

SmartCode Charrette Book Gulfport, Mississippi

February 23-28, 2006

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SPECIAL THANKS TO:

The Honorable Brent Warr, Mayor, City of Gulfport, and Laura Warr

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President Dr Willis Lott and Vice-Chancellor Dr Regie Sykes, Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College.

And the many other officals, neighbors, citizens, and architects who participated in the preparation of these plans.

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This document was prepared by Robert Alminana and Susan Poliwka of HDR|Town Planning with assistance from members of the Design Team.

Background

Background

August 29, 2005: Hurrican Katrina hits the Mississippi Gulf Coast

October 11-17, 2005: The Governor's Commission on Recovery, Rebuilding and Renewal and the

Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU) organize the Mississippi Renewal Forum

in Biloxi.

December 1, 2005: Robert Alminana of HDR presents the Gulfport report to the community at St

Joseph's Church in Orange Grove.

January 19-20, 2006: HDR facilitates a public downtown revitalization workshop sponsored by the

City and the Gulfport Downtown Association.

February 23-28, 2006: Our effort culminates with the 6-day SmartCode charrette.

This series of Post-Katrina events was aimed at helping the community:

- 1. Recover from and seize the opportunity created by the devastation;
- 2. Help citizens, community leaders, homeowners, property owners, and developers rebuild better than before Katrina.



Katrina's destruction on Gulfport's West Side



Gulfport Harbor Master's Station



Miss. Renewal Forum Team Leaders in Biloxi, Oct 05



Governor Haley Barbour addressing the Forum



Redevelopment Master Plan Charrette Book

Gulfport, Mississippi

31 October, 2005

Gulfport Report presented to the Gulfport Community on Dec 1, 2005

The SmartCode Charrette Objectives

- To offer direct and immediate help to the homeowners in deciding whether to rebuild their damaged or destroyed properties and how best to do it.
- To listen to citizens, community leaders and elected officials over and over again, to hear what they have to say about their future.
- To publicly present and discuss ideas about the planning of the city.
- To offer some of the tools that will help Gulfport achieve a balanced development in a beautiful and prosperous environment.
- To help the community and its leaders prepare an updated urban development code in the form of a calibrated SmartCode.
- To help implement the visions and recommendations of ongoing planning efforts.

The SmartCode Charrette significantly relied and built on the work accomplished during the October 2005 Rebuilding Charrette (refer to the Redevelopment Master Plan Charrette Book for the Gulfport, MS of October 31, 2005).

Company of the Co

Opening Presentation



Design Pin-up and Public Review



House Planning Asisstance Day

The SmartCode Charrette



Designers on Bus Tour with Mayor Warr



Designers at work in the Studio

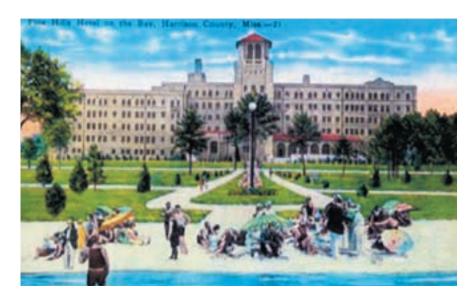


House Planning Assistance Day

Local Architectural Precedents



Great Southern Hotel, Gulfport - 1900's



Pine Hill Hotel on the Bay, Harrison County



Hotel Galvez, Galveston, TX



Great Southern Hotel, Gulfport - 1900's



Pine Hill Hotel on the Bay, Harrison County



Silvey's Apartments and Cottage, Gulfport - 1920's

General Urban and Architectural Precedents



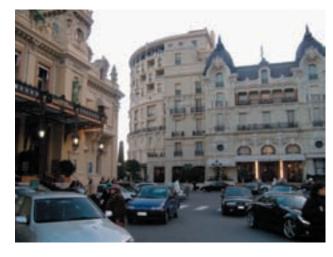
Hotel in Cannes, France



Hotel in Cannes, France



Hotels and Residential Buildings in Cannes, France



Casino - Monte Carlo



Casino - Monte Carlo



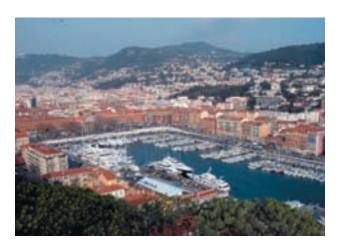
Casino - Monte Carlo



Port of Nice, France



Port of Nice, France

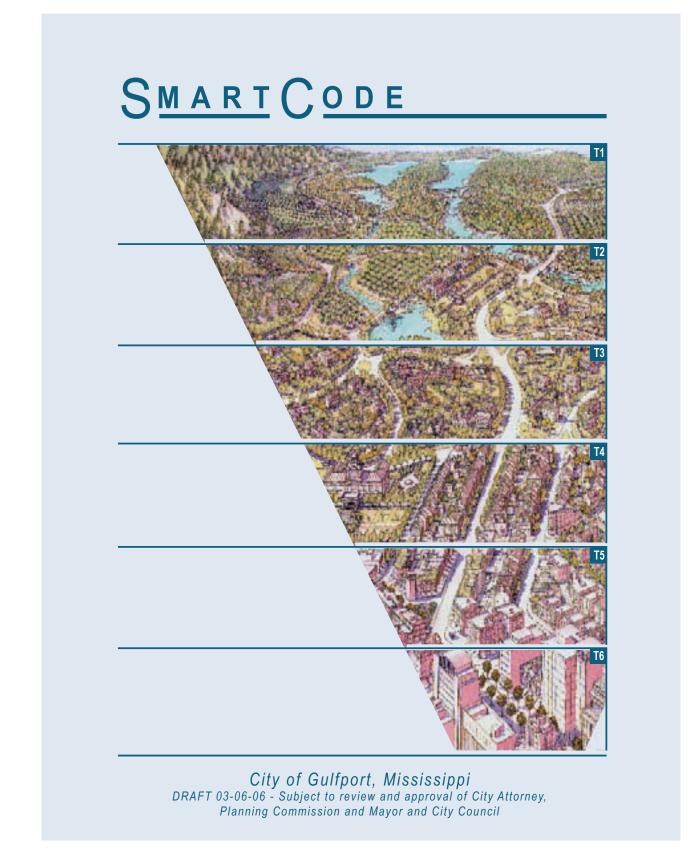


Port of Nice, France

SmartCode

What SmartCode does:

- Smartcode makes Gulfport's existing type of traditional neighborhoods legal to build on new sites.
- Smartcode enables the future vision and preserves and restores the past character of such neighborhoods.
- Smartcode enables sustainable plans for future development to accomplish the infilling of sprawl areas and hurricane-damaged areas while retaining local character.
- Smartcode protects the natural beauty of the area by keeping development compact.
- Smartcode reduces the infrastructure costs of growth to Gulfport by encouraging more compact development.
- Smartcode reduces congestion and driving time by moving ordinary destinations closer to where people live and by using street networks to move traffic rather than single arterial roads.
- Smartcode benefits both residents and developers because it lets both parties know what is expected and what to expect. The forms of building are specified at time of adoption, and so long as developers are willing to develop according to the residents' vision, they may proceed quickly and without costly delays and uncertainty.
- Smartcode reduces acrimony and improves fairness of the development process by reducing variances and appeals, providing a better outcome and greater community harmony.
- Smartcode makes it possible for growth to improve the quality of life rather than degrade it.
- Smartcode results in streets and development which improve property values rather than reducing them.
- Provides a diversity of living options for residents on the Coast by keeping rural and sub-urban areas peaceful and keeping urban areas lively.



Code Calibration performed at the Charrette:

- We addressed questions and concerns about SmartCode in public/official meetings.
- We customized the SmartCode for Gulfport character such as its stunning natural beauty and historic urban form.
- We calibrated metrics of setbacks, height, lot widths, etc.
- We mapped the T-zones city-wide, working with Mayor, City Council, city planners, and citizens.
- We set aside the current Special Districts (current Industrial zones) such as the airport, the sites along
- We suggested a Restoration District associated with architectural standards/special requirements.
- We correlated the code to the regulating plan to make the plan operational.
- We legally connected the code to Gulfport regulations and named authorities for plan review and variance/warrant procedures in Gulfport.



Examples of buildings and streetscapes illustrating the character and beauty of Gulfport, used of calibrating the SmartCode

Recommendations:

- 1. We recommend that the calibrated SmartCode be adopted as an optional overlay throughout the City, side by side with the existing Zoning Code. We believe that when offered a choice, developers and citizens will quickly realize that using the SmartCode is simpler and more predictable, therefore safer for their applications or their neighborhoods.
- 2. With the support of Mayor Warr and Councilwoman Libby Roland, we also recommend that the calibrated SmartCode be made mandatory in the Downtown south of the tracks.
- 3. We recommend a Design Review Process:

Architectural design review assures a level of quality, predictability, and therefore value, as does the SmartCode. Design review is recommended for strategic areas like T5, T6, and Historic Preservation or Restoration Districts. Developers and potential homeowners are more likely to invest if they can be reasonably sure of the development that will follow. A city may have an excellent plan and superb zoning ordinances, but without an official design review process, the built environment remains somewhat unpredictable.

Three options exist for design review that will assure the City of Gulfport of predictable, quality design:

- A. Hire a Town Architect as a member of the Planning Department to perform reviews on an as-needed basis.
- B. Form a Design Review Board (DRB) composed of a cross-section of local design and development professionals and City staff. The DRB would meet biweekly or monthly to review plans.
- C. Contract with a remote Town Architect or Design Reviewer who visits Gulfport monthly for personal plan review with owners, builders, developers, and City Staff

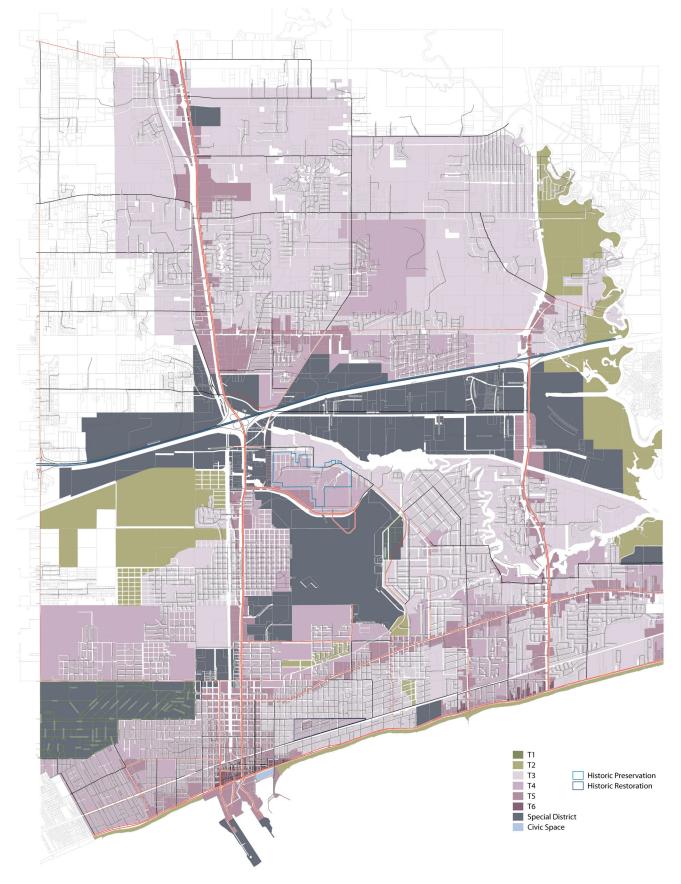




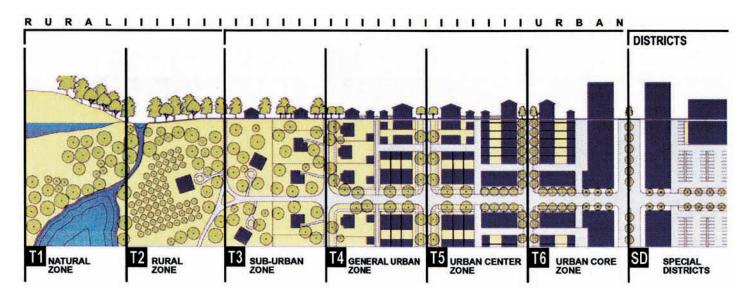
SmartCode

A necessary precursor to the desired implementation of the Smart Code within the community is the mapping of the existing and proposed future conditions according to the zones defined by the Transect. As this map details, the majority of the city falls into the T3 (sub-urban zone) and T4 (general urban zone) zones. Areas adjacent to the primary vehicular corridors – in particular Highway 49, Pass Road, Cowan Road and Courthouse Road—as well as surrounding the downtown fall into the more intense T5 – Urban Center – zone, with the most urban intensity found in the Downtown and its immediate surroundings, the Urban Core (T6).

There are a number of Special Districts within the community, ranging from the Port, to the Airport, to the industrial areas along the Bayou and the retail and sport-related zones parallel to I-10. There are also distinct pockets of green within the city map, particularly in those areas deemed environmentally sensitive. Those areas that will never be developed and which can best be maintained in some form of their original state are depicted as T1 – Natural Zone. Other areas, which may be currently undeveloped, but which might at some future point be developed, are depicted as T2 – Rural Zone.

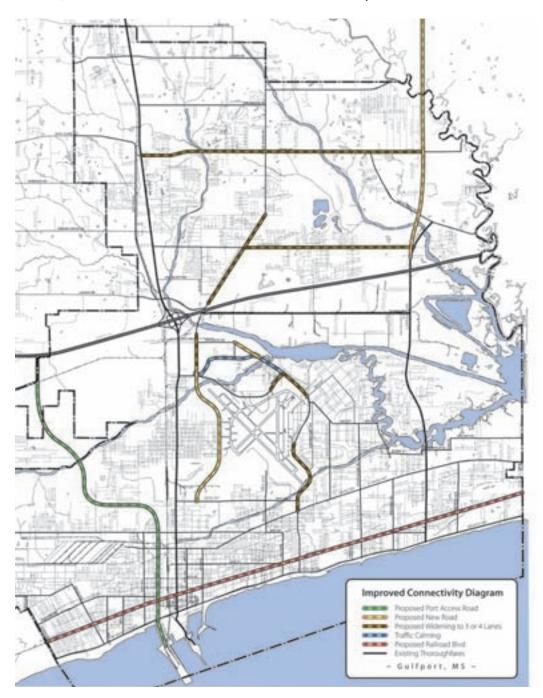


Working Draft of the Proposed Regulating Plan (as of March, 2006)



The Rural-to-Urban Transect

Improved Connectivity



Additional connectivity is needed both to facilitate movement within the city and to provide for several unique situations such as the movement of large quantities of freight to and from the Port in the least disruptive manner. It is also required to improve the local as well as regional south-north movement. Additional connectivity could be achieved by adding new sections of roads (orange lines) and enlarging portions of existing ones (brown lines).

Note: This Page edited from the December 2005 Mississippi Renewal Forum Charrette Report

Public Parks & Open Spaces



The proposed plan shows the existing parks, the proposed parks, and links between the parks and the communities. The network is a system of loops that make it feasible for a person to bike or walk continuously and end up where they began, on a large or small scale.

Jones Park

Jones Park is the little engine that has never made it up the hill. It has been over-loved and underutilized for years. Family reunions, carnivals, overflow parking and school picnics have abused what should be the "Central Park" of the coast. With no hierarchy of or defined public spaces, park goers are overwhelmed by the scale of the facility and feel no intimacy with the land.

The proposed design for Jones Park defines functional areas that will facilitate multiple uses. By minimizing the amount of impervious surfaces and managing stormwater in an environmentally holistic way, the park will be a model for future development along the coast. The ultimate goal for the space is to create a family-friendly park that meshes with surrounding development, while making a visual statement from Beach Boulevard.

The following list explains the amenities in and associated with the park:

The Horticultural Gardens will educate locals and tourists about the rich coastal landscape, and provide a meeting space for avid gardeners.

The Veteran's Memorial is located for visibility from the road as well as accessibility from the park. The local chapter of the Veteran's of Foreign Wars will update the monument to honor our fallen heroes.

The Pavilions will play an important role in bringing this large area to a human scale. These outdoor rooms will provide shade for picnics and people-watching as well as house public restrooms.

The Amphitheater will be a regional attraction. With the harbor as stage backdrop, concert goers will take in a beautiful view while listening to "Jazz in the Park", watching a community performance, or just watching the boats come in.

The Community Lawn will provide several functional uses while framing the view of the Gulfport Harbor from Beach Boulevard.

- 1. Open Space for free-play: Frisbee, Football, or Picnicking.
- 2. Parade Ground for "Cruisin' the Coast": Reinforcing the lawn with a subsurface cell system will create an annual display area for the antique cars that have become a beloved tradition. The nine foot wide concrete walking track around the lawn will serve as a "Parade Loop" for the participants.
- 3. Friday Night Flicks: The lawn will become a "Walk-in" Theater on Friday nights during the summer. Families will bring their blankets and chairs to the lawn to watch family movies on a screen in front of the harbor. Local snow cone vendors, hotdog







Jones Park Design updated in February 2006

stands, and popcorn and cotton candy makers will pay a fee to the Parks Commission to enter the park and serve goods to the people to create a fun atmosphere for everyone.

The Fountain located in the center of the lawn will serve as a focal point from all angles of the lawn as well as from Beach Boulevard.

The Children's Play Area adjacent to the lawn will include playground equipment and interactive fountains, and benches for supervising parents.

The Fisherman's Village in the northeast corner of the harbor, centered around the relocated Ship Island Ferry Dock, will create a harbor haven for tourists and local fishermen and boaters. It will include a bait shop, fish market, deli, and other small retail shops.

Fishing Rodeo Pavilions will be located around a traffic circle in the main entrance to the park. These four pavilions will host the annual Deep Sea Fishing Rodeo and accommodate vendors for the event. The "circle" will have a platform for the display of the trophy fish. When this area is not being used for events such as the Rodeo,

the pavilions can be rented by the public for birthday parties, family reunions, or other public uses.

Park Maintenance

Although this is not an amenity, it is imperative that the park be maintained on a consistent basis. A maintenance plan will need to be structured and followed. The design confines lawn areas to eliminate any confusion on what should and shouldn't be mowed.

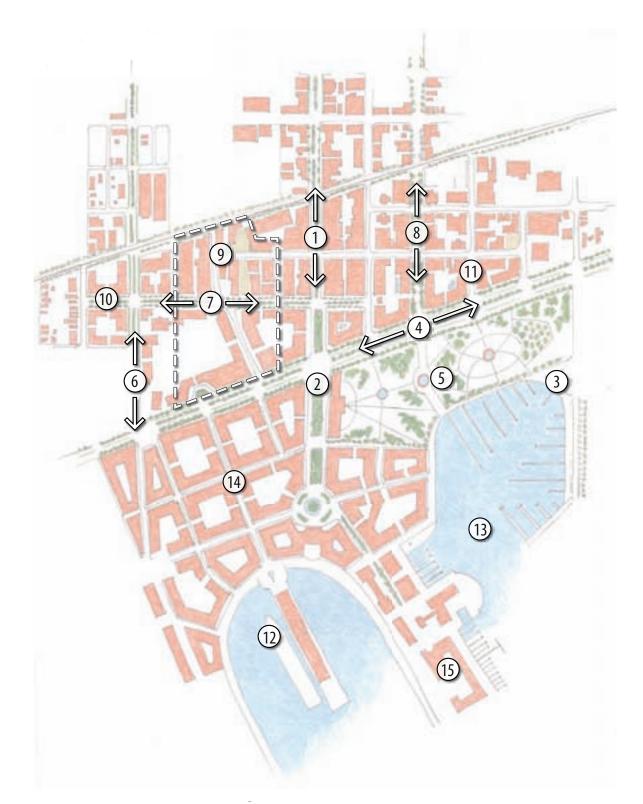
Fredrick Law Olmsted, the father of landscape architecture, once said, "such public grounds, are a necessity for civilized urban living." A new Jones Park is such a necessity for the New Gulf Coast.

The Port & the Downtown



The Downtown and the Port of Gulfport are envisioned as the two halves of one strong, vibrant and memorable heart of Gulfport. They reinforce each other, knitting together a fabric that draws on the economic strength generated by the port, the business and cultural intensity of the downtown, the beauty of the beach and the new Jones Park, and all of the amenities and entertainment opportunities associated with the new heart of Gulfport.

The Port & the Downtown



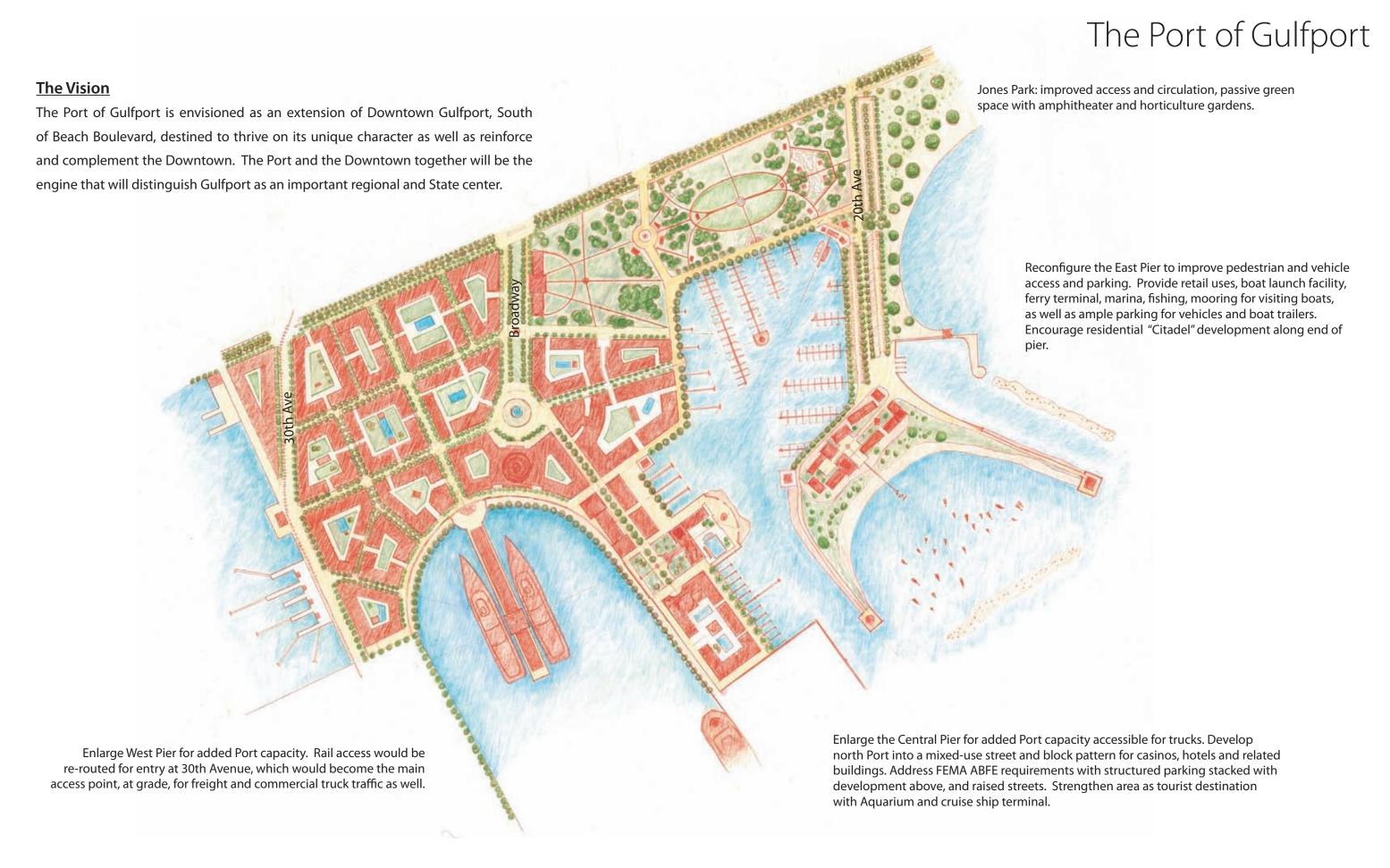
- 1 Redesign 25th Avenue
- ② Gateway to Port
- 3 Ferry Terminal
- 4 Redesign Beach Boulevard
- 5 Jones Park

- 6 30th Avenue Truck Boulevard
- 7) 13th Street Redesign
- 8 23rd Avenue Enhancement
- Q Culture and Arts District
- 10 New Townhouses

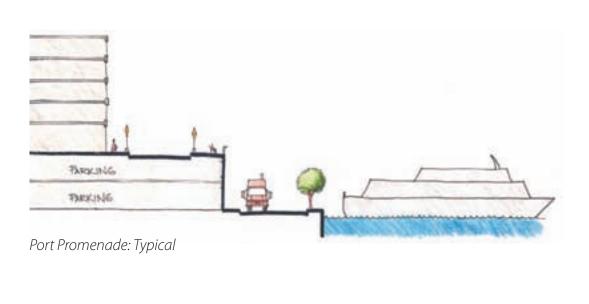
- 11) Downtown Hotel(s)
- (12) Cruise Terminal
- (13) Small Craft Harbor
- (14) Mixed Use: Residential / Commercial
- 15) Palace Hotel

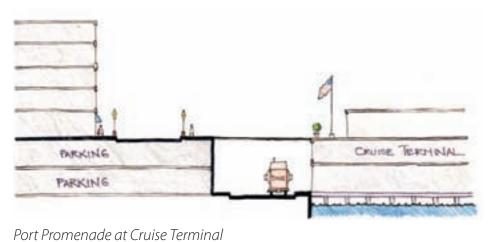


View of Downtown through Jones Park: New Hotels on old 1st Baptist Church site - by Knight Martorell



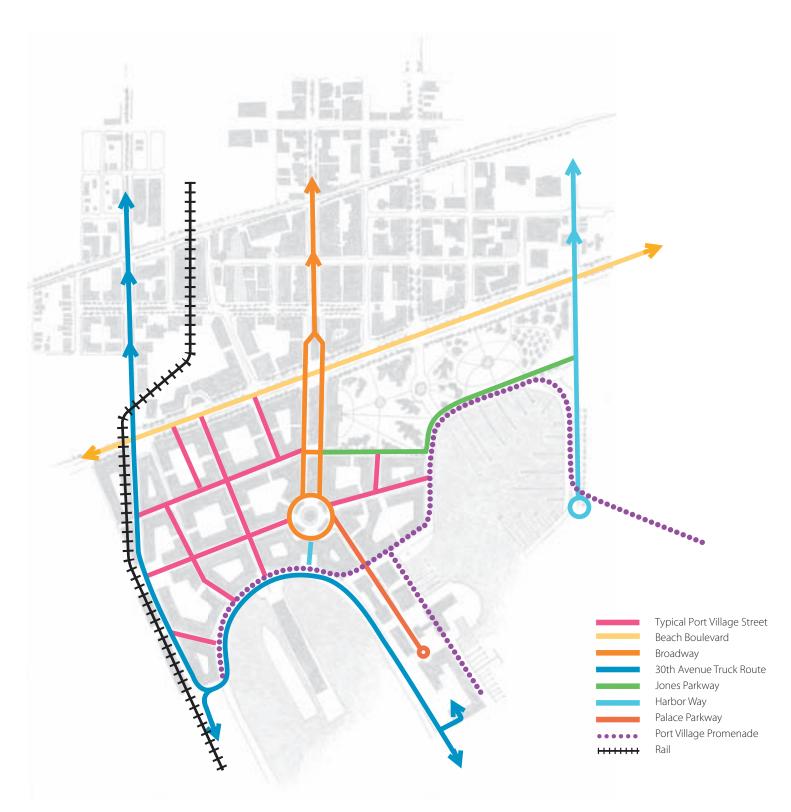
The Port of Gulfport





PARKING
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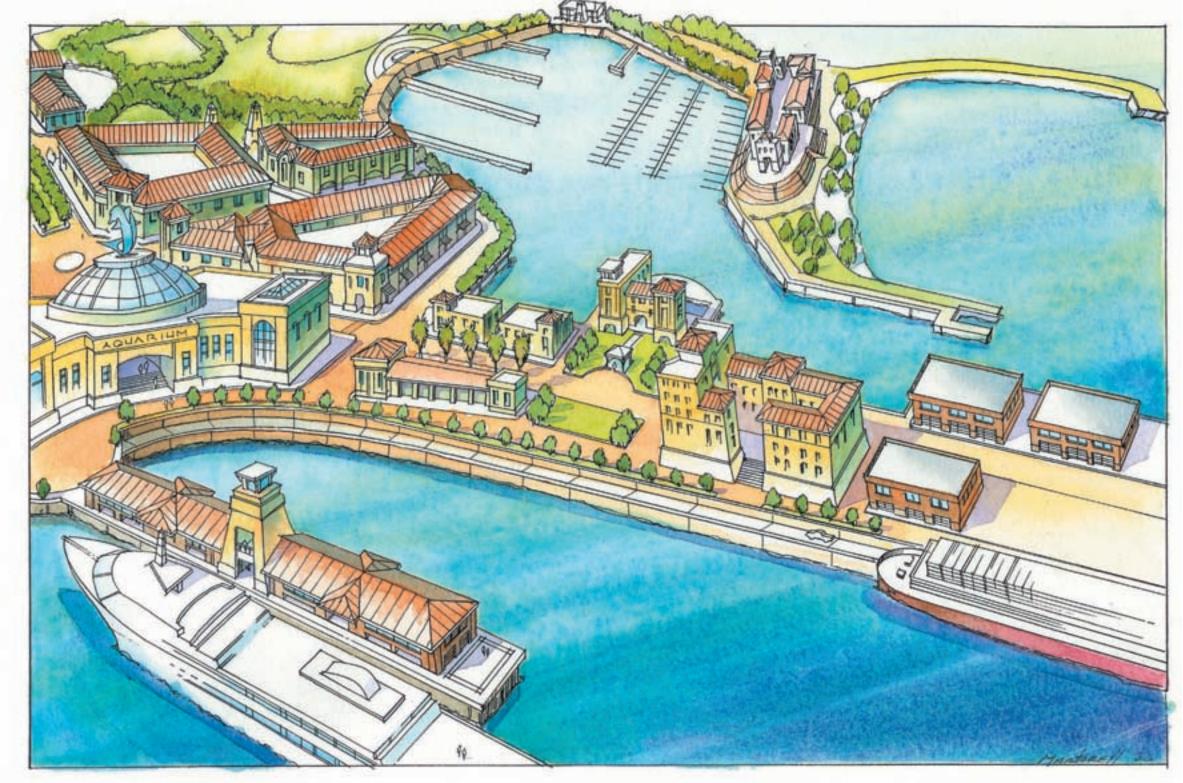
Port Village: Typical



Proposed Circulation Plan and Street Typology

Due to the FEMA Advisory Base Flood Elevations (ABFE), development in the Port Area will have to be raised above sea level. ABFEs for the area can be accommodated by building parking for the development below, with raised streets to maintain active uses at the ground level.

The Port of Gulfport

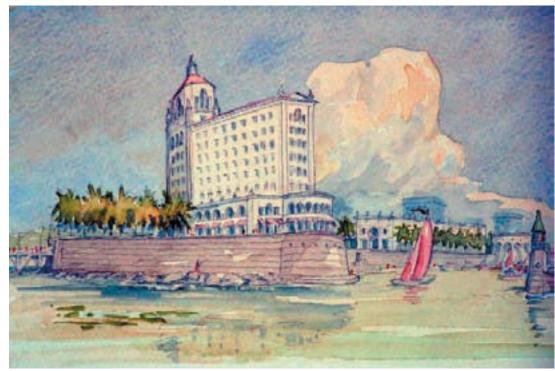




Initial Design from October 2005 Renewal Charrette

Bird's Eye View Illustrating a detail of the Vision for the Port of Gulfport - by Knight Martorell

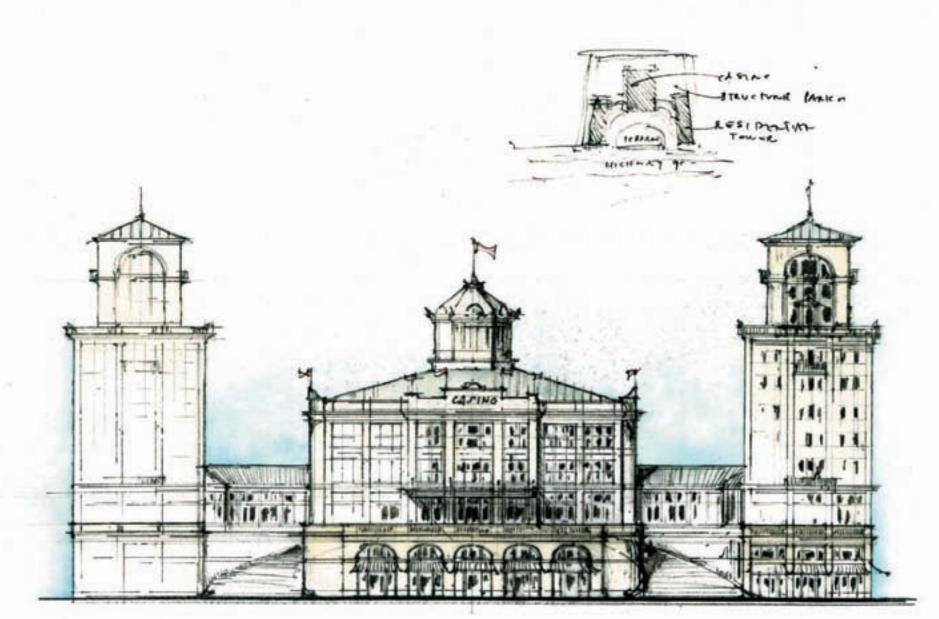
Casinos



Casino on the water's edge - by Michael Imber



Casino - Grand Hotel - by Michael Imber



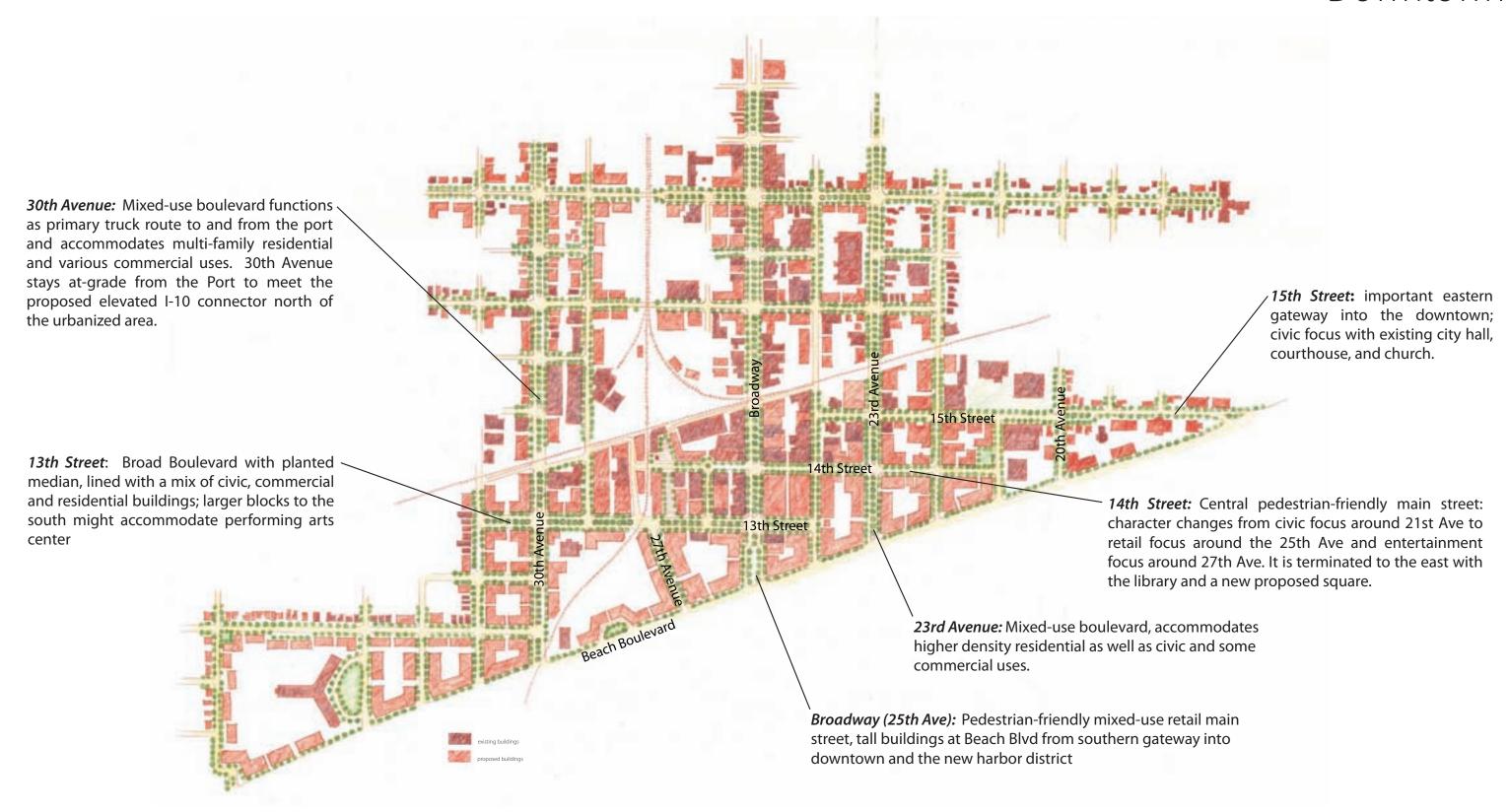
Casino and Residential Towers - by Marianne Cusato

Downtown



A View of Broadway Looking South Towards the Port - by Knight Martorell

Downtown



Proposed Plan of Downtown Gulfport

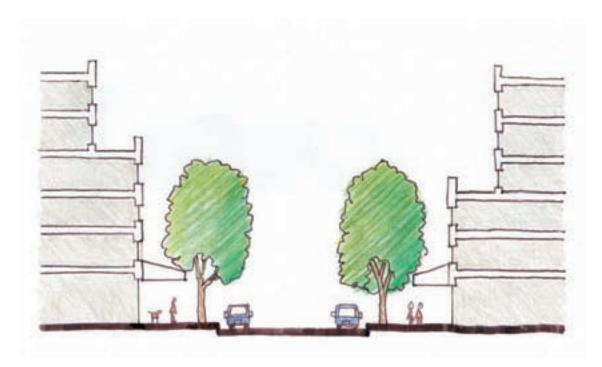
Downtown - Streets



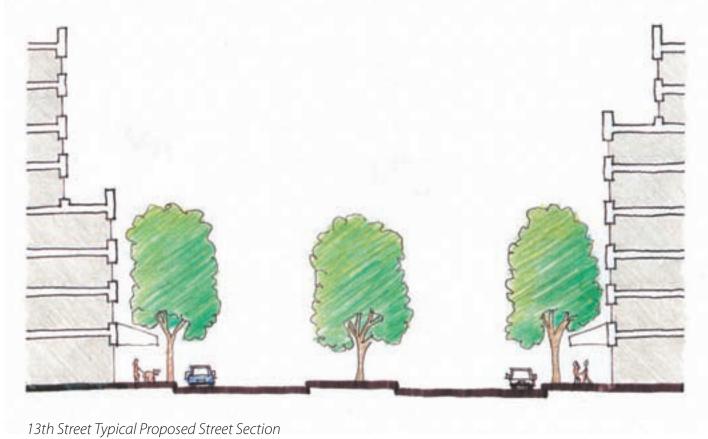
14th Street: Existing Condition



13th Street: Existing Condition



14th Street Typical Proposed Street Section



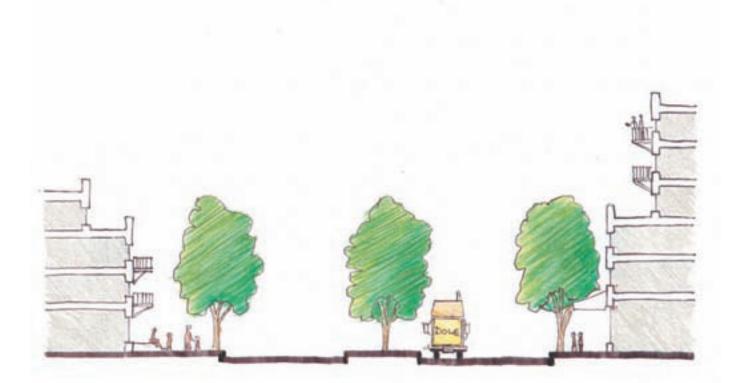
Downtown - Streets



30th Avenue: Existing Conditions



Broadway Avenue: Existing Conditions



30th Avenue Proposed Street Section

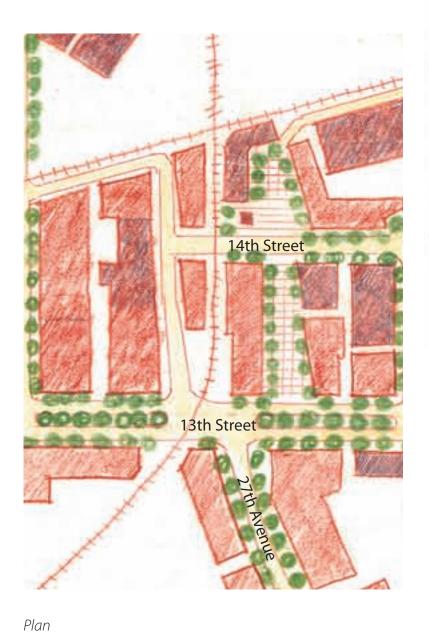


Broadway Avenue: Proposed Street Section

Downtown - Train Depot

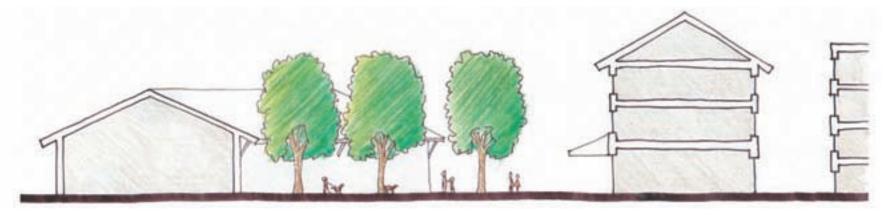
Proposed Strategy for Downtown Train Depot

Create a heart for the proposed downtown Culture and Arts District: form new plaza at existing train depot parking lot at 27th Ave between 13th and 14th Street for outdoor markets, concerts, etc.



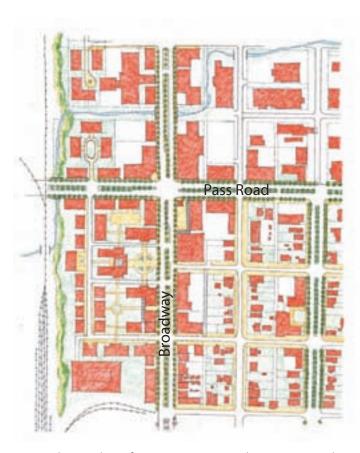


Rendering by Knight Martorell



Section

Eastern and Northern Downtown



Northern edge of Downtown at 25th St/Pass Road

Northern Downtown:

- o 25th St/Pass Road: a mix of commercial and residential buildings with activity "nodes" at key intersections:
- o 17th St: important connector to western neighborhoods
- o 19th St: local east-west route; eastern terminus is Soria City School
- o Pass Road: Key east-west route; existing commercial corridor presents a development opportunity for campus like business or institutional use
- o 28th St: Northern gateway into downtown: beginning of palm trees in wide median.



Western Edge of Downtown

Old Oasis Casino Area

- o Site lined with row houses along 11th St and 37th Ave to transition to adjacent single-family neighborhood
- o New buildings fronting Beach Boulevard.
- Height limited at western edge forming transition to single family residential.
- Height builds toward the east.
- o New residential development.

The West Side



Broad Avenue - North - South Transect



These neighborhoods, lying west of the Downtown and between the beach and the CSX Railroad, were hit very hard by Katrina. In most of this area, the first block or two nearest the shore were completely destroyed, leaving only mature trees and building foundations. The next block or two north of this destruction were also badly damaged, by water, wind and debris pushed from the shoreline blocks.

The preliminary flood surface elevation maps for West Beach include new, higher elevations for habitable floors in much of the frontage along Beach Boulevard. Not coincidentally, the destruction was generally greatest in these new areas mapped by FEMA.

West Side Neighborhood Detail

Note: This Page edited from the December 2005 Mississippi Renewal Forum Charrette Report

The East Side





East Side: Areas of Intervention

View of Proposed Condominiums at Tegarden Plaza at East Beach Boulevard - by Victor Deupi

The East Side - V.A. Hospital

The Gulfport Veterans Administration Hospital campus is an approximately 147-acre site to the west of Courthouse Rd. in Gulfport. South to north it spans from the northern right of way of Beach Blvd (Hwy. 90) over the CSX railroad tracks to just south of the EC Elementary School. It was already scheduled to be abandoned by the VA by 2009, and since Hurricane Katrina, the VA has apparently decided to not re-occupy the site except for a possible small temporary mobile hospital unit.

Based on a cursory look around on 14 October 2005, most of the buildings appear to have survived Katrina though many have substantial wind and water damage. The historic chapel lost part of its south wall, the historic guard house is gone. The buildings adjacent to the coast appear to have been washed through, though exterior walls are fairly intact. Much of the Mediterranean detail in the buildings has survived intact and those should be conserved and reused as quickly as possible to avoid their continued degradation.

Several different possible uses have been suggested, all with the intent to keep the historic south campus in the public realm. Some Gulfport citizens have suggested the possibility of the campus continuing as a medical facility with a specific focus of either pediatrics or a clinic facility dedicated to the needs of retirees. Either would require a hard look at whether it is feasible for a medical facility, even a clinic, to lie right on the coast line, under threat of every storm that comes ashore. Others have proposed an educational focus for the facility. The primary goal is to avoid placing the south campus, with its picturesque Mediterranean buildings and impressive stand of live oaks, in the hands of a private developer who might choose to keep the grounds off limits to the general public.

With the primary goal of preserving and enhancing the historic 1917 buildings in mind, we suggest that a service entry road be brought in just to the south of the railroad tracks, on the wide right of way from Hewes Av. to the NW corner of the site. A parking deck can be sited to be accessible from this road, and all trucks could serve the site from it as well.

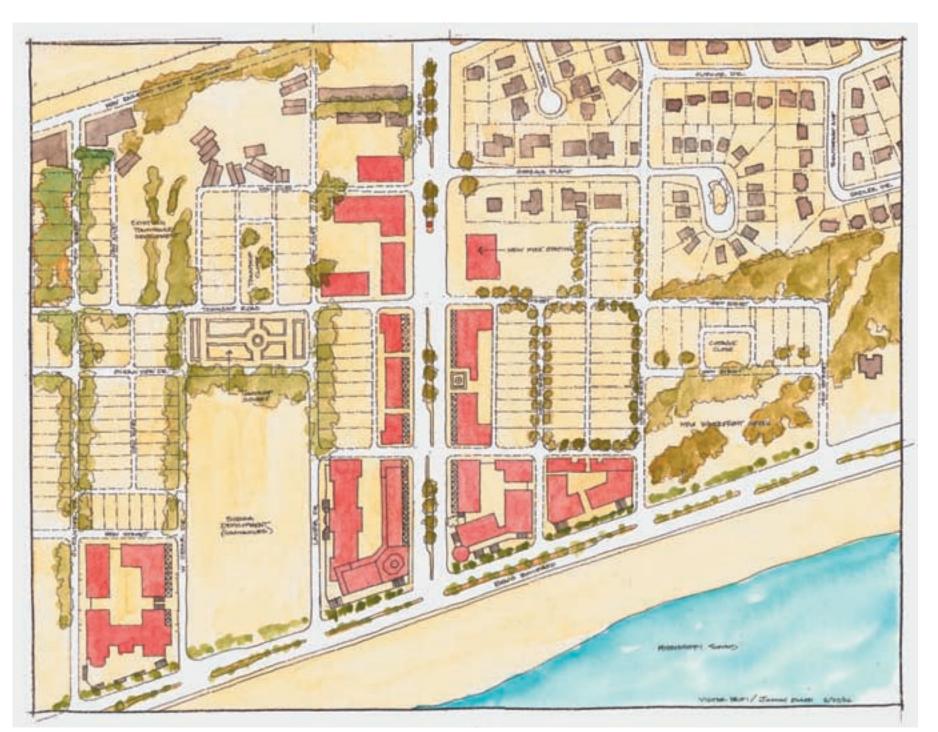
Building Condition, Post-Katrina

Site of Gulfport V.A. Hospital

The East Side: Cowan Road at East Beach Blvd.

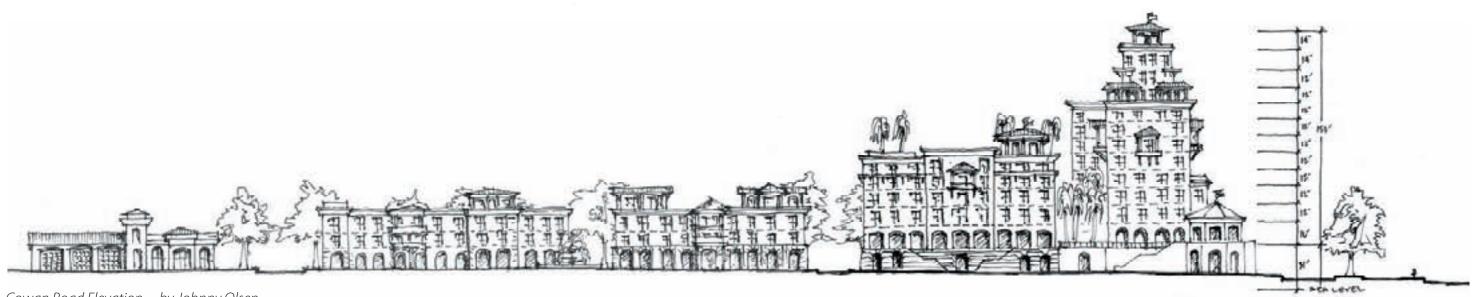
Cowan Road at East Beach Boulevard: Proposed Design Strategy

- Establish a traditional neighborhood development with resort amenities along the waterfront.
- Develop Cowan Road as a mixed-use, retail and commercial boulevard from the waterfront to the new Railroad Street extension.
- Reconstruct the damaged Fire Station at the intersection of Cowan and Township Roads, providing greater public presence and a higher architectural standard.
- Line the center aisle of Cowan Road with pavilions, trees, and plantings as necessary.
- Create a new Residential Square at the intersection of Township Road, and West Cedar and Laurel Drives.
- Provide a variety of residential types that include estate lots, cottages, townhouses, live-work units, apartment lofts and condominiums.
- Steadily increase the intensity as the neighborhood approaches the waterfront with 8-12 storey apartments, hotels and condominiums lining Beach Boulevard.
- Step back the apartments, hotels and condominiums along the waterfront so as to create a stunning skyline that respects the scale and character of the adjacent residential neighborhood, without blocking Gulf views from the public realm.
- Create a new Waterfront Green along Beach Boulevard where the apartments, hotels and condominiums meet the estate lots.
- Provide Cottage Closes at the Waterfront Green and Township Square as a transition from the urban to the residential.



Neighborhood Plan by Victor Deupi and Johnny Olsen

The East Side: Cowan Road



Cowan Road Elevation - by Johnny Olsen



Proposed Condominium building at Cowan Rd. and Beach Blvd by Victor Deupi



Proposed condominium building on Cowan Rd. between Township Road and Beach Blvd by Victor Deupi

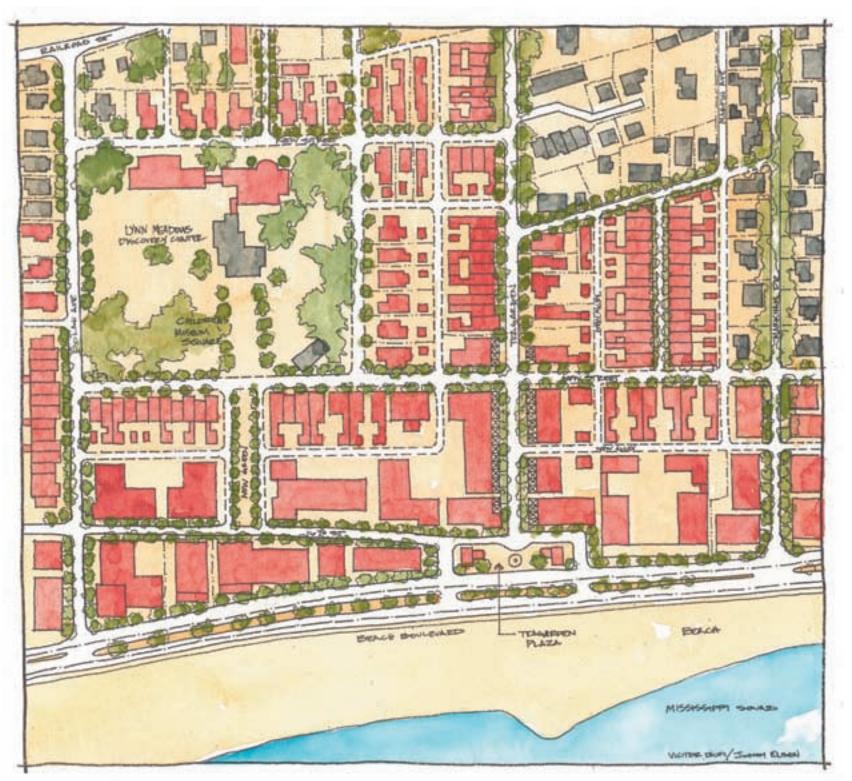


View down Cowan Road - by Victor Deupi

The East Side: Tegarden Neighborhood Strategy

Tegarden Road at Each Beach Blvd: Proposed Design Strategy

- Establish a traditional neighborhood development with an arts and entertainment district by the waterfront.
- Create a new waterfront plaza at the intersection of Tegarden Road, 16th
 Street and Beach Boulevard.
- Develop Tegarden Road as a mixed-use, retail and commercial corridor from the waterfront to Railroad Street.
- Create a new Residential Square surrounding the Lynn Meadows Discovery Center.
- Provide a variety of residential types that include estate lots, cottages, townhouses, live-work units, apartment lofts and condominiums.
- Steadily increase the intensity as the neighborhood approaches Beach Boulevard with 8-12 story apartments and condominiums lining the waterfront plaza.
- Step back the apartment and condominiums along the waterfront to create
 a stunning skyline that respects the scale and character of the adjacent
 residential neighborhood, without blocking Gulf views from the public
 realm.



Neighborhood Plan - by Victor Deupi and Johnny Olsen

The East Side: Tegarden at East Beach Blvd.

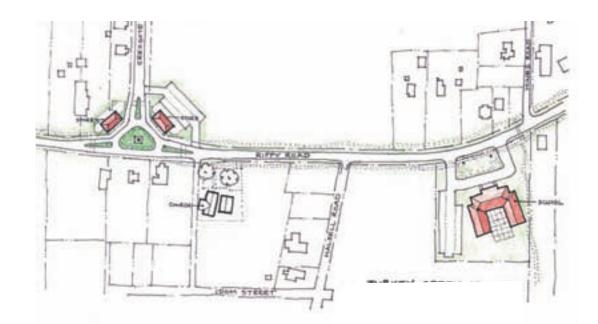


Proposed condominium building at Tegarden and Beach Blvd. - by Victor Deupi



Proposed Pavillion - by Victor Deupi

Historic Neighborhoods







2nd Street



Old North Gulfport



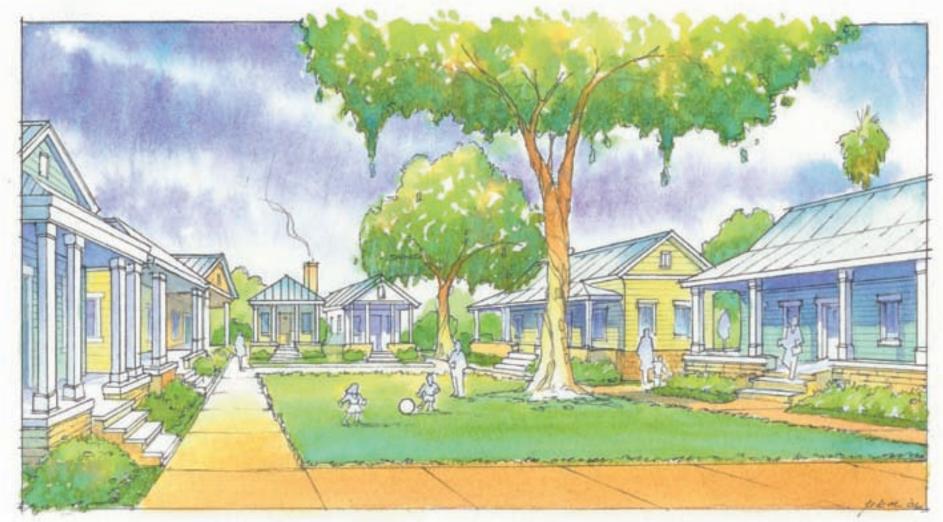
Soria City

Gulfport has many historic neighborhoods, such as the West Side, Gaston Point, Gulf Garden, Park Place, Central Gulfport, the Quarters, Soria City, Broadmoor, Second Street, Magnolia Grove, Hardy Court, Handsboro, Mississippi City, Old North Gulfport, or Turkey Creek. Many, particularly those near the beach, have been severely, sometimes almost entirely destroyed by Katrina. The priority is to both rebuild those communities, respecting the traditional patterns of urbanism, and make them even better places than they were, by improving the infrastructure and bringing them to higher safety standards. The illustrations on this page demonstrate how some of these places could be built or rebuilt.

Note: This Page edited from the December 2005 Mississippi Renewal Forum Charrette Report

Soria City Cottage Court

The cottage court is an ideal solution for infill in historic neighborhoods. It provides a dignified solution to affordable housing. This location is proposed for Soria City at Pratt & 20th, and would add 15 new homes on 2/3 acre or 22 du/acre situated around a small park. It would work well for other historic neighborhoods such as Mississippi City.



Proposed Cottage Court - by Knight Martorell



Existing Site



Proposed Soria City location for a Cottage Court