



priority action plan overview



turkey creek and north gulfport neighborhoods community plan

February 2006

prepared by Turkey Creek Community Initiatives and North Gulfport Community Land Conservancy

technical planning assistance and document production by Moore Iacofano Goltsman, (MIG) Inc.

DRAFT

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for more background on turkey creek
and the north gulfport neighborhoods:
www.turkey-creek.org

SECTION 1

introduction

1.0 project background

The communities of Turkey Creek and North Gulfport* are valuable historic neighborhoods fortunate to be defined by strong community ties, historic homes and landmarks, and an open space corridor around Turkey Creek. To preserve these assets, these neighborhoods have engaged in a community planning effort to benefit from improved city services, economic development opportunities, and coordinated neighborhood planning, particularly as we rebuild after Hurricane Katrina.

Due to Hurricane Katrina’s devastation on August 29, 2005, hurricane relief efforts in both communities have taken precedence over ongoing cultural and environmental conservation, restoration, education and community planning efforts. Like nothing before it, however, Katrina has dramatized and heightened the need for such work in the Turkey Creek basin and across the entire gulf coast.

1.1 project process

To launch the community planning process, Turkey Creek Community Initiatives and the North Gulfport Community Land Conservancy invited residents of Turkey Creek and North Gulfport, city and county staff and state representatives to meet in October 2005 to propose a shared vision for the future of the lower Turkey Creek Basin, including Turkey Creek and North Gulfport neighborhoods. Together, this group facilitated by the planning consultant firm, Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc., (MIG) identified goals and strategies to help preserve our local heritage and assets.

The consultant team used the outcome of this meeting as the building blocks of a community plan and began initial steps of analysis and research for the area in order to return to the community with a refined set of goals and objectives. In January 2006, MIG returned to facilitate a community-wide workshop. The goal of this workshop was to present the



The initial planning workshop to determine was held in the community two months after Katrina.

possible strategies for revitalization of these communities and get feedback from residents and stakeholders. Over 150 people attended the community meeting held at the Good Deeds Community Center in North Gulfport, including Mayor Brent Warr, County Supervisor William Martin, State Representative Frances Fredericks, City Councilwoman Ella Holmes-Hines, Gulfport Planning Director George Carbo, the Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport, the Mississippi Regional Housing Authority, the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, the Governor’s Commission in Rebuilding, Recovery and Renewal, South Mississippi Regional Housing Authority, the *Sun Herald* newspaper, and many community members from neighborhoods within the Lower Turkey Creek Basin. See Appendix B: Community Task Force Members for a complete list of attendees.



The neighborhoods of Turkey Creek and North Gulfport are home to historic homes such as this one, affected by neglect and Katrina, and in need of restoration.

The following local and national non-profit organizations are involved in the planning process:

- AARC (local chapter)
- Audobon Mississippi
- Enterprise Corporation of the Delta
- Healthy Building Network
- Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain
- Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights
- Mercy Housing
- Mississippi Center for Justice
- Mississippi Chapter of Sierra Club
- Mississippi Heritage Trust

Continued on next page

*References to North Gulfport include the adjacent neighborhoods of Forest Heights, Rolling Meadows, Villa Del Ray, Edgewood Manor, and L.C. Jones subsidized housing.

Continued from previous page

- Mississippi Urban Forest Council
- NAACP (Mississippi State Conference and Gulfport Chapter)
- National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Nature Conservancy
- Oxfam America
- William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation
- Vanguard Foundation
- Wildlife Rescue Center
- YouthBuild, USA



Participants in the community workshop share their ideas and concerns for the future of the Lower Turkey Creek Basin.

1.3 preliminary project goals

Through discussions with community members and stakeholders, a set of goals and objectives have been identified for North Gulfport, Turkey Creek and the lower Turkey Creek Basin.

COMMUNITY GOALS

- Develop infill housing that is affordable and culturally consistent
- Maintain historic character
- Build on African American history
- Initiate a small business development program
- Provide creek access and restoration
- Connect to regional greenways and trails
- Clean up polluted areas
- Develop and implement a stormwater management program
- Make streets walkable, safe and attractive
- Make the airport and other permanent stakeholders our partners for good community planning



1.3 document overview

This priority action plan is comprised of three sections:

- **Introduction:** Provides an overview of the project background and process
- **Determinants of Plan:** Outlines the key determining features that currently define opportunities and constraints within Turkey Creek, North Gulfport and the Turkey Creek watershed.
- **Planning Framework:** Describes the key strategies and action steps needed to preserve and enhance the cultural, historic and natural resources of these communities over the long-term, while strengthening the neighborhood’s livability and safety immediately.



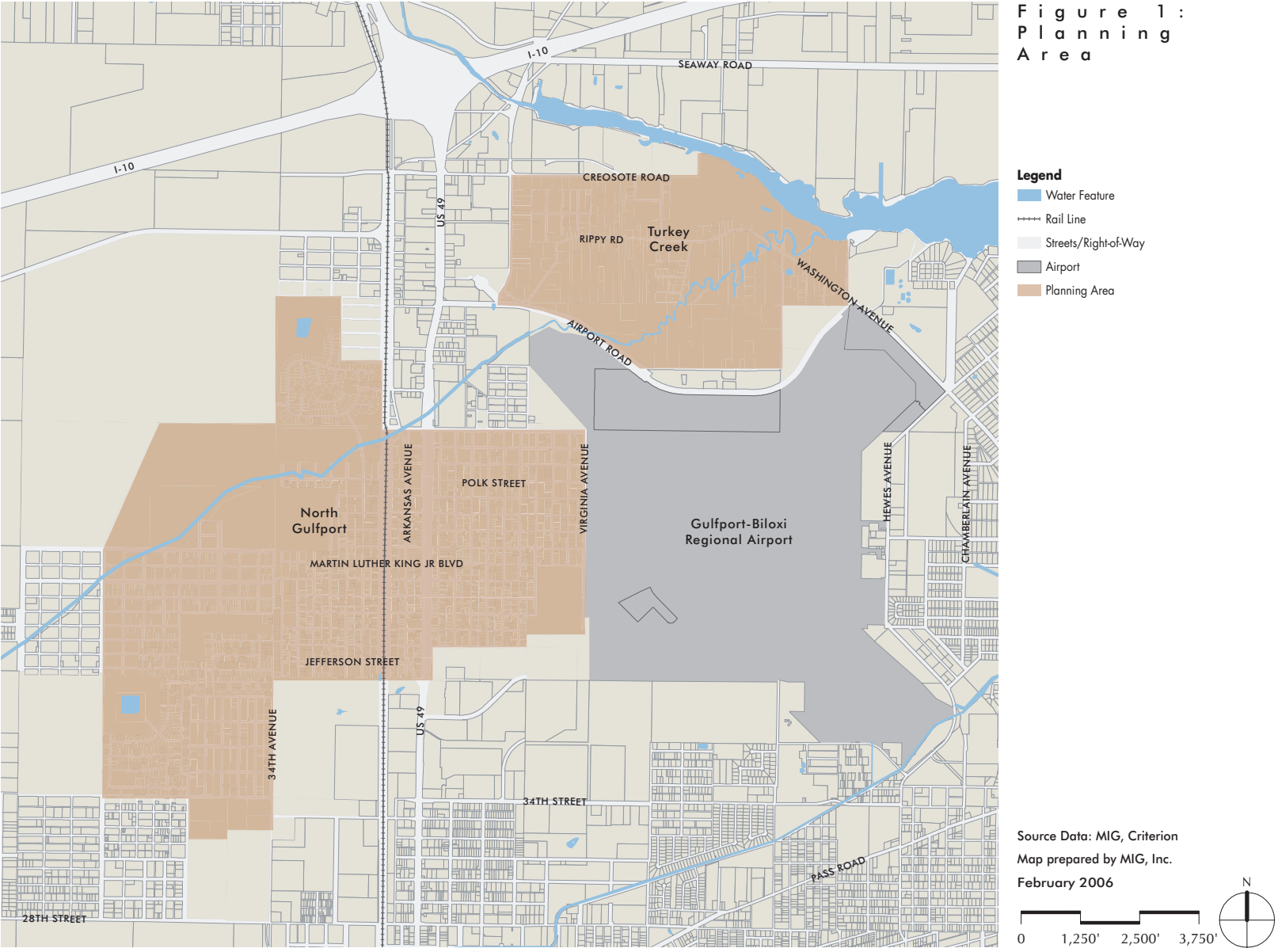
SECTION 2

community plan determinants

2.1 regional context

The communities of Turkey Creek and North Gulfport are incorporated neighborhoods within the City of Gulfport. Bordered to the north by Bayou Bernard, the east by Airport Road and Washington Avenue, the south by 28th Street and the west by Canal Road, the planning area is situated in the heart of Gulfport. The communities sit immediately adjacent to the Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport, Interstate 10, and are bisected by Highway 49. Increasingly, these major circulation routes are squeezing residential and historic neighborhoods that existed long before their construction.

The regional map below outlines the City of Gulfport’s boundary (dashed line), the regional highways and interstates and the planning area (brown) within the regional context. The planning area map (right) shows the area in closer detail.



2.2 flood zone and wetlands

Much of the Turkey Creek neighborhood borders Turkey Creek and falls within or adjacent to the 100-year flood zone. Similarly, the northern most section of North Gulfport and all of Forest Heights are within close proximity to the creek and its flood zone. Prior to Katrina, however, the creek had not flooded these homes in the lifetime of current residents.

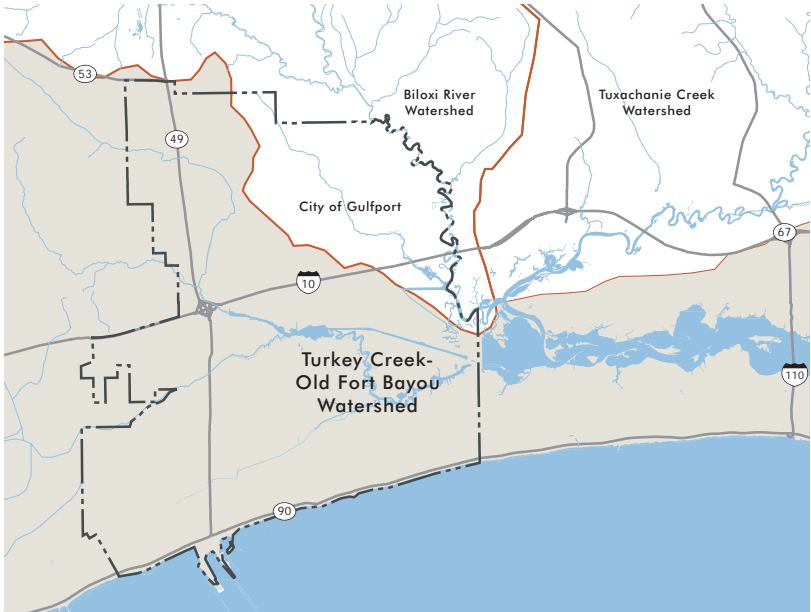
Given the area’s original designation as “swamp land”, it is not surprising that a significant portion of land within both neighborhoods are low-lying wetlands. Together, the wetlands and flood zone have required both communities to be aware of their area’s environmental sensitivity. Primarily, the communities of North Gulfport and Turkey Creek recognize the creek and wetlands as:

- Culturally significant
- Protection from flooding and erosion
- Ecologically valuable for the protection of local plant and animal species
- Contributors to public health by filtering air and water pollutants
- Undesirable for sprawl and over-development

Over the last decades of development, these residential neighborhoods have experienced encroachment from all sides. Some of this new development threatens the quality of the area’s natural systems.

Threats to the quality of the natural environment include:

- Encroaching development
- Industrial pollution
- Human pollution
- Reduction of stream buffer
- Loss of tree cover
- Increased runoff
- Harmful non-native plant species, especially Cogon Grass



The watershed diagram above shows the Turkey Creek-Old Fort Bayou Watershed boundary in relation to the city of Gulfport, the coast and the Biloxi River and Tuxachanie Creek watersheds to the north.



Turkey Creek was historically used for baptisms and fishing. Today many residents and experts propose improved public access and enjoyment.



Historically, the creek bed has been dependent on surrounding tree cover for flood control. Much tree cover has been removed by landowners south of Turkey Creek neighborhood.

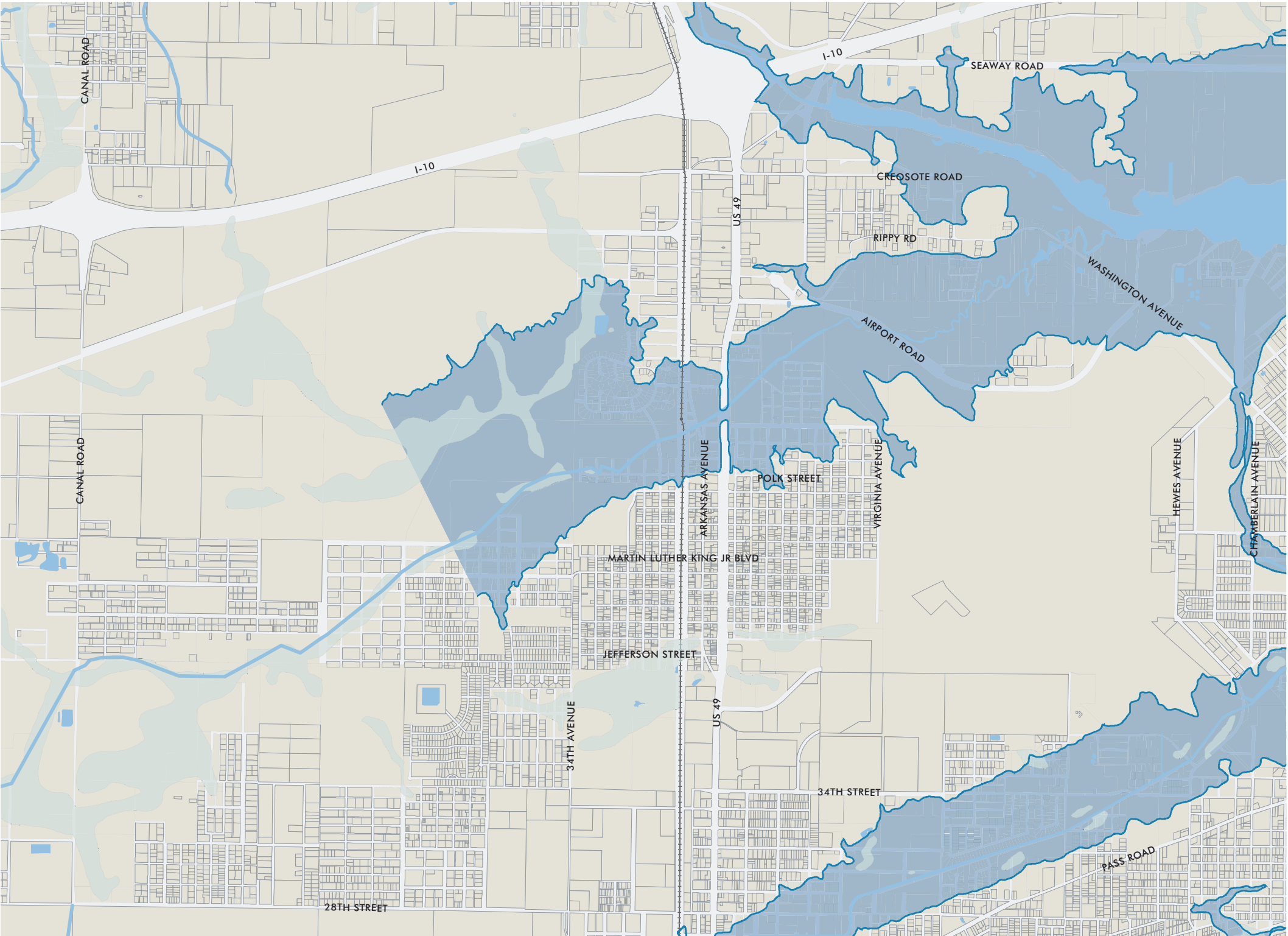
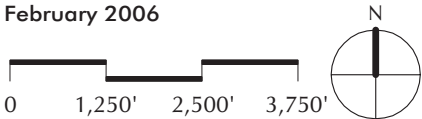


Figure 2 :
Wetlands
and Flood
Zones

- Legend**
- Water Feature
 - Rail Line
 - Streets/Right-of-Way
 - Wetland
 - FEMA Base Flood Elevation Area

Source Data: MIG, Criterion, FEMA
Map prepared by MIG, Inc.
February 2006



2.3 transportation network

The communities of North Gulfport and Turkey Creek are surrounded by regional and state-wide vehicular thoroughfares. Both neighborhoods are bisected by regional traffic that poses safety threats to the community and makes connections within the area difficult for any means of travel other than the car. These regional pressures threaten the quality of life for residents, as well as the integrity and character of the residential neighborhoods.

Just south of I-10, Creosote Road filters east-west traffic off of Highway 49 directly through the heart of historic and residential Turkey Creek. Strategies to redirect this traffic should be considered a high priority. A new east-west connection is needed to take heavy through traffic off of two-lane Rippy Road. Property owners in the neighborhood should be assured that future infrastructure plans will not impact their property negatively.

Highway 49 bisects North Gulfport into east and west districts. The plan should prioritize strategies to create a safe method for pedestrian and bike traffic to cross Highway 49.

The east-west commercial corridor in North Gulfport is Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. The boulevard lacks adequate infrastructure, including continuous sidewalks, lighting, stormwater treatment, and pedestrian amenities. It is currently a poor reflection of the great historic figure that it is named after.

In addition, North Gulfport’s residential streets are inadequately lighted, lack sidewalks and other streetscape amenities. Storm water drainage channels are exposed and unmaintained. In extreme cases, some have exposed sewer channels. Sustainable and attractive solutions for these residential streets will be a high priority in the plan.

Currently, an extension of Three Rivers Road is being considered which

would continue the road south of Airport Road to John Hill Boulevard. If the infrastructure plan is approved, the alignment should avoid negative impacts to the eastern edge of North Gulfport along Virginia Avenue.

A proposed “310 Connector” between Interstate 10 and the State Port near Downtown Gulfport is slated to traverse the Turkey Creek watershed diagonally from Canal Road in the northwest to 28th Street/31st Avenue in the southeast. The alignment and construction of this regionally important roadway should avoid causing adverse impacts upon North Gulfport area residents and Turkey Creek Wetlands.

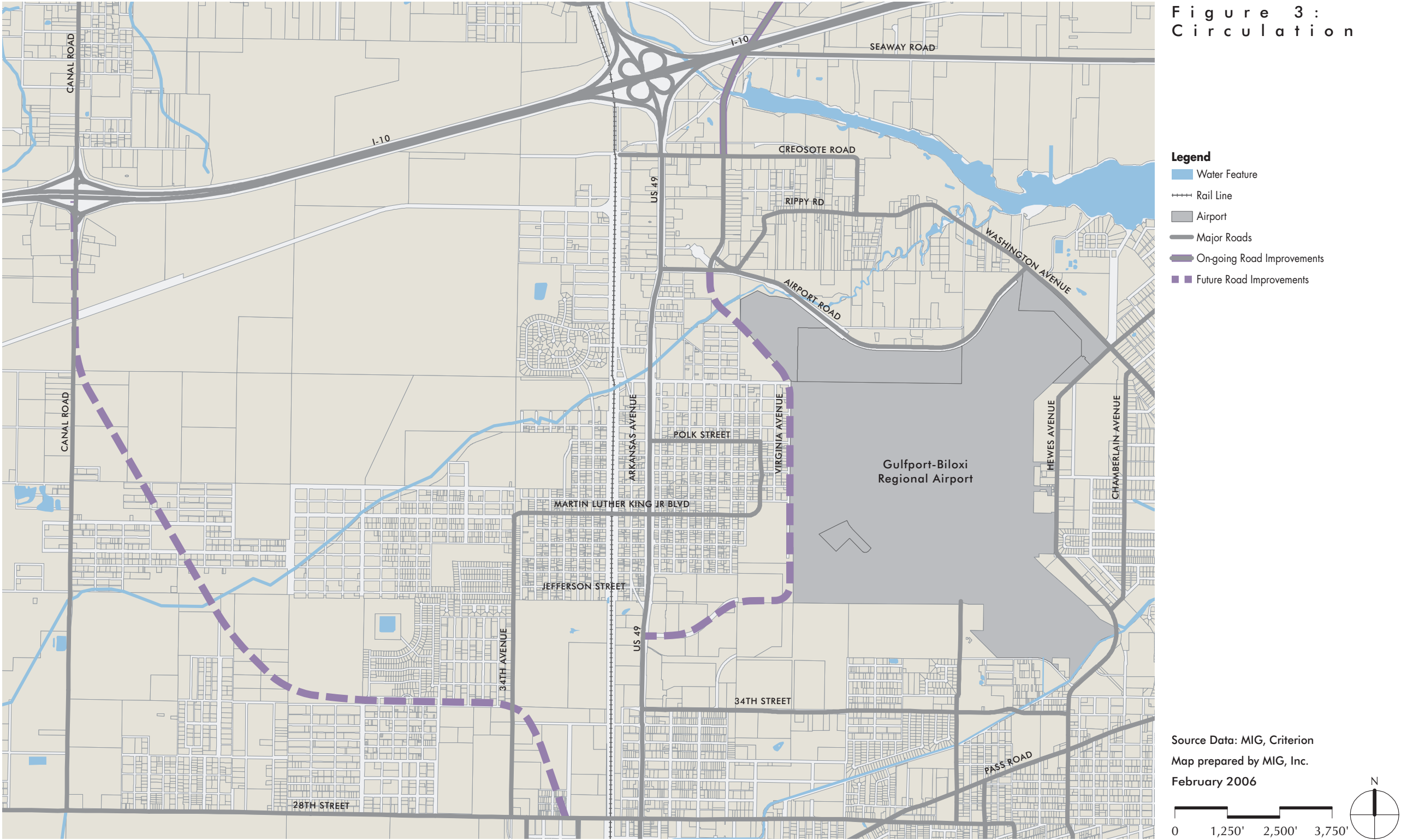


Highway 49 provides north-south access between I-10 and the coast. Six lanes of fast-moving traffic bisect North Gulfport.



Airport Road separates the historic residential and environmental character of Turkey Creek from the Airport to its south.

Figure 3:
Circulation



2.4 Historical and Cultural Resources

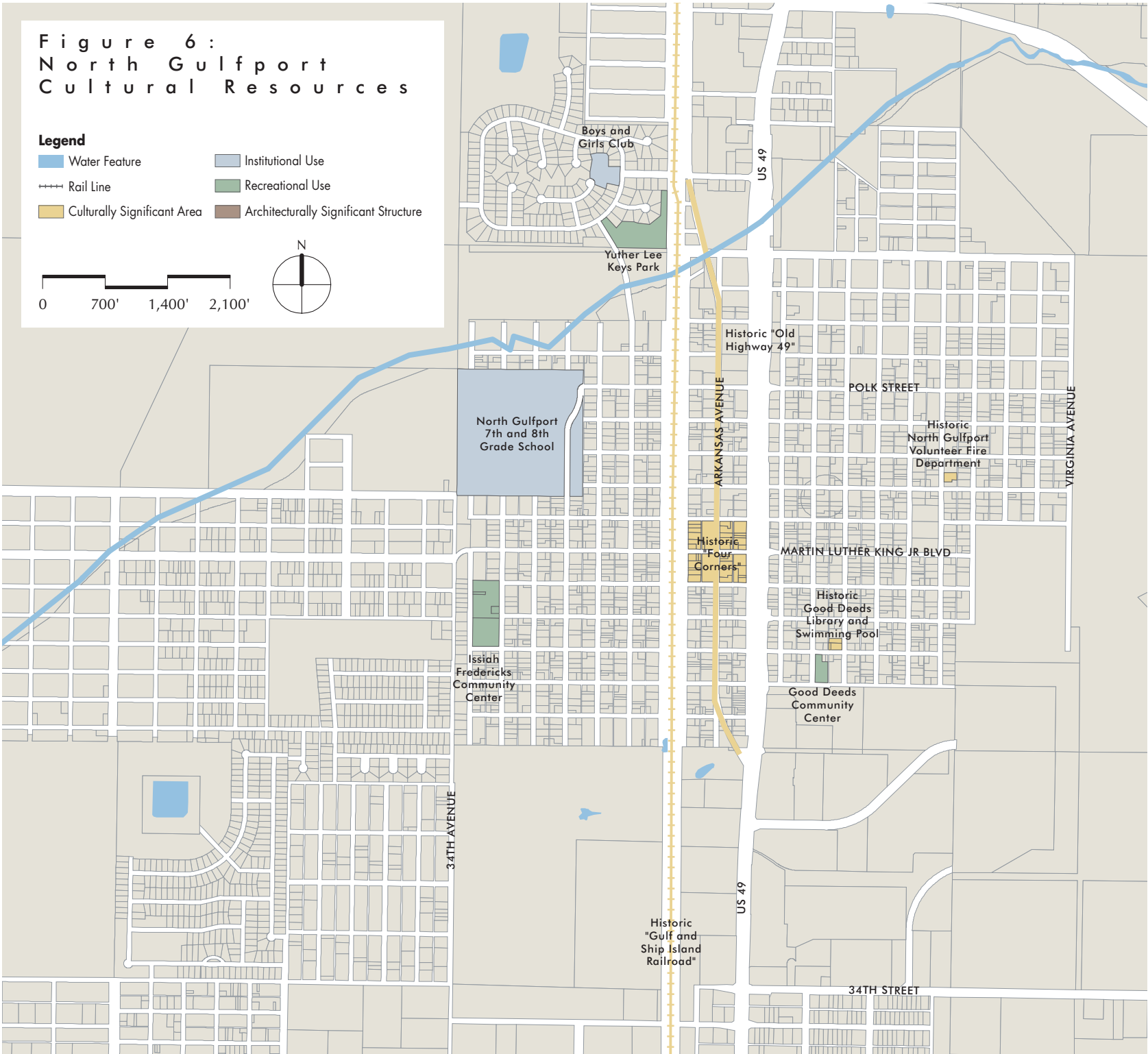
Born of the mid-nineteenth century federal legislation, the entire area described as Section 22 of Range 11 West in Township 7 South first entered Harrison County’s land records as an uninhabited and undeveloped “Swamp Land.” Stemming from a popular push in the 1840’s to increase the acreage of arable land in the southern states; an 1850 Act of Congress enabled the 1858 transfer of Section 22 from the US Department of the Interior to the State of Mississippi.

In 1866, a small group of recently emancipated African-Americans exercised their newly acquired rights of citizenship, property-ownership and self-determination to purchase and settle the 320 acres or “eight forties” that came to be known as the Turkey Creek community. The land they acquired comprised the entire northern half of section 22. Named for both a brackish steam flowing northeast towards Bayou Bernard and an abundance of wild turkeys in the area, the Turkey Creek community found itself nestled in one of North America’s most diversified national habitats. Turkey Creek and the surrounding communities were quickly transformed into vibrant, self-sufficient African-American neighborhoods, replete with farms, homesteads and the first African-American school in the Gulfport region.

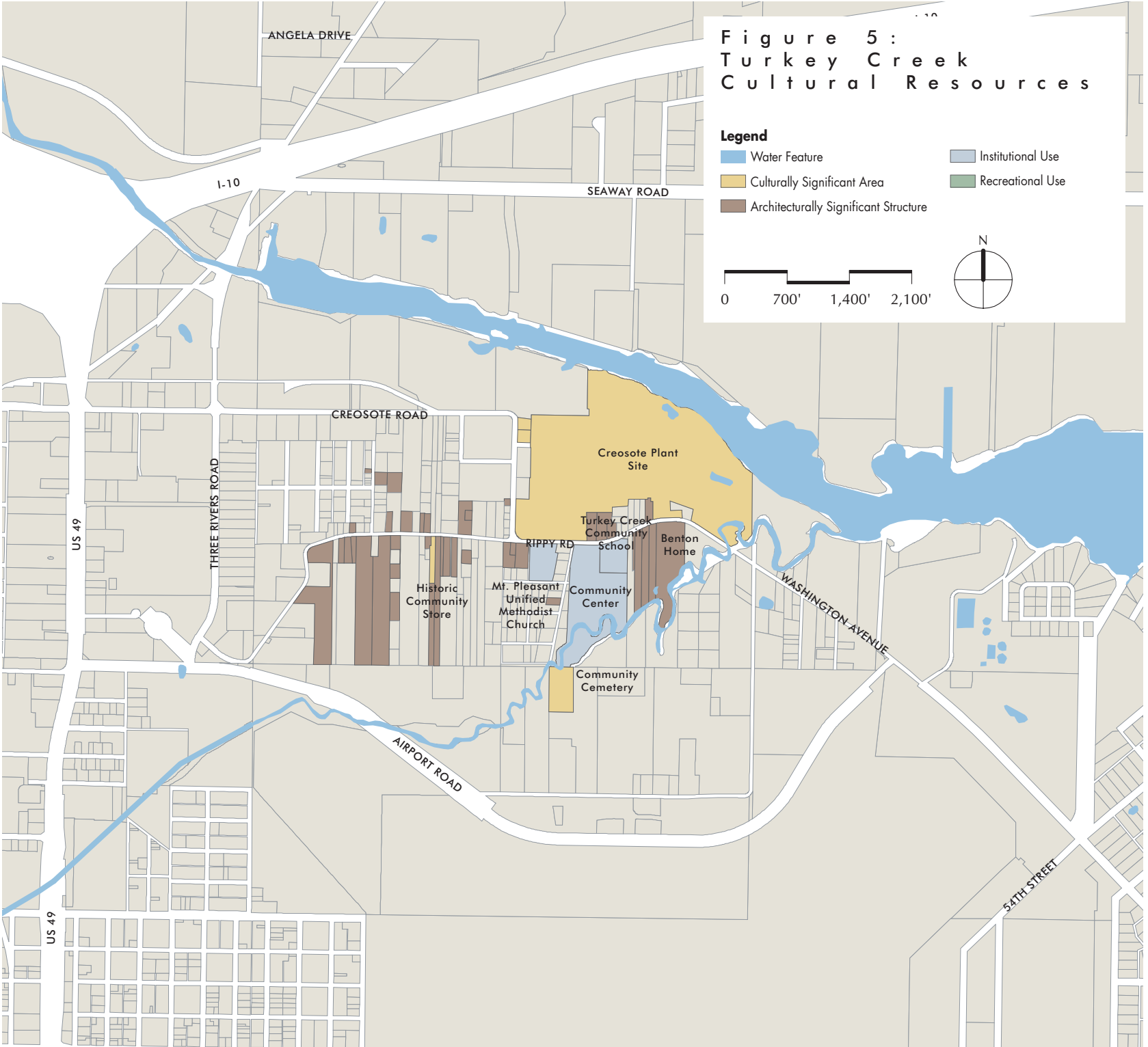
iginally known as Griffen, named after a prominent family that settled in the area shortly after the Civil War, the region known today as North Gulfport was first documented in 1875. By 1900, approximately 15 families had settled in North Gulfport. In 1902 the Gulfport harbor was



Many of the historic homes were constructed in the early 1900s and have been passed down generation after generation to current residents.



Source Data: MIG, Criterion - Map prepared by MIG, Inc. - February 2006



Source Data: MIG, Criterion - Map prepared by MIG, Inc. - February 2006

opened, and the city developed as an important lumber-shipping center. With the depletion of timber resources, Gulfport extended its shipping facilities and turned to manufacturing and a growing tourist trade. A lucrative resort development grew along the Gulf Coast which banned African-Americans from the coastlines and divided the area into two distinct communities, North Gulfport and the lucrative City of Gulfport. Segregated Gulfport stretched out along the coast, while the African-American community settled just a few miles north along the creek – near the commercial intersection of blues Highway 49 and Interstate 10.

During the historic “wade in” of 1969, Gulfport residents broke the color barrier by marching into the bay. Even after Jim Crow, the neighborhoods of North Gulfport and Turkey Creek remained isolated from the mostly white City of Gulfport. While city services extended to other outlying communities, North Gulfport residents were left to fend for themselves. The neighborhood suffered from a lack of basic infrastructure, contaminated drinking water, and chronic flooding. In response, a group of concerned citizens brought a successful challenge to the City’s gerrymandered annexation district, which curved around North Gulfport and Turkey Creek to capture the predominately white population of Orange Grove. In December 1994 the City annexed 33 square miles north of Gulfport making it the second largest city in Mississippi with a land area of 62.37 square miles and a population in excess of 70,000. Today, North Gulfport has 11.9 sq km of land and over 4966 residents as of the 1990 census.

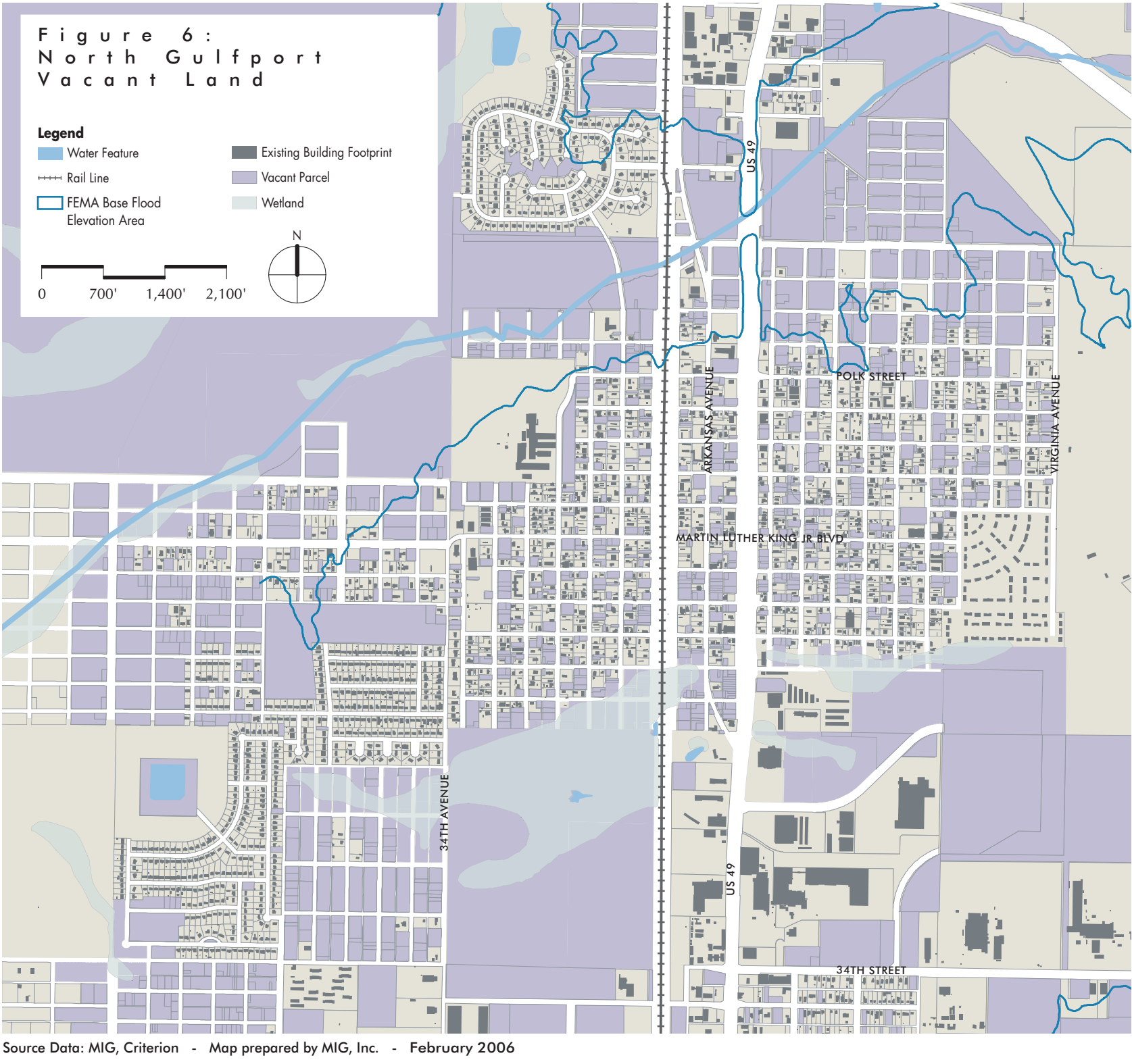
North Gulfport and Turkey Creek are among the few historic neighborhoods in coastal Mississippi that have survived the destruction of Hurricane Katrina. An overarching goal is to turn these distresses neighborhoods into opportunities for community revitalization. According to the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) the best method of preserving a neighborhood and protecting it from privately-funded alteration, demolition and intrusive new construction is to have it designated as a local historic district under a corresponding local ordinance. This is the only method to ensure that a neighborhood is protected from encroaching development and incompatible land use.

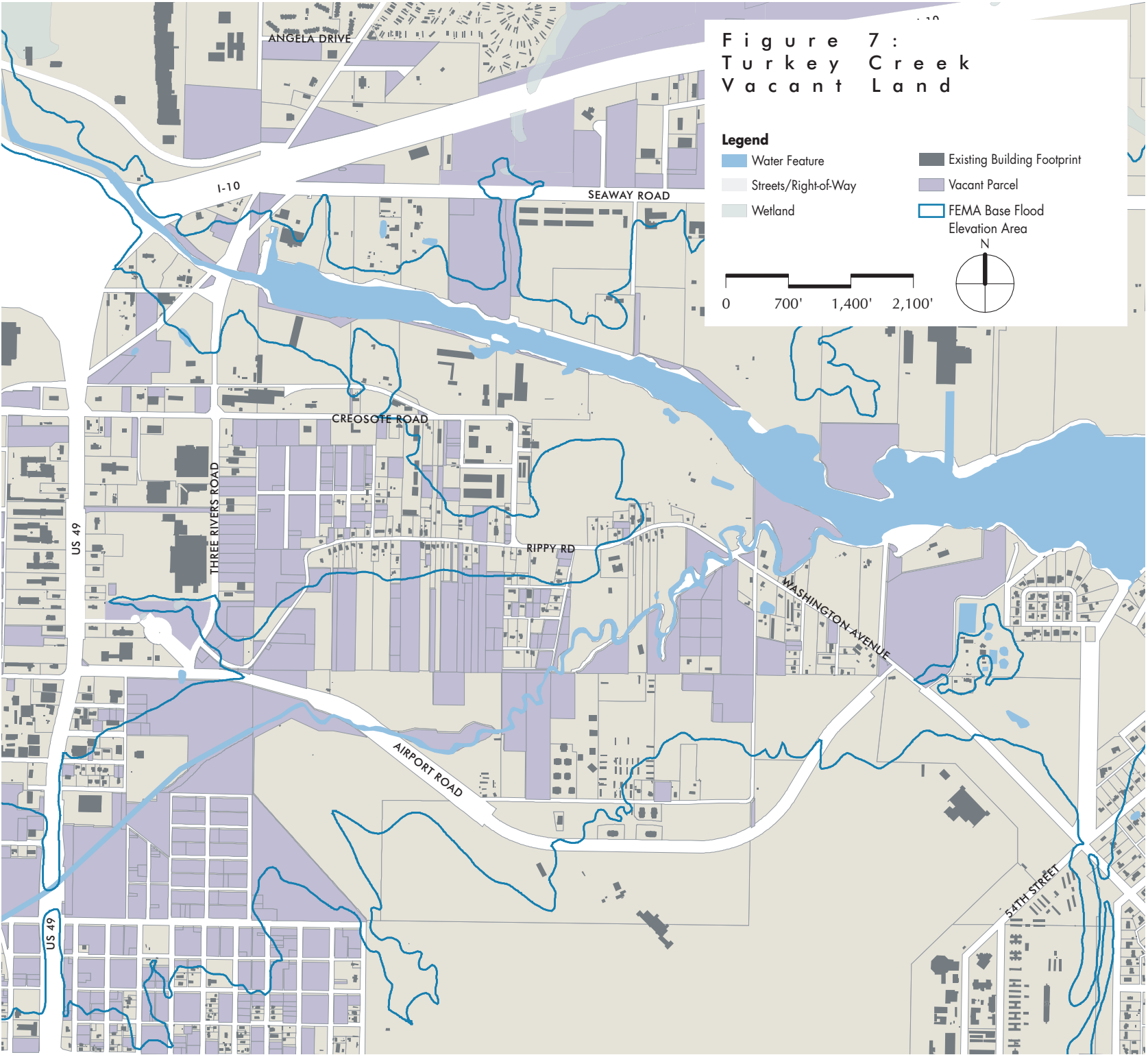
2.5 Vacant Land

Given their proximity to the flood zone and wetlands, both communities have historically been sensitive to development constraints, which has resulted in a significant amount of vacant land. However, in addition to undevelopable land, both neighborhoods have vacant parcels that can and should be developed to provide much needed housing, while strengthening neighborhood character. North Gulfport in particular has an abundance of vacant sites that are owned by absentee landlords. Typically these lots are unmaintained and considered “hold-outs” until land values increase to warrant development. This plan will strategize how to address vacant property in phases so that new development is clustered to create a desirable impact. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard is a priority corridor where residential and commercial development should take place.



A corner lot on MLK, Jr. Boulevard (top) and along Kentucky Avenue are just two examples of vacant lots that could benefit from new development.





Source Data: MIG, Criterion - Map prepared by MIG, Inc. - February 2006



Two vacant parcels along Rippy Road are shown above as examples of infill development opportunity sites.



After the group discussion of the area’s existing strengths and weaknesses, the participants broke into smaller groups to prioritize the needs of the community and identify the strategies that will build on previous efforts.

SECTION 3

planning framework

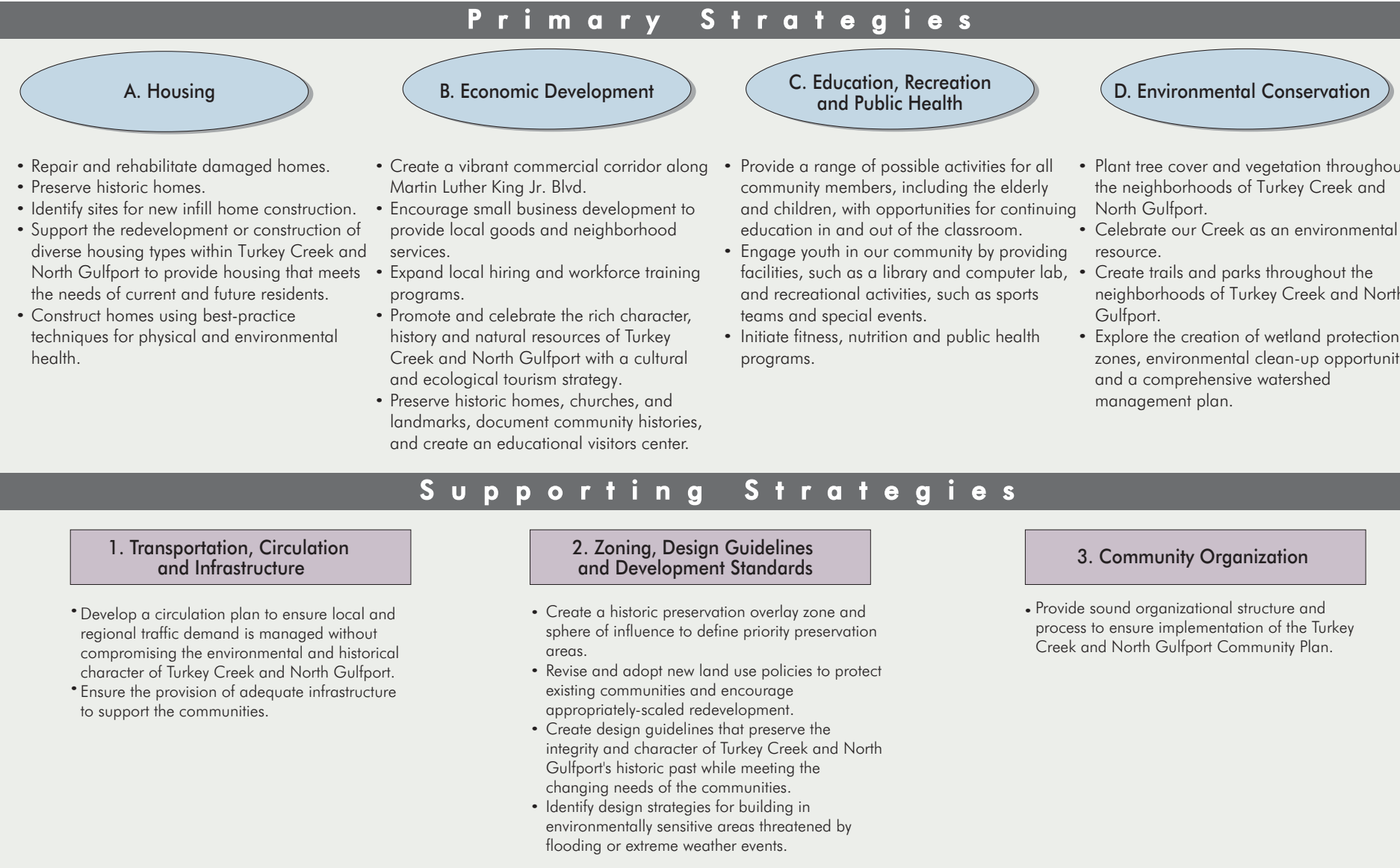
3.1 Strategy Framework

Building upon the goals and objectives set forth during the initial planning sessions, a strategy framework was developed to provide a structure for addressing North Gulfport and Turkey Creek’s opportunities, needs and priorities. The Strategy Framework prioritizes action categories into a two-tiered hierarchy, including primary strategies and supporting strategies. The primary strategies are the most important for achieving the community vision and goals. They are comprised of:

- Housing
- Economic Development
- Education, Recreation and Public Health
- Environmental Conservation

A set of supporting strategies have been identified as necessary to implement the primary strategies. They include:

- Transportation, Circulation and Infrastructure
- Zoning, Design Guidelines and Development Standards
- Community Organization



3.2 Key Action Steps

The previous section outlined the primary strategies necessary for meeting the goals of the community plan. In order to jump-start the plan even further, seven key action steps have been identified. These steps were chosen because they will meet immediate needs of community members, will represent critical steps towards preserving and enhancing the vitality of both neighborhoods, and agencies and organizations already have expressed interest in spearheading the necessary efforts.

The following pages describe each action step in detail in order to better explain what policies and funding sources are necessary for implementation.

7 KEY ACTION STEPS

ACTION 1.

Develop an inclusive process and structure to facilitate comprehensive neighborhood revitalization

ACTION 2.

Identify sites for new infill housing construction while continuing historic preservation efforts

ACTION 3.

Establish Turkey Creek and North Gulfport neighborhood historic districts

ACTION 4.

Identify transportation improvements to maintain community character and safety

ACTION 5.

Implement Turkey Creek Watershed Improvement Plan

ACTION 6.

Identify priority areas for capital improvements

ACTION 7.

Stimulate economic development opportunities

Action 1. Develop an inclusive process and structure to facilitate comprehensive neighborhood revitalization

A coordinated and inclusive effort is needed to plan for the future of both neighborhoods.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

- Establish an inclusive, coordinated community-driven effort that represents the various community organizations and service providers.
- Agree to work together to attain the community’s prioritized needs.

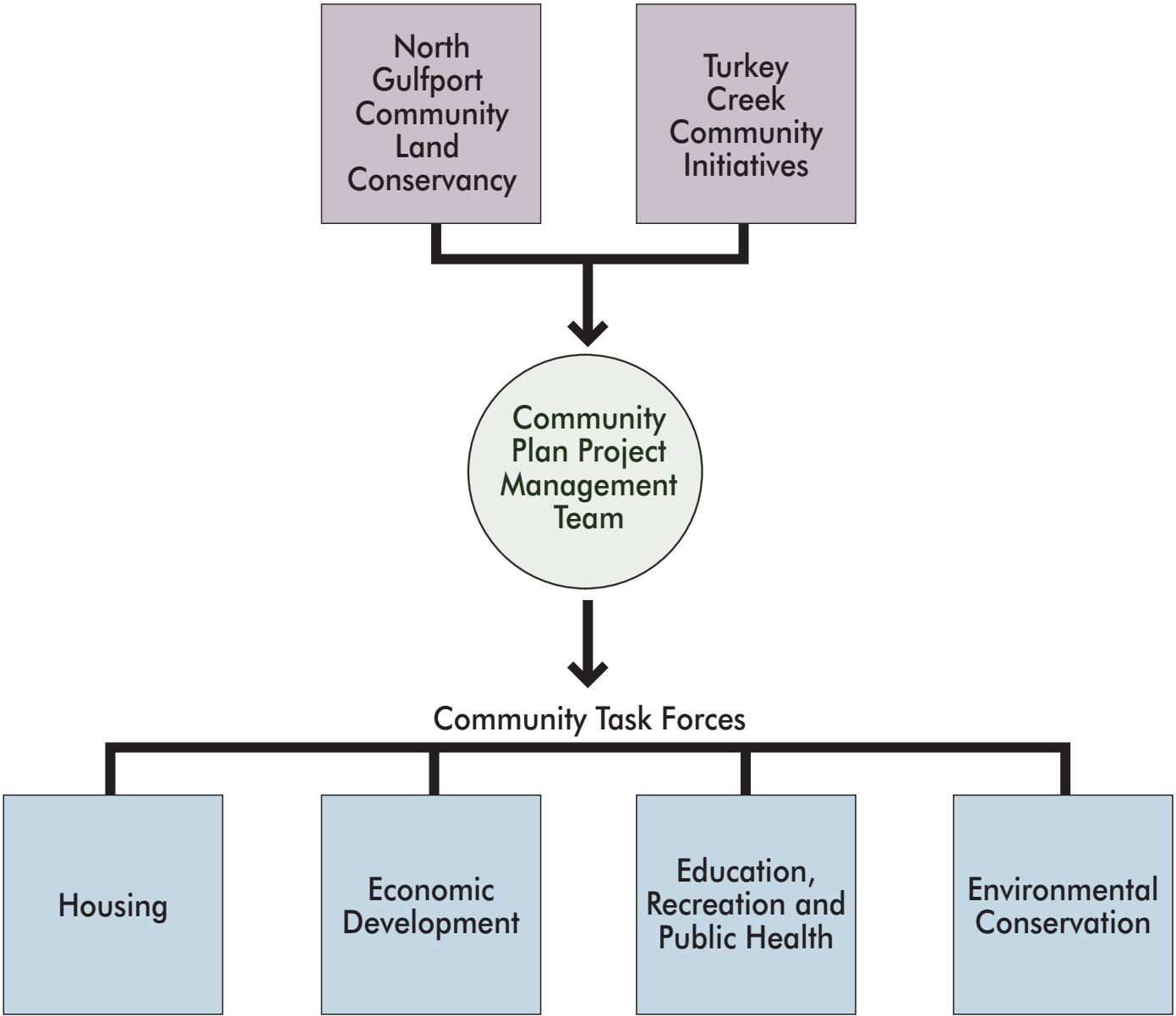
INITIAL STEPS

- 1.1 Create a Project Management Team comprised of community organizers, local government representatives (including City Council representative, Turkey Creek Community Initiatives, North Gulfport Community Land Conservancy and national legal and planning experts)
- 1.2 Engage other community leaders, residents and stakeholders to form task forces and an advisory board to govern neighborhood improvements for housing, economic development, education/ recreation, and environmental preservation.
- 1.3 Identify and obtain planning grants to complete Comprehensive Plan and retain technical planning expertise.

Representatives from the following community-based groups should be included:*

- Eulice N. White United Civic Organization
- Forest Heights Baptist Church
- Forest Heights Boys and Girls Club
- Forest Heights Homeowners and Renters Association
- Good Deeds Association
- Greater Mt. Olive Baptist Church
- Gulfport Concerned Citizens
- Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church
- North Gulfport Civic Club
- North Gulfport Community Land Conservancy
- North Gulfport Senior Citizens Center
- North Gulfport 7th and 8th Grade School

**See Appendix B for full list of Community Task Force members*



- People’s Baptist Church
- Turkey Creek Community Initiatives
- Turkey Creek Estates Homeowners Association
- Turkey Creek -North Gulfport School Alumni Association
- Turkey Creek Watershed Greenway Coalition
- Workers Helping Youth, Inc.
- Other churches and groups

Action 2: Identify sites for new infill housing construction

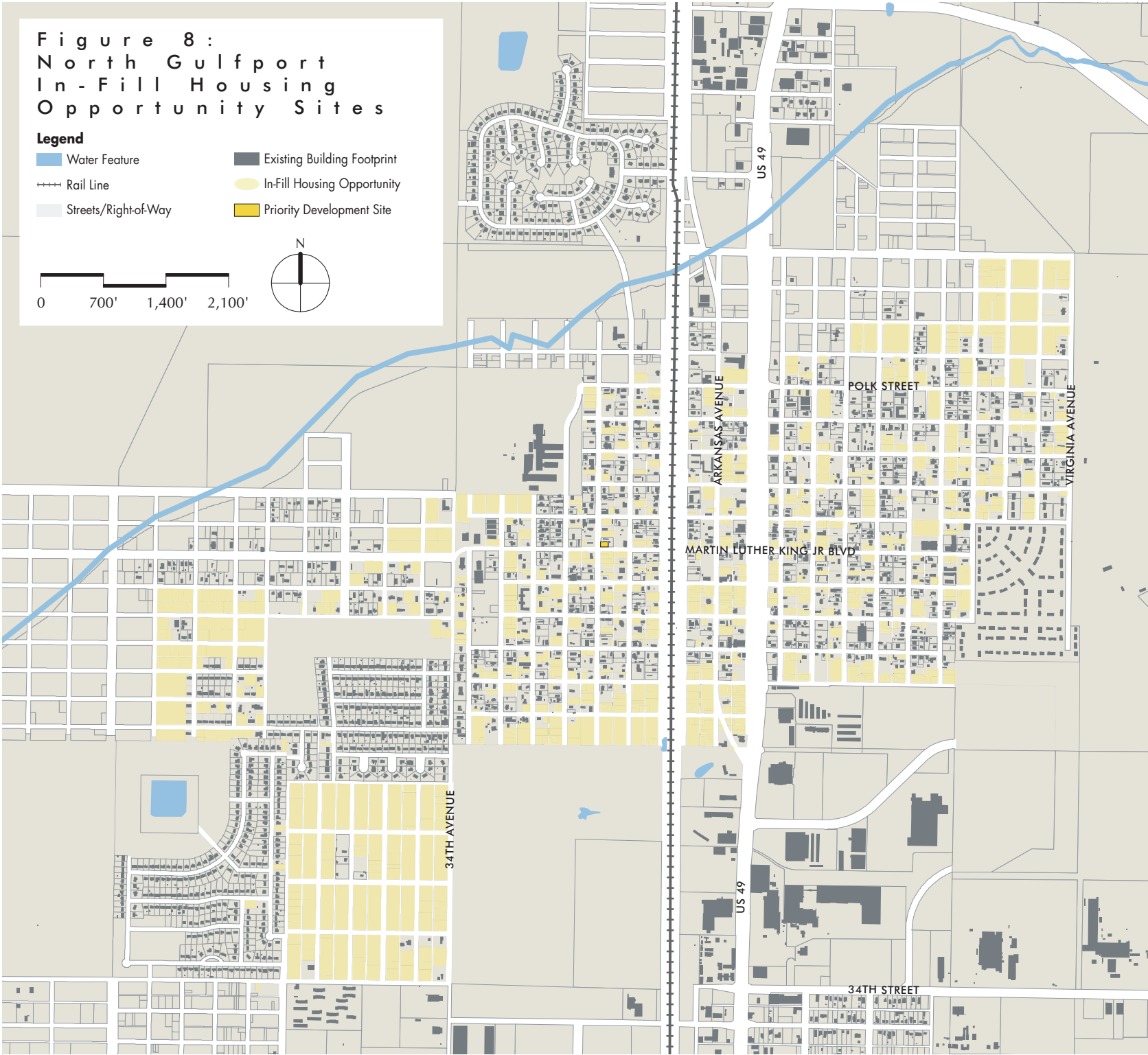
The primary need for both communities prior to Katrina, and especially in her aftermath, is the provision of housing that is safe, affordable, environmentally appropriate, and contributes to the historical and cultural character of the communities.

HOUSING GOALS

- Repair and rehabilitate damaged homes.
- Preserve historic homes.
- Identify sites for new infill home construction.
- Support diverse housing types that meet the needs of current and future residents.
- Construct homes using best-practice techniques for physical and environmental health.

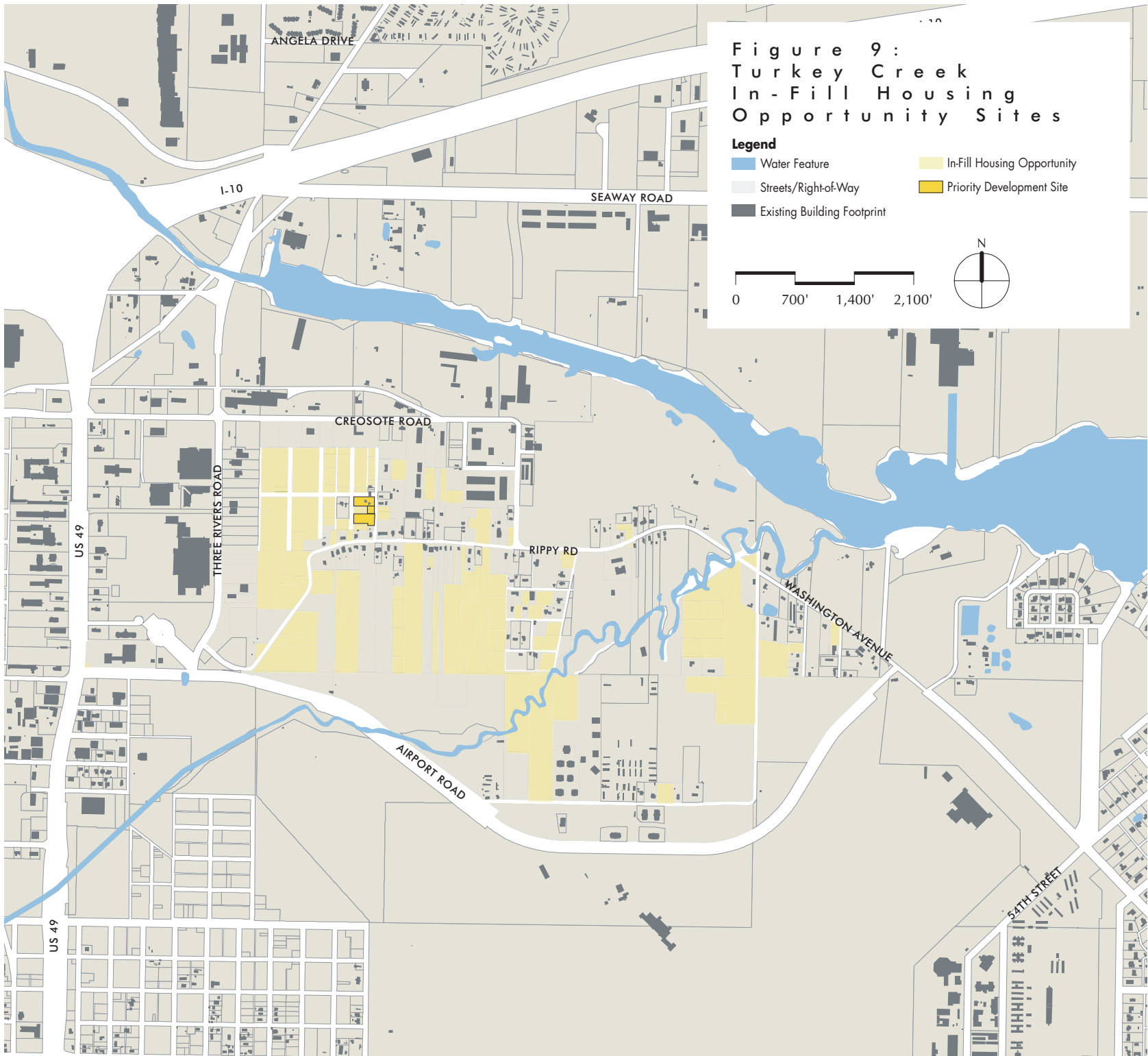
INITIAL STEPS

- 2.1 Coordinate with partners to secure funding for the North Gulfport Land Conservancy to use towards the purchase of priority development sites.
- 2.2 Conduct inventory of vacant lots and housing redevelopment opportunities.
- 2.3 Obtain “vacant lots in distress” inventory from City records.
- 2.4 Coordinate with the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights to provide legal assistance to ascertain ownership and obtain clear title for priority sites.
- 2.5 Create a housing task force of community members to set priorities for acquisition of land and distribution of new housing.
- 2.6 Coordinate with Youth Build, Inc. to create climate-appropriate building floor plans for construction of 10 new homes by 2007.



Source Data: MIG, Criterion - Map prepared by MIG, Inc. - February 2006

The in-fill housing diagrams identify where housing could potentially be developed within each neighborhood (pale yellow). Priority sites have been identified (dark yellow) based on their potential to stimulate further investment and the property owner’s willingness to develop.



Source Data: MIG, Criterion - Map prepared by MIG, Inc. - February 2006

Action 3. Establish Turkey Creek and North Gulfport neighborhood historic districts

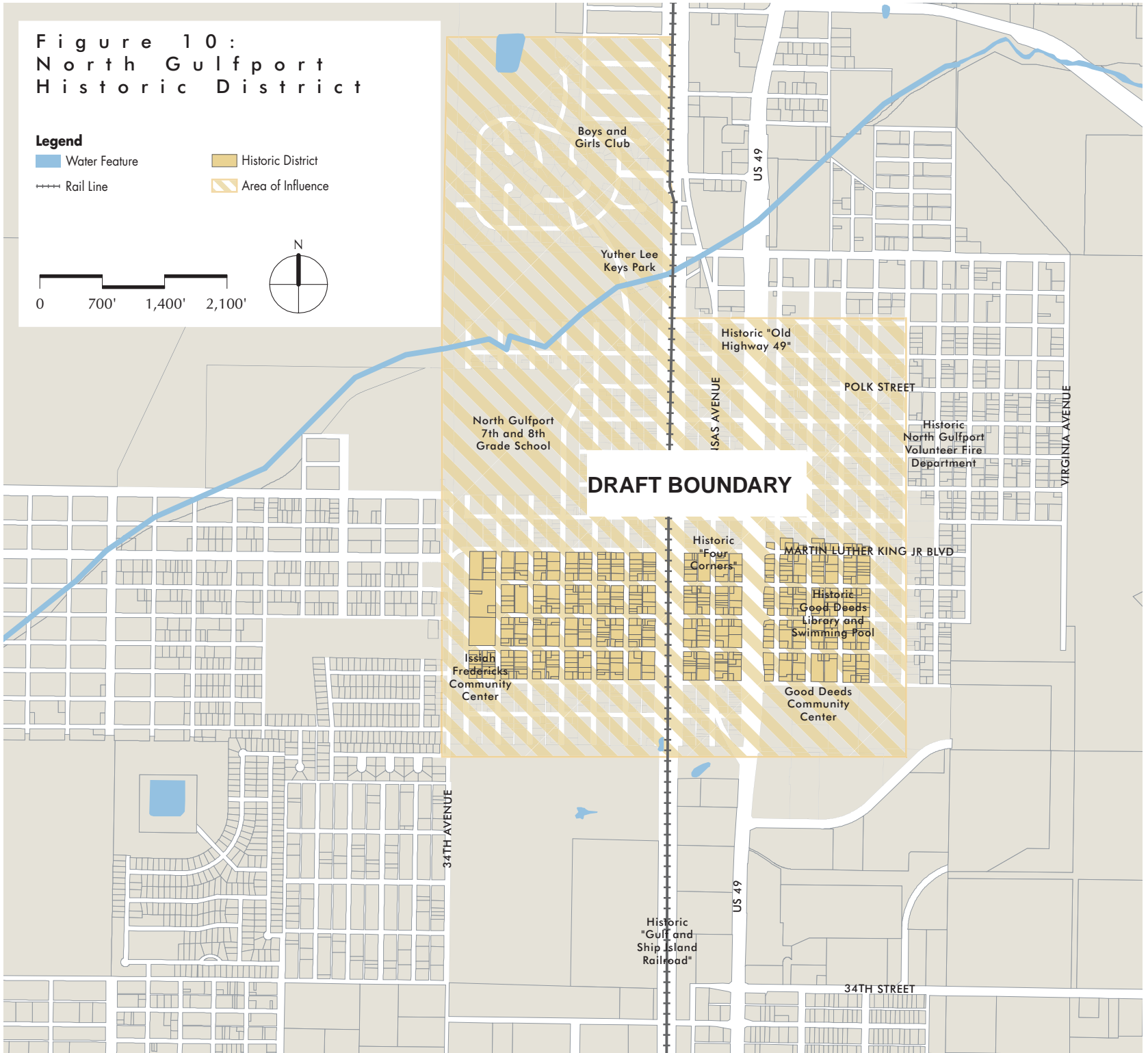
The proximity of North Gulfport and Turkey Creek to I-10, Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport and Highway 49 has subjected the neighborhoods to speculative development that will have detrimental impacts on the quality of life due to environmental conditions and incompatible uses. Areas within both neighborhood should be designated neighborhood historic districts to maintain and enhance their historical/cultural character, environmental value and architectural quality.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION GOALS

- Protect the neighborhoods of Turkey Creek and North Gulfport from encroachment
- Preserve the cultural and environmental character of each neighborhood by controlling future land use, development and infrastructure impacts.

INITIAL STEPS

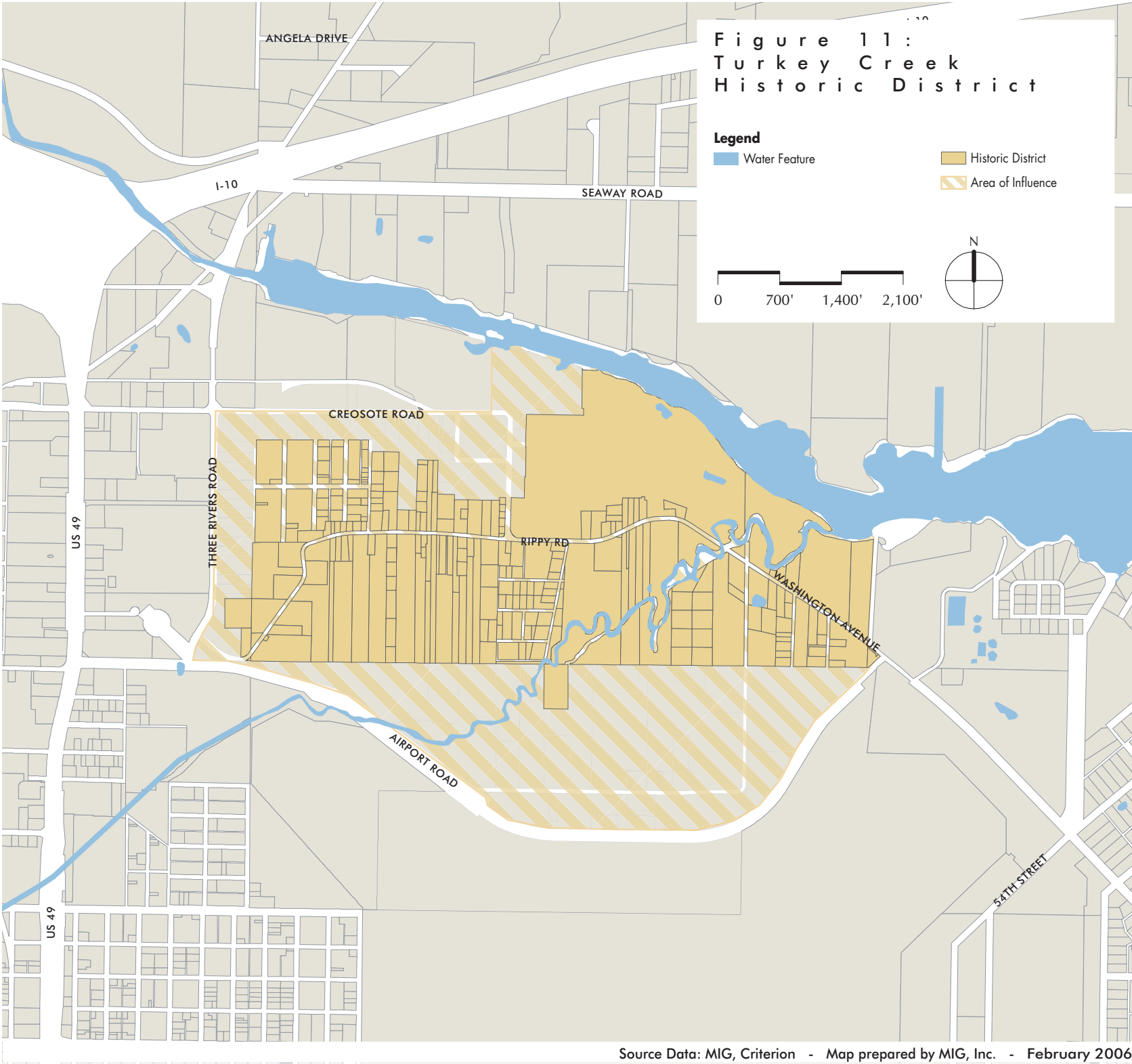
- 3.1 Create districts in and around Turkey Creek and North Gulfport to provide a planning a zoning rationale to ward off incompatible and detrimental development. See Appendix C: Historic Preservation Program Options.
- 3.2 Document historic buildings, churches and landmarks to support the rationale for neighborhood historic districts. An inventory of the historic and cultural sites within each community has begun and should be further developed in order to maintain the cultural integrity of the area and inform future development.
- 3.3 Develop the specific requirements of each zone and its area of influence, including allowable land uses, zoning and design guidelines.
- 3.4 Document local history to inform the rationale of proposed protection districts. Incorporate residents’ photo and oral histories and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History Inventory.



Source Data: MIG, Criterion - Map prepared by MIG, Inc. - February 2006

The diagrams identify the boundaries of the neighborhood historic zones within each neighborhood. The solid yellow areas identify the parcels that comprise the historic zone, whereas the dashed yellow parcels identify the parcels that make up the area of influence surrounding each historic zone. The area of influence will serve to protect the core of the protected zone. It will have restrictions on development and land use, though they will be less restrictive than those for the protected zone.

Turkey Creek’s protected zone will include all properties abutting Rippy Road, adjacent residential parcels and sites of historic importance, such as the historic community cemetery. The area of influence will include property owned by Turkey Creek residents, the Airport and adjacent commercial businesses.



Action 4. Identify transportation improvements to maintain community character and safety

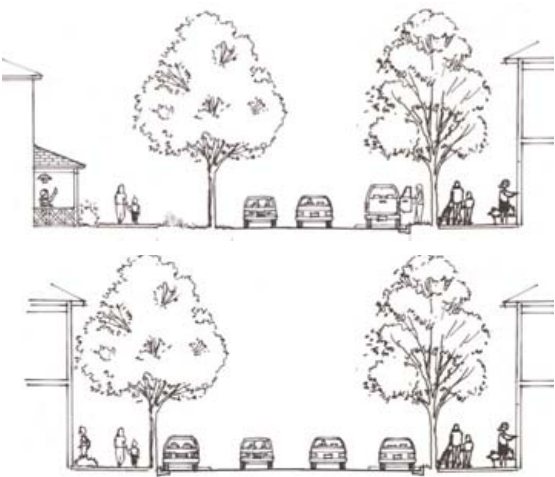
A coordinated transportation strategy is needed to protect the neighborhoods from future corridor realignments that compromise the integrity of the districts.

TRANSPORTATION GOALS

- Provide residents with safe and convenient vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian circulation routes.
- Reduce regional through-traffic through historical residential and culturally sensitive areas.

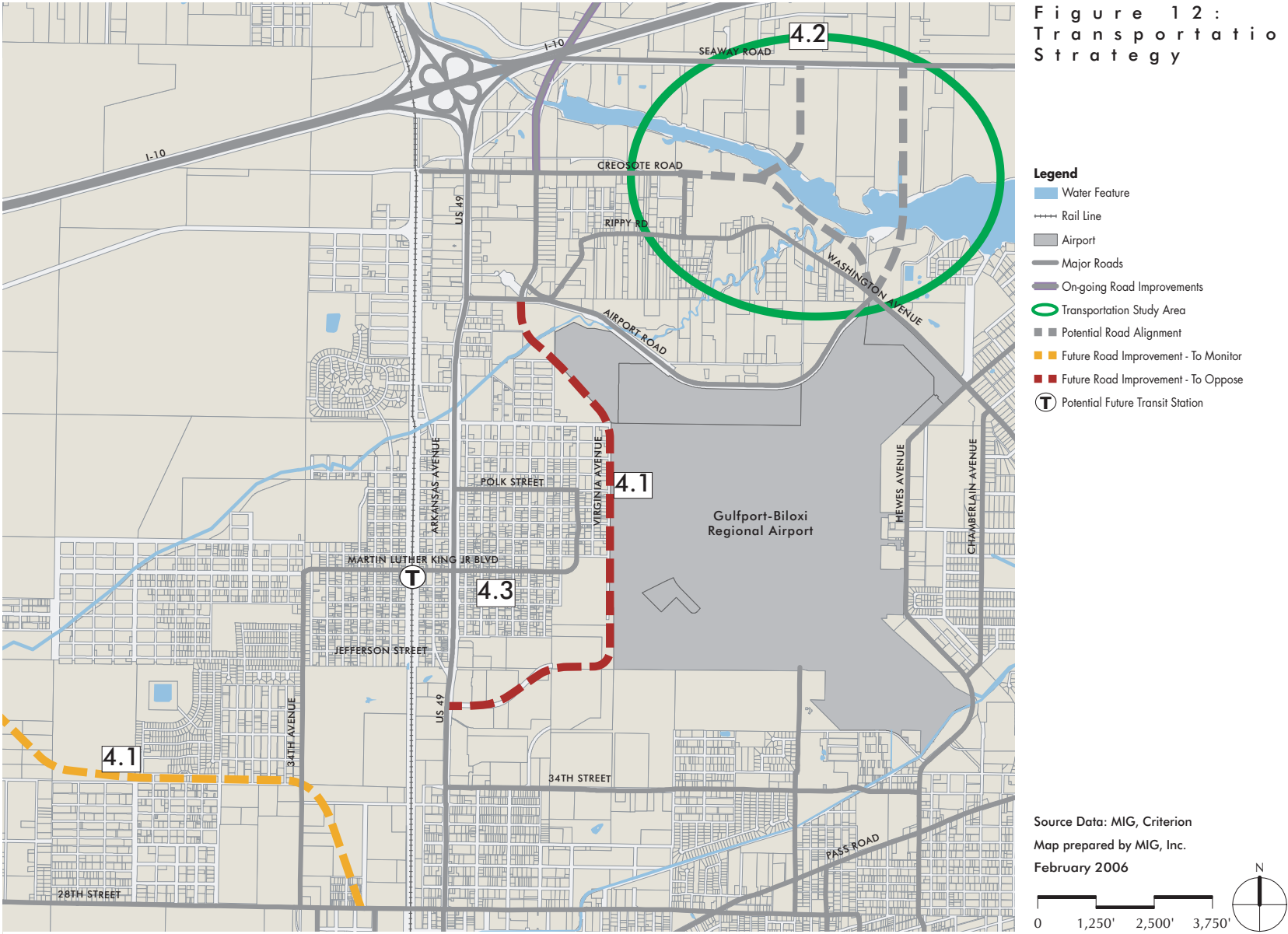
INITIAL STEPS*

- 4.1 Coordinate with Mississippi Department of Transportation to ensure that plans for the extension of Three Rivers Road and the proposed “310 Connector” do not negatively impact the neighborhoods.
- 4.2 In order to remove regional traffic from Rippy Road, determine whether the realignment of Creosote Road and/or a northern extension of Airport Road to cross Bernard Bayou is feasible within the City’s larger transportation plan.
- 4.3 Develop streetscape design for Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard.
- 4.4 Develop streetscape designs for North Gulfport’s residential streets.



As an initial step in the planning process, cross-sections were developed for MLK, Jr. Blvd. Two alternative cross-sections (left) illustrate how the mixed-use commercial/residential corridor can be enhanced with widened sidewalks, parking lanes and vehicular lanes. These concepts should be further developed to best meet the needs of existing businesses and residents, as well as accommodate new development.

*Where applicable, numbered initial steps are noted on the map.



Action 5. Implement Turkey Creek Watershed Improvement Plan

The neighborhoods of North Gulfport and Turkey Creek lie within the Turkey Creek Watershed and have sensitive environmental conditions which must be maintained and enhanced.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION GOALS

- Protect existing resources.
- Educate and empower the community.
- Restore natural functions.
- Increase non-vehicular connectivity between schools, parks, community facilities, homes, businesses and adjacent neighborhoods.

INITIAL STEPS*

- 5.1

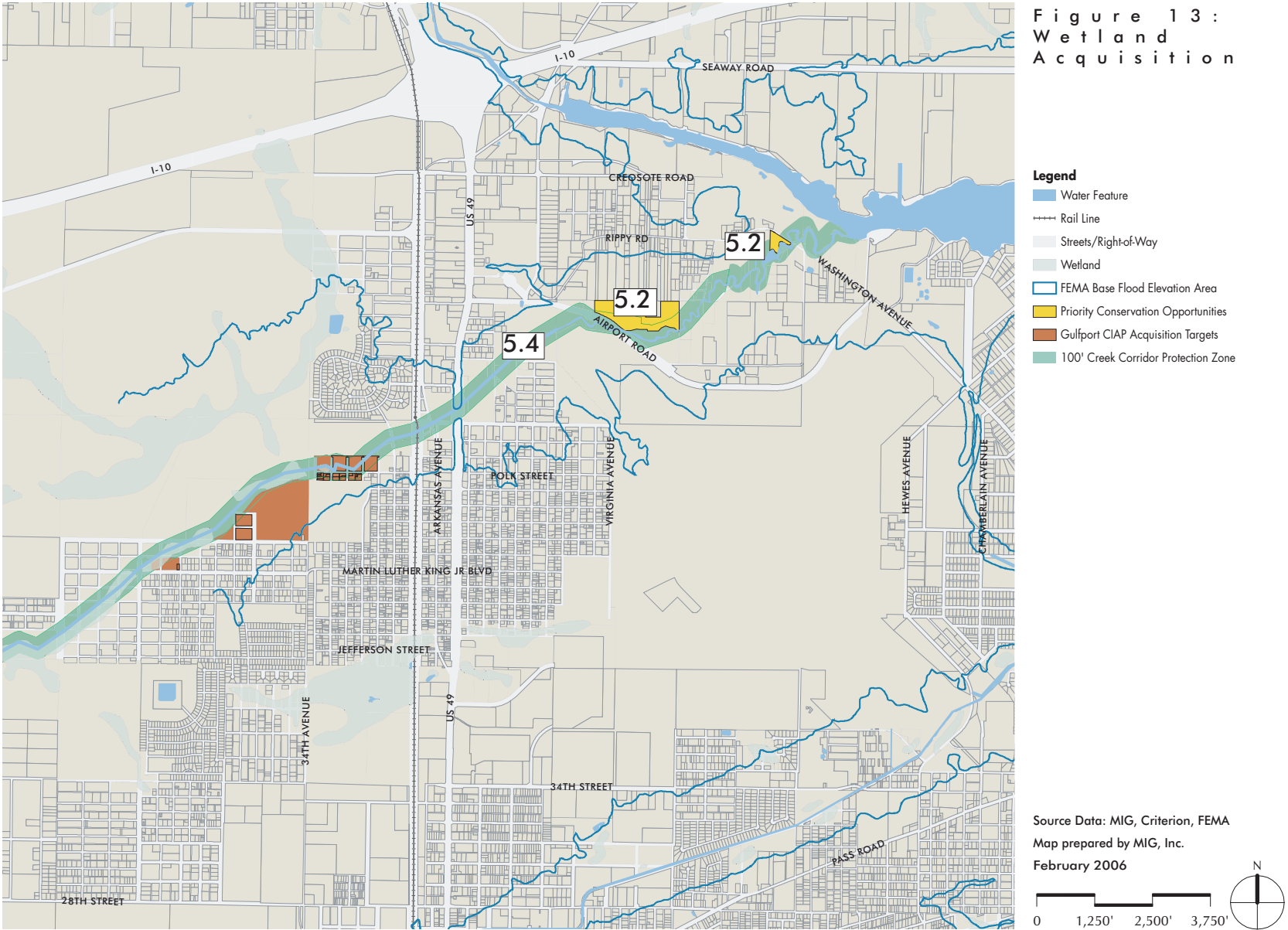
Continue coordination with the Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain, MDEQ Coastal Streams Basin Program, and watershed stakeholders to identify funding opportunities and establish realistic goals.
- 5.2

Maintain a greenway coalition task force to prioritize areas for acquisition and restoration.
- 5.3

Obtain a 319 grant to fund watershed improvement plan.
- 5.4

Create corridor protection zone.
- 5.5

Map urban greenway connections throughout the watershed.



*Where applicable, numbered initial steps are noted on the map.

Action 6. Identify priority areas for capital improvements

Both North Gulfport and Turkey Creek are under-served with basic services like water, sewer and electricity. Priority areas within the neighborhoods need to be identified to receive infrastructure upgrades funded by the City’s Capitol Improvement Plan (CIP).

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT GOALS

- Ensure that each neighborhood is provided with adequate infrastructure to support the community’s basic needs, including water, power and sewer.

INITIAL STEPS*

- 6.1 Identify potential priority areas for investment.
- 6.2 Allocate and utilize CIP funds to invest in sidewalks where desired, sewer lines, road upgrades, street lighting and other infrastructure needs.



MLK, Jr. Boulevard today



MLK, Jr. Boulevard with capital improvements in coordination with a streetscape plan for the corridor.

**Where applicable, numbered initial steps are noted on the map.*

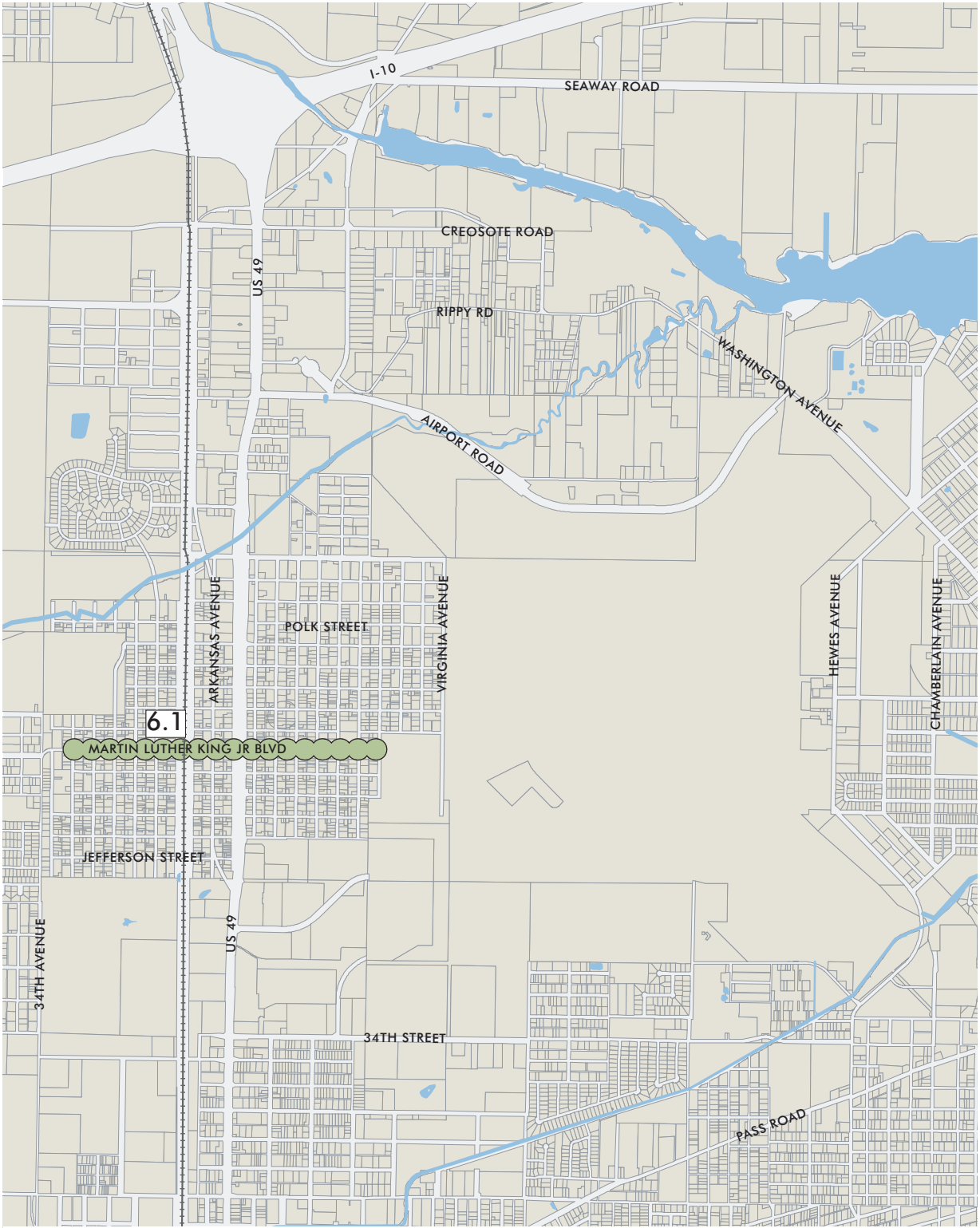
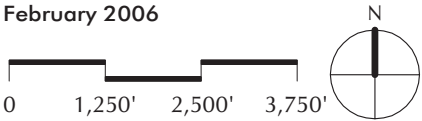


Figure 14:
Capital
Improvement
Plan

- Legend
- Water Feature
 - Rail Line
 - Streetscape Improvements

Source Data: MIG, Criterion, FEMA
Map prepared by MIG, Inc.
February 2006



Action 7. Stimulate Economic Development Opportunities

North Gulfport has a lack of neighborhood-serving businesses, a number of underutilized commercial properties and much potential for mixed-use development along Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. An economic development strategy is necessary to revitalize the neighborhood.

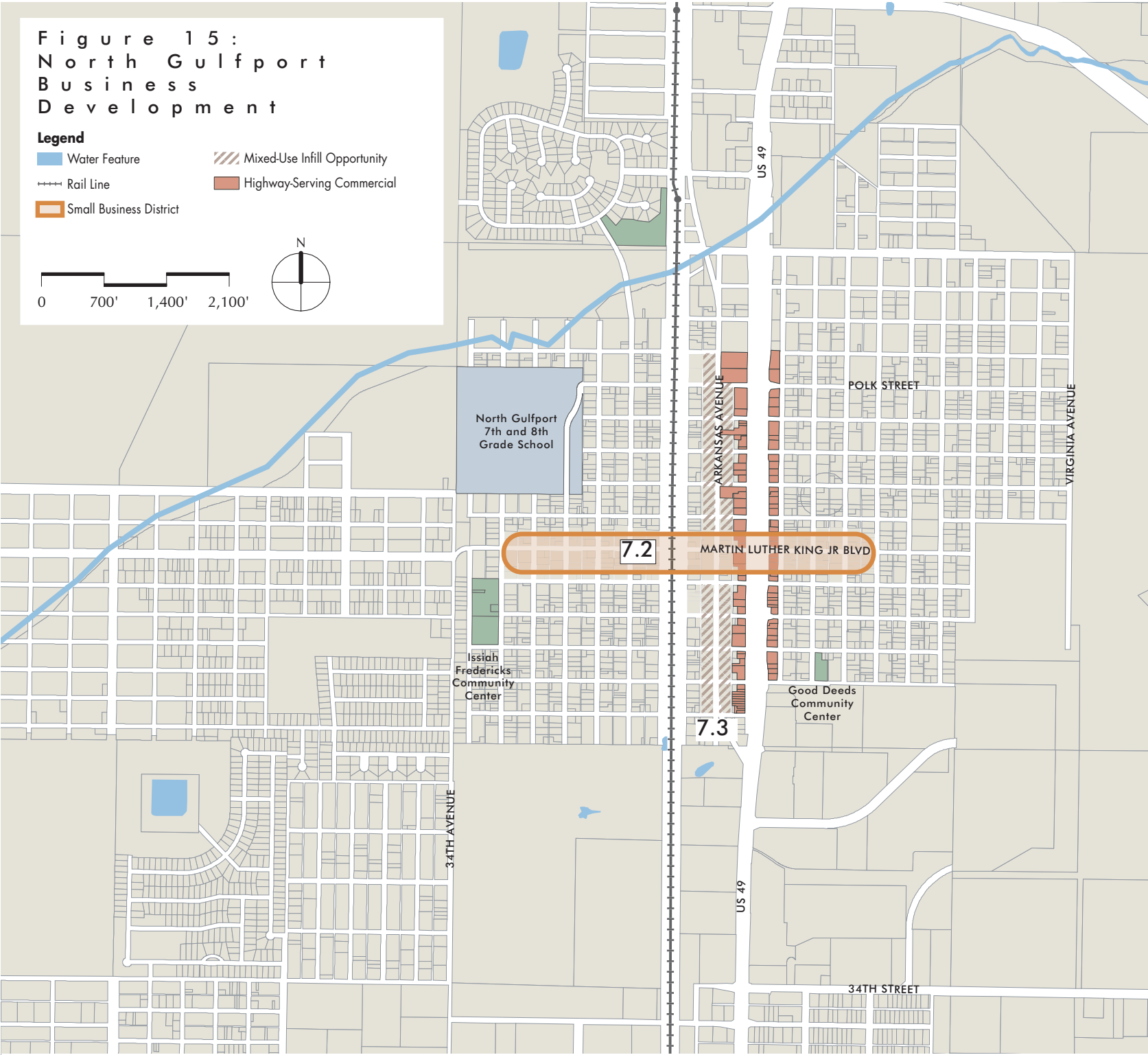
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- Create a vibrant commercial corridor along Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
- Encourage small business development to provide local goods and neighborhood services.
- Expand local hiring and workforce training programs.
- Promote character, history and natural resources to draw in visitors.
- Preserve historic homes, churches and landmarks.
- Document community histories.

INITIAL STEPS*

- 7.1 Develop housing to strengthen the potential market base in the communities (see Figures 8 and 9).
- 7.2 Define a small business district along MLK, Jr. Blvd. to tap into financial assistance from IDA programs.
- 7.3 Identify mixed-use economic development opportunities to increase community equity, business ownership and development programs.
- 7.4 Encourage ECD/Hope Community Credit Union to establish an office in the neighborhood.

**Where applicable, numbered initial steps are noted on the map.*



	Initial Steps	Priority	Potential Funding Sources	Implementing Partners
1.1	Create a Project Management Team comprised of community organizers, local government representatives	High	TBD	City Council representative, Turkey Creek Community Initiatives, North Gulfport Community Land Conservancy and national legal and planning experts
1.2	Engage other community leaders and stakeholders to form task forces to govern neighborhood improvements for housing, economic development, education/recreation, and environmental preservation.	Medium	TBD	
1.3	Identify and obtain planning grants to complete Comprehensive Plan and retain technical planning expertise.	High	TBD	
2.1	Coordinate with Healthy Building Networks to secure funding for the North Gulfport Land Conservancy to use towards the purchase of priority development sites.	Medium	TBD	
2.2	Conduct inventory of vacant lots and development opportunities.	High	TBD	
2.3	Obtain “vacant lots in distress” inventory from City records.	High	TBD	
2.4	Coordinate with Lawyers Committee to provide legal assistance to ascertain ownership and obtain clear title for priority sites.	Medium	TBD	
2.5	Create a housing task force of community members to set priorities for acquisition and distribution of land.	Medium	TBD	
2.6	Coordinate with Youth Build, Inc. to create climate-appropriate building floor plans for construction of 10 new homes by 2007.	Medium	TBD	

	Initial Steps	Priority	Potential Funding Sources	Implementing Partners
3.1	Create districts in and around Turkey Creek and North Gulfport to provide a planning a zoning rationale to ward off encroaching development.	Medium	TBD	
3.2	Document historic buildings, churches and landmarks to support the rationale for neighborhood historic districts. An inventory of the historic and cultural sites within each community has begun and should be further developed in order to maintain the cultural integrity of the area and inform future development.	High	TBD	
3.3	Develop the specific requirements of each zone and its area of influence, including allowable land uses, zoning and design guidelines.	Medium	TBD	
3.4	Incorporate local history, as documented by the community, oral history projects, and the Department of Archives and History Inventory, into rationale of the proposed historic districts.	Medium	TBD	
4.1	Coordinate with Mississippi Department of Transportation to determine their plans for realignment of corridors within or adjacent to the neighborhoods.	High	TBD	
4.2	Determine whether the realignment of Creosote Road is feasible within the City's larger transportation plan.	Medium	TBD	
4.3	Determine whether a possible northern extension of Airport Road to cross Bernard Bayou is feasible within the City's larger transportation plan.	Medium	TBD	
4.4	Develop streetscape design for Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard.	Low	TBD	
4.5	Develop streetscape designs for North Gulfport's residential streets.	Low	TBD	

	Initial Steps	Priority	Potential Funding Sources	Implementing Partners
5.1	Continue coordination with the Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain, Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality Coastal Streams Basin, and Sierra Club to identify funding opportunities and establish realistic goals.	High	TBD	
5.2	Create a greenway coalition task force to prioritize areas for acquisition and restoration.	Medium	TBD	
5.3	Obtain a 319 grant to fund watershed conservation plan.	Medium	TBD	
5.4	Create corridor protection zone.	Medium	TBD	
5.5	Map urban greenway connections throughout watershed.	Low	TBD	
6.1	Identify potential priority areas for investment.	Medium	TBD	
6.2	Allocate and utilize CIP funds to invest in sidewalks, sewer lines, road upgrades, street lighting and other infrastructure needs.	Medium	TBD	

	Initial Steps	Priority	Potential Funding Sources	Implementing Partners
7.1	Develop housing to strengthen the potential market base in the communities.	High	TBD	
7.2	Define a small business district along MLK, Jr. Blvd. to tap into financial assistance from IDA programs.	Medium	TBD	
7.3	Identify mixed-use economic development opportunities to increase community equity, business ownership and development programs.	Low	TBD	

