City of Gulf Breeze Comprehensive Plan Update

Stakeholder Meeting #1 Summary

To: Craig "Shane" Carmichael, Director of Community Services, City of Gulf Breeze

From: Emilee Aguerrebere, AICP, Project Manager

CC: Pat Tyjeski, AICP, Principal-In-Charge

Date: November 17, 2025

Reference: Stakeholder Meeting #1 Summary

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this memorandum is to summarize the feedback gathered during the virtual stakeholder meeting for the City of Gulf Breeze 2050 Comprehensive Plan Update. Held via Zoom on Thursday, November 13, 2025 (2:30 – 4:00 PM), this meeting included Inspire Placemaking Collective (Inspire), City staff, and community stakeholders. The meeting was intended to gather diverse perspectives to inform and shape the Comprehensive Plan update. This memorandum contains an attendee list, a summary of key discussion points, and next steps.

SUMMARY

The meeting opened with Project Manager, Emilee Aguerrebere, welcoming participants and highlighting the importance of their input in guiding the Comprehensive Plan update. Emilee requested verbal consent to record and photograph the session for project documentation. Stakeholders then introduced themselves and described their connection to Gulf Breeze, followed by City Staff and Pat Tyjeski, Principal-in-Charge.

Using a PowerPoint presentation (see **Appendix A**), Emilee presented the project scope and schedule, explained the purpose of Comprehensive Plans and why they need to be updated, went through the update process, and showcased key data and trends through a brief community profile. She then went through a series of questions designed to identify opportunities, challenges, and ideas to consider for the Comprehensive Plan update.

Stakeholders

- Shane Elkins
- Kathy Elkins
- Jay Billhorn
- Lila Cox
- Christian Monlezun
- April Hargraves

Inspire (Consultant)

- Emilee Aguerrebere, AICP, Project Manager
- Pat Tyjeski, AICP, Principal-in-Charge

City Staff

- Samantha Abell, City Manager
- Shane Carmichael, Director of Community Services

The discussion touched on a wide range of topics, such as the best and most challenging aspects of living or working in Gulf Breeze, future development patterns, housing needs, recreation and open space, public facilities, capital improvements, and resilience. Overall, the conversation was productive and organic, in which stakeholders exchanged thoughts and ideas with each other. Stakeholders expressed strong satisfaction with the city's current direction. Below is a summary of feedback shared during the stakeholder discussion.

To conclude the session, Emilee shared the project's website and reviewed upcoming steps in the Comprehensive Plan update process.



Development Patterns and Land Use

- Gulf Breeze is largely built out and constrained by surrounding water and national forest lands. The City will need to use its land and infrastructure efficiently to support future needs and adapt.
- Future growth and development will require thoughtful redevelopment and strategic reuse or replacement of older structures, many of which date from the 1950s – 1970s.
- Infrastructure upgrades will be essential, especially hurricane-proof design and utility upgrades.

Housing

- The city's aging demographic underscores the need to attract younger individuals and families.
- High real estate prices for starter homes makes it difficult for young individuals and families to live in Gulf Breeze.
- Mixed-use development was discussed as a potential tool to increase housing options with interest in combining high-quality units at varied price points.
- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs):
    - Seen as an idea worth exploring to expand housing options.
    - City staff explained that current regulations do not allow ADUs with permanent sleeping facilities.

Recreation and Open Space

- Throughout the meeting, stakeholders voiced strong appreciation for outdoor amenities, such as the multiuse trail, bridge routes, elevated wetlands walkway, parks, and recreation center.
- Many offered "kudos" to the City for investing in high-quality outdoor spaces that promote activity, safety, and sense of place and community connection.
- Stakeholders encouraged continued maintenance and expansion of trails to support walking and biking.
- Desired Amenities
  - Public Swimming Pool: Interest in a community pool with lap lanes for swim teams and recreational use. County initiatives for pool facilities were noted by City staff.
  - Performing Arts Space: Noted the absence of a dedicated space for performances and larger gatherings. Schools and local groups must rely on sites outside the City or inadequate spaces, which are not always available.
  - Outdoor Event Spaces: Interest in reviving farmers markets, outdoor music areas, and seasonal events previously held at the recreation center.
  - Hotels: Support of the idea for hotels to accommodate visitors and provide potential revenue benefits, such as a bed tax.

> *"My 5th grader just came inside and asked, 'Can I bike to my friend's house?' I know it's safe and that's a huge load off my mind that I wouldn't have if I lived in Pensacola."*

> *"The band usually performs at the Methodist Church but have gotten too big. We are paying big bucks outside the community for kids to have places to perform. They could not do their fall performance this year because they couldn't reserve a space.*

> *"My daughter practices theatre at the tennis courts in the morning because there is nowhere for them to practice."*

Public Facilities

- A stakeholder highlighted the need to improve internet infrastructure, noting that reliable high-speed service is inconsistent. Reliable internet is critical for remote workers and can help attract professionals. Alternative workspaces are limited: Panera and Starbucks are often noisy and packed; the library offers quiet areas but lacks dedicated rooms for meetings.
- Sidewalks are absent which pose safety concerns, particularly near schools, busy corridors, and streets with limited visibility, such as Silverthorn Road. Poorly lit streets and obstructed visibility further increase risks for pedestrians.
- Stakeholders stressed the importance of maintaining and improving walkability in residential areas.

Capital Improvements

- Highway US 98 significantly limits safe movement between north and south sides of the city for golf carts, bikes, and pedestrians.
- A need for improved multimodal connections and crossing – for example, to Publix – were noted.

- According to City staff, the Planning, Design and Engineering (PD&E) for a pedestrian overpass near Publix is complete. However, FDOT has placed the project on hold.

Resilience

- Stakeholders acknowledged significant City efforts to manage and reduce flooding, maintenance, and ongoing improvements.
- The attendees complimented the city on the quick debris pick up post-Hurricane Sally.
- Current projects, such as undergrounding utilities and upgrading the water reclamation facility, are recognized as important resilience investments.
- Continued monitoring, updating, and applying best practices in storm adaptation was strongly encouraged.

Appendix A

Gulf Breeze 2050 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FROM SHORELINE TO SKYLINE

CITY OF GULF BREEZE 1961

Inspire PLACEMAKING COLLECTIVE

Stakeholder Meeting #1

November 13, 2025
2:30 PM

Project Team



Emilee Aguerrebere, AICP
Project Manager

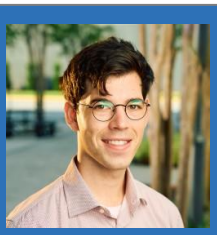


Pat Tyjeski, AICP
Principal-in-Charge



Jessica Hays
GIS Lead, Planner

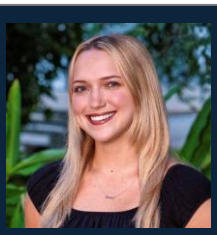
Gulf Breeze 2050 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FROM SHORELINE TO SKYLINE



Haiden Lewis
Planner



Alex Kozela
Planner



Lainie Jones
Senior Graphic Designer

Gulf Breeze, FL **Comprehensive Plan**

Agenda

Introductions
Scope and Schedule
Community Profile
Discussion
Next Steps

Gulf Breeze, FL

Comprehensive Plan

Scope and Schedule



What is a Comprehensive Plan?

The **Comprehensive Plan** is designed to guide the future actions of a municipality to achieve its community-driven vision for future growth.

- ✓ View the "big picture"
- ✓ Coordinate local decision making
- ✓ Give guidance to landowners and developers
- ✓ Establish a factual basis for policy decisions
- ✓ Involve a broad array of interests in a discussion about the long-range future
- ✓ Build an informed community

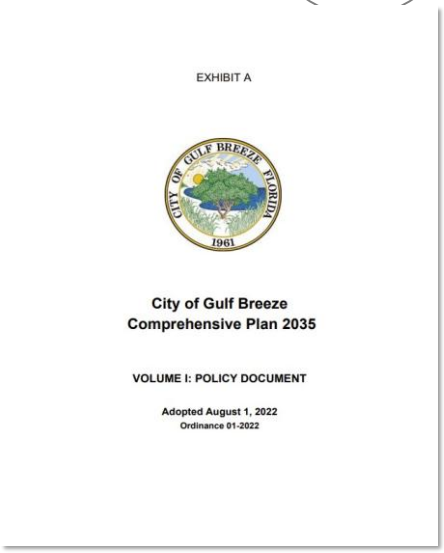
Source: Planning and Zoning – The Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan by Gary Taylor, 2018; Planning and Urban Design Standards (2nd Ed.), APA, 2020

Plan Contents (Elements)



Why Update?

1. Required to be updated at least every **7 years** per state statutes
   - Upcoming Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) letter due on **12/1/2025**
   - Last EAR update was in **2018**
2. Address recent changes in **Florida Statutes**
3. Reflect current conditions and renewed priorities. **Planning horizon year** established to **2050**
4. Update **Future Land Use Map Series**


EXHIBIT A

City of Gulf Breeze
Comprehensive Plan 2035

VOLUME I: POLICY DOCUMENT

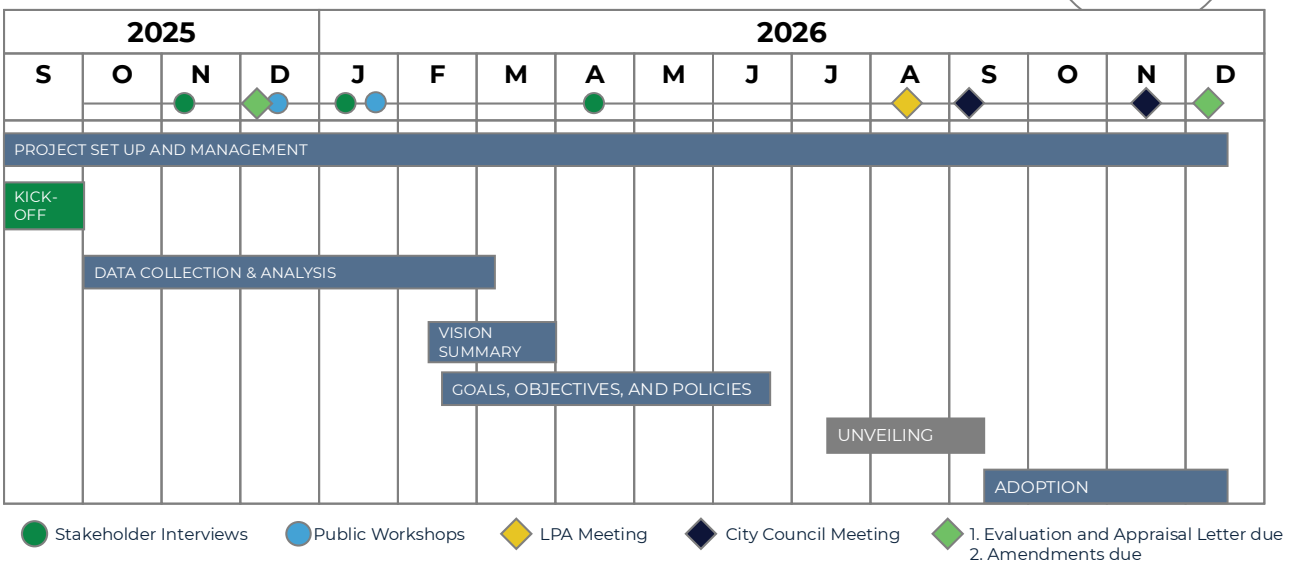
Adopted August 1, 2022
Ordinance 01-2022

Scope and Objectives





Schedule and Milestones



Gulf Breeze 2050 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FROM SHORELINE TO SKYLINE



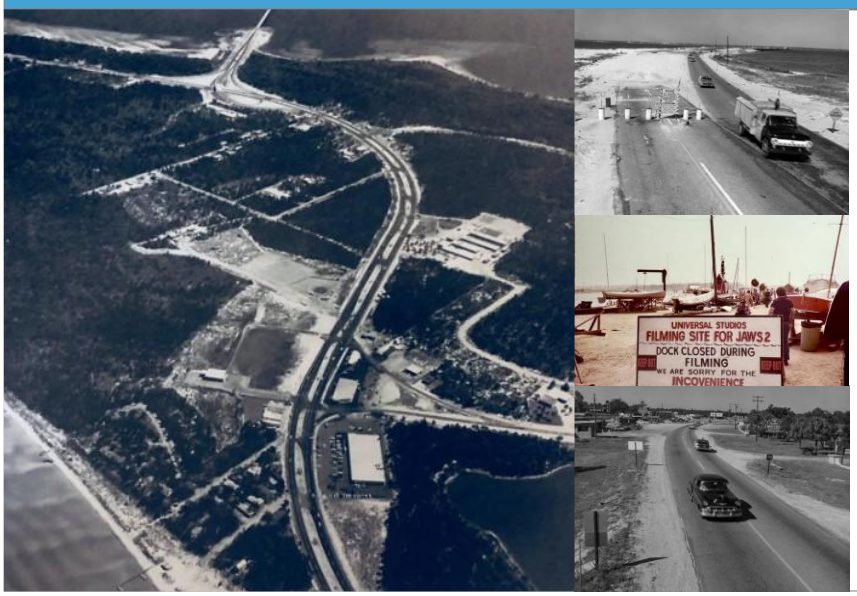
Community Profile

Geographic Setting



- Located at the tip of the Fairpoint peninsula in northwest Florida
- Surrounded by Pensacola Bay and the Santa Rosa Sound
- Includes 18 miles of waterfront and 3 protected bayous
- Encompasses 1,251 acres of the Naval Live Oaks, which are part of the Gulf Islands National Seashore

Historical Context



1931 - First bridge across Pensacola Bay opened, connecting Gulf Breeze to Pensacola

1936 – Community named after the *Gulf Breeze Cottages and Store*, which housed the first post office

1961 – City incorporated following the expansion of the Pensacola Bay Bridge

1960s – 1980s – Period of significant residential growth and community establishment

1995 – 2025 – City impacted by multiple major hurricanes

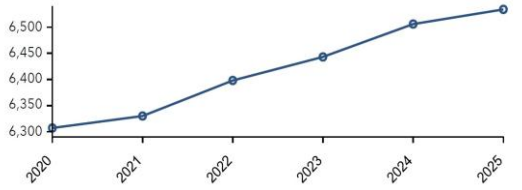
Sociodemographic

Population
6,582

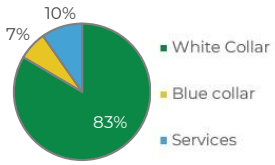
Median Age
48.5

Unemployment Rate
8.1%

Historical Population Trends



Employment



40.3%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Compared to
21.5% countywide
22.5% statewide

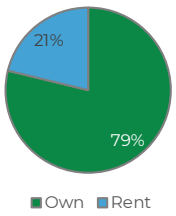
$116,815
Median Household Income
Compared to
31% higher than the County
50% higher than the State

Source: EsriBAO (2025); ACS (2019 – 2023)

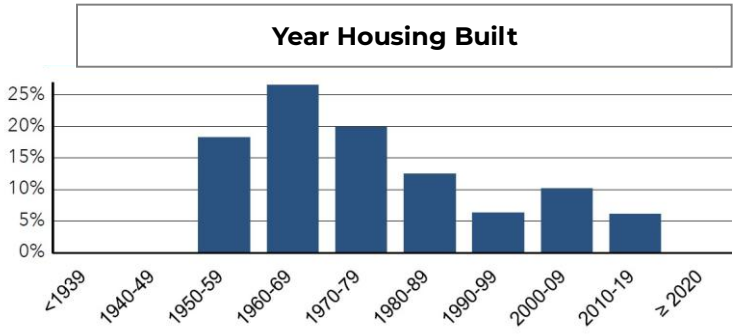
Housing Data

$591,142
Median Home Value
Compared to
$378,284 countywide (56% higher)
$416,969 statewide (42% higher)

Home Ownership



Year Housing Built



Source: EsriBAO (2025); ACS (2019 – 2023)

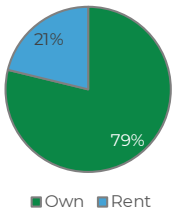
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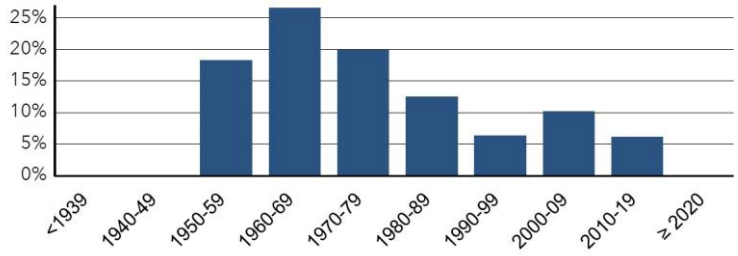
Median Home Value

Compared to
$378,284 countywide (56% higher)
$416,969 statewide (42% higher)

Home Ownership



Year Housing Built



Source: EsriBAO (2025); ACS (2019 – 2023)

Commuting characteristics

2.39
average household size

2,780
workers age 16+

23.7
average commute time
(in minutes)

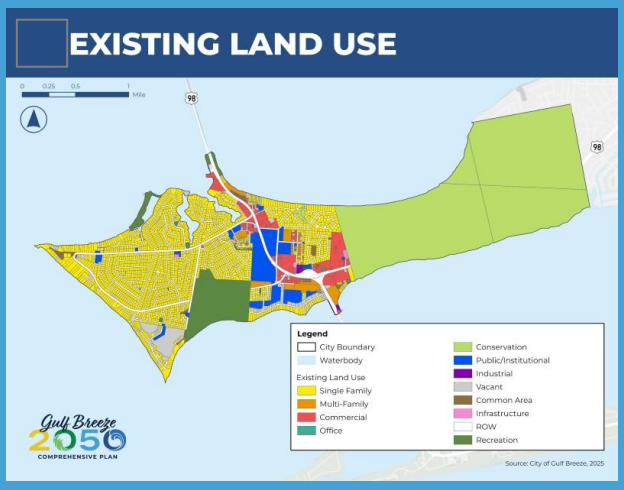
66%
drive alone to work
(2% carpooled)

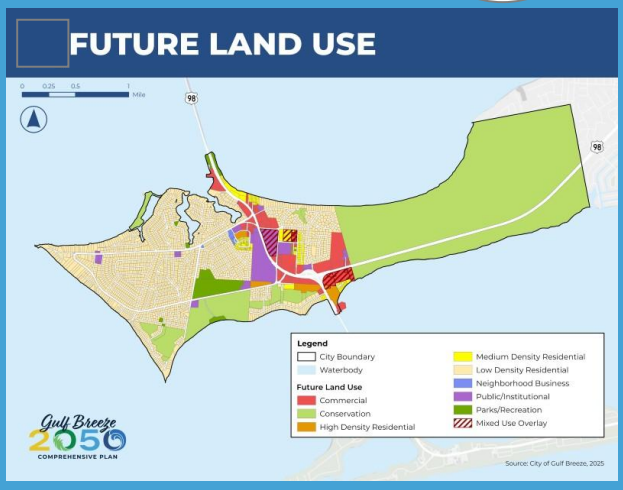
2.1%
walk to work

1.1%
bike to work

Source: Esri (2025), ACS (2019-2023)

Land Uses



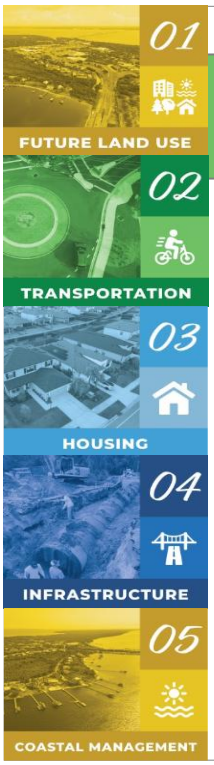


Source: City of Gulf Breeze, 2025

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FROM SHORELINE TO SKYLINE

03

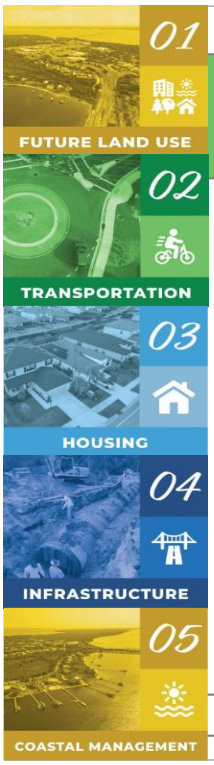
Stakeholders Input



Discussion

1. What do you believe are the **best** and **worst** aspects of living (and/or working) in Gulf Breeze?
2. What do you feel are the biggest **challenges** and **opportunities** facing Gulf Breeze in the next 20 years?
3. How do you feel about the City's current **development pattern**?
4. Do you feel that there is adequate **housing supply** and **housing variety** to satisfy demand?
5. Which type of **housing** (e.g., single-family, duplex, townhomes, apartments, condos) is needed in Gulf Breeze?
6. Where should **new housing** be located?





Discussion

7. How do you feel about the available **recreation and open space inventory** in the City?
8. What **market/employment** sectors do you feel are deficient within the City?
9. Have **public facilities** and services kept up with development? If not, where are the gaps in facilities and services most noticeable?
10. What **capital expenditures** should Gulf Breeze focus on in the next 5 to 10 years?
11. Which **community engagement** methods and tools should be incorporated as part of this effort to ensure that all voices within the City are heard?



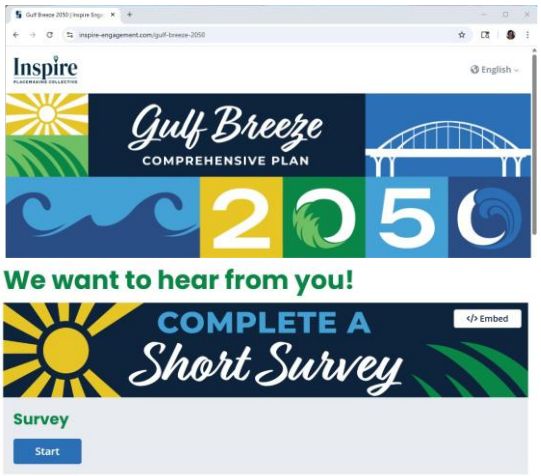
Gulf Breeze 2050 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FROM SHORELINE TO SKYLINE



Next Steps

Next Steps

Gulf Breeze 2050 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



SCAN ME!

https://www.inspire-engagement.com/gulf-breeze-2050

Timeline

- **September 2025** — Kick-off
- **October 2025 - March 2026** — Gather and analyze data
- **December 2025** — Workshop #1: Where are we now and where do we want to go? (Date TBD)
- **January 2026** — Workshop #2: How do we get there? (Date TBD)
- **February 2026** — Update Goals, Objectives, and Policies
- **July 2026** — Land Planning Agency (LPA) meeting
- **September 2026** — City Council Transmittal Hearing
- **September - November 2026** — State review
- **December 2026** — City Council Adoption Hearing

Gulf Breeze 2050
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FROM SHORELINE TO SKYLINE

Thank you!

Questions?
Comments?

