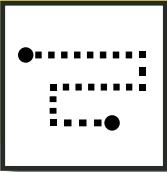
HISTORY



CHARM



CONNECTIVITY



DEVELOPMENT



The projects proposed in Phase 2 are derived from the guiding principles provided by the community and the strategic improvements introduced in Phase 1. The following projects seek to activate the **WATERFRONT** by converting underutilized rights-of-way into neighborhood-serving pocket parks, capitalize on the City's unique **HISTORY** and **CHARM** by expanding Spring Park and establishing authentic gateway signage, provide for non-motorized **CONNECTIVITY** opportunities into the Downtown from neighborhoods to the north via a new trail project along St. Johns Avenue, and 'filling-in' the perceived gaps within the Focus Area by priming a vacant catalyst site for **DEVELOPMENT**.



#14 ST. JOHNS AVE. TRAIL



#16 POCKET PARKS

Phase 2 (6-10 Years)		
13	Gateway Features	\$\$
14	St. Johns Avenue Trail (North of Walnut St.)	\$\$
15	Strategic Infill Project (Vacant Lot at Walnut St./Magnolia Ave.)	\$\$\$
16	Waterfront Pocket Parks	\$\$
17	Spring Park Expansion & Improvements (Vacate Spring St.)	\$\$\$
EST. COST: \$ = <\$100,000 \$\$ = \$100,000-\$1 Million \$\$\$ = \$1-5 Million \$\$\$\$ = >\$5 Millon		



13

Gateway features such as signage, monuments, and banners do more than just identify the location of an area or activity center. They are critical for establishing a sense of place, a community's identity, and conveying powerful messages. This Plan proposes to implement gateway features at strategic and highly visible locations within the Study Area which announce to residents and visitors alike they are entering thriving Downtown community rich with shops, restaurants, history, culture, and amenities.

14

Consistent with the community's desire for additional nonmotorized connections between neighborhoods, the waterfront, and downtown amenities, this project would convert a portion of the St. Johns Avenue right-of-way into an off-street, multi-use path for pedestrians, cyclists, scooters, and other motorless forms of transportation.

15

This Plan places a significant emphasis on the revitalization and redevelopment of the historic Walnut Street corridor between US 17 and the St. Johns River. A necessary step to realizing this goal will be to address the presence of vacant and underutilized properties. One such site is the northwest quadrant of the Walnut Street and Magnolia Avenue, which is currently privately owned and is being used as an unpaved private parking lot. As such, the property owner should be approached by the City to discuss a more intense use for the site, potential incentive programming to assist in the redevelopment process, and/or whether the site should be purchased by the City to further redevelopment efforts Downtown.

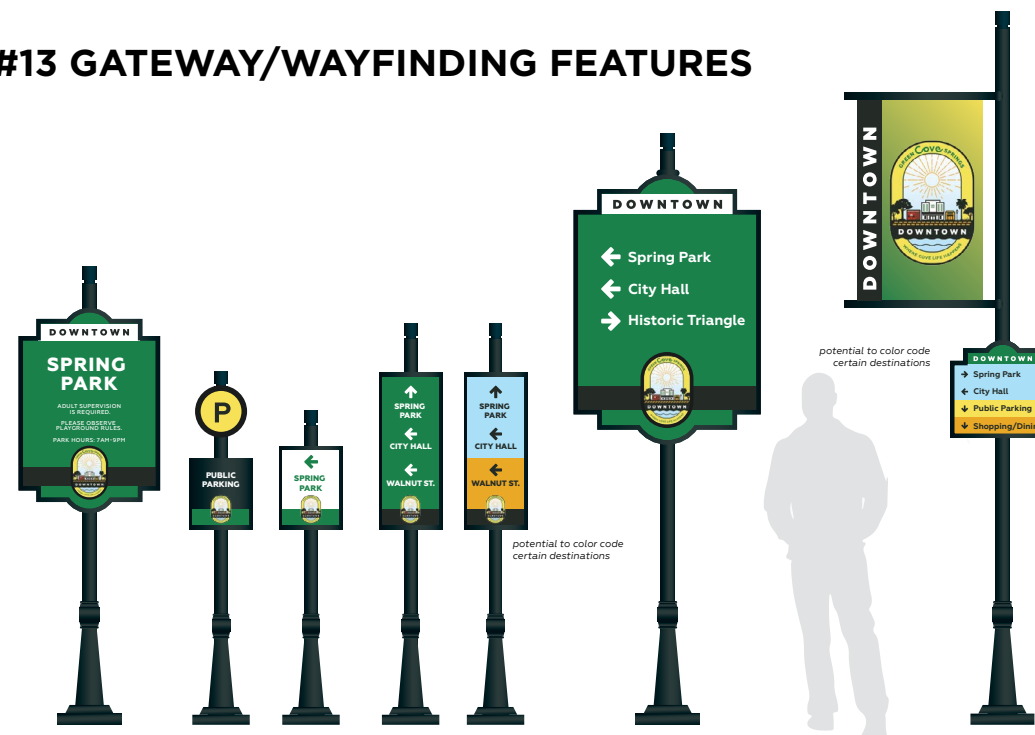
16

Many east-west roadways within the Study Area terminate after connecting with St. Johns Avenue. However, the rights-of-way from these roadways often extend into the River. Thus, ample opportunities exist to convert these underutilized or vacant spaces into waterfront pocket parks which can serve the Downtown neighborhoods and connect the proposed St. Johns Avenue trail. Potential amenities at these locations may include benches, pavilions, tables, water fountains, and kayak/canoe launches.

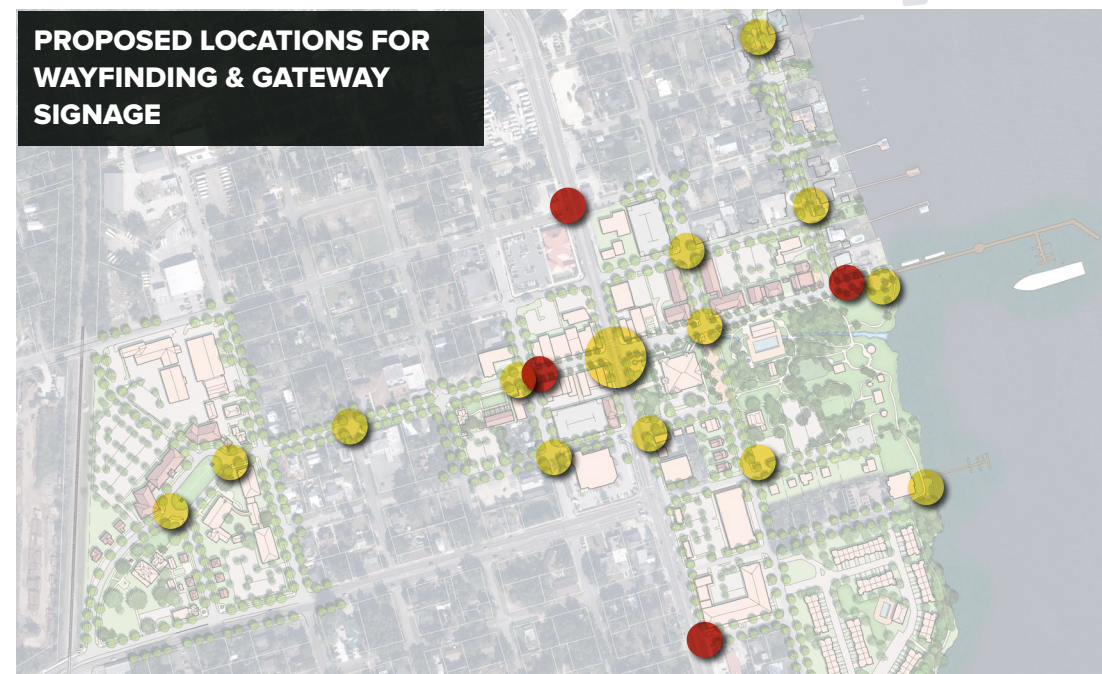
17

From its world-class active and passive recreational facilities to its wildly popular public events, Spring Park stands alone as the region's premier civic open space. This Plan proposes to vacate the Spring Street right-of-way east of Magnolia Avenue, resulting in a loss of 12 spaces, to further expand the Park's capacity for future facilities, programming, and events. As part of this effort, the City should also reevaluate the functionality of the space and determine if the Park's current layout and amenities are complimenting the City's Downtown revitalization efforts.

#13 GATEWAY/WAYFINDING FEATURES



PROPOSED LOCATIONS FOR WAYFINDING & GATEWAY SIGNAGE



 **Gateways**

● Wayfinding Signage

PHASE 3

WATERFRONT



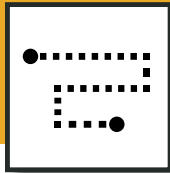
HISTORY



CHARM



CONNECTIVITY



DEVELOPMENT

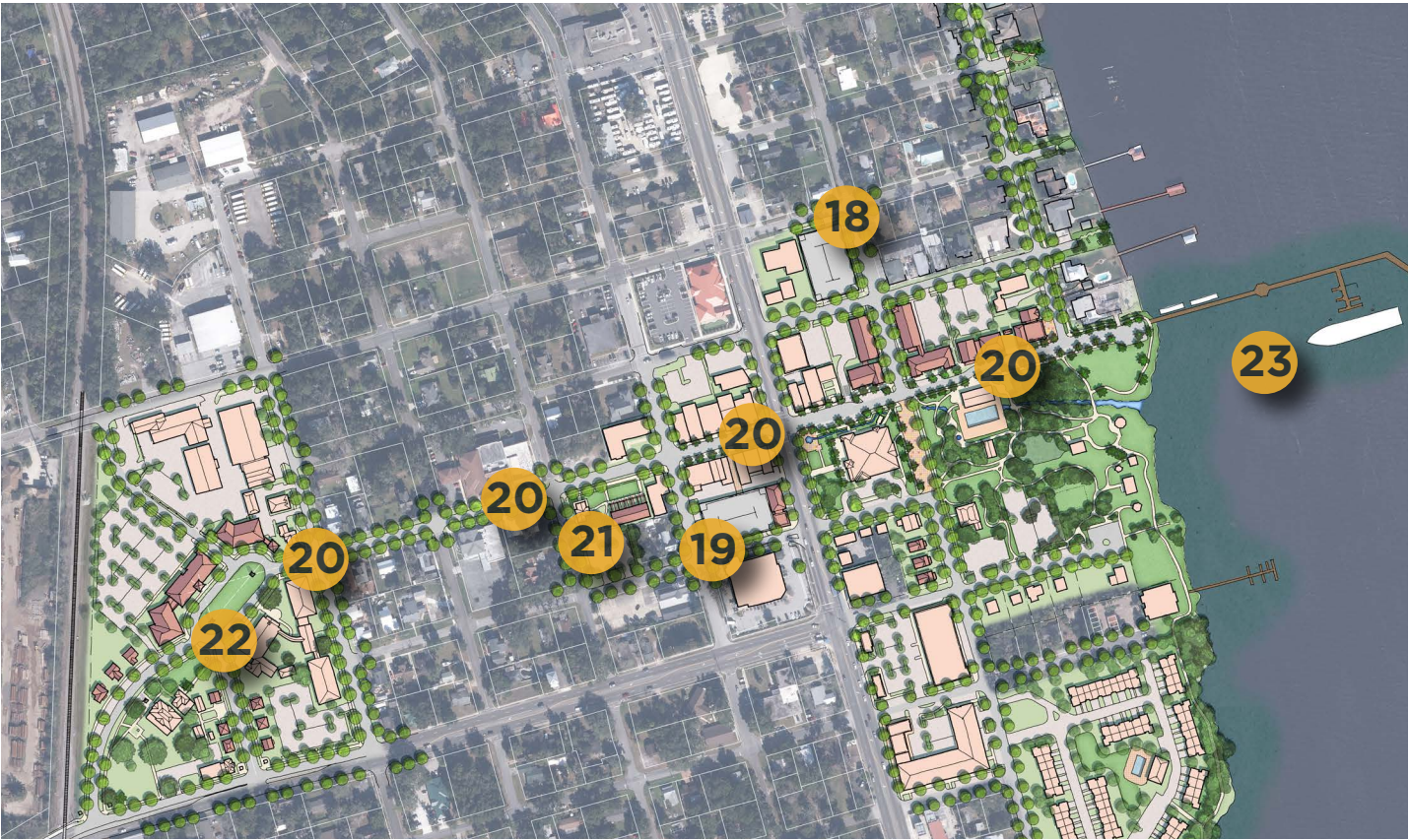


The third and final phase of this Master Plan identifies a series of long-term and community-driven strategic investments intended to set the stage for future economic development within Downtown Green Cove Springs. Most notably, this Plan proposes the construction of high-capacity parking garages to service existing and future **DEVELOPMENT**, embrace the City's **HISTORY** and **CHARM** by revitalizing the Historic Triangle, establish meaningful **CONNECTIVITY** between points of interests throughout Downtown via cultural markers, signage, and paths, and leverage the City's prime **WATERFRONT** location to cultivate a thriving river-based economy and tourism industry.



#18 & #19 PARKING GARAGES

Phase 3 (11-20 Years)		
18	Parking Garage - North (Intersection of Palmer St./Magnolia Ave.)	\$\$\$\$
19	Parking Garage - South (Intersection of Palmetto Ave./Spring St.)	\$\$\$\$
20	Culture Walk Markers	\$\$
21	Strategic Infill Project (Gustafson House - 515 Walnut St.)	\$\$\$
22	Historic Triangle Site Redesign	\$\$\$\$
23	Marine Field Programming	\$
EST. COST: \$ = <\$100,000 \$\$ = \$100,000-\$1 Million \$\$\$ = \$1-5 Million \$\$\$\$ = >\$5 Millon		



18

As Downtown's economy flourishes and the inventory of developable properties nears depletion, the City should consider allowing developers to convert existing off-street parking lots into new redevelopment projects. This policy change will likely result in the exhaustion of Downtown's parking supply and thus, will trigger the need for one or more intensive, large-scale parking structures within the Study Area. Two potential locations for these facilities are identified in the Phase 3 Map.

19

20

Downtown Green Cove Springs is rich with history and culture. In efforts to both celebrate the area's unique cultural heritage while simultaneously enhancing connectivity throughout the Study Area, the City should establish a Downtown cultural trail program complemented by historical markers, imagery, and murals which link important local assets. If implemented effectively, the Culture Walk program would compel residents and visitors alike to stay and explore the Downtown area after reaching their initial destination.

21

Frank and Agnes Gustafson, the founders of the Gustafson Dairy Farm, once resided along the historic Walnut Street corridor within Downtown Green Cove Springs. Today, their home remains under family ownership, but remains largely vacant and untouched since their passing. This Plan proposes to honor *Mama and Papa Gus'* legacy by working with the family to rehabilitate the historic home and repurpose it for a public use. Potential uses may include a history museum, small event space, visitor/community center, or other uses which help serve the community that this iconic couple called home.

22

The Walnut [Main] Street corridor is of critical importance to the success of Downtown and the City as a whole. In the past, significant attention has been paid to the blocks immediately east and west of the US 17 corridor. However, to create a truly vibrant Main Street, the corridor must be densely populated by public and private development that is bookended by important community focal points. Although the eastern end of the corridor meets this standard by featuring the St. Johns River and Spring Park, the western end terminates into the 'Historic Triangle', which houses a number of institutional uses in a sprawling and underdeveloped setting which fail to contribute to the Main Street vision of Walnut presented in this Plan. As such, this project includes various improvements to the corridor's eastern terminus by proposing a new public park facility, expanded parking facilities to accommodate Downtown events, and designating areas for future development which further support the Main Street activities along Walnut Street.

23

The City of Green Cove Springs is fortunate to be positioned adjacent to the St. Johns River—a renowned waterway whose natural conditions are favorable for a wide swath of aquatic activities, such as kayaking, fishing, and paddle boating. Additionally, the portion of the St. Johns River where the City resides is also unique in that it is an ideal setting for an established marine field capable of supporting boating lessons and training programs. Once established, this catalyst industry would attract a wide variety of commercial and industrial support businesses to the area, including restaurants, bait and tackle shops, hotels, and boat repair and restoration facilities.



#22 HISTORIC TRIANGLE



#23 MARINE FIELD PROGRAMMING



The Historic Triangle development will add new civic spaces and honor the City's historic assets

Several parking projects of varying scales have been identified to meet the Study Area's existing and projected parking needs

Potential redevelopment projects are strategically identified throughout the Walnut St. corridor to 'fill in' any perceived gaps in Downtown's urban fabric

Pocket Parks and the St. Johns Trail will connect neighborhoods to the Downtown while simultaneously increasing the supply of local open spaces

Enhancing Walnut St. will strengthen the corridor, connecting community assets throughout the Downtown

The City Hall Park and 'Festival Street' along Magnolia Ave. provide a seamless open-space system from Orange Ave. to the River

The closing of Spring St. and conversion to green space will expand Spring Park

The combination of corridor and intersection improvements provide critical links between places of historic, cultural, and economic significance throughout Downtown Green Cove Springs

New developments south of Ferris Street will complement the City's Downtown revitalization efforts

VISION 2042

A lot can happen in twenty years. In 2042, the First Coast Expressway will have long been completed and it is anticipated that the long-awaited redevelopment of Reynolds Park will have taken form. According to the mid-range projections from the University of Florida's Bureau of Economic and Business Research, the population of the greater Clay County region will grow by more than 50,000 residents over the next twenty years.

The effort to revitalize Downtown Green Cove Springs has already begun with the creation of this Master Plan. By embracing the history and character to advance thoughtful and compatible economic development strategies, Green Cove Springs will be a desired destination.

Phase 1 of this Master Plan includes projects such as improvements along Orange Avenue and Walnut Street corridors, US 17/Walnut intersection enhancements, and the design and construction of a small park in front of City Hall. These projects are intended to foster a greater sense of arrival into Downtown Green Cove Springs. The first phase also seeks to leverage these public improvements for private investment. The City-owned parcels along Walnut Street, between Magnolia Avenue and St. Johns Avenue, provide a prime location for redevelopment that could include a destination restaurant that capitalizes on a beautiful and protected waterfront vista across Spring Park.

Phase 2 of this Master Plan seeks to further enhance the public realm within the Focus Area. The Spring Park expansion includes the vacation of a portion of Spring Street to increase green space. The conversion of Magnolia Avenue, from Walnut Street to Spring Street, to a curbless 'festival street' seeks to connect the Park to City Hall and create continuous park space from the St. Johns River out to US 17. A restored Judge Rivers House will serve as a physical symbol of the City's history and values. These public improvements will advance another private sector redevelopment opportunity on the vacant lot next to the Clay Theatre.

Phase 3 of this Master Plan reflects the anticipated success of the first two phases. Increased property values and the growing popularity of Downtown Green Cove Springs should create the need for one or more parking garages to serve both residents and visitors. Furthermore, the success and revitalization near the St. Johns River should extend and create opportunities for redevelopment on the west side of Walnut Street, including the underutilized publicly-owned parcels west of Green Street.

Over the next twenty years, there will be many new developments to support a growing Clay County region. However, no new development can replicate the authenticity of Downtown Green Cove Springs. Through thoughtful public realm enhancements and targeted private investments, which enhance activity and preserve community character, Downtown Green Cove Springs can regain its past vitality and position the City for new achievements in the 21st century.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Residents of Green Cove Springs

Edward Gaw, Mayor
Matt Johnson, Vice Mayor
Connie Butler, Council Member
Steven Kelley, Council Member
Van Royal, Council Member

Henrietta Francis, Planning & Zoning Board Chair
Gary Luke, Planning & Zoning Board Vice-Chair
Brian Cook, Planning & Zoning Board Member
Justin Hall, Planning & Zoning Board Member
Richard Hobbs, Planning & Zoning Board Member

Steve Kennedy, City Manager
Mike Null, Assistant City Manager / Public Works Director
Michael Daniels, Planning & Zoning Director
Heather Glisson, Planning Technician
Tiffanie Kelly, Public Information Officer

& The Stakeholder Interview Group

LEAD CONSULTANT:



TEAMING PARTNER:



