

Chapter 2

Goals and Objectives

What do we want our community to be?

In the days after Hurricane Katrina, this question has been asked by many people, in many ways and for many plans. The Governor's Commission on Recovery, Rebuilding and Renewal brought together leaders from across the Mississippi Gulf Coast and the State, and leaders in Planning and Urban Design from across the United States and the world to focus on rebuilding the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Additionally the Governor's Office asked Counties to form Long Term Recovery Task Forces to tailor these ideas to their communities. And the Federal Emergency Management Agency developed Long Term Recovery Plans. The concepts and ideas of their work is defined in the Introduction of the Comprehensive Plan Update.

The Bay St. Louis Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee considered these visions and thoughts when they answered the question. What do you want Bay St. Louis to be? The Committee said that their vision of the community was that:

Bay St. Louis will remain "A Place Apart"

Following is a discussion of issues considered by the committee. The issues include some of the key thoughts and justifications for the series of goals that were developed by the committee. Objectives that follow are recommended by the consultants and from the City's 2000 Comprehensive Plan.

A series of public meetings were held in the late summer and fall of 2007. Public comments from these meetings have been incorporated into the elements of the Comprehensive Plan, including the Goals and Objectives section.

Key Issues Facing the City

1. FEMA Advisory Base Flood Elevations

About two months after Hurricane Katrina made landfall on the Gulf Coast, the Federal Emergency Management Agency released the Advisory Base Flood Elevations (ABFE) for Mississippi Gulf Coast Communities, including the City of Bay St. Louis. The intent of the ABFE was to provide guidance to people rebuilding after Hurricane Katrina, as FEMA finished updating flood maps for the Mississippi Gulf Coast. FEMA released to the public draft updated flood maps in December 2007.

The City of Bay St. Louis did not adopt the ABFE as part of their review of their floodplain management ordinance after Hurricane Katrina, but instead required 4 feet of freeboard, above

the Base Flood Elevation for homes that were significantly damaged (approximately 50% or more of the value of the structure).

With the release of the Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps areas of the City of Bay St. Louis that were not located within a designated floodplain prior to Hurricane Katrina will be located within a floodplain based upon the Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps. Areas located in the coastal high hazard flood zone- that area subject to wave action from storm surge- will be larger and will extend inland to areas not directly adjacent to the waterfront. Preliminary data indicates that as much as 40% of the City of Bay St. Louis is now within the velocity Zone and about 40% of the City is within the A Zone. Property owners in nearly 80% of the city would be subject to floodplain management ordinances.

And while FEMA projected increased base flood elevations for buildings within the floodplain, with the ABFEs, the proposed heights documented in the Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps is on average about 2 feet lower than the elevations projected by the ABFEs.

For example, an area in Cedar Point, west of Engman Avenue adjacent to the waterfront, according to the ABFE, would be required to have the first finished floor of the structure at an elevation of 24 feet or 25 feet depending on the exact location. A typical topographical elevation within this area is between 4 to 8 feet. Typical BFE within this area prior to the release of the ABFE would have been about 15 feet. The draft maps released in December 2007 indicate that the elevation within this area would be required to be between 22 feet to 23 feet depending on the location.

An area in Cedar Point, located east of Dunbar Avenue, adjacent to the waterfront would be required to have the first finished floor of the structure at an elevation of between 22 feet to 24 feet depending on the exact location. A typical topographical elevation within this area is between 7 to 10 feet. Typical BFE within this area prior to the release of the ABFE would have been between 15 and 18 feet. The draft maps released in December 2007 indicate that the elevation within this area would be about the same as the ABFE.

An area on Fiber Street, near Bluemeadow Road would be required to have the first finished floor of the structure at an elevation of between 24 feet and 25 feet. FEMA maps indicate an outdoor high water mark associated with Hurricane Katrina within this area of 20.6 feet. Typical BFE within this area prior to the release of the ABFE would have been about 15 feet. Typical topographical elevation within this area is about 6 feet. The draft maps released in December 2007 indicate that the elevation within this area would be between 20 to 22 feet depending on the location.

An area in Shoreline Park, adjacent to the Jourdan River, would be required to have the first finished floor at 26 feet. Typical topographic elevations within this area are between 4 feet and 8 feet. The BFE would have required a first finished floor elevation of between 14 to 20 feet within this area. The draft maps released in December 2007 indicate that the elevation within this area would be between 22 to 23 feet depending on the location.

An area adjacent to South Beach Boulevard in Bay St. Louis would be required to have a first finished floor of the structure at an elevation of between 23 to 27 feet, depending on the exact location. Typical BFE required within the VE Flood Zone within this area prior to the release of

the ABFE were 14 to 19 feet. Typical outside high water marks from Hurricane Katrina's storm surge near Central Avenue near the Waveland/Bay St. Louis City line indicate water reached between heights of 22.7 to 25.5 feet within this area. Typical topographical elevations within this area are about 10 to 20 feet depending on the exact location. The draft maps released in December 2007 indicate that the elevation within this area would be between 22 to 26 feet depending on the location.

The ABFE for the City's downtown area are limited to the immediate area adjacent to the coastline and would require a first finished floor to be 20 feet msl. Typical topographical elevations within this area are between 18 to 22 feet. The draft maps released in December 2007 indicate that the elevation within this area would be between 21 to 25 feet depending on the location.

The City of Bay St. Louis participates in the National Flood Insurance Program. The City's participation is expressed by the City actively managing the floodplain, by the adoption of a floodplain ordinance and the implementation of that ordinance. That ordinance requires that the structures located within the floodplain

have the first finished floor of the structure elevated to the required BFE as adopted by the City, which may be the base flood elevation recommended by FEMA, or the City may adopt a higher elevation;

that homeowners within the floodplain provide an elevation certificate for the first finished floor to the City's building office;

that the City building office maintain elevation certificates within its files;

and if improvements are made to a structure which cumulatively equal 50% or more of the value of the structure (over a period of time), then the structure must comply with current elevation requirements.

Participation in the National Flood Insurance Program by the City, allows residents the opportunity to purchase flood insurance. Additionally, the City of Bay St. Louis participates in the Community Rating System Program. Their participation, by actively administering flood management programs which may reduce the amount of damage due to flooding within the City and allows flood insurance policy holders reductions in premiums.

Continued participation by the City in the NFIP program will require that the City adopt the final revised Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate maps. These maps were released in December 2007. The City indicated to FEMA that they will challenge these maps, due both to the technical information utilized to develop the data, and due to the economic implications on the City.

Building to these new heights may reduce the amount of damage that will occur to structures within the floodplain, but it will also increase the cost of construction. Prior to Hurricane Katrina, much of the City's coastal and bayside waterfront were single-family homes. Construction costs will be a consideration as people determine if they can build back, and the size and scope of the homes that they will build back will be impacted by both the costs of the

required elevations, required foundations and the cost of insurance. In some cases, it may be cost prohibitive to build back a single-family home on a waterfront lot.

2. Insurance

Another barrier to redevelopment in Bay St. Louis and along the entire Mississippi Gulf Coast is access to and cost of insurance, and insurance settlements from Hurricane Katrina. Many policyholders along the coastal area have not yet reached settlements with their insurance companies, delaying rebuilding, not only in Bay St. Louis, but along the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Additionally, both access to and the cost of insurance will likely affect redevelopment and growth in Bay St. Louis in the near future. Most major insurance companies are continuing renewal policies for home and commercial businesses. However, according to the Mississippi Department of Insurance none of the top five national insurance carriers are writing new wind policies in Coastal Mississippi, only a handful of small carriers are writing new wind insurance policies in Coastal Mississippi, and therefore, the Mississippi Wind Pool is likely to be the only option for new policies.

Besides limited access to insurance, cost is also an issue. The Mississippi Wind Pool, according to the Mississippi Department of Insurance, “provides wind coverage at a higher rate than private carriers for residents of six South Mississippi counties.” Renewal costs have risen drastically, contributing to the cost of not only building in Bay St. Louis, but also living and doing business in Bay St. Louis.

3. Sustainability of the Community

Damage from Hurricane Katrina was extensive throughout Bay St. Louis. Discussion is still ongoing among scientific and technical experts as to whether Hurricane Katrina was a unique hurricane, or a common occurrence. The Mississippi Renewal Commission asked local governments to consider utilizing building and planning methods that could make the communities along the Mississippi Gulf Coast more sustainable, and speed recovery from future storms.

These steps include elevating homes to new elevation standards, building with new construction technologies and building structures consistent with the International Code Standards and Standards for Coastal Construction. Additionally, the Mississippi Renewal Commission asked local governments to encourage development on higher ground, away from high hazard areas.

The Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee indicated that issue was very important to the safety of residents within the community and to the economic vitality and long term health of the City of Bay St. Louis. The Committee recognized that structures must be safer and built to reduce damage exposure from hurricanes. This would not only protect residents of the city, but also protect investments within the community, and reduce the cost of damage.

Through a series of Growth Allocation Workshops, residents of the county and city considered how the County may grow in the next two decades. One possible scenario for development defined through the workshops, was a pattern in which development would shift away from the coastal areas to land areas less impacted by coastal flooding and storm surge. If this occurred,

recovery within the coastal areas could be slowed. It is likely that if the shift of residential development is away from the coast, then there would also be a shift in businesses providing basic retail goods and services away from Bay St. Louis and Waveland. Planners conducting the workshop indicated the City would require a redevelopment strategy to mitigate the loss of vitality, which could translate to loss of character and ultimately downtown disinvestment.

The Advisory Committee felt strongly that the downtown area would remain vital even if development moved inland away from the coastal areas, due to the unique characteristics of the downtown area, and the draw for regional tourists. However, recommendations were made to establish a position which could market and recruit businesses and developments to Bay St. Louis. Additionally, the committee made recommendations which would encourage denser developments on higher land within specific neighborhoods by adopting specific strategies within the City of Bay St. Louis, and encourage less intensive developments on areas likely to flood, or wetlands areas which may serve to mitigate some of the flooding from storm surge.

4. Long Term Economic Recovery

Bay St. Louis' character defines its economic strength as a quaint, historic seaside community. A portion of the City's economic vitality is based upon this image and tourism in general. Many factors threaten the viability of recovery of the City of Bay St. Louis. Businesses that were located along the waterfront will not be effectively operating back on the waterfront until late 2009 or 2010, as the city completes utility work and reconstruction of Beach Boulevard.

Additionally, Bay St. Louis' economy was a unique retail and service economy that catered to a regional tourist population. Arts, antiques and food, as well as second homes were the draw to downtown. Hollywood Casino Resort is another important tourist draw. Hollywood Casino offers gaming, one of the best golf courses within the Country, entertainment and first class hotel and recreational vehicle accommodations.

The committee recognized that tourism was an important economic generator within the City of Bay St. Louis. The tourism base included people attracted to the community for the quality of life offered and people attracted to the community to visit the City's gaming industry.

Tourists that might be attracted to the community for the quality of life can include:

- People attracted to the seaside community for shopping and dining.
- People attracted to the seaside community for the arts community- which may include other artists attending workshops, or patrons seeking art work.
- People attracted to the community's quality of life and maintain a second home.

The committee embraced the continuation of the tourism as an important draw to the community, and sought to enhance the draw by marketing eco-tourism. Eco-tourism activities may include bird-watching, fishing, hiking, canoeing and kayaking.

Additionally committee members saw the need to recruit businesses to the community that would be supportive of Stennis Space Center. Scientific and technical information businesses could benefit from the quality of life offered in Bay St. Louis, provide a residential base of population that could support local businesses, and diversify the economy of the city, while

supporting the “Get Away” feel of the downtown area, while developing along a Highway 90 business corridor.

While the committee was optimistic that the City of Bay St. Louis would recover, they felt that character was important to that recovery, to insure that the city stayed an attractive tourism destination, with a high quality of life associated with waterfront living. However, the City should consider working with the Hancock County Chamber of Commerce to establish a benchmarking system to monitor recovery, and provide information to public decision-makers to help them develop public re-development strategies, if needed.

5. Increased Density and Height

As a response to the widespread devastation from Hurricane Katrina, and as a method to address the high costs of rebuilding, it is likely that land uses will become denser on lands within the city that are on higher ground, and that structures may need to be taller, with more floor space, in order to amortize the costs of reconstruction.

The idea of Traditional Neighborhood Development was introduced to the Gulf Coast during the Mississippi Renewal Forum. Traditional Neighborhood Development allows for a compact community that is walkable. Density is increased, due to smaller lot sizes, and in some cases, garage apartments or cottages are allowed. This idea made sense in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina as planners and community members tried to determine where housing could safely be built along the coastline.

Options for implementing greater density in Bay St. Louis may include allowing garage apartments in specific neighborhoods, and may include “mother and daughter apartments” suggested by the Mississippi Renewal Forum for Bay St. Louis;

“Long Blocks and lots, legacy of the French survey units called arpades, leave odd bits of land on many lots that can be used for certain types of infill. This ‘Mother and Daughters’ approach of raised cottages is one such typology. Other might be courtyard housing, townhouses, granny flats and mansion houses with multiple units.

“All of these are important strategies to hold at bay the simplistic density and value increase that high rise buildings represent. Owners of houses lost in Bay St. Louis will be hard pressed to build back the homes they enjoyed unless there is a way to fund the additional costs of new, hurricane resistant construction. Added density on linear lots provides that opportunity to remake the community in its own image (Mississippi Renewal Forum, Rebuilding Bay St. Louis, p. 20).”



From **Mississippi Renewal Forum**, Rebuilding Bay St. Louis, p. 20
“Cottage Court to rear of rebuilt Wagner House”

Costs to rebuild in downtown along the beachfront, may require that buildings have more floor area to amortize the cost of building. The issue of height is both a character issue and also an economic issue for both property owners on the beachfront and for small businesses seeking to rebuild in downtown. The Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee discussed a height limitation of 50 feet within the downtown area which would provide for a four story structure. The Committee also recommended that a workshop be held with architects, engineers and developers to understand the costs of construction, requirements of FEMA and City to meet new elevation requirements and coastal construction requirements, and the cost of insurance. The intent of the workshop would be to provide an idea of the cost to small business and help city decision makers determine appropriate height and design requirements.

Height restrictions will also be an issue with single-family residential development within certain floodplains of the City of Bay St. Louis. With elevation requirements currently as high as 23 feet, a one story home will likely be the only type of residential structure allowed within some of the lower areas of the floodplain.

Architect Bill Dennis indicated that height must be part of the volume of the building, which would include elements such as height, setbacks and the façade of the building. Therefore height considerations should be tied to architectural standards to insure that the character of the neighborhood is maintained.

As with height, public comments clearly stated that density needed to be specifically defined. Within the existing zoning ordinance there was little to encourage single-family units on smaller lots, but instead the zoning classification which would allow small single family units on smaller lots would also allow multi-family units. It was identified that there was a need for a new type of zoning classification that would allow smaller lots for single family residences. Specific methods to achieve higher density in specific areas are defined within the Future Land Use Plan.

6. Redevelopment and growing with character

The City of Bay St. Louis had unique charm. Key elements of that charm include architectural heritage, town character and natural beauty. This charm has inspired artists, residents and visitors to the community. The Comprehensive Plan Citizen Advisory Committee felt that that re-establishing that character was important to the economic well-being of the community. Character was important to the redevelopment of the downtown area. The Committee also felt that Highway 90 and Highway 603 should be attractive in order to encourage economic vitality along the business corridor.

7. Second home development

Second homes have been an important part of this community. Census data from 2000 indicates that as much as 12% of the housing within the City of Bay St. Louis, prior to annexation was maintained as second homes, and as much as 25% of the homes within the area annexed by the City of Bay St. Louis were maintained as second homes. This part-time population supported local businesses, and for years fostered the need to maintain a great quality of life.

Prior to Hurricane Katrina, almost all second homes were single-family detached homes and cottages nestled within the older neighborhoods of the city or along the canals in the annexed area. Construction costs and insurance costs may preclude many second home owners from rebuilding. Additionally, many second home owners may still be renovating their primary homes which were also damaged by Hurricanes Katrina or Rita.

The Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee felt that second homes must continue to be an important part of the redevelopment of the Bay St. Louis. Second homes in Bay St. Louis provided a market for local businesses, contributed to tax base of the community, and many second home owners became full-time residents.

Options for redeveloping the second home market within the community can include, on an individual level- allowing apartments and guest cottages on single family residential sites; and on a larger scale- encouraging clustered residential developments that can offer a range of housing sizes and styles, including condominiums and mixed uses.

Goals and Objectives

Community Character

Significant Finding: Prior to Hurricane Katrina the City of Bay St. Louis was identified as a unique community on the Gulf Coast, with a thriving downtown waterfront area. Residents and visitors value this character. The character of the City was defined by historic buildings, vernacular architecture, natural beauty and scenic vistas overlooking St. Louis Bay and the Mississippi Sound.

GOAL 1. Preserve the small town and unique character of the city, by protecting and nurturing architectural heritage, natural resources, the arts community and small businesses.

Objective 1. Establish design guidelines and architectural standards to capture the natural beauty of the area.

Objective 2. The City may consider limiting buildings to 4 stories within the downtown area of Bay St. Louis to retain the character of the community. And consider protecting the view of landside businesses by limiting the height of beachside businesses along Beach Boulevard in the downtown area. Develop design standards which would consider the volume of the building and link height, setbacks and the façade of the structure.

GOAL 2. Encourage vibrant and diverse neighborhoods and a healthy downtown business district, incorporating mixed use techniques that foster walkability and community interaction and attraction as a tourist destination.

Objective 1. Investigate form based codes (Smart Code) in areas of the City in which new building is necessary and desirable, and through form based codes, new development can enhance local character and local vitality.

Objective 2. Utilize cluster development and Traditional Neighborhood Development standards to incorporate condominium, housing redevelopment and mix-use developments into existing neighborhoods. These standards should establish the height, density and scale of the development to be complimentary to existing adjacent developments.

GOAL 3. Enhance and preserve residential neighborhoods within the City of Bay St. Louis.

Objective 1. Ensure that new development is compatible with the existing development and the characteristics of existing neighborhoods.

Objective 2. Continue to enforce applicable property maintenance, buildings and zoning codes to minimize the physical deterioration of properties in established neighborhoods.

Downtown and Retail Development

Significant Finding: Sales revenues from establishments in City of Bay St. Louis account for only about 24% of all retail sales in Hancock County, yet Bay St. Louis retail establishments average 61.8% of all miscellaneous retail sales, 63.9% of all miscellaneous services and 33 % of all food and beverage sales. The City's magnetism before Hurricane Katrina was as a seaside art community, with unique character and southern charm.

GOAL 1. Maintain a healthy retail and small business community, which attracts customers from across the region and people seeking to establish second homes in Bay St. Louis.

Objective 1. Consider mixed use development in the downtown area to encourage residential living areas over commercial and service oriented land uses. It is important that the mixed land uses contribute to one another and do not detract from each other.

GOAL 2. Maintain and market historic, cultural and ecological and recreational based tourism in Bay St. Louis.

Objective 1. Establish a waterfront park area in Downtown Bay St. Louis.

Objective 2. Encourage loft and gallery space in the Depot District.

GOAL 3. Public buildings will remain in Downtown Bay St. Louis, to bring people into downtown at all times of the year.

Objective 1. Encourage the county to rebuild county buildings and reuse these buildings for daily county business in downtown Bay St. Louis.

Objective 2. Establish a parking garage in downtown Bay St. Louis.

GOAL 4. Establish a public harbor and municipal pier in or around the downtown area.

Significant Finding: Retail sales from Bay St. Louis establishments declined by 30% in the year after Hurricane Katrina. The loss of local population, the loss of the Highway 90 Bridge between Pass Christian and Bay St. Louis and the loss of Beach Boulevard will impact the recovery of sales in the community.

GOAL 5. Explore options to develop and redevelop businesses and housing in Bay St. Louis.

Objective 1. Establish the Hancock County Resource Business Center, one-stop shop, for people seeking to develop businesses and housing developments to coordinate permits, programs and incentives that may be available for redevelopment.

Objective 2. Establish and maintain selected economic data and materials concerning major commercial and institutional properties available, workforce availability, taxes, schools, and other matters pertinent to attracting businesses to Bay St. Louis.

Objective 3. Make an effective effort to occupy or redevelop vacant commercial properties along major roadways, especially Highway 90 and the Downtown area.

Economic Development

Significant Finding: Hancock County is home to the John C. Stennis Space Center, and economic developers within the County have targeted the Aerospace sector. Employees of the Stennis Space Center and the Aerospace Industry are highly skilled, and technical.

GOAL 1. Develop Bay St. Louis to have a quality of life attractive to businesses seeking to relocate to Hancock County. This includes an emphasis on culture, recreation, education and stable taxes.

GOAL 2. Create an environment that allows the Bay St. Louis schools to build an educated technical workforce.

Objective 1. Rebuild schools in Bay St. Louis to include state of the art technology and science labs.

Objective 2. Provide high school students with the opportunity to gain college credits while in high school to prepare for careers in science and technology.

Objective 3. Establish mentoring programs between school classes and businesses at Stennis Space Center and Port Bienville Industrial Park.

Objective 4. Create a Center for Higher Education. Regardless of how small the center may start out, higher education is directly proportional to a higher standard of living. NASA and the technical agencies at the Stennis Space Center require educated personnel.

GOAL 3. Position Bay St. Louis to capture a diversity of businesses, including spin-off businesses from the Stennis Space Center, government, defense and aerospace technology contracts or businesses.

Objective 1. Encourage employers to make use of the local workforce.

Objective 2. Encourage high quality office space development, as well as technology centers, to capture businesses that support Stennis Space Center mission or to house spin-off businesses from Stennis Space Center.

GOAL 4. Diversify the City's economy, maintaining one casino district within the City Bay St. Louis, welcoming other casinos and the types of supportive facilities needed to keep the casino industry thriving within this district.

GOAL 5. Establish an aggressive economic development campaign to attract new service, retail and professional businesses to all business areas in Bay St. Louis.

Objective 1. Establish the Hancock County Resource Business Center, one-stop shop, for people seeking to develop businesses and housing developments to coordinate permits, programs and incentives that may be available for redevelopment.

Objective 2. Establish a Resort zoning classification to allow resort developments that are isolated from the built community and to do not intrude on existing neighborhoods in Bay St. Louis, Waveland and unincorporated Hancock County.

Housing

Significant Finding: Hurricane Katrina caused significant damage to the housing stock in Bay St. Louis. As many as 1,448 residential acres were damaged by storm surge from the Hurricane. The process to rebuild has been slow, and homeowners and developers are faced with many decisions and issues in the rebuilding process. Chief among these issues are the higher costs for insurance and the smaller insurance market, higher construction costs, and changing base flood elevations implemented to mitigate the risk of flooding. Public comments gathered from a series of public meetings held throughout late summer and early fall in 2007 indicated that residents thought the City should assist single-family homeowners return to the City.

GOAL 1. Make housing available in appropriate quality, quantity, and range of costs in locations, densities and arrangements forming attractive, diverse and sustainable neighborhoods (from the City's 2000 Comprehensive Plan).

Objective 1. Make every effort to encourage the continuation and upkeep of existing freestanding, single-family dwellings in residential neighborhoods that compose the bulk of the housing in Bay St. Louis. Preserve or improve the neighborhood settings where these houses mainly occur.

Objective 2. Remain open to innovative structures and arrangements providing dwelling units consistent with site and neighborhood characteristics. Obtain efficient use of land to be occupied by housing, especially in dense developments. Provide opportunities to integrate affordability into neighborhoods keeping with the context of the neighborhood. This objective applies to both public and private housing.

Objective 3. Strongly encourage residential developments to locate where suitable roads and utilities are already installed.

Objective 4. Recognize and understand the hazard of neighborhood deterioration (blight) and take every opportunity to prevent its occurrence or to reverse its course if already begun.

Objective 5. Make use of required design elements, discourage demolitions, and allow for special lot dimensions and building placements when these measures will preserve or enhance market values or other residential property in a locale or district.

Objective 6. Officially and consistently apply applicable standards of residential construction and building systems to obtain stable, durable houses that will maintain their physical integrity and suitability for occupation.

Objective 7. Support efforts of a non-profit land bank or Housing Trust program to assemble vacant property for redevelopment for housing. One such organization may be the Hancock County Housing Resource Center.

Objective 8. Support the Housing Resource Center to develop incentive programs such as down payment assistance programs and low interest mortgage programs to help keep housing affordable.

Objective 9. Develop a long-term affordable housing strategy.

GOAL 2. Rebuild housing in a manner complementary with historic precedent or the vernacular style in architectural design and scale.

Objective 1. Develop design and zoning standards to encourage the style of housing that existed prior to Hurricane Katrina to be built back on Beach Boulevard, but allow additional density to the rear of these homes, to counter act costs associated with rebuilding.

Objective 2. Work with the Mississippi State Department of Archives and History to develop Historic Preservation Ordinance for neighborhoods with significant historic housing stock.

GOAL 3. Ensure that everyone displaced by Hurricane Katrina will be given a reasonable opportunity to return home.

Objective 1. Establish and maintain a Housing Recovery Center to help residents rebuild during the recovery phase. This Center could help people understand funding that is available to assist rebuilding and provide information on building back to safer standards.

Objective 2. The Housing Recovery Center could work with developers to build market rate and affordable housing in Bay St. Louis and Hancock County.

Land Use

Significant Finding: Investigate different options for rebuilding in areas of the city to maximize density in areas where denser developments are appropriate and to minimize density in areas that might not be appropriate for dense development. Options within the City include Traditional Neighborhood Development and Cluster Development or Conservation Design Subdivisions.

A Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) is a neighborhood that shares the following features: it is generally compact, designed for human scale, provides a mix of uses in proximity to one another within the neighborhood; provides a mix of housing styles, types and sizes to accommodate households of all ages, sizes and incomes; incorporates a system of relatively narrow interconnected streets with sidewalks, bikeways, and sometimes, transit, that offer multiple routes for motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists; retains existing buildings with historical features or architectural features that enhance the visual character of the community; incorporates significant environmental features into the design; and is a self-sustaining community consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Cluster Development or Conservation Design Subdivisions are developments which build upon the natural landscape of a parcel of land. As stated in *Growing Greener*, by Randall Arndt, “Conservation Design rearranges the development on each parcel as it is being planned so that half (or more) of the buildable area is set aside as open space. Without controversial ‘down zoning’, the same number of homes can be built in a less land-consumptive manner, allowing the balance of the property to be permanently protected and added to an interconnected network of community green spaces.”

Cluster development involves the modification of minimum standards, including the minimum lot area, width, depth setback and other minimum dimensions to allow structures to be clustered on a property, and thereby minimizing the infrastructure within the development, with the purpose of preserving natural or scenic qualities by maintaining open land. The purpose of cluster subdivision design is NOT to increase site density, but to preserve open space and reduce the amount of road, water, sewerage and other public infrastructure needed to be built and maintained to serve residential development. The permanent open space can encompass a significant environmental feature on the site, or be an amenity for residents of the new development

GOAL 1. Provide the opportunity for higher density subdivisions that incorporate green space into their design, to allow for concentration of populace in the areas least vulnerable to storm surge.

Objective 1. Review zoning ordinance and investigate the use of Smart Code to allow Traditional Neighborhood Developments, Conservation Design and Cluster Developments.

Objective 2. Higher density subdivisions should compliment the adjacent neighborhoods in character.

GOAL 2. Take maximum advantage of natural and historic elements. Bring about and maintain an appearance of neatness, order, prosperity, and small coastal town character and scale. Show thoughtful design of structures and landscapes, and considered placement, architecture and scale of new commercial, institutional, and industrial developments and redevelopments.

Objective 1. Review zoning ordinance and investigate the use of Smart Code to allow Traditional Neighborhood Developments, Conservation Design and Cluster Developments.

Objective 2. Incorporate standards for mixed use developments within the City's zoning ordinance.

Objective 3. Architectural Design standards should incorporate both historical elements identified in the City's Historic District and vernacular elements identified throughout the city and region.

Significant Finding: The City's adherence to life and safety codes, including building codes, stormwater ordinances and floodplain ordinances, may have contributed to the survivability during Hurricane Katrina of some homes, businesses and neighborhoods in Bay St. Louis. The City should continue to plan for resilience.

GOAL 3. Planning for future storms should be a primary concern, in order to maintain lower community insurance ratings, reduce damage to structures and infrastructure, and facilitate evacuation.

Objective 1. Become, and remain, knowledgeable in disaster preparedness as an influence on planning, obtaining certifications and keeping up to date publications on the subject.

Objective 2. Seek pertinent advice, design guidelines, and interagency cooperation as appropriate, especially concerning hurricane winds and floods, and hazardous materials releases resulting from railroad derailments or highway accidents. Keep up to date plans and agreements that might result.

Objective 3. Support proposed land use plans with documented evidence of their sufficiency for purposes of evacuation.

Objective 4. Survey city properties and resources for their potential availability and employment in temporary care for people made homeless or stranded due to a hurricane.

Objective 5. Continue to participate in the Community Rating System Program.

Objective 6. Continue to work with FEMA to adopt Floodplain Management measures that mitigate against the risk of flooding and hurricane damage.

GOAL 4. Make a consistent and effective effort to adopt, utilize, promote and enforce accepted engineering based codes, standards and recommendations for the safety of buildings and other structures. Provide for adequate staffing (From the City's 2000 Comprehensive Plan).

Objective 1. Include all building systems and features: mechanical, electrical, plumbing, fire safety and means of egress, security against intruders, stability against weather (especially high winds and floods), and others that may be realized.

Objective 2. Provide trained City personnel and furnish them with time and resources as necessary for prompt, uniform, and complete enforcement of the adopted building standards and codes.

Objective 3. Give special attention to procedures concerning certificates of occupancy and condemnation of vacant or dilapidated property, including coordination with utility providers and relocating occupants to safe quarters in unusual cases.

Objective 4. Rarely make local modifications to standard building and safety codes, and then only for good and preferably permanent reasons recorded at the time.

GOAL 5. Work with the City of Waveland and Hancock County to establish an intergovernmental mechanism that would coordinate city and county land use decisions.

Objective 1. Establish a joint Planning and Building Department between the City of Bay St. Louis, the City of Waveland and Hancock County that could share support services, mapping capacity and specific areas of building expertise.

Objective 2. Establish regular county and city meetings to share information about land use projects which may have extra-territorial impacts.

Significant Finding: The City's adherence to public welfare and safety codes contributes to the sustainability of neighborhoods and business districts. By controlling nuisances, property values within the city are maintained and neighborhoods maintain viable, sustainable and pleasant places for people to live, to work and to socialize.

GOAL 6. Consistent with safety, regulate sources of noise and light to minimize intrusion into residential areas and individual dwellings. Regulate sources of noise and light interfering with commercial or institutional activities.

Objective 1. In considering and permitting a development or redevelopment, take into account whether it will be a source of or be adversely affected by noise and light.

Objective 2. Reduce, to the greatest extent feasible, noise associated with transportation due to vehicle starts, stops, speed, turning, and exhaust noise.

Objective 3. Control by regulation the intrusion of sound from car audio equipment on public streets and, when parked, within hearing range of residential areas, and sound escaping from audio equipment used at home.

Objective 4. Reduce, where possible, intrusive noise and light from industrial and commercial sources.

GOAL 7. Minimize storm water runoff through effective building, landscaping and site planning.

Objective 1. Continue to implement the City's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Phase II Program.

Objective 2. Continue to implement the City's storm water control ordinance.

Objective 3. Include storm water runoff as a consideration in development planning and approval due to considerations of life, safety, security of property, and environmental considerations.

Objective 4. Participate in regional planning for storm water runoff to ensure that a regional system is adequately funded.

Objective 5. Evaluate and improve maintenance practices for ditches, drains, and catch basins.

Objective 6. Place special emphasis on FEMA guidelines and apply related engineering models as applicable when elevating or altering the contours in flood plain zones.

Objective 7. Provide sufficient trained personnel and resources to enforce the adopted flood ordinance.

Objective 8. Promote public understanding of City and interagency flood related policies and requirements as these pertain to land uses, building practices, and insurance costs.

Objective 9. Encourage the use of conservation easements by developers.

Objective 10. Keep family-oriented activities, such as fishing, biking, shopping and water sports in mind when planning for future land use.

GOAL 8. Bay St. Louis will preserve its wetlands to be enjoyed by citizens and visitors, act as a nursery for fisheries, provide storm protection and provide a base for eco-tourism.

Objective 1. Work proactively with community and regional partners to purchase and preserve wetlands areas within the City.

Significant Finding: The City must ensure that its public facilities are adequate to service the needs of the community. As the City recovers from Hurricane Katrina, it is challenged to both reconstruct utility systems and public facilities within the City, while planning ahead for an uncertain future which will include growth, but possibly only slow growth in the immediate future.

The City's challenges are complicated by financial constraints. The City borrowed \$8 million in loans in the year after Hurricane Katrina to begin reconstruction and to continue basic city operations. Additionally, the City is responsible for providing a 10% match for reconstruction costs funded through the FEMA Public Assistance Program for Local Government, and should have cash flow to be able to carry about 25% of the cost of the local reconstruction projects, as FEMA reimburses the final amount only after the project is complete. Recently, Congress forgave the 10% match required by the City for the Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance program. However, Congress may not forgive this match for future disaster declarations. Still, the City has been operating on reduced taxes and reduced revenues from services.

GOAL 1. Plan growth and manage growth through the provision of adequate infrastructure.

Objective 1. Work with the County Authority to establish a regional wastewater treatment plant.

Objective 2. Complete and keep up to date diagrams and maps of the municipal wastewater collection system.

Objective 3. Plan projected wastewater collection capacity in accordance with projected land uses.

Objective 4. Assuring the availability and the estimated cost of wastewater treatment should be considered in the City's decisions to expand services.

Objective 5. Adopt and follow engineering and design standards and specifications to assure acceptable wastewater collection systems in subdivisions.

Objective 6. Re-establish a recycling program, and work with organizations to make the program sustainable.

GOAL 2. Provide safe and reliable drinking water and water flow adequate for fire protection.

Objective 1. Work with the County Authority to establish the east county water system proposed in the Mississippi Gulf Region Water and Wastewater Plan, to increase the supply and insure the reliability of water in Bay St. Louis. This should address the need for an additional well by the City to insure reliability of the City water system.

Objective 2. Complete and keep up to date diagrams and maps of the municipal water system.

Objective 3. Plan projected capacity in accordance with projected land uses.

Objective 4. Assure that existing residents have available water at a fair cost.

Objective 5. Adopt and follow engineering and design standards and specifications to assure acceptable water systems in subdivisions.

Objective 6. Ensure Fire Department participation in water system plans, modifications, and performance evaluations.

Objective 7. Encourage water conservation by consumers and by maintaining a leak-free delivery system.

Objective 8. Work with the Hancock Water and Sewer District to provide water service to the area newly annexed into the City of Bay St. Louis.

Objective 9. While the City's water is healthy, due to the mineral content, it is not often clear in color. Implement a system to clarify the color of the City's water.

GOAL 3. Promote and cooperate in the provision of facilities, programs, and parks or open spaces in a variety of locations and settings for use by all citizens.

Objective 1. Make the most of the beauty and utility of public lands through recreational, park, and open space uses.

Objective 2. Take advantage of lowlands too frequently flooded for building to set aside for recreation and open space. The City may utilize Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds available through the Federal Emergency Management Agency to purchase contiguous properties with homes that repetitively flood to achieve this objective.

Objective 3. A recreation commission should monitor, initiate, and evaluate parks, public open space, and recreation programs.

Objective 4. Establish a municipal pier in the downtown area.

Objective 5. Cooperate with the County and with the City of Waveland to provide recreational opportunities.

Objective 6. Establish neighborhood centers and community centers throughout the City to promote active recreation and life-long social, cultural and artistic learning.

Objective 7. Renovate the Valena C. Jones Center or reconstruct a facility at this site for a Boys and Girls Club.

Objective 8. Revisit the development of the Science Nature Center in Cedar Point as an educational tourist draw.

GOAL 4. Provide fully effective fire protection, prevention and expert fire related knowledge throughout the City. Maintain a highly rated fire department able to respond in sufficient time and force to rescue persons and preserve property (from the City's 2000 Comprehensive Plan).

Objective 1. The City should consider National Fire Protection Association or NFPA recommended information, publications and services (as accepted by Mississippi rating authorities) to assess the fire department capabilities, capacities, training needs, and economic performance.

Objective 2. Offer fire prevention, safety inspections and education throughout the City while "in service" or by special assignment. Encourage the public to make use of fire department expert knowledge over a wide range of fire and hazardous materials related subjects. Continue the existing fire safety liaison with the schools, training children and teachers as well as gaining familiarity with school buildings and grounds.

Objective 3. Encourage City officials to seek consultations and cooperation from the Fire Department. Provide knowledgeable assistance to City officials in instances of planning and management where fire safety is a consideration - water mains, hydrants, standpipes, access for emergency vehicles, and means of egress.

Objective 4. City administration should provide to the Fire Department sufficient time and knowledge of City decisions, which will affect Fire Department planning capabilities, and requirements - especially as to the type, extent, height, and location of developments and potential enlargement of the City perimeters.

Objective 5. The Fire Department should make effective mutual aid agreements with surrounding fire departments and interests.

Objective 6. The Fire Department should be present for public safety at special events involving large assemblies indoors and out.

GOAL 5. Provide fully effective police protection and related knowledge. Maintain a highly rated police department able to respond in sufficient time and force to reduce crime and protect life and property.

Objective 1. The City administration should continue to maintain the high level ratio of sworn officers to population.

Objective 2. The City Council and City administration should make use of National Law Enforcement Organizations for recommended information, publications, and services assessing police department capabilities, capacities, training, needs, and economic performance.

Objective 3. The Police Department should offer education throughout the City while "in service" or by special assignment.

Objective 4. Encourage the public to make use of police department expert knowledge over a wide range of law enforcement. Continue the drug education program in the

schools, training children, and teachers as well as gaining familiarity with school buildings and grounds.

Objective 5. Encourage City officials to seek consultations and cooperation from the Police Department. Provide knowledgeable assistance to City officials in instances of planning and management where crime prevention and traffic safety is a consideration.

Objective 6. The Police Department should make effective mutual aid agreements with surrounding law enforcement departments and interests.

Objective 7. The Police Department should be present and provide training to officers to prepare for public safety at special events involving large assemblies indoors or out.

Objective 8. Special emphasis should be placed on cooperation with casino security managers and casino staff to secure seamless public safety, economy of City operations, and traffic management.

Objective 9. The Building Department should provide an orientation to zoning and building ordinances for the police from time to time.

Objective 10. City administration should obtain police knowledge in planning and selecting lighting for public places and roadways.

Objective 11. The Police Department should re-establish Neighborhood Watch Programs.

GOAL 6. Support a fully effective emergency management agency within Hancock County. Work with the county to insure that the agency is able to prepare for and respond to all natural and man-made disasters in Hancock County.

Objective 1. Work with the County Board of Supervisors to establish a location for a New Emergency Operations Center that is not likely to flood.

Objective 2. Work with the County Board of Supervisors to establish safe shelters within the County.

GOAL 7. Establish organized recreation, social and cultural programs for the City's youth.

Objective 1. Work with non-profit organizations to develop summer and after school programs in Bay St. Louis.

GOAL 8. Establish community centers in neighborhoods throughout Bay St. Louis.

Objective 1. Identify city and county facilities that can be re-built as community centers for youth, senior and adult programs.

Objective 2. Develop an arts business incubator which can also be utilized for community programming.

Objective 3. Renovate the Valena C. Jones Center, reconstruct a facility at this site, or find an equally suitable site which could provide space for governmental offices and the Boys and Girls Club.

Transportation

Significant Finding: Attractive roadways and ample vehicle parking welcome people into a community, market the community to visitors and create opportunities for additional retail sales.

GOAL 1. Make corridors into and within the City more attractive.

Objective 1. Complete the Gateway Project slated for Highway 603 and Interstate 10.

Objective 2. Establish a Gateway at the Bay St. Louis bridge.

Objective 3. Rebuild Beach Boulevard in a manner that is attractive and functional and preserve views of the beach and Bay.

Objective 4. Require businesses located on corridors of the City to provide attractive buildings, signage and landscaping.

GOAL 2. Establish attractive boulevards throughout the city to include tree-lined streets and landscaped medians.

Objective 1. Establish Drinkwater Boulevard as a tree lined boulevard.

Objective 2. Establish streetscape improvements on Beach Boulevard.

GOAL 3. Provide ample vehicle parking, preferably off-street parking in the business district.

Objective 1. Establish a parking garage in downtown.

Significant Finding: Many residents of Bay St. Louis commute to New Orleans, Stennis Space Center, Port Bienville or Gulfport and Biloxi to work. Provide an opportunity for transportation other than private vehicle transportation.

GOAL 4. Explore options of inter-city/regional transportation in our area.

Objective 1. Re-establish public transit between Bay St. Louis and Gulfport.

Objective 2. Investigate the opportunity and feasibility for commuter passenger rail service between the Mississippi Gulf Coast and New Orleans and Mobile.

Objective 3. Establish Park and Ride area for people to park and use if they commute to their workplace in other areas such as New Orleans or Stennis Space Center.

Significant Finding: Other forms of transportation, including walking and biking which are growing in popularity, can help reduce traffic problems and pollution and encourage tourist-related activities.

GOAL 5. Make Bay St. Louis safer for bicycles by creating a network of sidewalks and bike paths throughout the City.

Objective 1. Work with the Bay-Waveland School District to plan their “Safe Routes to School Program”.

Objective 2. Work with the school district to obtain funding to implement the planned walking and biking routes.

Objective 3. Enforce subdivision regulations requiring sidewalks in and between subdivisions and neighborhoods.

Objective 4. Provide new sidewalks where needed to link neighborhoods with commercial areas and to link neighborhoods with community centers and recreation areas.

Significant Finding: Failure of citizens and visitors to observe vehicle speed limits and traffic signals adversely affects public safety and detracts from the pleasantness of daily living. This will become an ever increasing problem as the population of the area grows in the years ahead, unless extraordinary efforts are taken to control vehicular traffic.

GOAL 6. Make enforcement of traffic laws a high priority for City police.

Objective 1. Provide resources and staffing as needed to insure safe highways.

Objective 2. Seek authority from State government, as necessary, for City police to use modern law enforcement devices such as radar and street cameras to provide safer streets.

GOAL 7. Make use of innovative traffic calming measures such as round-a-bouts and speed humps which can effectively reduce vehicle speeding without requiring a police presence.