



City of Fort Walton Beach
America's Most Beautiful Beaches 

96-14

Resolution _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF FORT WALTON BEACH, FLORIDA, RELATING TO COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT; FINDING THE EXISTENCE OF BLIGHT CONDITIONS IN AN AREA OF THE CITY; MAKING CERTAIN FINDINGS AND DETERMINATIONS; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the City Council adopted Resolution 77-38 on November 22, 1977, finding the existence of slum and blight conditions in an area of the City of Fort Walton Beach known and referred to as "downtown Fort Walton Beach", as more particularly described in that resolution (such area being referred to herein as the "Original Area"); and

WHEREAS, Carr Smith Associates has prepared a study and an evaluation and analysis of the conditions in that part of the City of Fort Walton Beach, Florida as more particularly described on Exhibit "A" hereof (such area being referred to herein as the "Expansion Area"); and

WHEREAS, the results of that study have been presented to the City of Fort Walton Beach Community Redevelopment Agency ("CRA") and to the City Council of the City of Fort Walton Beach, for consideration and such study was presented at a public meeting and included in the public records; and

WHEREAS, after having considered the study's determinations and the facts and evidence of blight conditions in the Expanded Area and has received and considered such other evidence of the blight conditions in the Expanded Area as have been presented to it, the CRA has determined that certain actions are appropriate and necessary and should be taken to address the conditions now present and expected to be present in the Expansion Area, and recommended to the City Council that a resolution be adopted by the City Council finding the existence of conditions of blight in the Expansion Area and that the Expansion Area be added to the community redevelopment area within the City of Fort Walton Beach in accordance with Part III, Chapter 163, Florida Statutes;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FORT WALTON BEACH, FLORIDA:

Section 1. Findings of Conditions. Based upon the evidence, data and facts presented to it, the City Council does hereby find:

(a) Conditions are present in the Expansion Area which are detrimental to the sound growth of the City of Fort Walton Beach, including the Expansion Area, and which substantially impair or arrest the growth within the Expansion Area and adjacent territory, and present conditions and uses in the Expansion Area are detrimental to the public health safety, morals and public welfare; and

(b) Public transportation facilities are or will be incapable of handling the volume of traffic flow into or through the Expansion Area, either at present or following proposed construction within the Expansion Area; and

(c) There exists a shortage of housing affordable to residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly, in the Expansion Area.

Section 2. Findings of Necessity. The City Council does hereby expressly find that the rehabilitation, conservation or redevelopment, or a combination thereof, of the Area are necessary and in the interest of public health, safety, morals or welfare of the residents of the City.

Section 3. Community Redevelopment Area. Based upon facts presented to it and contained in the public record, including the study prepared by Carr Smith Associates, the City Council does hereby find the Expansion Area contains conditions of blight as defined in Section 163.340(10), Florida Statutes (1995).

Section 4. Effective Date. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon its approval.

ADOPTED

August 13, 1996

MAYOR

Larry Genary

Attest:

Helen A. Spencer
CITY CLERK

The form and legal sufficiency of the foregoing has been reviewed and approved by the City Attorney.

Jerome Miller
CITY ATTORNEY

DISPOSITION
CDS
C/M
Est

**Finding of Necessity
for the
Proposed CRA Area
City of Fort Walton Beach**

**prepared for:
City of Fort Walton Beach
Community Redevelopment Agency**

**by:
Carr Smith Associates**

February, 1996

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FINDING OF NECESSITY SUMMARY

The Finding of Necessity which follows, has found the need to incorporate the proposed Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) expansion area, shown in Figure 1 and described in Section 3.0, into the existing CRA Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) in the City of Fort Walton Beach. The determination is motivated by, the finding of a concentration of blighting conditions, and the inadequacy of existing transportation infrastructure. Together, these impact the City's ability to motivate and fund the restoration, maintenance, and upkeep of historic properties; as well as inhibit needed private enterprise and development is the central core for economic revitalization.

The blight conditions which have been found, and are presented in detail in Sections 4.1 through 4.7, and Section 5 include:

1. Approximately 9.4% of the net developable land in the proposed CRA Expansion Area is blighted of deteriorating due to dilapidated and deteriorating structures.
2. There are non-conforming structures and areas of conflicting land use which bring blight and economic stress to nearby properties.
3. There are fire code violations in existing structures, jeopardizing public safety.
4. Over 4% of the net developable land in the CRA Expansion Area is vacant or occupied by closed buildings.
5. Approximately 18% of the CRA Expansion Area is inhibited from efficient redevelopment by a diversity of ownership.
6. There is inadequate infrastructure for the delivery of water.
7. There is inadequate infrastructure for storm drainage.
8. There is inadequate infrastructure for street drainage.
9. There is inadequate infrastructure for pedestrian circulation.
10. There is a disproportionately high proportion of serious and violent crime incidents in the proposed CRA Expansion Area.
11. There are inadequate transportation facilities to meet regional mobility needs.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Finding of Necessity has been completed and conveyed as part of a planning process to update the existing Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) plan of the City of Fort Walton Beach. As proposed, this process has emphasizing market analysis, vigorous community input, and the recommendation of an implementable program to achieve the objectives of the CRA. This report, formatted as the Finding-of-Necessity, will be reformatted, and incorporated in the updated CRA Plan as the Boundary Description, and Existing Conditions sections.

Amendment of the CRA Plan has been recommended by the Community Redevelopment Agency. The Agency recommended that modification of the CRA Plan include a change in the boundaries of the redevelopment area to add land which also shows evidence of blight and economic need. (163.361(1) F.S.) The governing body of the CRA has held two, advertised public hearings on the proposed modification of the CRA Area boundary: the first on September 22, 1995 at the City Council Chambers, 107 SW Miracle Strip Parkway; and the second on November 15th, 1995 at the Fred Hedrick Recreation Center at 132 Jet Drive. (163.361(2) F.S.)

The Finding of Necessity which follows is based on the recommendation that the existing CRA area should be expanded to include other areas of need in the City; creating a boundary that includes areas of blight, and areas with strong functional relationships to the blighted areas. Overall, the expanded area provides greater potential for the channeling of resources to revitalize the blighted and economically distressed areas of Fort Walton Beach.

2.0 BASIS OF DETERMINATION

This determination is motivated by four general categories of need, consistent with the Community Redevelopment Part of Chapter 163, Florida Statutes: (Sec.s 163.335, 163.340, 163.355 F.S.)

1. the finding of blighted areas;
2. the finding that transportation infrastructure is inadequate, and improvements are not programmed;
3. the finding that there is an impact of adjacent infrastructure and uses on the City's ability to motivate and fund the restoration, maintenance, and upkeep of properties identified as having historic significance.
4. the finding that the level of private enterprise and investment within the proposed boundary has not kept pace with surrounding areas, and the rehabilitation and redevelopment of the area, including the development of housing which low or moderate income can afford, is necessary in the interest of maintaining the health, safety, morals, and welfare of the residents of the City of Fort Walton Beach.

2.1 BLIGHT

The determination of blight is based on the methodology and criteria detailed in Section 4 of this report. Among the criteria for determining blighted conditions, those which have been discovered on individual blocks and areas within the proposed CRA area include:

1. Deteriorated and dilapidated buildings concentrated in the proposed CRA area;
2. Land use conflicts and deficiencies which blight adjacent uses;
3. Non-conforming structures and uses;
4. Fire code violations;
5. Buildings in unsafe condition;
6. Concentrations of vacant, unimproved lots, within otherwise viable blocks;
7. Closed buildings;
8. Diversity of ownership in commercially redevelopable areas;
9. Inadequate potable water infrastructure;
10. Inadequate drainage infrastructure;
11. Inadequate pedestrian infrastructure (sidewalks);
12. Concentration of high crime rates in the proposed CRA area.

2.2 INADEQUATE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

The determination of inadequate transportation infrastructure is based on the findings outlined in Section 5. This determination refers to the inadequacy of State and County routes traversing the area, and local City streets which are impacted by deficiencies in the deficient State or County roads. These include:

- Miracle Strip Parkway (US 98 / SR 30), from Saint Mary Avenue to the Brooks Bridge;
- Eglin Parkway (SR 85), from Hollywood Boulevard to Miracle Strip Parkway, including Florida Place;
- Beal Parkway (SR 189), from Hollywood Boulevard to Miracle Strip Parkway;
- Hollywood Boulevard, from Robinwood Drive to Eglin Parkway;
- First Street, from Saint Mary Avenue to Brooks Street (east of Alconese).

The inadequacy of these regional links and highways significantly impacts the safety and economic vitality of the CRA area. They have strong functional relationships to safety, private investment, employment, residential development, and the general public interest and welfare of the residents of the City. The inadequacies of these facilities provide a rational target for redevelopment in blocks not individually meeting blight criteria to correct conditions in blighted areas.

2.3 RESTORATION AND UPKEEP OF HISTORIC STRUCTURES

The Vision Plan for the City of Fort Walton Beach identifies the need to utilize historic assets in the community as a component of economic revitalization. The Vision Plan further recommended that a preservation plan should be prepared for the downtown area to coincide with the CRA redevelopment plan. It recommended that the preservation plan address:

- Development of a small area of the downtown that preserves existing structures. This area shall be compatible with the goals of the CRA, and be planned to encourage new development within the area as well as encourage visitation to the area.
- An historic structures preservation strategy should be developed to obtain grant funding and designate receiving sites for the relocation and rehabilitation of historic structures.

Rehabilitation of many of the vacant and deteriorating structures has not been undertaken because of the inability of the residents and owners to pay for restoration, or the inability of owners to justify reuse because of depressed market conditions and the inability of the City to develop the surrounding infrastructure to support quality adaptive reuses. With the assurances of controls to negate the possibility of incongruous neighboring development, public infrastructure investment, and a climate of increasing economic value, property owners will be willing to preserve and reuse their properties, thus reinforcing the overall character of the area.

2.4 PRIVATE ENTERPRISE INVESTMENT DISPARITY

Market surveys conducted for the plan update, along with supporting secondary data, indicate a severe disparity between private investment in the proposed CRA Area, and that in surrounding communities. Assessed property and real estate values in the City of Fort Walton Beach have not kept pace with Okaloosa County, showing a growth rate in taxable value which is approximately 63% of that of the County from 1992 to July, 1995. In the same period, the downtown core and waterfront area (existing CRA Area) has seen a decrease in property and real estate taxable value. In the last ten years, this area has experienced a 16% drop in the property values.

3.0 PROPOSED CRA AREA BOUNDARY

The legal boundaries of the proposed CRA Area are shown with the existing CRA Area boundaries in the CRA Area Boundaries Map, Figure 1. Figure 2 shows the division of blocks in the CRA area for analysis purposes. These boundaries include all tracts or parcels of land, improved or unimproved, lying and being within the inscribed area, which is entirely within the City of Fort Walton Beach, Okaloosa County, Florida. For descriptive purposes, the boundaries of the proposed CRA Expansion Area are:

- from the existing CRA boundary at the intersection of First Street and Bass Avenue, north along the western edge of the Bass Avenue right-of-way, to Comet Street;
- west along the south boundaries of the lots fronting on Comet Drive (north boundary of the Public Housing Authority property);
- then north along the eastern edge of the Robinwood Drive right-of-way;
- then east along the north edge of the Hollywood Boulevard right-of-way;
- then north along the western edge of the City-owned property on which Pruitt Park and the Public Safety Building are located;
- continuing in a north-by-northwesterly direction along the centerline of the Shell Avenue right-of-way, to Walter Martin Road;
- northeasterly along the northwest edge of the Walter Martin Road right-of-way;
- northeast along the centerline of the Carson Drive right-of-way, to the city limit;
- east along the city limits between Cinco Bayou and Fort Walton Beach along Hughes Street;
- then south along the eastern edge of Fort Walton Square;
- then east along the centerline of the Staff Drive right-of-way, to Buck Drive;
- south, then east along the centerline of the Buck Drive right-of-way, to Vine Avenue;
- south along the centerline of the Vine Avenue right-of-way, to Hollywood Boulevard;
- east along the Hollywood Boulevard right-of-way, to Chicago Avenue;
- south along the centerline of the Chicago Avenue right-of-way, to First Street, and then proceeding along the boundary of the existing CRA area to the Santa Rosa Sound.

Within the boundaries described above, the proposed CRA Expansion Area covers approximately 888 gross acres of land within the City, of which there are approximately 766 net developable acres (86.2%). A complete legal description of the CRA Expansion Area boundaries is included in Appendix A, along with the legal description of the existing CRA Area.

3.1 GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

General requirements and objectives for establishing a Community Redevelopment Area have been considered for defining the proposed CRA Area boundaries. The following sections describe the general conditions of the CRA Area which apply to the motivation for recommending its expansion to the proposed boundary. These conditions are based on extensive field observation, data collection, and primary market data collection, and interviews with landowners and civic organizations.

3.1.1 BLIGHT AND NEED

The proposed CRA Area incorporates a predominance of blocks which are blighted by deteriorating conditions. These conditions include the presence of a substantial number of deteriorating units, unsanitary and/or unsafe conditions, deterioration of sites and other improvements, and diversity of ownership. The blighted conditions combine with other factors to produce an urban environment which continues to discourage investment, and therefore produces a self-perpetuating condition of urban decline.

3.1.2 NON-BLIGHTED AREAS

The proposed CRA Area boundary includes blocks which are not directly blighted as per the criteria of Section 4; however, their inclusion is necessary to achieve the objective of eliminating blight throughout the area. They are important to achieving the elimination of blight, because:

- Conditions in blocks not meeting blight conditions directly impacts the quality of life and propensity for investment in blighted blocks which are abutting, adjacent, or in near proximity.
- Redevelopment funds may be spent in blocks not meeting blight conditions to correct conditions in blighted areas, where the block is in near proximity to blighted areas or has a functional relationship to the blighted conditions.
- Blocks which do not meet blight conditions, and are either surrounded, or immediately adjacent to blighted blocks have functional relationships to blighted blocks, aesthetically, and in terms of health, safety, and enjoyment. These relationships directly impact the quality-of-life of the residents and the marketability of the overall area for investment.
- Blocks which do not meet blight conditions, and are not immediately proximate to blighted areas, have functional relationships regarding infrastructure, which must be improved along linear patterns and as part of a network. Transportation infrastructure is inter-related and must be comprehensively approached as a network.

3.1.3 DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The CRA Area includes a substantial number of development and redevelopment opportunities which can be realized. Development opportunities include structures with adaptive reuse potential, as well as parcels which can be redeveloped (clear, or existing vacant). Strong indicators of such opportunities include the presence of a significant number of vacant properties; however, in many locations, ownership and assemblage patterns and urban deficiencies do not facilitate comprehensively planned redevelopment.

3.1.4 COMPLEMENTS EXISTING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT

The CRA designation shall become a primary leveraging force to encourage and direct public and private investment in the designated area. To leverage private participation with public investment, the best possible use of existing public investments should be made. The area is positively impacted by the inclusion of two community development block grant (CDBG) sites along Windham Avenue, existing capital improvements, and public land. These assets provide a starting point from which the many needed infrastructure, land, and structural investments can achieve a cohesive economic revitalization in the CRA Area.

3.1.5 TAX BASE

An important objective of the redevelopment of a central area of the city is to increase the value of that area, which increases the city's and county's general revenue tax base. In this role, the CRA becomes a revitalization tool for the city and region at large. In the interest of its own self-sustainability and growth, with new investment in the CRA area, the CRA can leverage further improvements via an increased revenue by an enhanced tax increment area base.

3.1.6 COMPLEMENTS EXISTING CRA

The proposed CRA expansion area should complement the existing 218-acre CRA located south of First Street. The expansion area should functionally enhance development or redevelopment in the existing area by creating mutual support relationships, such as the concurrent development of a residential area to provide a base for commercial revitalization, while the commercial area provides an employment base for residential development. The expansion area should be an asset to the CRA in its potential balance between tax increment revenue and outlay for development-leveraging projects.

3.1.7 COMMUNITY SUPPORT / INCLUSIVENESS

Among the various residential, civic, and commercial communities which exist in the potential expansion area, the CRA boundary encompasses a wide base of support in its ability to channel resources to the needs of these groups. The CRA area incorporates many potential assets and opportunities, while maintaining consistency of purpose and a compact form to link the synergism of the individual projects within a comprehensive plan. Its specific efforts must be focused to effect economic vitality, and attain visibility as a regional asset.

3.1.8 CITY VISION

The purpose of defining the CRA area is consistent with the overall City Vision as well as supportive of the neighborhood visions for which it encompasses. The visions are outlined at city-wide and neighborhood scales in the *Vision Plan for the City of Fort Walton Beach*.

4.0

BLIGHT

CRITERIA AND FINDINGS

4.1 STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS

This report finds that the proposed CRA area has experienced depreciation in the value of its land and buildings. Both a cause and indicator of the blight is the presence of a critical massing of buildings and structures which have deteriorated or become dilapidated without reinvestment by the property owner. As an indicator of blight, it is postulated that the owner has no economic justification to reinvest due to the depressed value of the property, or that the owner does not have the means. As a redevelopment area, it is imperative to identify such structures, as their condition affects not only the owner's equity, but the viability of the area as a whole.

4.1.1 METHODOLOGY

The finding of structures in poor condition within the proposed CRA Area, is based on the primary and secondary data sources, analyzed with respect to their cause of blight conditions. The methodology includes:

1. analysis of Florida Statutes and other successful CRA designations, in the determination of criteria for sound, deteriorated, and dilapidated structures in the determination of blighted conditions;
2. extensive, block-by-block field survey of the proposed CRA designation area;
3. collection and analysis of code violations and survey findings of the City of Fort Walton Beach.

The above data was collected, reviewed, and aggregated. The findings have been reported by summary quantitative statistics and presented in map format to summarize the characteristics of spatial distribution.

4.1.2 CRITERIA

Structural conditions were assessed and characterized as being generally one of three possible conditions. These conditions, and the criteria for their determination are:

Sound: The building is not in need of repair to any major architectural element. The roof, walls, porch, doors, windows, and fireplace are all in generally good condition. One or two defects which are recent occurrences may be present, such as a broken window on an otherwise well maintained property. There are no defects which compromise the safety of occupants. If the building is not occupied, the vacation is temporary, regular maintenance and upkeep are evident, and if for sale, it is marketable and suitable for immediate occupancy in its present condition.

Deteriorating: The building condition shows signs of minor deterioration: this includes small defects to the roof, walls, doors, windows, and porches. The minor deteriorations are single occurrences in instances such as a broken

window, broken door, or a single area of missing roof tiles or leakage. Deterioration is also evidenced by missing or sagging gutters, or paint or roofing which is generally worn and in need of reconditioning. Site conditions which show a long-term lack of maintenance or code violations which impact the value of the adjacent properties are considered. These include: clear lack of lawn cutting, an abundance of tall uncultivated vegetation, walks in disrepair, broken fences or walls, or the storage of abandoned vehicles or machinery within view of the front of properties. Deteriorating structures do not have any conditions which singularly or in conjunction cause the structure to be unsafe to occupants.

Dilapidated: The building's major structural elements are sagging or giving way, such as sagging roofs; where window frames and door frames are warped or protruding from the walls; or where there are virtually no doors or windows in good condition. In addition, a structure is deemed to be dilapidated where it shows multiple signs of the minor deterioration conditions listed above, or exhibits a combination of single occurrences such that the structure is extensively deteriorated. The building may be abandoned or occupied, but where occupied, it is often in violation of code as a result of its conditions. Some dilapidated buildings must be demolished and replaced, while others may be reused by restoration; dependent on historic value, and/or the owner's option.

The number of properties with deteriorated and dilapidated structures for each block of the proposed CRA area was recorded and compared against the total number of properties with sound structures on the same block. Ancillary structures, such as detached garages and storage sheds were not included in the determinations.

If the proportion of deteriorated and dilapidated structures is such that 20% or more of the properties are effected, the block is considered to be in a blighted condition. If the proportion of deteriorated and dilapidated structures is such that 10% or more of the properties are effected, the block is considered to be in deteriorated condition, and blight is imminent without reinvestment.

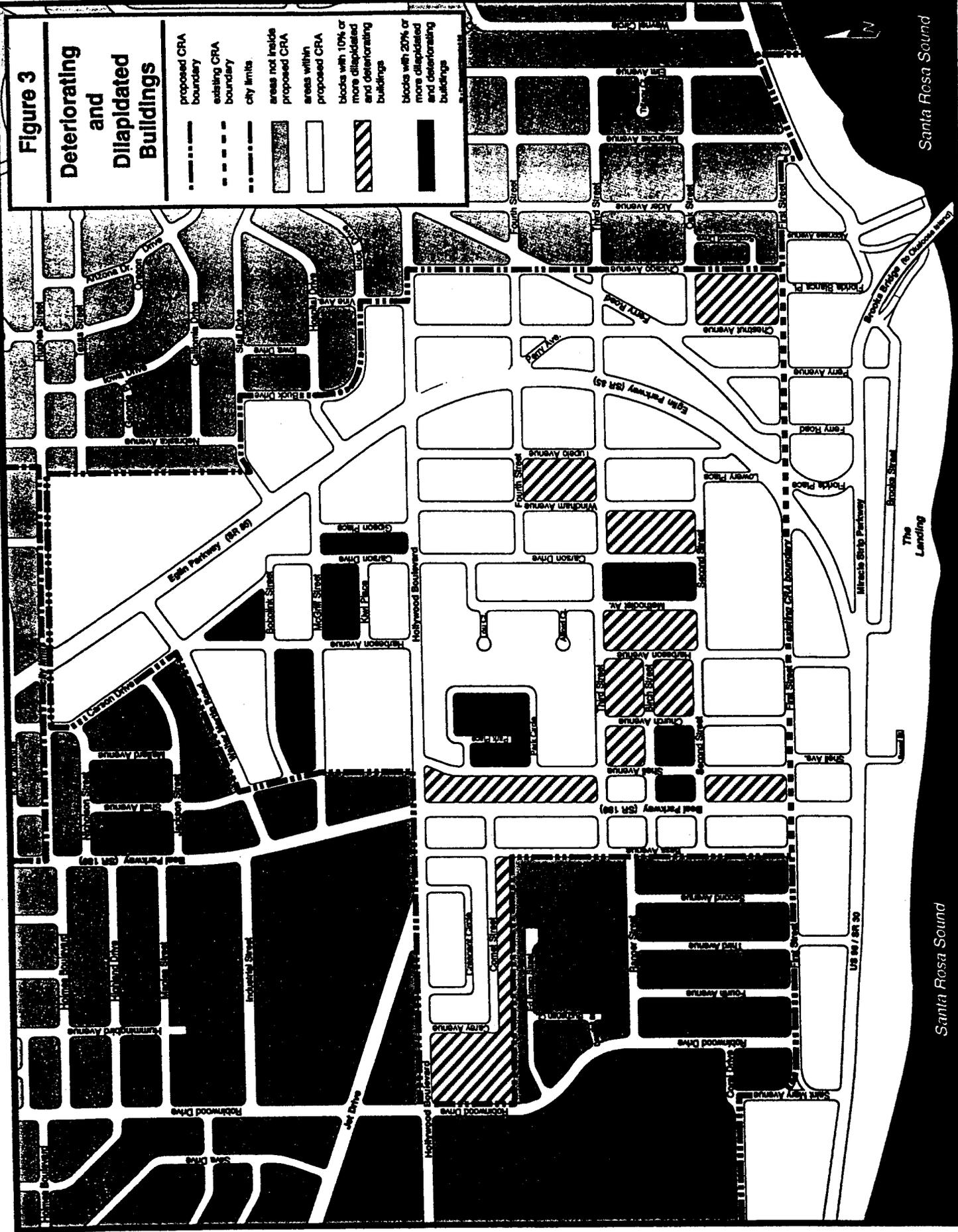
4.1.3 FINDINGS

As illustrated in Figure 3, eight blocks are blighted by a preponderance of deteriorated or dilapidated structures, and ten others are deteriorating. Twenty-nine (28.57) acres of the proposed CRA area are thus blighted, and an additional 43.56 acres are significantly deteriorating. Overall, 72.13 acres, approximately 9.4% of the net developable land in the proposed area is blighted or deteriorating due to dilapidated and deteriorating structures.

Figure 3

Deteriorating and Dilapidated Buildings

- proposed CRA boundary
- - - - - existing CRA boundary
- · - · - city limits
- ▨ areas not inside proposed CRA
- ▩ areas within proposed CRA
- ▧ blocks with 10% or more dilapidated and deteriorating buildings
- ▦ blocks with 20% or more dilapidated and deteriorating buildings



Santa Rosa Sound

Santa Rosa Sound

4.2 LAND USE DEFICIENCIES

The presence of non-conforming structures is a planning element that can cause a lack of investment or disinvestment in an area. Generally, non-conforming structures with regard to: the size of the structure or individual units, adequate parking provisions, setbacks, height, or lot coverage, can be a contributing factor in a area coming to blighted conditions. In the proposed CRA area, these factors have been investigated, and non-conforming structures which are contributing have been identified.

Certain residential blocks of the proposed CRA area have experienced depreciation in the value of land and buildings, due to blight conditions brought about by conflicting land uses. These areas are evidenced by the presence of deteriorating or dilapidated residential structures in the immediate vicinity of a commercial use, where the proximity and the character of the residences and character of the commercial use have a clearly apparent, functionally-based impact on the quality of the area. The owners of properties on these blocks have a disincentive to reinvest due to low expected market return on their investment. The viability of these residential areas is at risk due the blight brought by the conflicting uses.

4.2.1 METHODOLOGY

The conflicting land uses within the proposed CRA Area, is based on the primary and secondary data sources, analyzed with respect to their cause of blight conditions. The methodology includes:

1. extensive, block-by-block field survey of the proposed CRA designation area, and note of areas of disinvestment adjacent to areas of apparent conflicting uses;
2. collection and analysis of zoning district and code requirements of the City of Fort Walton Beach;
3. collection and analysis of non-conforming structures data as surveyed and maintained by the staff of the City of Fort Walton Beach.

The above data was collected, reviewed. The findings have been reported in this section and presented in map format.

4.2.2 CRITERIA

Structures which do not conform to zoning codes, and which are contributing to blight conditions within the proposed CRA area, were reviewed regarding the following criteria:

- size of dwelling units
- number of dwelling units
- inadequate parking requirements
- inadequate yards and setbacks

- lot coverage, height restrictions, and floor area ratio.

4.2.3 FINDINGS

Four structures were found in the proposed CRA area which do not conform with zoning codes. Their locations are shown in Figure 4.

1. At 12 Second Street SE, the residential structure does not meet the setback requirements of the C-2, General Commercial Zoning District, that the front yard be a minimum of 10 feet, and the side yard, when abutting a residential district, be at least 30 feet.
2. At the 109 Shell Avenue SE, (corner of Birch Street) Unit 3B does not meet setback requirements for the R-2 Zoning District: front yard minimum of 25 feet, and side yard minimum of 7.5 feet.
3. At 42 Carson Drive NE, the back of the property, which fronts on Harbeson Avenue is in violation of the R-NC Residential-Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District permitted uses. An auto repair operation is on the dwelling site. Although this use is grandfathered in, with regard to the finding of blight, its non-conformance with the intent of the zoning district is a cause of blight to other residences along the street.
4. At 107 Carson Drive SE, the single family residence has a non-conforming apartment at the rear of the building. This is a violation of the R-1 Single-Family Dwelling Residential Zoning District permitted uses.

Three areas, shown in Figure 4 were found to be blighted by conflicting land uses. In the first areas, there are no uses which are inconsistent with zoning requirement; however, the marketability of the residential properties in these areas are impacted by the immediate proximity of commercial uses. The third involves a grandfathered land use which causes blight to proximate residences.

1. The first of these areas is the residential community along Park Circle, in which there are 2 buildings which are dilapidated, and 3 buildings which are in deteriorated condition. The character of Park Circle is that of a single-family residential area. At the southeast corner of Park Circle, Park Circle Condos is a planned unit development of new townhouses which are aimed at a middle-income market; however, this development is sheltered from views of Park Circle and the commercial use at the street's northeast corner. Here, is located the back-lot of an auto-related business on Hollywood Boulevard. On this portion of the lot are stored abandoned automobiles, buses, and other parts and machines. This storage, characteristic of a used auto parts lot, is immediately adjacent to, and visible by the residences along Park Circle. It is possible to revitalize this area as a quiet residential enclave utilizing the old growth, and the layout of Park Circle;

however, the commercial use situation will need to be resolved or visually buffered.

2. The second of these areas lies along Comet Street, along which there is 1 building which is in deteriorated condition, and 1 building which has burned, and has since been abandoned. The backs of the homes along the north side of Comet Street face onto Crescent Circle, which is a busy service road for several commercial establishments fronting on Crescent Circle or on Hollywood Boulevard. The backs of homes along the south side of Comet Street abut the Fort Walton Beach Housing Development, which is not as well maintained as the Germany Terrace Housing Development. Combined, these impacts detract value from the neighborhood, as evidenced by the abandonment. The Comet Street neighborhood is small, consisting of 21 single-family homes, and located on the edge of a hill, has attractive natural features. To remain a vital neighborhood, investment to stimulate further reinvestment will be needed.
3. At 42 Carson, between Bobolink Street and Walter Martin Road, there is an auto repair operation within a single-family dwelling. This operation takes place at the back of the address, so the auto repairs are visible to and cause blight to the homes along Harbeson Avenue, between Bobolink Street and Walter Martin Road. There are five single-family residences along this segment of Harbeson Avenue.

Figure 4

Non-Conforming Structures and Land Use Deficiencies

- proposed CRA boundary
- existing CRA boundary
- city limits
- areas not inside proposed CRA
- areas within proposed CRA
- areas of land-use deficiencies
- non-conforming structures



Santa Rosa Sound

Santa Rosa Sound

4.3 FIRE CODE VIOLATIONS AND UNSAFE CONDITIONS

Unsafe conditions are a criteria of blight relating to the most fundamental tenets of land use controls: to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. Both a cause and indicator of the blight is the presence of buildings and structures which have deteriorated to the point of being unsafe, or are unsafe by modifications of low quality or incorrectly performed construction. It is imperative to identify such structures, as their condition affects the well being and quality of life of the community at large, as well as negatively impacting the value of adjacent properties. Structures which are structurally damaged to the point of being unsafe, and structures which do not meet fire codes were investigated.

4.3.1 METHODOLOGY

The finding of unsafe structures within the proposed CRA Area, is based on the primary and secondary data sources, analyzed with respect to their cause of blight conditions. The methodology includes:

1. extensive, block-by-block field survey of the proposed CRA designation area, and notation of visibly unsafe structures;
2. collection and analysis of zoning district and code requirements of the City of Fort Walton Beach;
3. collection and analysis of data regarding structures in violation of fire code as maintained by the Fire Safety Inspector of the City of Fort Walton Beach.

The above data was collected, and reviewed. The findings are reported here and presented in map format.

4.3.2 CRITERIA

Unsafe structures were noted and characterized as one of two conditions:

1. The structure is unsafe as visible from the outside of the building. The building's major structural elements have given way, such as: fallen floors, a fallen roof, sagging or failed walls, or other major structural elements which have failed.
2. The structure does not meet fire codes, as reported by the Fire Safety Inspector.

4.1.3 FINDINGS

There are two structures which were found to be in unsafe condition. Their locations are shown in Figure 5.

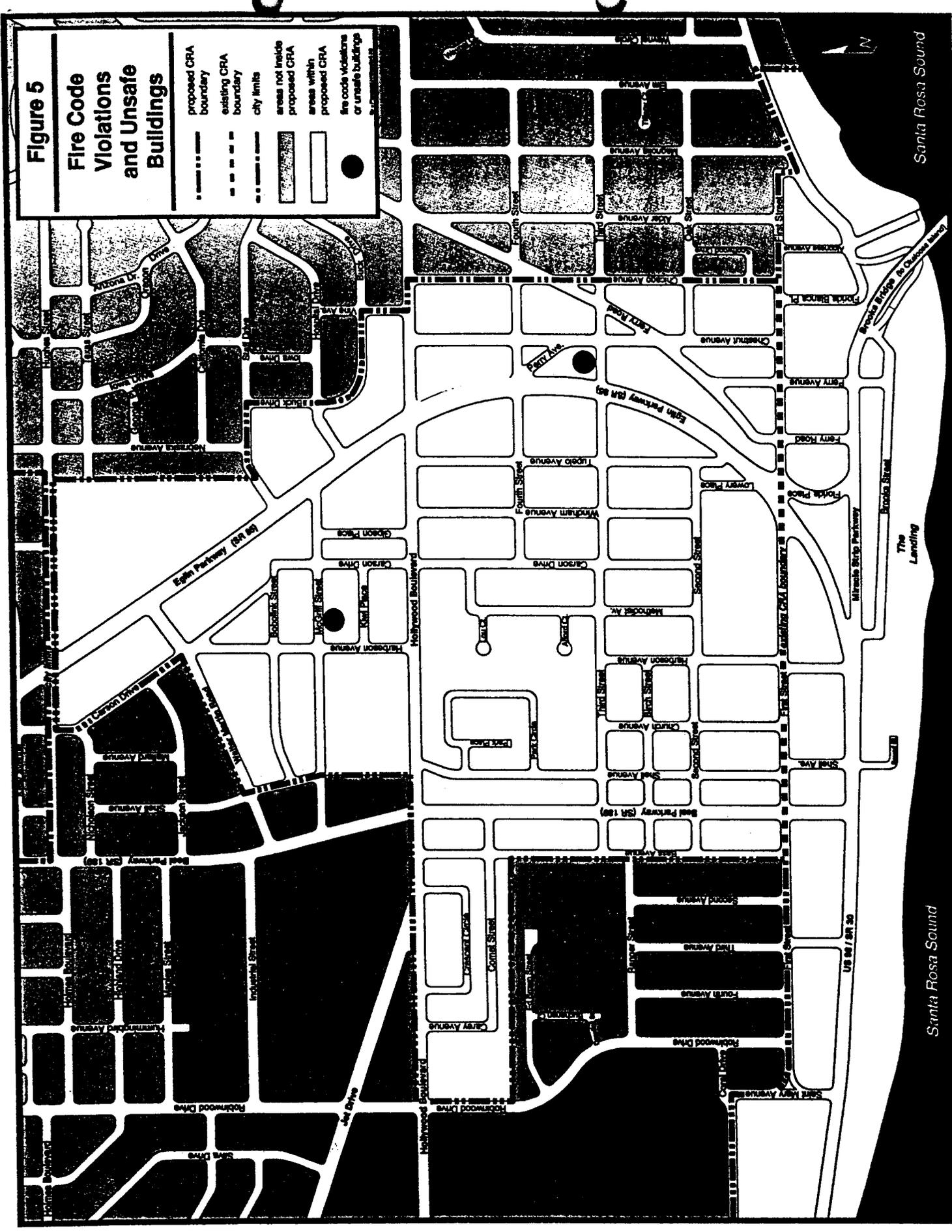
- 1 The boarding house located at 106 McGriff Drive does not meet the standards set forth in the 101 Life Safety Code, 1994 Edition, Chapter 20-3.2 and Chapter 20-

- 3.4. The entire building is constructed of pine, and each room has an open transom into the hallway. The heater is located in the hallway, and the roof does not appear to be structurally sound.
2. The commercial building between Eglin Parkway and Chestnut Avenue along Third Street has a caved in roof. The remaining parts of the roof are not sound. The building is presently vacated.

Figure 5

Fire Code Violations and Unsafe Buildings

	proposed CRA boundary
	existing CRA boundary
	city limits
	areas not inside proposed CRA
	areas within proposed CRA
	fire code violations or unsafe buildings



Santa Rosa Sound

Santa Rosa Sound

The Landing

4.4 VACANT LOTS AND CLOSED BUILDINGS

Another cause and indicator of the blight is the presence of a large percentage and/or number of vacant properties and obsolete, closed buildings, especially those which are poorly maintained, and have become locations for dumping. As an indicator of blight, it is assumed that the owner has no economic justification to develop the property due to the depressed market value of the area as a whole. In the case of closed buildings, it is assumed the owner has no economic incentive to reinvest, or that there is no market for tenants. As a redevelopment area, it is imperative to identify these vacancies, as their presence disrupts neighborhoods the character of the urban neighborhoods, and decreases the market value of commercial areas.

4.4.1 METHODOLOGY

The finding of vacancies and closed buildings, within the proposed CRA Area, is based on primary data sources, analyzed with respect to their cause of blight conditions. The methodology includes:

1. extensive, block-by-block field survey of the proposed CRA designation area, and identification of vacancies, with notes on condition of maintenance;
2. collection and analysis of code violations and survey findings of the City of Fort Walton Beach, related to vacant lots and structures.

The above data was collected, reviewed, and aggregated. The findings have been reported by summary quantitative statistics and presented in map format to report the summarize the characteristics of spatial distribution.

4.4.2 CRITERIA

Vacant lots were identified visually by the presence of unimproved or overgrown lots. These locations were checked against City records to confirm that these are privately-owned vacant lots, and not areas set aside for recreation, preservation, or other open space functions.

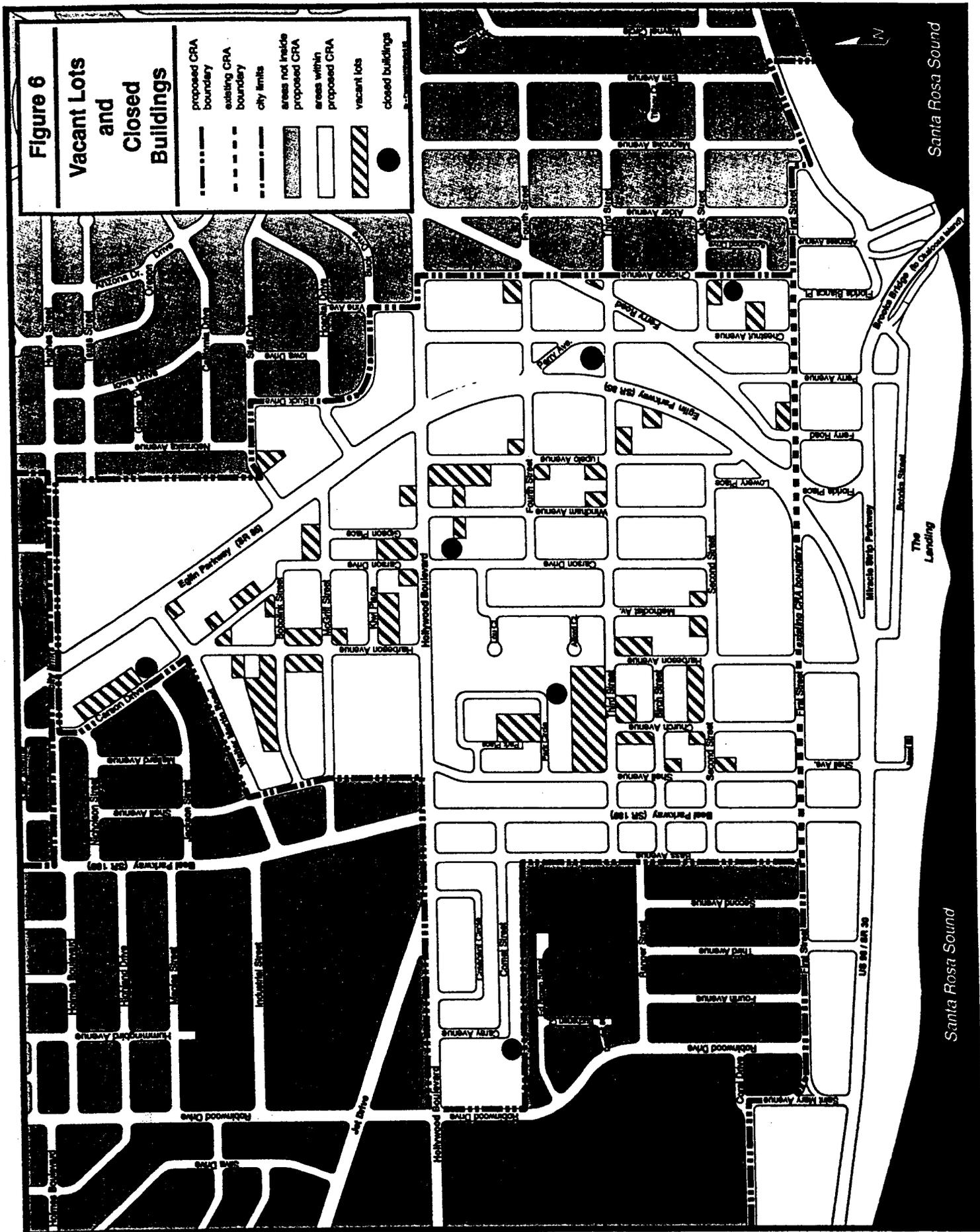
Closed buildings were identified visually and checked against the City's records of code violations. City staff, and CRA members were consulted with to confirm that these structure were closed, and not under renovation or in a temporary state of vacation. Buildings are considered closed if they are

- dilapidated, as defined in Section 4.1.2;
- not suitable for immediate occupancy;
- or otherwise sound, but with boarded windows.

Buildings that were unoccupied but not closed, were not included as closed buildings.

4.4.3 FINDINGS

As illustrated in Figure 6, there are 44 vacant properties and 6 closed buildings in the CRA Expansion Area. Of the 44 vacant lots, several are in poor condition and presently are used for dumping. The 6 closed buildings occupy sites which collectively sum to approximately 2 acres, and the vacant lots add approximately 31.7 acres. Collectively, these vacant properties comprise 34 acres, which is 4.4% of the net developable land in the proposed CRA area.



4.5 DIVERSITY OF OWNERSHIP

Blighted areas in need of redevelopment are often further disadvantaged by a diversity of ownership on blocks for which redevelopment is planned. Often, individual owners do not have the means individually, nor the necessary organization to effect a comprehensive revitalization effort. The authority of the CRA can provide organization for such purposes, and when efforts fail, the CRA may invoke eminent domain where it is a valid public purpose related to economic redevelopment of the CRA area. If the area is not a designated redevelopment area, these actions can not be applied for redevelopment purposes; their use as assemblage tools is not permitted.

The proposed CRA area has been considered for blocks where a diversity of ownership would inhibit the redevelopment and the correction of blight by individual property owners.

4.5.1 METHODOLOGY AND CRITERIA

Diversity of ownership can be tested by matching the number of addresses to the number of property owners for each block. On blocks which are primarily residential, single lots can be used to successfully construct residential dwellings. It is further assumed that in detached single-family residential areas, houses are owned individually, and these areas may be characterized by a high diversity of ownership. Because single lot development is economically feasible by contractors and local developers in residential areas, their diversity of ownership is not relevant to the correction of blighted conditions. This applies to all areas zoned as R-1, R-1A, Single Family Residential, and R-2, Multiple Family Residential.

The same is true for area zoned as C-1, Limited Commercial, or R-NC, Residential Neighborhood Commercial. Although the diversity of ownership may be high, it is not an impediment to redevelopment of the nature and scale that is appropriate to these areas.

In other commercial areas, specifically those zoned as C-2, General Commercial, DC-4, Downtown District, and DR-5, Mixed-Use District along the waterfront, diversity of ownership can impede redevelopment of the nature and scale which is economically feasible. Within these areas, three criteria were used to identify blocks in which diversity of ownership is an obstacle to the correction of blight.

1. there are signs of deterioration in the block and signs of deterioration or economic obsolescence in the commercial establishments in the block;
2. There is a diversity of ownership which is inappropriate to the scale and nature of economically feasible development, and the character of development which has been identified for this area as a future land use.

4.5.3 FINDINGS

The blocks which were found to meet the criteria of Section 4.5.2 are shown in Figure 7. These nine blocks comprise approximately 18% of the proposed CRA area.

Figure 7

Diversity of Ownership

- proposed CRA boundary
- - - - - existing CRA boundary
- - - - - city limits
- ▨ areas not inside proposed CRA
- ▩ areas within proposed CRA
- ▧ diversity of ownership criteria



Santa Rosa Sound

Santa Rosa Sound

4.6 INADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE

This report finds that a cause of blight in the proposed CRA is a lack of adequate infrastructure. Inadequate infrastructure devalues property and supports a lack of investment in two ways.

1. First, the lack of adequate water, drainage, sewage, sidewalks, and curbs acts as a comparative disincentive to development. Where these infrastructure elements are inadequate, a developer must upgrade these privately, adding to the development costs. Where alternative areas offer more complete, and adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of the development and concurrency requirements, the developer will favor the other area (other considerations equal).
2. Second, the lack of sidewalks and curbs, or the presence of flooding, poor lighting, and inadequate water or sewage supply effects the quality of life and aesthetic value of a place. As such, it becomes the residence or place of business when a better place can not be afforded.

Both conditions result in the lowering of property value, and a lack of private investment. In extreme instances, inadequate infrastructure is a threat to public health and safety. As a redevelopment area, places where the infrastructure is inadequate for existing development or potential redevelopment must be identified.

4.6.1 METHODOLOGY

The finding of inadequate infrastructure within the proposed CRA Area, is based on the primary and secondary data sources, analyzed with respect to their cause of blight conditions. The methodology includes:

1. extensive, block-by-block field survey of the proposed CRA designation area to identify areas in need of curb and gutter, or areas of apparent flooding;
2. collection and analysis of data maintained by the City staff, regarding needed upgrades to storm drain lines;
3. collection and analysis of data maintained by the City staff, regarding needed upgrades to water mains;
4. collection and analysis of data maintained by the City staff, regarding streets without curb and gutter;
5. collection and analysis of data maintained by the City staff, regarding inadequate sidewalks;
6. collection and analysis of data maintained by the City staff, regarding inadequate street lighting.

The above data was collected, reviewed, and aggregated. The findings are presented in map format.

4.6.2 CRITERIA

The criteria of infrastructure inadequacy are based on City staff data and analysis, and reflect existing inadequacies without additional demands placed by new construction or redevelopment.

On streets without sidewalks and/or curb and gutters, this condition is not considered a contributor to blight if the density of the area is such that pedestrian traffic is very low or if the character of the area is such that there is no economic devaluation or detriment to the quality of life caused by their absence. Essentially, low-density, single family residential areas (R-1, R-1A) are not considered to need sidewalks to maintain their social and economic value.

4.6.3 FINDINGS

The locations of water mains which need upgrading within the proposed CRA area are shown in Figure 8. The location of storm drainage which needs upgrading within the proposed CRA area is shown in Figure 9.

The locations of streets without curb and gutter, where curb and gutter is necessary for existing and future development, are shown in Figure 10. Within the CRA area, there are 50 street segments out of 150 which are inadequate because of a lack of curb and gutter. This represents 33% of the links in the street network within the CRA area.

The locations of streets with inadequate sidewalks, in need of repair, upgrade, or construction for existing and future development, are shown in Figure 11. Within the CRA area, there are 78 street segments out of 150 which have inadequate pedestrian circulation. This represents 52% of the links in the street network within the CRA area.

Figure 8

Inadequate Water Mains

- proposed CRA boundary
- existing CRA boundary
- city limits
- areas not inside proposed CRA
- areas within proposed CRA
- inadequate water mains

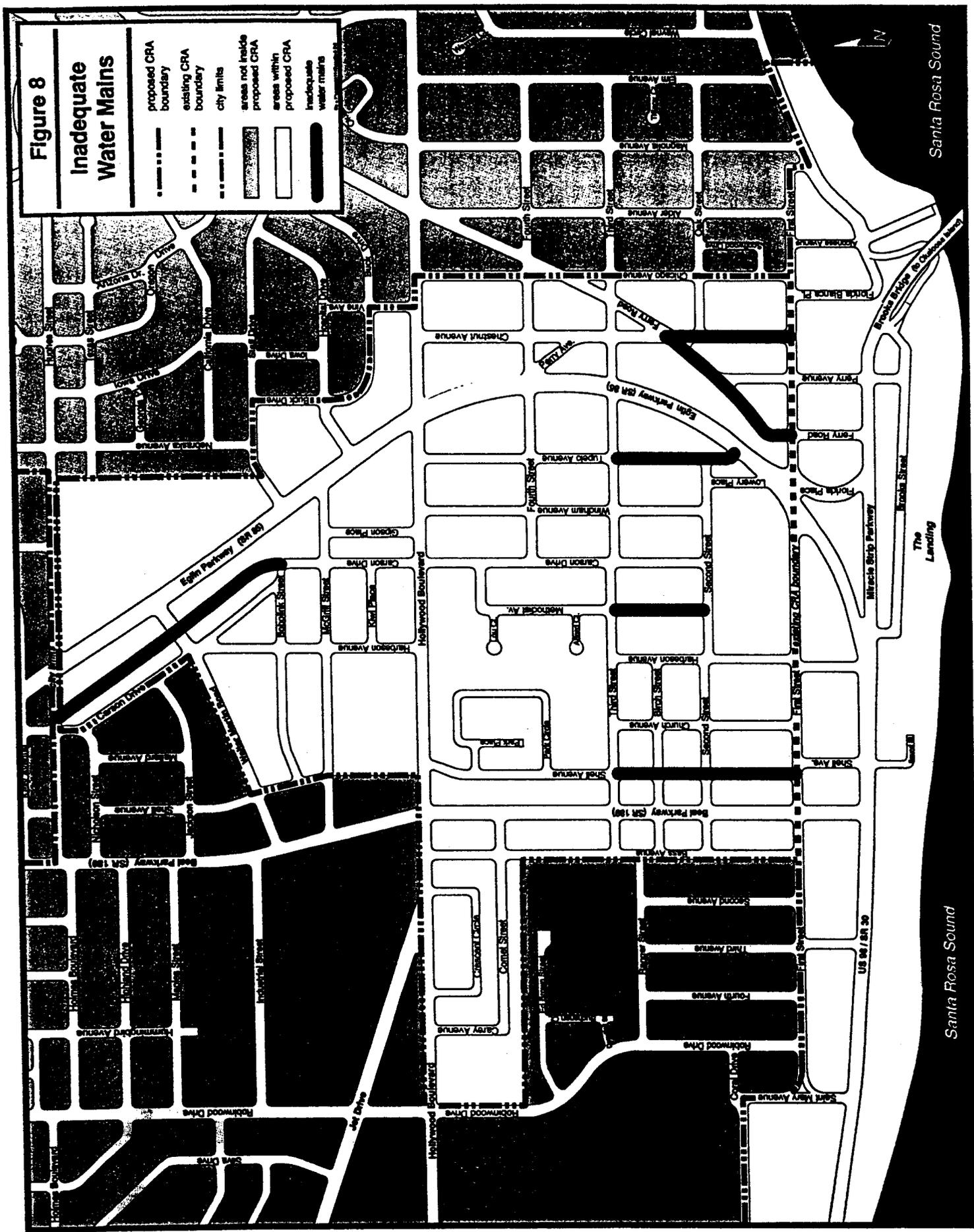


Figure 10

Inadequate Street Drainage - Streets Without Curb and Gutter

- proposed CRA boundary
- existing CRA boundary
- city limits
- areas not inside proposed CRA
- areas within proposed CRA
- streets without curb and gutter

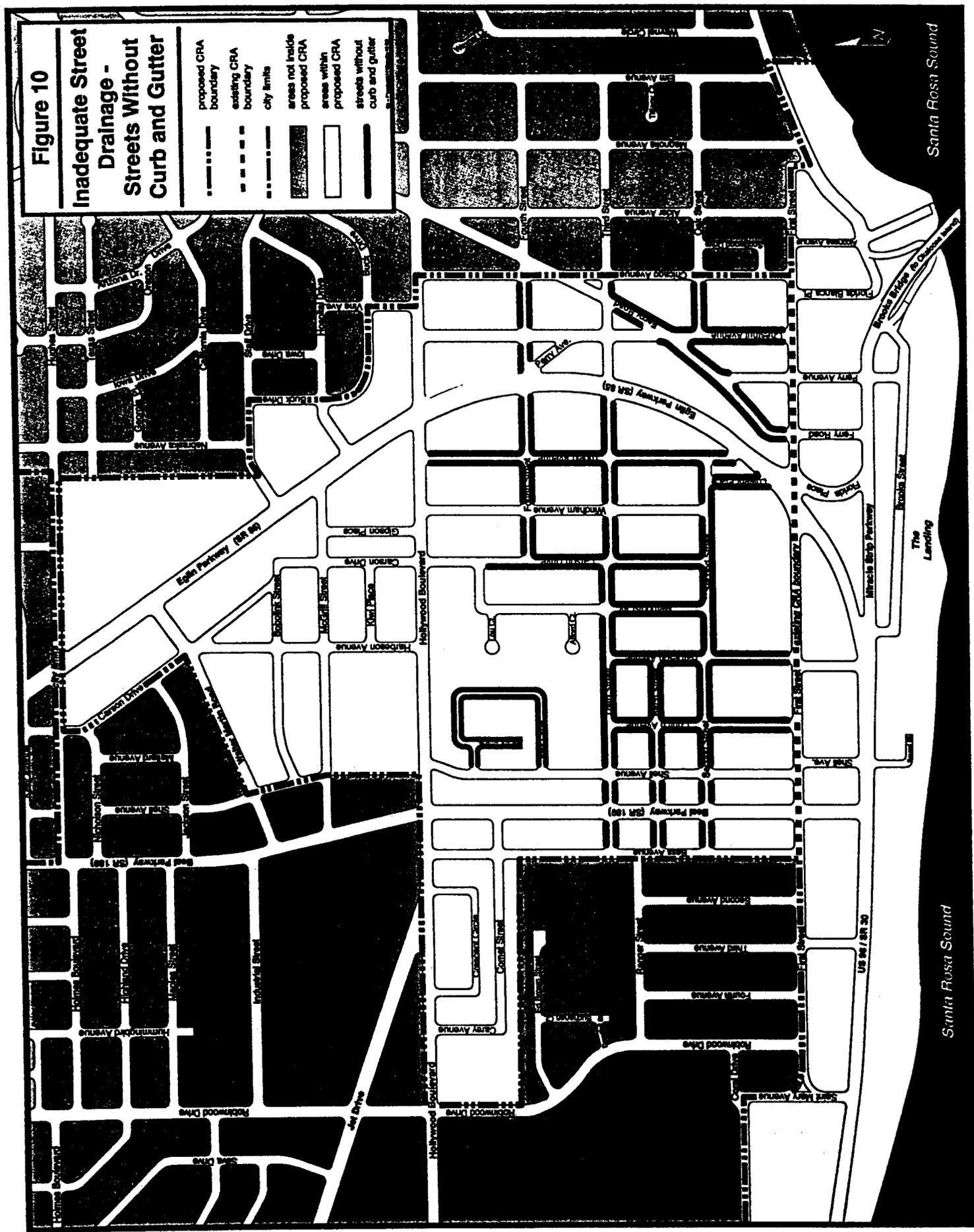
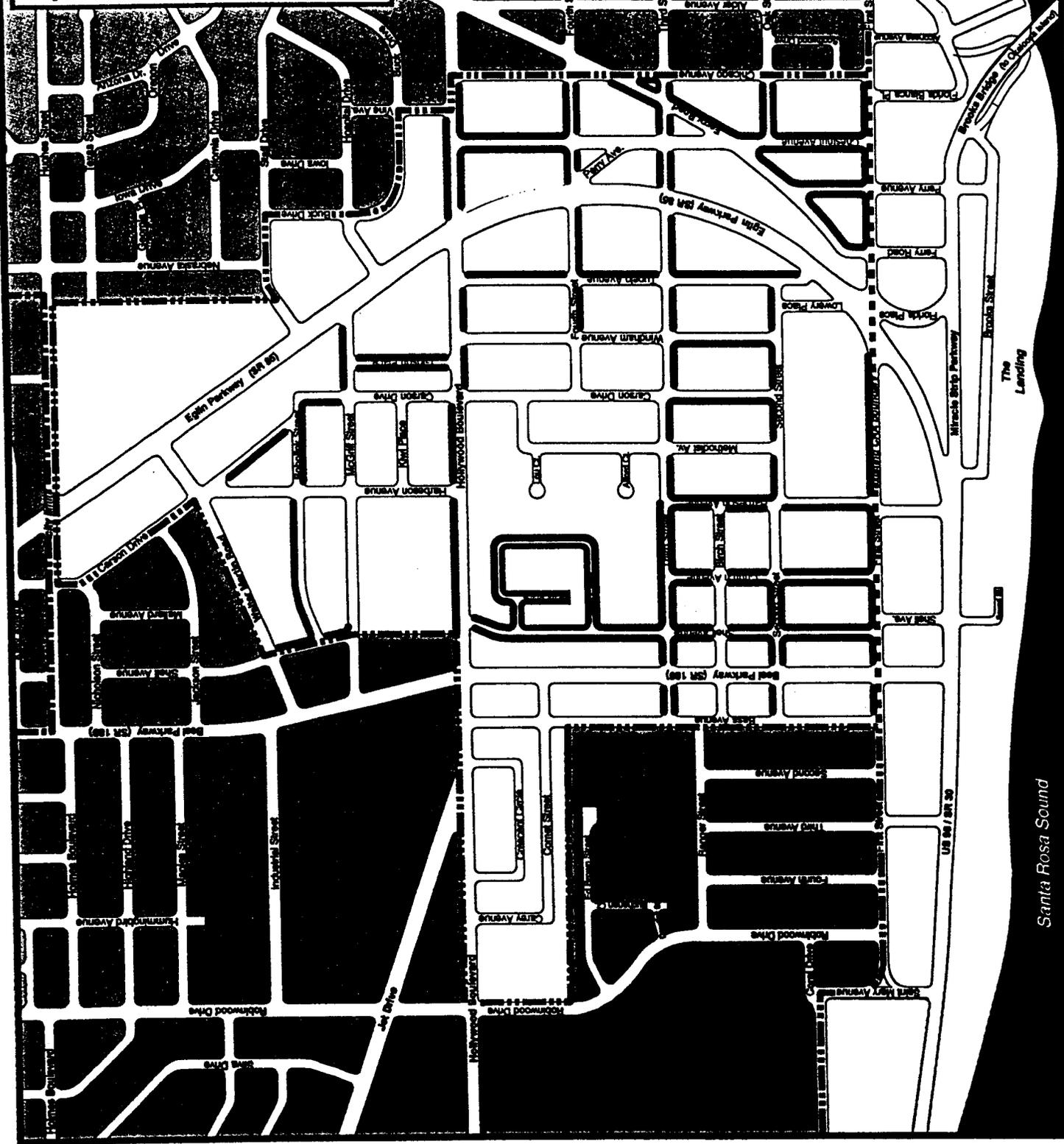


Figure 11

Inadequate Sidewalks

- proposed CRA boundary
- existing CRA boundary
- city limits
- areas not inside proposed CRA
- areas within proposed CRA
- Inadequate sidewalks: need repair, upgrade, or construction



4.7 HIGH CRIME RATES

High crime rates, relative to other areas of the City, are an indication of the social breakdown, despair, and devaluation that occurs as a result of community becoming blighted. High crime rates create a threat to public safety that results in further divestment of a community as residents and businesses relocate, and visitors become less frequent. As such, high crime rates are both an indicator and cause of blight.

This report presents the finding that the crime rate of serious or violent crimes are disproportionately and substantially higher in the proposed CRA area than in other areas of the City. This both indicates and contributes to the blight found in the proposed CRA area.

4.7.1 METHODOLOGY AND CRITERIA

The finding of high crime rates in the proposed CRA area was provided by a report of the analysis by the Community Policing Coordinator of the Police Department's crime statistics. The report is added as Appendix D.

Serious and violent crimes were analyzed by Police Department reporting grids. The grids contained by the boundary of the proposed CRA area were compared against City-wide rates, and a percentage taken to indicate the proposed CRA areas share of the City's crime rates. Although there is not an exact match between police reporting grids and the CRA boundaries, the Community Policing Coordinator has indicated that the accuracy and reliability for the purpose of this report is extremely high.

4.7.2 FINDINGS

The following table lists the violent crime occurrences that occurred in the five police reporting grids that makeup the proposed CRA area, versus the occurrences City-wide. The survey period is March 8, 1992 to December 31, 1995. The proposed CRA area comprises 25% of the geographic area of the City.

CRIME	CRA AREA INCIDENCE	CITY-WIDE INCIDENCE	PERCENTAGE OF CRIME IN CRA AREA
Homicide	4	4	100%
Assault/Battery	648	961	67%
Sexual Battery	70	121	58%
Robbery	69	130	53%
Burglary	1,287	2,476	52%
Stolen Vehicles	516	741	70%

5.0 INADEQUATE TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

Crossing through the proposed CRA area, are five roadways: three state highways, a county arterial, and a local collector which are impacted by existing or forecast deficiencies. The deficiencies of the State highways impacts local streets by causing conflicts among the need for regional mobility, and the economic viability and quality-of-life in the proposed CRA area. Local and regional transportation deficiencies are exacerbated by the growth in surrounding communities, while more pressure is put upon the CRA area to expand highways and construct new grade-separated traffic structures in critical locations. These five roadways include:

- Miracle Strip Parkway (US 98 / SR 30), from Saint Mary Avenue to the Brooks Bridge;
- Eglin Parkway (SR 85), from Hollywood Boulevard to Miracle Strip Parkway, including Florida Place;
- Beal Parkway (SR 189), from Hollywood Boulevard to Miracle Strip Parkway;
- Hollywood Boulevard, from Robinwood Drive to Eglin Parkway;
- First Street, from Saint Mary Avenue to Brooks Street (east of Alconese);

5.1 MIRACLE STRIP PARKWAY (US 98 / SR 30)

Miracle Strip Parkway (US 98 / SR 30) serves as the primary east-west arterial through Mary Esther and Fort Walton Beach, and it provides service directly into the Miracle Strip and Eglin Parkway business district of Fort Walton Beach. It is also the main route linking the cities of Pensacola to the west and Panama City to the east, with the rapidly growing Destin area just to the east. The Fort Walton Beach Urbanized Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and the Florida Department of Transportation, District 3 (FDOT) have undertaken a *Development and Environmental Study*, in May 1992, and a *Preliminary Engineering Report*, in May 1993. The purpose of these studies are to enhance mobility in this growing urban area. The east segment of this project includes the Miracle Strip Parkway segment from the western limit of the CRA area, at Saint Mary Avenue to the intersection with Eglin Parkway.

Existing daily intersection approach volumes were calculated from approach and turning movement counts for the MPO Study, at the intersections with Eglin Parkway and Beal Parkway. Based on 24-hour intersection approach counts, existing when two-way average daily traffic volumes east of Beal Parkway are approximately 32,000 vehicles per day.

Presently the intersections at Beal Parkway and Eglin Parkway operate at acceptable levels-of-service during the AM, PM, and mid-day peaks. The Beal Parkway intersection operates at LOS B at all three periods, with average delay times of 9.3 to 13.5 seconds. The Eglin Parkway intersection operates at LOS B during the PM peak, and LOS C during the mid-day and AM peaks.

Under existing conditions and geometry, growth in traffic volumes was projected for the Year 2015 by FDOT. Future traffic operations were evaluated in the corridor, including intersection capacity analysis, and evaluation of lane requirements. For the Year 2015:

- Eglin Parkway / Miracle Strip Parkway intersection will operate at LOS C in the AM peak, and LOS E in the PM peak, with an average delay time of 50.5 seconds. This is an unacceptable intersection level-of-service.
- Beal Parkway / Miracle Strip Parkway intersection will operate at LOS D in the AM peak, and LOS F in the PM peak. The average delay time will be extremely excessive, since the volume through the intersection will exceed its capacity by 20% ($V/C=1.2$). This is an unacceptable intersection level-of-service.

The unacceptable operations projected indicate the need for a six-lane arterial. If Miracle Strip Parkway were six lanes through these intersections, in the Year 2015, the intersection levels-of-service would be B for both of them, with average delay times between 8.5 and 12.1 seconds.

In the Fort Walton Beach Urbanized Area, *Roadway Congestion Management System* (CMS), of August 1995, the MPO identifies existing and future (Years 2000, and 2005) deficient roadway segments by level-of-service analysis. Within the CRA are, Miracle Strip Parkway, from Florida Place to the Brooks Bridge, including the bridge, are currently deficient roadways. The 4-lane roadway segment, with an LOS Service Standard of D, and a maximum allowable volume of 34,200, has an average annual daily traffic (AADT) count of 37,500. By the Years 2000 and 2005, the forecasts expect counts of 42,231 and 46,626 respectively.

Over thirty alternatives were reviewed in developing the most economically feasible project with the least environmental and socioeconomic impacts. The Brooks Street one-way pair was eliminated due to business damages and business relocations that would occur. The widening of the existing alignment through the downtown area (Eglin Parkway intersection to Brooks Street intersection) was also eliminated due to business damages and business relocations that would occur, and the cost of acquiring right-of-way. Among the alternatives, four remained. The impacts of the alternatives from the *US 98/SR 30 Project Development and Environmental Study*, (PD&E) relevant to the CRA area are:

1. One-Way Pair SR-85 Alternative: Widening of Miracle Strip Parkway to 6 lanes west of Eglin Parkway. Eastbound traffic would continue on Miracle Strip Parkway, while westbound traffic would use First Street, establishing the two as a one-way pair.
- 2, 3. One-Way Pair Wright Parkway Alternative, One-Way Pair Memorial Parkway Alternative: Using the existing Miracle Strip Parkway alignment, eastbound traffic would continue to the Brooks Bridge, while westbound traffic would use

First Street from Coral Drive and Saint Mary Avenue to a new bridge crossing just east of Alconese Street.

4. Relocated US-98 Alternative: Widening of the existing alignment to Eglin Parkway, where a bypass of the downtown area would occur. Six lanes would occur on Eglin Parkway and a new eastbound alignment would loop north of the downtown area and tie into the existing Brooks Bridge crossing. The westbound alignment would continue on First Street and cross the Intra-coastal Waterway on a new bridge located just east of Alconese Street.

Summarizing the urban impacts of each of the alternatives to the CRA area, as taken from the analysis in the *Project Development and Environmental Study*, 58 businesses in the blocks from west of City Hall to Eglin Parkway would experience business damages. In the same segment, 13 businesses would have to be relocated. These calculations are based on requirements to purchase right-of-way, and to restore business damages from lack of access during construction. These results do not express the less predictable damages caused to remaining businesses by changing traffic patterns, lack of pedestrian circulation, or the loss of adjacent commercial attraction and the loss of a critical mass of commercial activity. This area is already becoming marginally viable.

In the CMS, the segment is listed as number 10 priority throughout Okaloosa and Walton Counties. The methodology to provide corridor improvements was to be determined through the City's Visioning process. The PD&E Study is on hold awaiting the outcome. The visioning process, documented by the *Vision Plan for the City of Fort Walton Beach*, noted the following findings.

The issue of the future design of Highway 98 through the City was the highest priority. Three conceptual alternatives were considered:

1. Bypass traffic to Okaloosa Island around the center of town to the north, or with a new bridge to the west, if the citizens prefer a less tourist, commercial city.
2. If a strong tourist and commercial waterfront orientation is preferred, then widening and adding a bridge must be undertaken such that the quality of the downtown area is not significantly affected.
3. Initiate a combination of traffic light progression, alternative transportation modes, and access control to maximize the utility of the existing roadway configuration as long as possible. This is an interim solution.

The outcome of the visioning process, is documented in the Vision Plan Strategies Section. The community expressed their preference that high traffic volume was good for encouraging business development along the corridor. The citizens also felt that this one benefit was not worth the existing and potential liabilities, stated as: potential to widen to 6 and 8 lanes, traffic volume increase, increase in speeds, the need for bridge widening, physical division of the City, noise and air pollution, lack of pedestrian relationships, and visual pollution. The following strategies were recommended (p.53, 54).

- The City should work with the MPO to de-designate the Miracle Strip Parkway as Highway 98, and maintain it as a 4-lane arterial.
- Research the need for a second bridge crossing to Okaloosa Island.
- Future interchanges should be located in a fashion that reinforces a newly master planned traffic circulation system in the City.
- A traffic management plan needs to be prepared for the Miracle Strip Parkway. This plan would include: traffic signal progression, pedestrian crossing areas, access control management, signage management, and speed management.

The results of the visioning process were followed by the subsequent cancellation of further PD&E work from the *Fort Walton Beach Urbanized Area Transportation Improvement Program* (TIP) Major Project Priorities. Design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction for capacity improvements to Miracle Strip Parkway are not scheduled. The MPO has approved a Congestion Management Study for the critical intersections of the roadway. These improvements would be operational improvements, programmed in the Traffic Operations Project Priorities section of the TIP. While there are still existing and future capacity deficiencies for the road, there are no feasible long-term remedies presently planned or programmed.

5.2 EGLIN PARKWAY (SR 85)

Eglin Parkway (SR 85) serves as a primary north-south arterial through Fort Walton Beach, Shalimar, Eglin AFB, Niceville, and Crestview, and it provides service directly into the Eglin Parkway and Miracle Strip business district of Fort Walton Beach. It is also the main route linking Fort Walton Beach, and Okaloosa Island to I-10 to the north.

This segment of Eglin Parkway, from the proposed CRA boundary to First Street, a 6-lane, divided facility, is to operate at LOS Service Standard D, allowing a maximum volume of 45,000. Current (1994) volumes are at 32,883, which is LOS D. The level-of-service projected are LOS D for both Years 2000, and 2005. The two segments from First Street to Miracle Strip Parkway, including Florida Place are currently at LOS C. Through Years 2000, and 2005, they will remain at LOS C.

Although these segments of Eglin Parkway are sufficient regarding traffic movement, the intersection of Eglin Parkway with Miracle Strip Parkway will be inadequate by the Year 2015 demand, if improvements to the intersection or Miracle Strip Parkway are not made. This will cause upstream traffic impacts along Eglin Parkway.

5.3 BEAL PARKWAY (SR 189)

Beal Parkway (SR 189) serves as a primary north-south arterial through Fort Walton Beach, and Mary Esther. The segment of Beal Parkway within the proposed CRA boundary from Hollywood Boulevard to Miracle Strip Parkway, is a 4-lane, undivided minor arterial facility. It is to operate at LOS Service Standard D, allowing a maximum volume of 32,490. Current (1994) volumes are at 14,500, which is LOS B. The level-of-service projected are LOS B for both Years 2000, and 2005.

Although these segments of Beal Parkway are sufficient regarding traffic movement, the intersection of Beal Parkway with Miracle Strip Parkway will be have severely failed by the Year 2015 if capacity improvements are not made to Miracle Strip Parkway. As is the case for Eglin Parkway, upstream traffic impacts will be experienced along Beal Parkway.

5.4 HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD

Hollywood Boulevard serves as a primary east-west collector through Fort Walton Beach, and Mary Esther. The Fort Walton Beach High School and Edwin Elementary School are both located along Hollywood Boulevard. The segment of Hollywood Boulevard within the proposed CRA area, from Robinwood Drive to Eglin Parkway, is a 2-lane, undivided city collector with left turn lanes. East of Eglin Parkway is a 4-lane, divided facility. It is to operate at LOS Service Standard D.

In August 1992, FDOT conducted a Project Development and Engineering Study to use Hollywood Boulevard as a north by-pass of Miracle Strip Parkway, from the Mary Esther City Limit to Eglin Parkway. The objective of developing the preliminary alignments was to establish various combinations of alignments, and provide alternatives with the least impacts and most economically feasible concept. All of three of the alternatives used the segment of Hollywood Boulevard from the western boundary of the proposed CRA area, to Eglin Parkway.

The projects called for a 4-lane, divided, 45-mph design speed typical section, spanning a 108-foot right-of-way. Further study was canceled due to significant public opposition at the Alternatives Public Meeting of August 20, 1992.

5.5 TRANSPORTATION DEFICIENCY FINDINGS

The findings of the Finding of Necessity report reveal transportation deficiencies in five categories, illustrated in Figure 12:

1. existing roadway capacity deficiencies;
2. future roadway capacity deficiencies;
3. future intersection capacity deficiencies;
4. access management deficiencies;

5. unresolved conflicts between the City's needs and regional mobility needs.

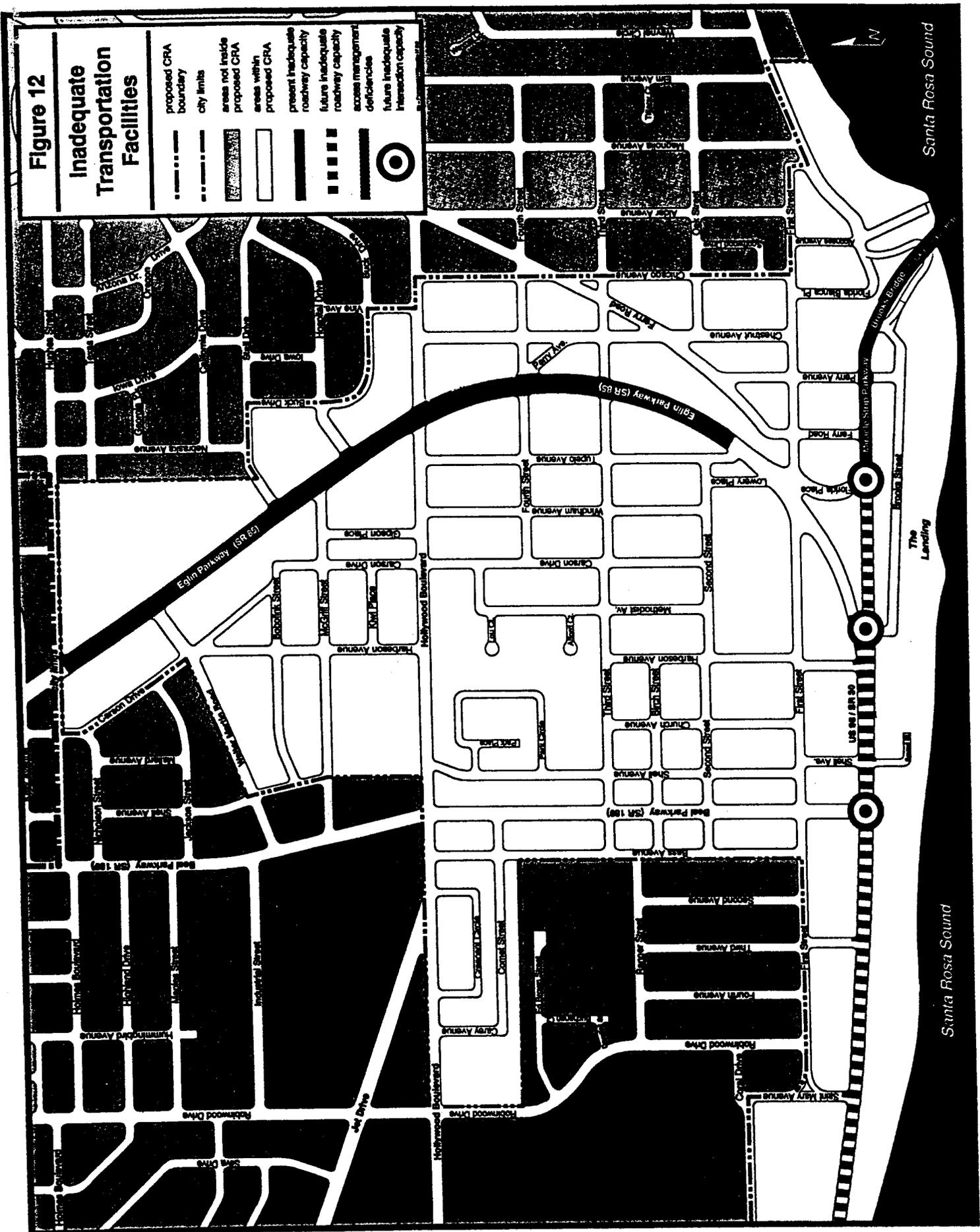
Sidewalk infrastructure and curb and gutter deficiencies are found throughout the proposed CRA area, and are reported in Section 4.6 of this report.

Although FDOT and the MPO can resolve many of these deficiencies with well engineered and community sensitive solutions, consensus on the method has not, or can not be achieved in the community. The CRA can be a critical partner to mediate the unresolved conflicts between the City's circulation and quality-of-life needs, with the needs of regional mobility, and the City's commercial assets. Presently, the need to eventually improve capacity on Miracle Strip Parkway is unresolved, and continues to threaten other impacts as by-pass alternatives are sought. The City, the MPO, and FDOT are left in an untenable position of having inadequate roadways, severe peak congestion to and from Okaloosa Island, and no feasible improvements planned in the Long Range Plan or programmed in the TIP. Whether capacity improvements are made, or not, the proposed CRA area will experience economic impacts, due to changing travel patterns, increased congestion, or a diverted through-traffic customer base. A CRA which encompasses all of the property owners that may be impacted, as well as the near-by residents who will be most impacted, is in the best position to mediate, and help direct restoration to impacted property owners if capacity improvements are made. The CRA will address these issues, and help to direct redevelopment in a manner, character, and pattern that helps achieve consensus and maximizes economic benefits to the City.

Figure 12

Inadequate Transportation Facilities

- proposed CRA boundary
- - - city limits
- ▨ areas not inside proposed CRA
- ▨ areas within proposed CRA
- ▨ present inadequate roadway capacity
- ▨ future inadequate roadway capacity
- ▨ access management deficiencies
- future inadequate intersection capacity



APPENDIX A
LEGAL DESCRIPTION