

**Table 25: 2010 Total Housing Units**

	No.	%
Single Family	1,679	74.6
Multi-Family/Duplex	563	25.0
Mobile Home	9	0.4
Other	0	0
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>2,251</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Calculations by SARPC

**Occupancy Status**

Occupancy and vacancy status of a community's housing stock can be influenced by many factors including the housing market, the economic climate of the region, and housing trends such as insurance and property taxes. In tourist communities like Dauphin Island, high vacancy rates indicate the increased number of vacation rental properties and secondary residences. High vacancy rates in tourist communities among owner-occupied units can indicate changes in the housing economics of the region including changes in insurance premiums due to hurricanes. Table 27 illustrates occupancy and vacancy trends for Dauphin Island by comparing data from the 1990 Census, the 2000 Census, and the 2010 Census.

**Table 27: Occupancy and Vacancy Trends for Dauphin Island**

	Total Housing Units	Occupied Housing Units	Vacant Housing Units	Vacant Housing Unit %
1990 Census	1,224	359	865	70.7
2000 Census	1,703	600	1,103	64.8
2010 Census	1,818	582	1,236	68.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

on the Island that were deteriorated or dilapidated and in need of rehabilitation. However, these units only represented 1.7% of the total housing stock in 2010 and therefore are not considered to indicate areas of economic decline.

Table 28 illustrates 2009 Census estimates for occupancy and vacancy statistics for Dauphin Island and two other coastal tourist communities in Alabama, Gulf Shores and Orange Beach, to demonstrate the housing trends from local communities that are similar in their use of housing stock. Gulf Shores and Orange Beach have housing stocks seven times larger than Dauphin Island.

**Table 26: Decade Change in Number of Housing Units**

	Number	Percent of Change
1990 (U.S. Census Count)	1,224	39.13%
2000 (U.S. Census Count)	1,703	32.18%
2010 (SARPC Count)	2,251	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The majority of vacant housing units on the Island consist of rental units, or secondary residences used for seasonal or recreational purposes. The 2010 Census data indicates that of the 1,236 vacant housing units on the Island, 837 of those are for vacation or seasonal use, 304 are for long-term lease rentals, 60 were for sale or rent during the sampling period, and 5 were rented or sold, but not occupied. The remaining 30 units were classified as not for sale or for rent but were vacant. This last category could indicate housing units

However, Dauphin Island's vacancy trends mirror those of Gulf Shores and indicate a slightly lower vacancy rate for homeowners. Orange Beach exhibited the highest vacancy rates of all three communities which could indicate a larger percentage of vacation rental housing types within their community.

**Table 28: 2009 Occupancy Housing Statistics for Dauphin Island and Region**

Municipality	Total Housing Units	Occupied Housing Units	Vacant Housing Units	Vacant Housing Unit %	Home Owner Vacancy Rate	Rental Vacancy Rate
Dauphin Island	1,810	582	1,236	68.0	10.9%	75.4%
Gulf Shores	11,921	4,453	7,468	62.6	10.9%	37.9%
Orange Beach	11,726	2,492	9,234	78.7	19.8%	75.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 29 illustrates tax revenues associated with seasonal rental properties and tourist spending on Dauphin Island for fiscal years 2002 through 2009.

**Table 29: Dauphin Island Tax Revenues Associated with Seasonal Rental Properties and Tourist Spending**

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
<b>Ad Valorem Tax</b>	259,548	268,967	344,784	390,281	369,035	469,678	427,143
<b>Lodging Tax</b>	218,765	285,918	236,896	153,464	194,917	381,332	342,672
<b>Sales Tax</b>	301,420	363,316	451,503	466,956	488,430	374,214	330,571

Source: Town of Dauphin Island

### ***Housing Tenure***

Housing tenure data for a community provides insight into the socioeconomic status of an area as well as indicates the types of population that live in a community. Typically, housing tenure data defines what types of households and housing types are located in communities such as families, singles, single family houses, or multifamily units. In tourist communities, the tenure data reflects the resident population of the community and indicates the number of year round occupied units in comparison to tourist occupied seasonal rentals.

Table 30 illustrates tenure for Dauphin Island's occupied housing units in 1990, 2000 and 2010. According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the number of occupied housing units increased by 241 units or 67.1% between 1990 and 2000 indicating an increase in primary resident population.

**Table 30: Dauphin Island's Occupied Housing Unit Tenure for 1990, 2000 and 2010**

	1990			2000			2010		
	Total No. of Occupied Units	No.	%	Total No. of Occupied Units	No.	%	Total No. of Occupied Units	No.	%
Owner Occupied	359	278	77.4	600	452	75.3	582	486	83.5
Renter Occupied		81	22.6		148	24.6		96	16.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**Housing Age**

The age of the housing stock can provide an indication of potential deficiencies in the quality and safety of dwelling units and identify areas in need of rehabilitation. Older residential units may be constructed to lesser building standards than are currently required and be eligible for public funding assistance for modernization activities. The age of a community's housing stock also identifies the historic neighborhoods and homes that are potentially eligible for historic preservation through federal, state, or local agencies. The age of Dauphin Island's housing stock is illustrated in *Table 31*. Approximately 38.5%, or 611 housing units were constructed in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s and are 20 to 49 years old. Typically, housing of this age begins to show signs of deterioration and needs rehabilitation. 11.6%, or 184 units, of Dauphin Island's housing stock is 50 years old or more. Typically, for residential property to qualify for historic significance with federal or state historical agencies, a property must be at least 50 years old or more and have maintained many of its historical structural integrity. Most of these historic structures are located in residential neighborhoods in the center of the Island in the old village district two blocks east and west of LeMoyné Drive. A historical structure survey could be conducted by the Alabama Historical Commission to identify properties potentially eligible for historic preservation.

**Table 31: Age of Dauphin Island's Housing Units Reported as 2009 Estimate Data**

Year Built	Number	Percent
2005 or later	80	5.0
2000 to 2004	276	17.4
1990 to 1999	436	27.5
1980 to 1989	158	10.0
1970 to 1979	281	17.7
1960 to 1969	172	10.8
1950 to 1959	143	9.0
1940 to 1949	24	1.5
1939 or earlier	17	1.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,587</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**Housing Values**

The cost of housing in a community is influenced by many factors including the community's location to employment opportunities, recreational opportunities, and transportation. The cost of housing within a community also influences the type of population that lives there. Coastal communities typically exhibit higher property values, especially if they are tourist destinations. *Table*

32 illustrates regional housing value trends of Dauphin Island in comparison to selected municipalities located within the region.

*Table 32: 2009 Estimate of Regional Housing Value Statistics for Dauphin Island and Selected Communities in Region*

Municipality	Median Owner - Occupied Housing Values (\$)	Median Owner - Occupied Housing Monthly Mortgage (\$)	Median Renter - Occupied Monthly Rent (\$)
Orange Beach	403,500	2,250	908
Gulf Shores	266,900	1,445	887
Dauphin Island	273,100	1,387	1,135
Mobile	113,300	1,110	670
Bayou La Batre	67,700	928	306

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 33 illustrates the percentage of change in monthly mortgage costs for owner-occupied housing units between 1990, 2000 and 2009. Monthly mortgage costs increased significantly during this time.

*Table 33: 1990, 2000 and 2009 Monthly Mortgage Cost Percents for Specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units on Dauphin Island*

Monthly Mortgage (\$)	1990 %	2000 %	2009 % Estimate
Less than 300	0	0	0
300-499	22.3	2.5	0
500-699	37.7	9.6	5.0
700-999	17.7	22.5	9.2
1,000-1,499	14.6	16.5	43.7
1,500-1,999	5.4	9.4	8.8
2,000+	2.3	3.0	33.2
Median (\$)	643	952	1,387

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 34 illustrates the change in monthly rent for specified non-owner occupied housing units on Dauphin Island between 1990, 2000 and 2009.

**Table 34 : 1990, 2000 and 2009 Monthly Rent Percents for Specified Non - Owner Occupied Housing Units on Dauphin Island**

Monthly Rent (\$)	1990 %	2000 %	2009 Estimate %
Less than 200	0	1.4	0
200-299	4	0	0
300-499	64	14.9	0
500-749	32	35.8	0
750-999	0	28.4	27.1
1,000 -1,499	0	8.1	72.9
1,500+	0	0	0
Median Rent (\$)	442	706	1,135

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Sample Data

## Trends in Residential Development

### Projected Population and Household Growth

Household projections are useful in forecasting future residential land use needs. Households can occupy single family or multi-family dwellings. Planning for future land use needs associated with residential development can determine how much of each type of residential use should be anticipated and planned for in the future. Dauphin Island, with its abundance of natural resources, should consider more dense residential land uses to prevent development of vacant lands that could be used for conservation. As discussed in Chapter 2 of this document, the estimated population range for Dauphin Island in 2015 is 1,229-1,412 with an average projection of 1,328. In 2020, the population is projected to be within 1,265-1,611 with an average a projected average of 1,441. For 2025, the population projection is between 1,300-1,838 with a projected average of 1,564. In 2030, the population is projected to be within 1,333-2,097 with an average of 1,696.

**Table 35: Household Projections**

	2015	2020	2025	2030
Population Projections	1,328	1,441	1,564	1,696
Total Households (assuming 2.1 average size)	632	686	745	808

Source: SARPC

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the average household size on Dauphin Island is 2.1 persons. Using the population projections discussed in Chapter 2 of this document, and assuming the average household size will stay the same in the future, we can make projections about the future number of households. Table 35 shows the total household projections for years 2015-2030. The number of households includes permanent residents only, not seasonal residents. The number of

households is also equal to the number of occupied housing units, but again, only those occupied by permanent residents.

**Projected Housing Needs**

Housing projections are also useful in forecasting future residential land use needs, as it is important to plan for future population growth. In order for a real estate market to function properly, with a natural balance between supply and demand, there needs to be a “natural” vacancy rate. According to the 2010 U.S. Census data, of the 1,818 housing units reported, 364 units, or 20% were vacant and for sale or rent. This percentage appears to be higher than normal, most likely due to the current state of the economy and rising insurance costs. For the purpose of making housing projections, a more feasible vacancy rate of 10% is used.

Table 36, shows the future household projections, the housing needs for that population, plus the necessary vacancy rate, compared to the existing housing unit supply in 2010. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, 32% of housing units are occupied by permanent residents as opposed to being seasonal units. Assuming that the number of housing units remains the same, and the percentage of housing units occupied by permanent residents stays at 32%, eventually, the population will begin to put pressure on the market consumption of the seasonal housing inventory may begin to occur. Table 36 shows that there is sufficient inventory at the present time to maintain the current balance of permanent and seasonal units through year 2015. In 2020, additional housing will be needed to accommodate the growing permanent resident population. By 2030, the Island will require 307 more housing units than is currently available.

**Table 36: Housing Needs for Future Households**

	Projected # of households or occupied housing units	Housing Units Plus 10% Vacancy Rate	Existing Housing Units	% of Permanent Units	Total Units needed to maintain 32% Permanent Occupancy	Additional Units Needed
<b>2015</b>	632	695	2,251	30.9%	-	113
<b>2020</b>	686	755	2,251	33.5%	2,360	173
<b>2025</b>	745	820	2,251	36.4%	2,563	238
<b>2030</b>	808	889	2,251	39.5%	2,779	307

Source: SARPC

**Housing Density**

It was estimated that single family units occupied approximately 499.5 acres of land and 1,661 parcels. The average parcel size for single family units is 0.3 acres. Duplex dwellings occupied approximately 4.1 acres and 17 parcels on the Island. The average parcel size for duplex dwellings is 0.24 acres. Multifamily units occupied approximately 42.8 acres of land and 43 parcels on the Island in 2008. The average parcel size for multifamily units is 1.0 acres. Undeveloped land totaled approximately 513.4 acres and 1,540 parcels on the Island. The average parcel size for undeveloped lots is 0.33 acres. In assessing the Island’s size coupled with residential land use acreage and average parcel size, it is clear that the Town’s housing has occurred on small lots in close proximity to

each other. This is typical of coastal tourist communities where property values are significantly higher than inland communities.

### *Projected Land Requirements*

It was estimated in *Table 36* that by 2030, an additional 307 housing units will be needed to accommodate the population growth. Average residential parcel sizes range from 0.24 to 1.0 acres. Using these current densities, an additional 307 units would require 73 to 307 acres.

### *New Housing Locations and Other Concerns*

In addition to determining the necessary number of housing units to accommodate future population, communities should also determine the best possible locations for these housing units. The west end of Dauphin Island has suffered a severe loss of land due to sand erosion during Hurricanes Ivan and Katrina. Many single family lots that were once waterfront have lost partial or complete parcels into the Gulf. Homes constructed on parcels once located in the inner platted portions of the Island's west end are finding high tide damage as well. Many of the property owners seeking to rebuild their homes on their parcels are finding that complying with front, back, and side yard setbacks required in the zoning ordinance results with the new structure being placed too close to high tide. Conversely, new construction that does not comply with setbacks, encroach on adjacent properties resulting with housing structures being too close together, or too close to property lines. Property owners, on the west end of the Island, have asked the Town of Dauphin Island to research the issue and propose a solution, if possible. The Town has agreed to explore the possibility of creating an additional residential single family zone, specific to the west end, and intends to involve the public and request feedback on whether this concept would receive support from the citizens.

### *Community Goals*

- Explore future uses and solutions to the west end beach erosion problem with regards to residential development and public access.
- Protect the wetlands and other natural resources of the Island from encroachment or destruction due to residential development or over-development.
- Protect the Island's drinking water supply from residential over-development of the east end of the Island.
- Create additional housing options on the Island through the development of a mixed-use zoning classification that allows, where appropriate, people to live and work on the same parcel of land.
- Replenish the Island's seasonal vacation rental housing stock that was lost in Hurricanes Ivan and Katrina through hazard mitigation like measures, in order to regain the Island's tourist economy and support Island commercial businesses.
- Explore the establishment of historical designations of housing stock on the Island in efforts to preserve the history and character of older homes on the Island.
- Explore the need for development of affordable housing options on the Island.
- Protect the small-town character of the Island from large-scale development by utilizing height and spacing restrictions on multifamily developments.

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*Recommendations and Strategies*

1. Promote a choice of single family, duplex, and multifamily living environments and housing types on the Island. This includes anticipating and planning for future housing stock requirements associated with future population projections.
2. Research the need and support for the creation of a new residential single family zoning classification specific to houses located on the west end of the Island for the purpose of allowing flexibility with the front, back, and side yard setbacks.
3. Develop provisions through local Town ordinances to encourage and/or require the use of environmentally-friendly alternative materials for infrastructure and buildings associated with new multi-family construction and/or major improvements or rehabilitations.
4. Explore the establishment of homestead exemptions from property taxes for primary residences and other “dual economy” incentives that would decrease the cost of living for primary residents on the Island.
5. Require, through building codes and inspection, a high quality of construction for residential structures that meets all flood and hurricane specifications.
6. Identify and preserve historical houses on Dauphin Island and explore the state or federal designation of historical significance for these structures through support by the Alabama Historic Commission.

Chapter 4

# Transportation

All residents and businesses of a community depend on the transportation network of the community to connect to each other and to their region. The type, quality, and location of these transportation networks are key components that influence quality of life and a sustainable local economy.

The transportation network of Dauphin Island includes streets, highways, ports, air access, ferry service, public transit, sidewalks, a bicycle and walking path, signage, lighting, parking, and traffic signalization. This chapter identifies and evaluates the current elements of Dauphin Island's transportation system as they relate to traffic flow and connectivity of land uses, as well as, alternative modes of transportation. Lastly, recommendations and strategies are proposed to accomplish community identified transportation goals and to address identified problems and deficiencies in the current transportation network.



## Road Access

Highway 193, which is classified as a minor arterial road, is the only roadway onto Dauphin Island and runs along a north-south axis through southern Mobile County from the City of Mobile to the Island. The Dauphin Island Bridge, formally known as the Gordon Persons Bridge, is a three-mile two-lane section of Alabama Highway 193 from the mainland of south Mobile County across the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway onto the Island. The original drawbridge was destroyed in 1979 by Hurricane Frederic, but the new bridge was reconstructed in 1982. See Figure 14.

On Dauphin Island, Highway 193 becomes Le Moyne Drive and serves as the commercial gateway onto the Island. Bienville Boulevard, classified as a major collector road, is the main, local roadway on the Island and spans the six mile length of the developed portion of the Island from east to west, see Figure 15. The remainder of the Island is served by small local streets mostly lined with residential land uses. Figure 16 illustrates the road network on Dauphin Island.

**Figure 14: Highway 193 South Approaching the Dauphin Island Bridge**



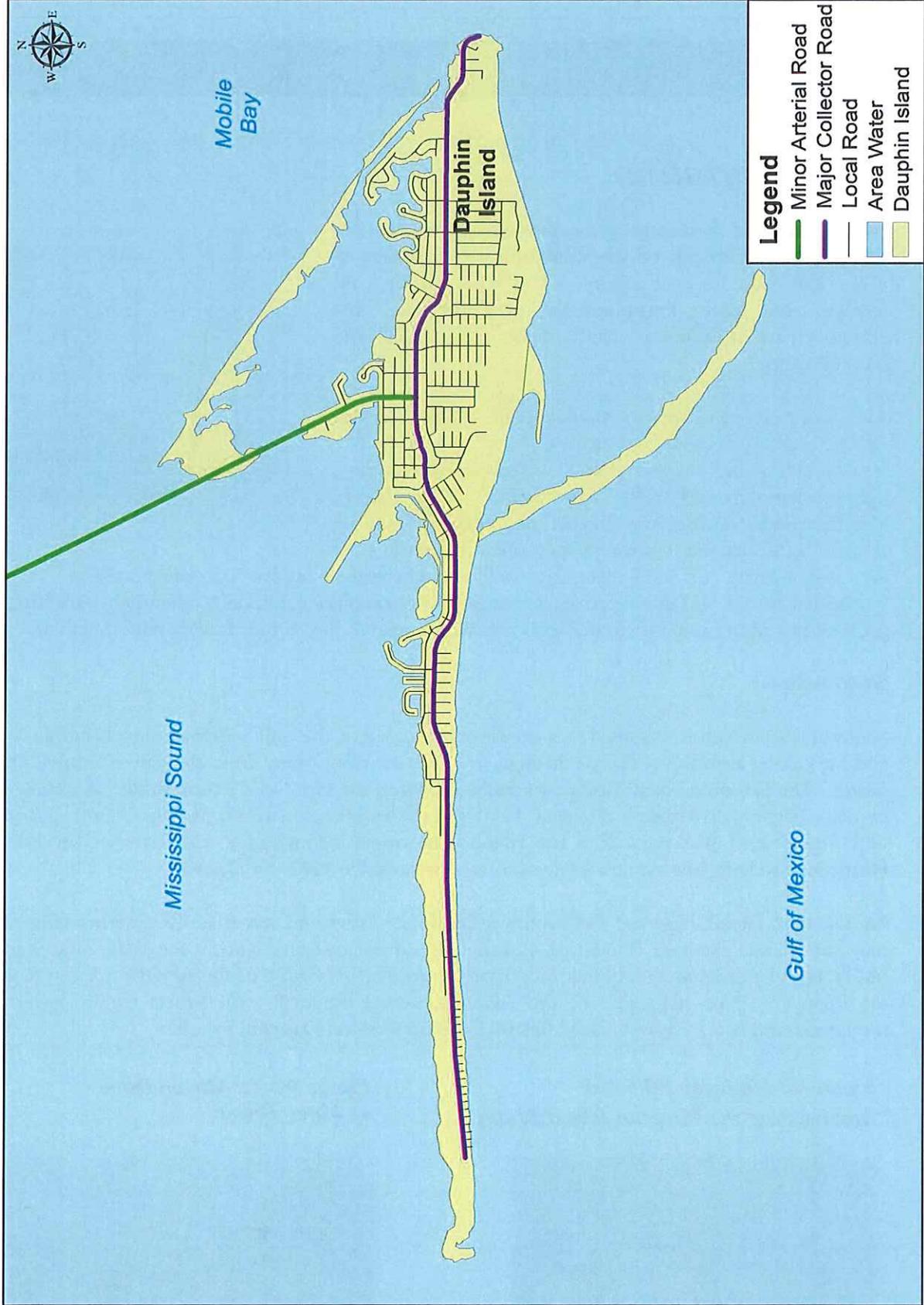
Source: SARPC

**Figure 15: Le Moyne Drive at Water Tower**



Source: SARPC

Figure 16: Road Network and Functionally Classified Roadways on Dauphin Island



Source: Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT)

**Road Classifications & Volumes**

The functional classification system, used by the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), separates streets by a hierarchical system based on street function. The classes of roadways on Dauphin Island range from minor arterial, emphasizing the movement of moderate volumes of traffic, to local streets, emphasizing access to adjacent properties. *Table 37* illustrates the functional classification of the roads on Dauphin Island.

- Arterial Highways—Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) defines these roads as the most important in the state. They are designed to carry significant high-speed, long-distance traffic. When improvements are necessary, substantial federal funding is usually available.
- Collector Highways – These are defined by ALDOT as roadways that collect and distribute traffic to the arterial roads. Generally, they serve places of lower population density. These roadways are also eligible for federal funding.
- Local Roads – These are defined by ALDOT as all roads not in the first two categories. They generally carry low volumes of traffic and serve local needs. *See Figures 17 & 18.*

**Table 37 : Functional Classification of Roads in the Town of Dauphin Island**

Highways or Roadways	Functional Classification
Alabama Highway 193	Minor Arterial
Bienville Boulevard	Major Rural Collector
All other roads	Local Roads

Source: ALDOT

**Figure 17: Local Street**



Source: SARPC

**Figure 18: Bienville Boulevard**



Source: SARPC

**Average Daily Traffic Volumes**

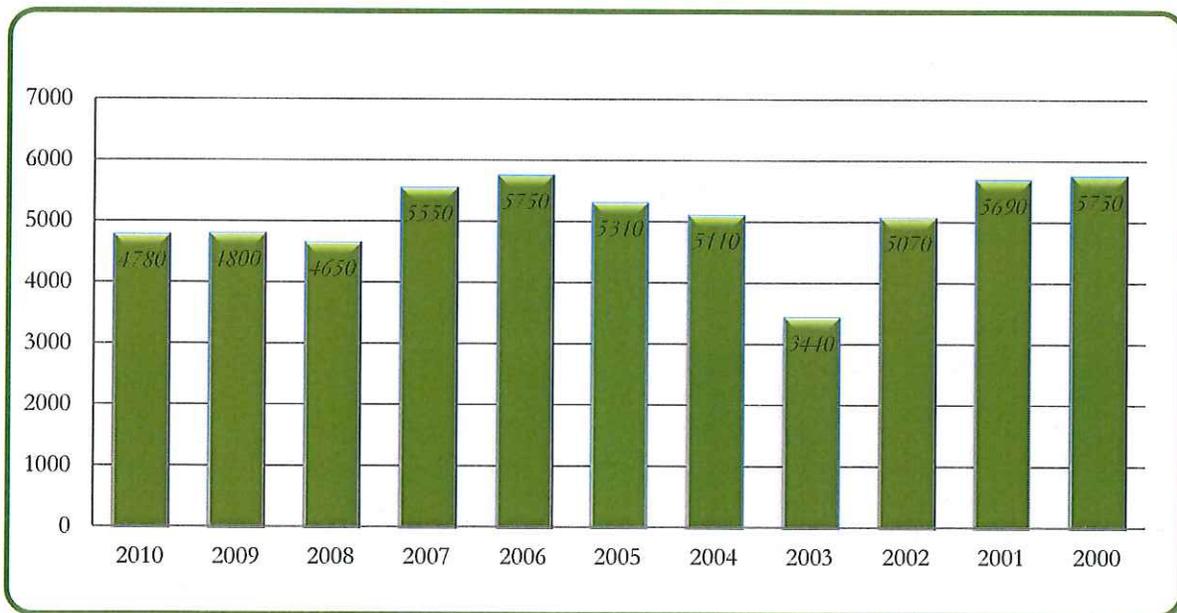
Many Dauphin Island residents work off island and travel Hwy 193 north into Mobile County. Commuters can then access Interstate 10, located approximately 30 minutes north, to travel east into Mobile or west into Mississippi. The highest traffic volumes along Highway 193, south of I-10, during the work week occur during the morning and evening commute hours. However, these traffic volumes are considerably less along this same corridor when compared to weekend traffic volumes which significantly increase due to Island day visitors and tourists.

The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) assigns volume capacities to roadways. In order to determine the performance of a transportation facility within a network, daily traffic volumes are assessed to determine a Level of Service (LOS). There are six LOS categories, A through F, with A being the least congested and most desirable, and F being the most congested and least desirable.

ALDOT currently has one traffic counting station located on the Dauphin Island Bridge. Using data obtained from this ALDOT counting station and the Mobile Area Transportation Study Model developed by the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission, it was determined that Alabama Highway 193, south of I-10 to Dauphin Island, is currently operating at a LOS of B. This indicates no current need for improvements to the corridor’s carrying capacity.

Figure 19 illustrates the historic traffic counts from the Dauphin Island Bridge ALDOT traffic counting station.

**Figure 19: ALDOT Historic Average Daily Traffic Counts for the Dauphin Island**



Source: SARPC

Elevation and other roadway protection measures are needed to reduce routine over wash episodes while insuring access during times of evacuation. Elevating these low portions of Highway 193 between the Mobile County mainland and Pelican Point would eliminate roadway flooding, erosion, and constant repair of this stretch of roadway. See Figure 20.

**Figure 20: Highway 193 South**



Source: ALDOT

Regular maintenance, repair, and improvements to Island streets are necessary due to storm damage, increased tourist populations, and community upgrades. West portions of Bienville Boulevard are especially vulnerable to damage during storms and hurricanes.

Other portions of roadway on Dauphin Island in need of continued maintenance and repair due to storms and erosion are: 1) the east end portion of Bienville Boulevard that borders Historic Fort Gaines, 2) west end portions of Cadillac Drive, and 3) many of the local residential streets located on the north side of the Island that extend northwardly out into the Bay, subjected to constant erosion.

### *Pedestrian and Bike Paths*

A pedestrian/bike path runs along Bienville Boulevard and Le Moyne Drive providing connectivity between different neighborhoods, commercial areas, public facilities, and tourist attractions across the Island. The small, local streets lined with residential land uses do not have sidewalks. However, due to minimal traffic, sidewalks are not needed for pedestrian and/or bike mobility on these small residential streets. The local streets carry the alternative modes of transportation without adverse impact to their intended capacity or safety.

Currently, the sidewalk network on the Island lacks adequate, well-defined crosswalks to direct pedestrian and bicycle traffic safely across Bienville Boulevard and Le Moyne Drive. Designating appropriate areas for crossing would increase traffic safety and provide an aesthetic character to the streetscape of an area. Please see *Figures 21 & 22*.

Through the Town's recently adopted Strategic Plan, the Aloe Bay Area, along De Soto Avenue, has been proposed as the site for the re-establishment of a working waterfront district. Le Moyne Drive has been proposed as the site for the Central Business District. As the community progresses towards developing these areas, great attention and planning of pedestrian accesses with sidewalks and boardwalks should occur. The development of a waterfront network of sidewalks, boardwalks, and observation/rest areas along Aloe Bay would improve this area's connectivity to Le Moyne Drive, the proposed Central Business District, and Bienville Boulevard.

### *Parking*

Dauphin Island currently lacks adequate public parking facilities on the Island and experiences difficulties accommodating the vehicular traffic during Island events and the peak tourist season. The Town's zoning ordinance requires businesses to provide

*Figure 21: Pedestrian/ Bike Path along Bienville Boulevard*



Source: SARPC

*Figure 22: Bienville Boulevard and LeMoyne Drive*



Source: SARPC

on-site parking to its customers however, many of the attractions and events that draw visitors to the Island are not specific to any one lot or business. The Town is tolerant of some parking in the right-of-way associated with certain attractions and events.

The Island is currently exploring parking alternatives that are complimentary to the Island's small-town character to alleviate this problem. Two to three small, low impact development parking facilities that utilize pervious substrate and plenty of indigenous plant species are more appropriate for the Island. The use of multiple, small parking facilities, as opposed to one mass parking lot, will have less adverse effects on adjacent property owners and neighborhood aesthetics. Small parking facilities are more easily screened with vegetation to alleviate visual encroachment and increased traffic noise. Pervious substrate, including lattice pavers, is more appropriate for conservation and protection of the Island's natural resources. Low impact development and storm water drainage techniques employ these types of materials and result in less pollution run-off and erosion.

Parking facility plans should address location, landscaping, types of materials, signage, street furniture and lighting.

### *Streetscaping*

Streetscaping includes street furniture, lamp post lighting, trees and vegetation, signage, curbing, paving materials, awnings and canopies, and other aesthetically pleasing corridor improvements. A successful streetscape provides visual interest, and creates social meeting places for community interaction. The Town of Dauphin Island has taken great effort over the years to incorporate streetscaping amenities across the Island. However, there are several areas for improvement, especially with the proposed development of the central business district and the working waterfront district, as adopted in the Strategic Plan. Streetscaping amenities on Dauphin Island should be practical for barrier islands and withstand tropical storms and hurricanes, therefore alternative materials and designs should be employed.

Improved streetscaping along Le Moyne Drive would enhance the entrance onto the Island and establish a welcoming gateway. Sidewalks and boardwalks with observation/resting areas on both sides of the corridor, would provide adequate pedestrian and bike access to commercial land uses and views of Aloe Bay. Indigenous vegetation, street furniture, and lamp posts should be used to encourage public access and create a walkable community. Two pedestrian crosswalks utilizing colored substrate, one at De Soto Avenue, the other at Bienville Boulevard, should be installed on Le Moyne Drive to emphasize the commercial use and intended pedestrian access.

Streetscaping should also be utilized at the Ferry Landing area next to Billy Goat Hole. This would improve the visual aesthetics of the access area and provide ferry users with a pedestrian-friendly gateway onto the Island with amenities such as shaded observation decks, street furniture, lamp post lighting, and indigenous landscaping. Creating the streetscaping infrastructure would encourage the development of a small retail area with shops and eateries to serve resident and tourist populations using the Ferry, staying at the campgrounds, or students and faculty from the Sea Lab. Streetscaping should also be installed and upgraded along Bienville Boulevard from Fort Gaines on the east end to the West End Beach. Streetscaping amenities should include trees and landscaping, street furniture, and lamp post lighting. This ongoing effort by the Town can be accomplished with various sources of federal, state, and local grant funds.

### *Public Transit*

The Town of Dauphin Island offers Island wide public transportation to residents and tourists with a shuttle bus service. The Town currently operates two handicapped-accessible, 15 passenger shuttle buses, the Crabbie Cabbie and the Island Hopper, with the support of Alabama Department of Transportation grant funds through Mobile County and the Wave Transit. The shuttle buses have designated stops along the Island and run varying schedules depending on the day of the week and time of the year. Fees are inexpensive and vary for children and seniors.

Improvements needed to the public transit system include the designation and construction of several bus stop locations to identify transit access points of pick-up and delivery. Amenities needed at these bus stops include adequate signage for identification and bus schedule, street furniture to accommodate waiting pedestrians, and trees and vegetation for shade and aesthetics.

The town may want to consider the development of a water taxi service to shuttle residents and tourists from different parts the Island, or even onto the Island from across the Bay or from Mobile County. Development would be dependent on an increase in public water access points across the Island, which currently do not exist to the extent needed to accommodate this potential transit opportunity.

### *Water Access*

Dauphin Island is accessible by water via personal watercraft or by public ferry. Personal watercraft can dock at either private docks located on residential waterfront lots or at the privately-owned Dauphin Island Marina for a nominal fee. The Dauphin Island Marina offers dry-storage for Island residents who lack private water access to dock their boats see *Figure 23*. There is

**Figure 24: Public water access at Little Billy Goat Hole Island**



Source: SARPC

currently limited marina and harbor fee-based docking space and no free public access docking space for day trip boaters.

There is also limited water access for boat launch on the Island. The Island currently has only two public boat launches, Little Billy Goat Hole, see *Figure 24*, located next to the Dauphin Island Sea Lab and Billy Goat Hole located next to Ferry Landing. Both lack adequate parking facilities to accommodate boat trailer parking resulting in right-of-way parking along Bienville Boulevard.

**Figure 23: Dauphin Island Marina on LeMoyne Drive**



Source: SARPC

There is a great need for the development of multiple public water access points across the Island to better serve residents and tourists. Additional public water access points would provide an alternative way to access the Island resulting in a decrease in vehicular commuter traffic along Hwy 193. The multiple access points would also decrease local street traffic, especially during large Island events as residents and tourist would utilize these access points to move around the Island by boat.

As discussed above, the development of scattered water access points across the Island would also allow for the development of a water taxi transit service which would further decrease Island traffic and move residents and tourist more freely from points on the Island or even onto the Island from Baldwin and Mobile Counties.

Dauphin Island is also accessible via a public ferry system. The Mobile Bay Ferry, located at Ferry Landing on Bienville Boulevard and operated by Hornblower Marine Services, provides water transit for vehicles and pedestrians between Dauphin Island and Baldwin County's Fort Morgan area, see Figures 25 & 26. The ferry crosses Mobile Bay north of Sand

**Figure 26: Cars aboard the ferry**



Source: SARPC

Island Lighthouse and connects two of Alabama's most beautiful historic landmarks, Fort Gaines and Fort Morgan. During the peak tourist seasons of spring and summer, two ferries are

operated along the route and one in the fall and winter. Weather permitting, the ferry operates year round, seven days a week, providing eight departure times from Dauphin Island to Fort Morgan starting at 8:00 a.m. and ending at 6:30p.m. The ferry offers various trips as follows: one-way trip for a vehicle and

occupant; roundtrip for a vehicle and occupant; pedestrians (walk-on). The fee schedule varies, but children under the age of 12 ride free.

### **Air Access**

Dauphin Island is accessible by air via the Dauphin Island Airport. The Dauphin Island Airport is publicly owned by Mobile County and is located on the northwest portion of the Island at the end of Chaumont Street. The facility consists of a one (3000X80feet) runway providing two approach/ascent options, one from the east and one from the west. See Figure 27. Aircraft operations average at 70 a week with 60% classified as transient general aviation and 40% classified as local general aviation. The facility also provides space for long-term aircraft parking as well as adequate parking for vehicles of aircraft commuters.

The facility's current size adequately accommodates the Island's resident and tourist populations, therefore facility expansion to increase capacity is not proposed at this time. However, the facility does require upgrades and maintenance of existing infrastructure to keep it operational. Some improvements can be funded through the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) and Mobile County.

**Figure 25: Cars in line to board the ferry at Ferry Landing on Dauphin Island.**



Source: SARPC

**Figure 27: Dauphin Island Airport Runway**



Source: SARPC

### Gateways

The Island currently has three access gateways that serve as “welcome mats” to residents and the first impression to tourists. The gateways are: 1) LeMoyne Drive corridor onto the Island from the Dauphin Island Bridge, see *Figures 28 & 29*; 2) Ferry Landing on the east end of the Island at Billy Goat Hole; and 3) the Dauphin Island Airport located on the northwest side of the Island. As recommended in the adopted Strategic Plan, the Island is proposing to develop a fourth gateway at Aloe Bay with a working waterfront development for public boat access onto the Island.

The three existing gateways are in need of improvements to their streetscaping amenities, their bicycle, pedestrian and commuter access, and their visual aesthetics. Improvements should be appropriate and respectful to the Island’s character, defined by the property owners as a “small-town seaside village.” Appropriate gateway improvements include: small-scale commercial development opportunities along these entrances that serve resident and tourist populations; waterfront access development along Aloe Bay to provide public water access and commercial opportunities for residents and tourists; improved signage onto the Island; improved street furniture, landscaping, and lighting; improved bicycle and pedestrian access with sidewalks, crosswalks, and boardwalks; and improved aesthetics with development of design guidelines.

### Community Goals

The following goals, associated with transportation networks and facilities, were identified by the community and presented in the Strategic Plan.

- Improve the Island’s public water access by developing several locations across the Island to accommodate boat transit for resident and tourist populations. This should be accomplished with public boat launch pads, public boat docking spaces, and public trailer parking facilities. This also includes the development of a main Working Waterfront marina/harbor.
- Plan and support parking facilities, bicycle, and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, such as sidewalks and boardwalks, in the proposed Working Waterfront District, Central Business District, and Ferry Landing developments. Aesthetic improvements to these areas should also be made and include park benches, signage, lighting, and landscaping.
- Improve the roadway, airway, and waterway access corridors onto the Island to create a welcoming gateway for residents and tourist populations. Improvements should be consistent with long-term goals of property owners of the Island, as identified in community workshops and defined as maintaining the Island’s “small-town character of our seaside village”. Types of supported improvements include low impact developments that do not encroach on the natural

*Figure 28: LeMoyne Drive Gateway onto Dauphin Island*



Source: SARPC

*Figure 29: LeMoyne Drive Gateway onto Dauphin Island*



Source: SARPC

resources of the Island or adversely impact resident's quality of life. Large-scale commercial projects, commonly found in neighboring resort communities, have typically been identified by property owners as not in keeping with the Island's overall character.

- Utilize and encourage eco-friendly materials and construction methods with new developments on the Island. This includes both public and private projects involving new construction and substantial improvements to existing facilities, buildings, and infrastructure.
- Create and establish an appropriate means of public transportation on the Island to accommodate tourist and resident populations, especially during large Island events.
- Research the implementation and use of access management fees for tourist populations. This includes access fees associated with proposed public water access, public transit opportunities, proposed parking facilities, and possibly roadway access as well.
- Create and support activities and events that encourage pedestrian and bike transportation on the Island. Examples of supported activities could include an annual Island walk-a-thon, an annual Island bike trail ride, and implementing the Walking-School Bus Program or other Safe Route To School Programs.

### *Recommendations and Strategies*

The recommendations and strategies are as follows:

1. Seek federal, state, and/or local grant funds for the elevation and protection of low portions of Highway 193 between Mobile County and Pelican Point, north of the Dauphin Island Bridge.
2. Continue research and seek federal, state, and/or local funding opportunities to develop an engineered solution for protection from erosion and damage associated with seasonal storms and hurricanes.
3. Seek federal, state, and/or local funds for ongoing local street maintenance and improvements such as paving activities, erosion control, and structural improvements to local streets and bridges. Specific areas for ongoing maintenance and improvements are: 1) the east end portion of Bienville Boulevard that borders Historic Fort Gaines; 2) west end portions of Cadillac Avenue; and 3) many of the local residential streets located on the north side of the Island that extend northwardly out into the Bay, subjected to constant erosion.
4. Install pedestrian/bike crosswalks within the existing roadway network at the following locations along Bienville Boulevard: 1) Billy Goat Hole/Sea Lab; 2) Ferry Landing/Campgrounds; 3) LeMoyne intersection; and 4) at the Little Red School House/Commercial Area/Public Beach. A crosswalk should also be installed on LeMoyne Drive at the DeSoto intersection.
5. Plan and develop the installation of two or three low impact development parking facilities on the Island to accommodate the proposed Central Business District, the Working Waterfront District, and Ferry landing developments.
6. Plan and install streetscaping amenities to enhance the visual aesthetics and pedestrian/bike access of the proposed Central Business District gateway along LeMoyne Drive.
7. Plan and install streetscaping at the Ferry Landing area next to Billy Goat Hole.
8. Install and upgrade streetscaping amenities along Bienville Boulevard from Fort Gaines on the east end to the West End Beach.
9. Improve the Island's public transit shuttle bus system by installing designated bus stops across the Island to identify transit access points of pick-up and delivery.

10. Establish a Working Waterfront District along Aloe Bay on the northwest side of the Island. The district should provide public water access with boat launch pads, boat docking spaces, and pedestrian boardwalks and observation areas.
11. Plan and install several public water access points across the Island for boat launch, boat docking spaces, and boat trailer parking facilities.
12. Improve the appearance of roadway, airway, and waterway access corridors to create an attractive gateway onto the Island.
13. Update the Town's Zoning Ordinance to support the use of eco-friendly materials and construction methods with new developments on the Island. Pervious parking materials and indigenous vegetative filter strips should be strongly encouraged with all new developments.
14. Establish and support Annual events: 1) Island Walk-A-Thon and Bike Trail Ride; 2) Island Beautification Day; 3) Coastal Vegetation Re-Nourishment Day; 4) Walk to School Program.

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## Chapter 5

# Land Use

Land use planning ensures the orderly growth and development of communities. This plan attempts to protect quality of life and safety of the residents, conserve natural resources, promote compatible land uses and transportation accessibility, and provide availability of utilities and public facilities for the current and future residence of Dauphin Island.



### Existing Land Use Inventory

Dauphin Island's current land use development patterns are illustrated on *Figure 30*. An existing land use category has been assigned to all parcels within the municipal limits of the Town of Dauphin Island. The primary source of this information is a field survey conducted in 2008 by the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission. The data was then cross-referenced with the Mobile County Revenue Commission 2010 parcel data for accuracy and reviewed again in 2012. The land use categories are as follows:

*Single-Family Residential* – All parcels that have single-family structures.

*Duplex Residential* – All parcels that have two dwelling units per lot.

*Multi-Family Residential* – All parcels that have three or more dwelling units per lot.

*Mobile/Manufactured Home* – All parcels that have mobile or manufactured homes on individual lots or in parks.

*Commercial* – All parcels that have commercial structures and/or uses. This includes banks, offices, gas stations, restaurants, and retail stores.

*Government* – All parcels with City, County, State or Federal structures. This includes police and fire facilities, post offices, libraries, court houses, and City and County buildings.

*Industrial* – All parcels with light or heavy industrial structures and/or uses including industrial parks, warehouses and manufacturing operations.

*Institutional* – All parcels that have a school, hospital, nursing home, or church.

*Parks and Recreation* – All parcels that have parks, open space, trails, recreational space and facilities.

*Undeveloped* – All parcels that do not have structures on them and are undeveloped.

*Utilities* – All parcels with utility structures and facilities including water/sewer treatment facilities and storage and electrical substations.

*Table 38* presents a summary of the approximate acreage contained in each of the land use categories listed above and located within the municipal limits of the Town of Dauphin Island.

The largest land use category on the Island is *parks and recreation* land, totaling 838.5 acres, which accounts for 41.1% of the total municipal limits.

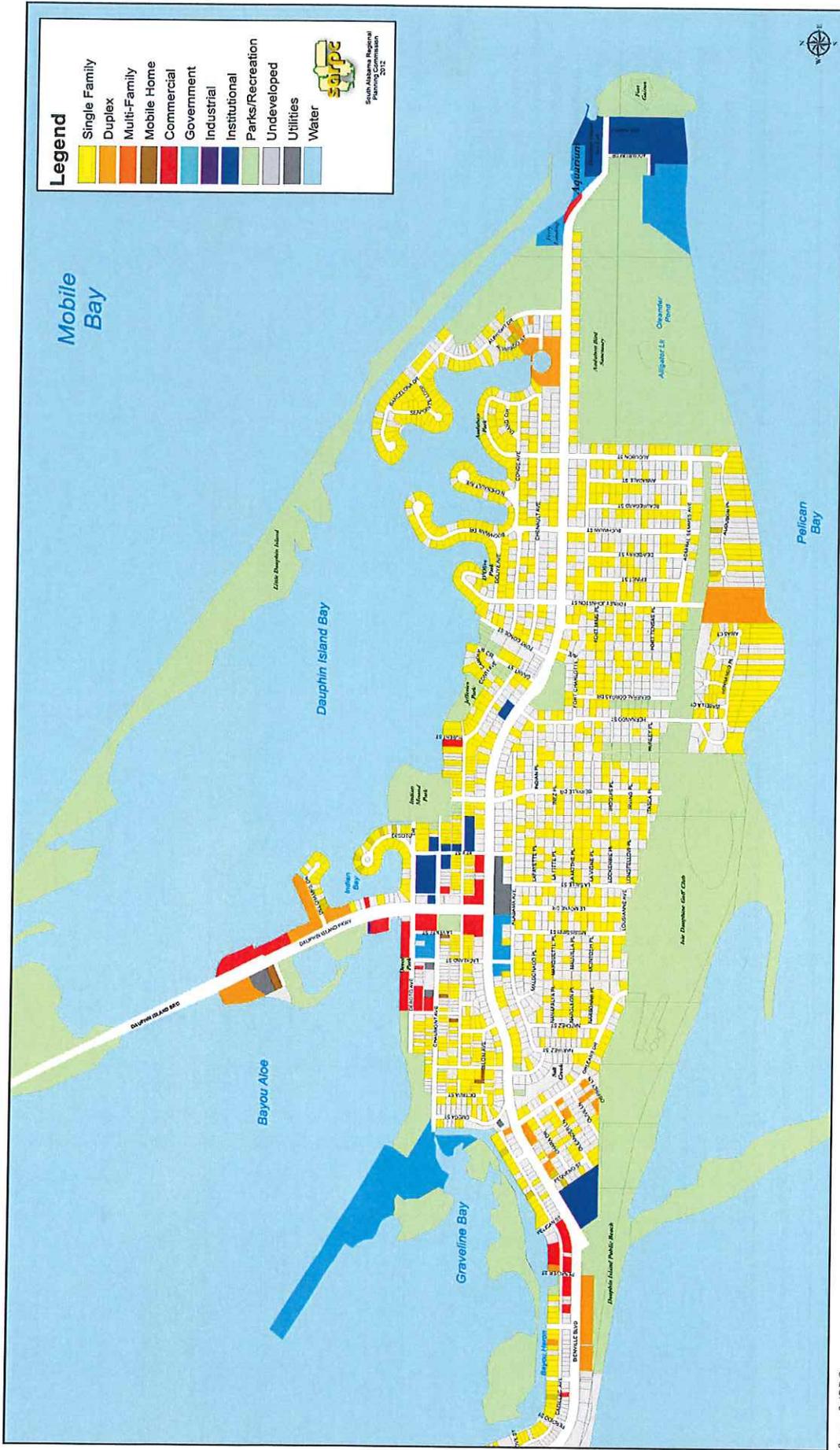
The second largest land use category on the Island is *undeveloped lands* with a total of 513.4 acres, which accounts for 25.2% of total acreage. There are 1,540 undeveloped parcels identified on the Island with the average parcel size of 0.3 acres. Most of the undeveloped lots are located in residential neighborhoods. Some are not suitable for development due to wetlands present on the parcels. The *single-family residential* land use category is the third largest category with 499.5 acres, or 24.5% of the total Island. 1,661 parcels contain single family residences with an average parcel size of 0.3 acres. The *government* land use category represents 3.4% of the total municipal area, or 69.2 acres. Twenty-three parcels are used for government land uses with an average parcel size of 6.0 acres. This includes the Town buildings, the Federal post office, and the Mobile County owned airport property. *Multi-family residential* land uses comprise 42.8 acres, or 2.1% of the Island. 43 lots are designated as multi-family, with an average parcel size of 1.1 acres. *Institutional* land uses are found on 38 parcels, for a total of 38.4 acres, or 1.9% of the Town's total acreage. These parcels include the Elementary School, the Sea Lab, and all churches and cemeteries on the island. *Commercial* land uses constitute 1.2% of the total developed land area, or 24.4 acres. The 80 commercial parcels on the Island have an average size of 0.3 acres. Most of the commercial land uses are located on LeMoyné Drive and Bienville Boulevard in the central portion of the Island. There is also a cluster of commercial development located on Bienville Boulevard, west of the public beach and across from high rise condominiums, where many retail shops and restaurants are located. *Utility* land uses comprise 0.4% of the Island, or 7.2 acres. These parcels include the Dauphin Island Water and Sewer properties and electrical substations on the Island. *Duplex residential* uses comprise 4.1 acres, or 0.2% of the total island. Duplexes are situated on 17 parcels with an average parcel size of 0.2. *Mobile/Manufactured homes* are found on 9 parcels totaling 1.9 acres and 0.1% of the total island. There is one *industrial* parcel located on the island. At only 0.2 acres in size, it constitutes less than 0.1% of the island's total acreage.

**Table 38: Current Total Acreage of Land Use Categories Illustrated on Figure 30 in the Town of Dauphin Island**

<i>Land Use Category</i>	<i>Total Acreage</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Parks and Recreation	838.5	41.1
Undeveloped	513.4	25.2
Single-Family Residential	499.5	24.5
Government	69.2	3.4
Multi-Family Residential	42.8	2.1
Institutional	38.4	1.9
Commercial	24.4	1.2
Utilities	7.2	0.4
Duplex Residential	4.1	0.2
Mobile/Manufactured Home	1.9	0.1
Industrial	0.2	<0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,039.46</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: SARPC

Figure 30: Existing Land Use for the Town of Dauphin Island, East End





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## *Future Build Out Analysis and Projections*

The physical characteristics of the land help determine the location, density, and types of development that should occur. Soil characteristics, drainage patterns, and topography also determine if land is acceptable for development. Dauphin Island's topography is flat and at sea level with elevations above sea level being usually less than 10 feet across the Island. Most of the exterior portions of the Island are located in the FEMA 100-year floodplain. As a result, the Town requires that all new structures be built elevated out of the floodplain to the adopted base flood elevation regulations determined for the region.

The central, interior portions of the Island are not located in the 100-year floodplain, but many of the parcels on the Island contain wetlands and are not suitable for development. The Town has adopted and implemented a wetland ordinance that requires compliance by all future development on the island.

To determine future build out projections for the Town of Dauphin Island, data from other chapters in this plan were evaluated. The future land use acreage was projected based on current and historic growth trends and future land use requirements according to future population and housing projections.

*Figure 31* illustrates the 2030 future land use development pattern projected for the Town of Dauphin Island. This proposed development pattern was based on a build out analysis formulated using the existing land use inventory, historical and current land use growth patterns, the current zoning map of the Town and future population and housing projections for the Town of Dauphin Island. The *single family* and *duplex* categories were combined. It was determined that these two housing types were similar and harmonious.

*Mixed use*, an additional land use category, was added to the future land use maps. Some currently undeveloped parcels zoned *resort/commercial* along LeMoyne Drive and zoned *single family* on Bienville Boulevard were designated as future commercial use.

A *working waterfront* land use category was also created. This area provides opportunity for use that supports and encourages a working waterfront. The Dauphin Island Marina is located in this land use category. Uses can include but are not limited to: lodging, restaurants, marinas, boat works, fishing piers and bait shops. Another land use category added was *tourist/resort*. This land use category is specific to tourism and resort opportunities.

*Undeveloped parcels* are not identified on the future land use map. This does not mean all parcels on the Island are projected to be developed, but that the opportunity exists for land owners to develop their properties. It should also be noted that due to natural resources such as wetlands, not all parcels are suitable for the development and all future development must comply with the Wetland Ordinance, Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations of the Island for overall community compatibility.

In *Table 39*, the largest land use category on the Island by 2030 is projected to be *single-family/duplex*, with a total of 852.8 acres. This is 41.8% of the total municipal limits. There are a total of 2,854

parcels identified for this use in 2030. The average parcel size of this type of land use is 0.3 acres. This is an increase of 1,193 potentially developed single family parcels on the Island by 2030.

*Table 39: Future Total Acreage of Land Use Categories Illustrated on Figure 31 in the Town of Dauphin Island*

<i>Land Use Category</i>	<i>Total Acreage</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Single-Family/Duplex	852.8	41.1
Parks and Recreation	700.9	34.4
Tourist/Resort	205.9	10.1
Mixed Use	83.1	4.1
Government	66.1	3.2
Working Waterfront	54.5	2.7
Multi-Family Residential	37.5	1.8
Institutional	30.5	1.5
Commercial	5.7	0.3
Utilities	2.6	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,039.46</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: SARPC

### *Community Goals*

To ensure that Dauphin Island’s Comprehensive Plan reflects the values and desires of the residents, it is important that the community play an active role in its development. The community identified a vision for the future for the Island that is the basis for the proposed goals and strategies for future growth and development. The following goals associated with land use were identified by the community and presented in the Strategic Plan.

- Explore future uses and solutions to the west end beach erosion problem with regard to residential development and public access. This includes researching and proposing solutions to the current yard setback problems being experienced by land owners.
- Create additional housing and business opportunities on the Island through the development of a mixed-use zoning classification that allows, where appropriate, people to live and work on the same parcel of land.
- Replenish the Island’s seasonal vacation rental housing stock that was lost in Hurricanes Ivan and Katrina in order to regain the Island’s tourist economy and support Island commercial businesses.
- Protect the small-town character of the Island from large-scale development by utilizing height and spacing restrictions on all new developments.
- Expand commercial development across the Island to revitalize the Island’s economy and create more businesses and job opportunities for residents. Facilitate the creation of more retail and basic service businesses that support tourism and address permanent resident needs.

- Develop strategies to maintain and enhance the small town feel of the Island to protect against over-development. The goal is compatible, controlled, and guided economic development and growth that does not compromise the small town character of the Island or its natural resources.
- Enhance economic opportunities compatible with existing uses at the Ferry Landing, Billy Goat Hole, Dauphin Island Marina, and the west end beaches.
- Honor the Island's cultural heritage by developing a working waterfront for commercial fishing, recreational boating, retail and residential uses.
- Expand and support waterfront access to increase eco-tourism opportunities and businesses. Acceptable waterfront eco-tourism would economically utilize the Island's natural resources without adverse effect to the physical or social environment. Applicable eco-tourism businesses would include watercraft rentals, scuba diving shops, water taxis, charter fishing, seafood markets, bait and tackle shops, etc.
- Design and develop a charming, centralized small downtown business district.
- Encourage and promote cottage industries on the Island.

### *Recommendations and Strategies*

Recommendations and strategies are below.

1. Create a mixed use zoning category. Adopt design guidelines and building standards for the physical appearance of the district. Allow and encourage mixed use/pedestrian-oriented development within the district to support cottage industries, traditional neighborhood development, and smart growth initiatives. The district should also permit "mother-in law" (*i.e.*, over the garage) apartments.
2. Design and develop a Working Waterfront District. Adopt design guidelines and building standards for the physical appearance of the district and establish district boundaries where provisions will apply. Encourage mixed use development within the district. The working waterfront access should consist of a network of boardwalks, observation points, buildings, and a marina. The waterfront area should include mixed-use buildings for retail, service, residential, and lodging opportunities.
3. Design and develop a business district near Billy Goat Hole to establish appropriate design standards and opportunities for residential and business uses associated with the water access and Ferry Landing.
4. Investigate the opportunity to develop a municipal commercial fee based loading/unloading dock in the Billy Goat Hole region. Link the new facility to the rest of the Island via shuttle buses. Provide adequate parking facilities for cars, boats, and trailers.
5. Create a new residential single family zoning classification specific to houses located on the west end of the Island for the purpose of allowing flexibility with the front, back and side yard setbacks.
6. Create zoning classifications that allow for the development of the mixed use district and working waterfront district. These ordinances should contain design guidelines and architectural standards for building design and facades, streetscaping, signage, lighting, and landscaping.
7. Preserve and protect the wetlands and other natural resources through the enforcement of the Town of Dauphin Island Wetland Ordinance.

8. Adopt and implement through the Town's Zoning Ordinance, development and design standards that specify height and spacing restrictions on developments to prevent contiguous loss of waterfront views and public access to waterfronts.
9. Protect the small town character of the Island and quality of life by creating a design and scale criteria compatible to adjoining residential /commercial development.
10. Educate the community and businesses on stewardship, low-impact development, smart growth and strategies to enhance Dauphin Island's resiliency to climate change.

Figure 31: Future Land Use for the Town of Dauphin Island, East End

