

1961

Comprehensive City Plan, Niceville, Florida

George W. Simons Jr.

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**COMPREHENSIVE
CITY PLAN
NICEVILLE, FLORIDA**

1961

**LAND USE, POPULATION, AND ECONOMIC
SURVEYS AND ANALYSIS**

**PLANS FOR LAND USE, MAJOR STREETS,
HOUSING AREAS, COMMUNITY FACILITIES,
PARKS, AND COMMERCIAL AREAS**

**PLANNING PROCEDURES, IMPLEMENTATION,
AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM**

COMPREHENSIVE CITY PLAN

NICEVILLE, FLORIDA

June, 1961

City Council

Wallace Spence, Mayor

John Bullock

Thomas Powell, Jr.

Cortez Shiver

Roger H. Wright

Joseph Anchors

Planning Board

John Bullock, Chairman

Thomas Powell, Jr.

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Jacksonville, Florida

For and under the General Direction of the Florida Development Commission and in collaboration with officials of the City of Niceville, Florida

The preparation of this report was financed in part through an Urban Planning Grant from the Housing and Home Finance Agency, under the provisions of Section 701 of the Housing Act of 1954, as amended.

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PREFACE

The preparation of the Comprehensive Development Plan Report involved three fundamental processes: (1) The survey of existing conditions, (2) an analysis of present and future needs, and (3) the formulation of many component plans accommodating those needs in a manner that may ultimately reach a single comprehensive planning goal.

The survey of existing conditions required mapping of the city and the surrounding urban area; land use classification and mapping; surveys of streets, traffic, and parking conditions; collection of data regarding population trends and economic growth; an inventory of all public and community facilities; and many other studies basic to the subsequent analysis and plans for future needs.

The analysis of present and future needs required detailed study of all information and maps collected to formulate some goal for future development, to assess future needs in comparison to present facilities, and to provide some order and time schedule in carrying out the various steps necessary to reach the final goal.

The formulation of a broad concept of the future goal of the city resulted in the general land use plan. To implement this goal the preparation of many component plans and regulations such as the zoning plan, zoning and subdivision regulations, and a capital budget plan were required. All of the components plans, such as the major street plan, the area treatment plan, the neighborhood plan, the community facilities plans, are designed to accomplish specific goals but at the same time each is considered in relationship to all of the other plans in order that there be no conflict and that each supplement the other as much as possible. It is this process that makes the final plan comprehensive and most beneficial to the ultimate needs of the city.

CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

IN THE VICINITY OF THE

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE

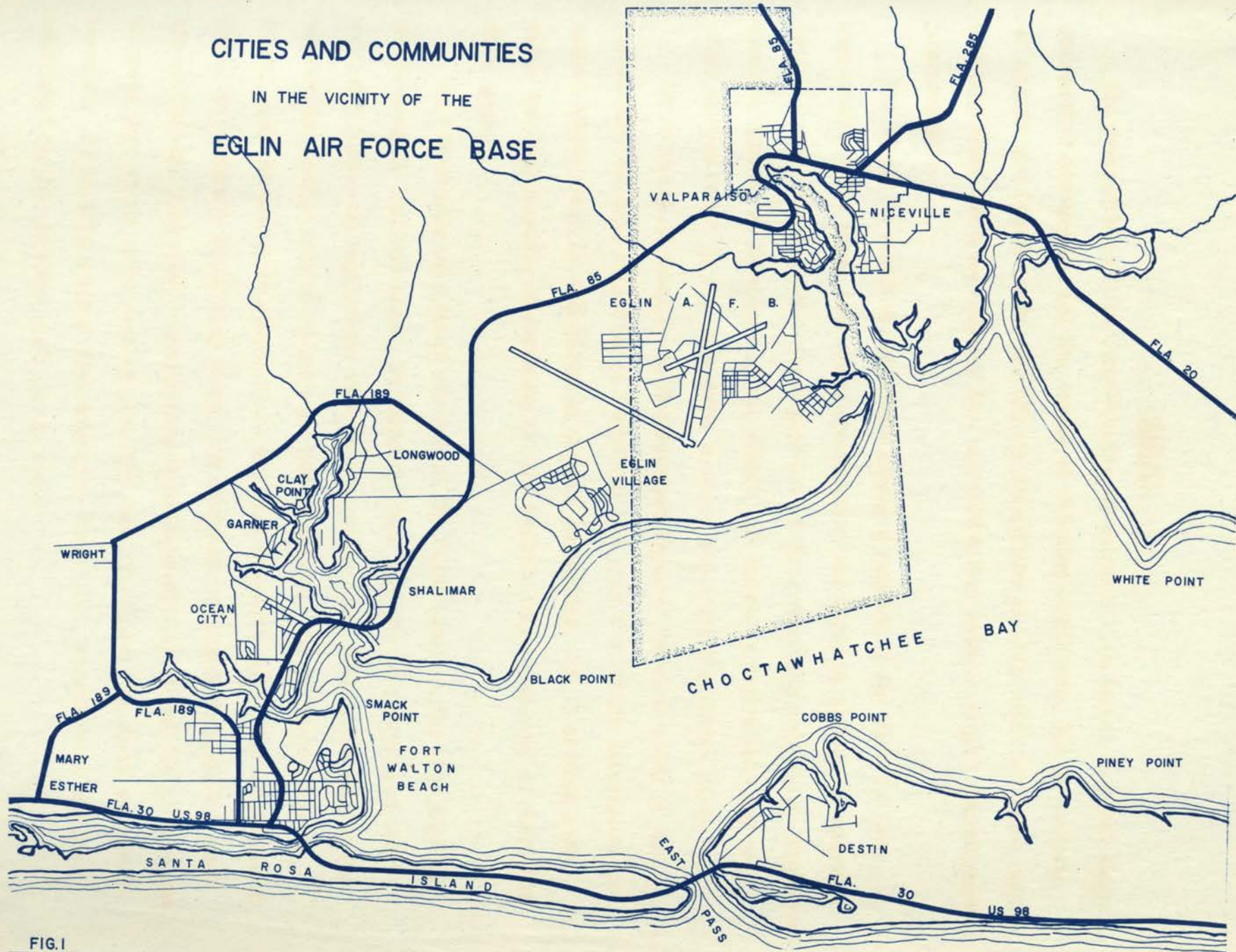


FIG. 1

CHAPTER I.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Niceville is located at the head of Choctawhatchee Bay on Valparaiso Bay, formerly known as Boggy Bayou. Niceville was known as Boggy, after Boggy Creek which flows into the head of the Bayou.

Through this area of the north Gulf Coast, the east-west clay belt meets the indentured coast of the bay country. The result is a most remarkable topography of pine clad hills reaching an elevation in places of over 100 feet overlooking the inland bays. These clay hills, overlain by a strata of sandy soil, are deeply cut by ravines and in many places bluffs drop abruptly to the waters edge. Through the deep ravines flow small, clear streams of fresh water into the brackish waters of the bayous. No area of Florida offers better natural advantages of a site for the development of a community endowed with scenic beauty, healthfulness, recreation, and open space.

Boggy was a small settlement during the War Between the States, when a grist mill was established to serve farms in the sparsely settled country. In the 1880's Boggy had only a half dozen families living in the vicinity, and there was a general store and sawmill in addition to the grist mill. Timber cutting was the main activity of those early days. Later a boat works was established.

In 1919 the Valparaiso Development Company was established by John B. Perrine, who bought thousands of acres of land in the area and proceeded to establish the neighboring town of Valparaiso, planning a community for the influx of thousands of people. Nevertheless, development was slow and efforts to promote the area failed for lack of a solid economic base to sustain a large population. It was during this period that Boggy, stimulated by the dreams of its neighboring community, changed its name to Niceville.

In 1921 the Valparaiso Development Company was put into bankruptcy, and James C. Plew of Chicago bought the assets in March 1922 for \$46,500. Plew continued to promote the area and with much larger resources at his disposal. He built an Inn and golf course and brought people to see the area by special train. As an aviation enthusiast, Plew provided facilities for officers from nearby Maxwell Field, Alabama, and interested them in the area's recreational advantages.

Meantime, the natural advantages of Choctawhatchee Bay inspired great visions of commerce and port development in the vicinity of Valparaiso. Port Dixie was chartered, to be located on Garniers Bayou, to build wharves, a rail line north, and a city of one square mile. These dreams failed to materialize but hung on until the present, awaiting the day when the hinterland will develop the people and economic base required to take advantage of the natural deep water assets of the area.

As early as 1931 the need for a gunnery and bombing range for Maxwell Field became apparent, and, because of the acquaintance of aviation men with the Choctawhatchee country, attention was focused here for land and water ranges.

Plew saw the advantages of army payrolls for the area, and he contributed time and land to insure the development of the area for military aviation. In 1933 the Valparaiso airport was developed on 137 acres for the use of Maxwell Field. Plew then offered 1460 acres of land for the development of a permanent military reservation. The offer was not accepted until 1937, when the range was designated Eglin Field. In the years that followed permanent facilities were developed and the area's strategic potential for military activities was realized. Defense officials began to negotiate the transfer of the Choctawhatchee National Forest, which was established by Theodore Roosevelt in 1908. Local support was



REGIONAL LOCATION OF EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE

strong in favor of the transfer and in 1940, by act of Congress, the vast preserve was added to Eglin Air Force Base to make it the nation's largest military installation. From that time, the build up at Eglin Field was intensified to assume its importance in the war effort and in today's defense program.

When Niceville first appeared in the U. S. Census in 1940, it had a population of 948, compared with 221 in neighboring Valparaiso. At this time the major expansion of operations at Eglin Air Force Base began. Throughout most of this expansion there was a critical shortage of housing in the entire area, but the result was particularly harmful to Niceville. Already on a comparatively low economic level, Niceville attracted much of the transient development of the boom period, and this has strongly influenced the character of the community.

Thus, Niceville, a community without a design or goal clearly defined, just grew, its character of today indelibly marked by those early beginnings. A brief review of the past suggests that Niceville's planning objective is first to know itself, to dream a little, and to define its goal.

CHAPTER II.

POPULATION, ECONOMY, AND FUTURE PROJECTIONS

The preparation of a Comprehensive Development Plan must be predicated on certain assumptions. The scope of the planning program and the size of the area to be planned depends upon future population, economic, and technological trends that may change the character of the community. Much of the planning is predicated on accommodating future growth. However, planning can benefit a community in need of rectifying past mistakes and in need of general improvement, even though little growth is expected.

The economic and population studies that follow will analyze past growth trends, the present economic base, and define within general terms the future prospects of the community. Growth trends and future predictions have greater accuracy when applied to a large geographical area than when applied to small communities such as Valparaiso and Niceville. Therefore, much of the analysis deals with larger areas and relates trends in the larger area to the opportunities available to Valparaiso and Niceville. There is no certainty that these opportunities will be realized, but as the economic future unfolds the two communities can continue to assess their progress and to modify and extend their planning objectives.

"Luck may bring us opportunity.
Intelligence alone shapes it to our purpose"

ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

The economic base of an urban area is the total of all activities that contributes income to its people and provides the economic foundation that sustains the area. Basic activities, such as military operations, tourism, agriculture, lumbering, or fishing, are necessary to bring money into an area and support its people. Certain non-basic activities, such as retail trade, construction, finance, and real estate, are of a servicing nature and their level of operations are determined by the growth and stability of the basic activities.

The economy of Valparaiso and of Niceville cannot be considered separately, and further this area's economy is tied to that of a much larger region encompassing at least the southern part of Okaloosa County. Influences outside the Okaloosa County region also are factors not only contributing to the area's growth but also shaping its character. For these reasons the study of Valparaiso and Niceville's economic background must consider this small area as only a part of a larger whole.

The economy of Okaloosa County was transformed in a brief span of years into one based primarily on military operations and secondarily on tourism and resort trade. In the early days the economy was based primarily on agriculture, timber and naval stores, and fishing. Resort activities and tourism became a factor in the 1920's, when hotels were erected in Ft. Walton, Mary Esther, Valparaiso, and Florosa, and the area began to realize a part of its potential for recreation. Military operations were established in the 1930's, but as a major factor in the local economy this is a development that accelerated from 1940 to one of primary importance today.

Okaloosa County was created in 1915 from Walton and Santa Rosa Counties. The official U. S. Census of 1920 recorded only 9,360 persons, and the increase

was negligible by 1930, when 9,897 persons were recorded. As the economy expanded from one based upon agriculture and forestry to include tourism, resort and the nascent military operations, population increased by 1940 to 12,900 persons, an increase by 30 per cent. However, the accelerated build up of Eglin Air Force Base began in 1940 and by 1950 the increased military construction and operations were largely responsible for an increase in population to 27,533, an increase by 113 per cent over 1940. Post-War expansion of military operations at Eglin Air Force Base have continued at a substantial rate and resulted in a population increase to the present 61,175 persons, an increase by 122 per cent.

Table 1 indicates the dominance of military operations as a source of personal income to the inhabitants of Okaloosa County. The percentage distribution by category of employment in 1957 is indicated for the State as a whole, Okaloosa County, and for neighboring Escambia County, for purposes of comparison.

TABLE 1.

PER CENT DISTRIBUTION - MAJOR INDUSTRIAL SOURCES -
PERSONAL INCOME - FROM "ECONOMIC LEAFLETS" - 1958
(In Thousands of Dollars)

	<u>FLORIDA</u>	<u>OKALOOSA COUNTY</u>	<u>ESCAMBIA COUNTY</u>
Total (dollars)	\$7,647,000	\$96,341	\$301,302
Extractive, Processing, Fabrication	22.2%	6.1%	26.6%
Agriculture	4.9%	1.6%	0.7%
Mining, Fishing	0.7%	0.1%	0.2%
Manufacturing	8.1%	1.4%	17.0%
Construction	8.5%	3.0%	8.7%
Trades, Services & Related Ind.	40.6%	16.4%	27.2%
Transportation, Communications, Utilities	5.9%	1.7%	4.8%
Finance, Real Estate, Insurance	4.9%	1.2%	2.9%
Retail & Wholesale Trades	17.6%	6.5%	12.6%
Services, Trades, Professions	12.2%	7.0%	6.9%
Government	20.8%	71.6%	36.7%
Unclassified	16.4%	5.9%	9.5%

From this table it is readily apparent that Government is the principal contributor to the economy of Okaloosa County, its contribution for Okaloosa County being more than three times what it is for the State at large and nearly twice what it is in neighboring Escambia County.

MILITARY OPERATIONS, A BASIC ACTIVITY

The development of Eglin Air Force Base resulted from several strategic factors of location; proximity to Maxwell Field, availability of vast open spaces of pine barrens and ocean for gunnery and bombing ranges and sparseness of population.

Most of the population growth of Okaloosa County has resulted from military activity, either directly or indirectly. At the close of World War II there were over 11,000 officers and men and 4,000 civilians employed at Eglin Air Force Base. Since 1950 the combined strength of military and civil service personnel has ranged from 77,910 in June, 1950, to 15,581 in December, 1956. The combined strength reported in January, 1959, stood at 10,843, with 7,860 military and 2,982 civil service personnel. In addition, there are some 1,500 personnel employed by some 45 contracting companies located at Eglin Air Force Base.

If we assume that normal strength for Eglin Air Force Base is about 9,000 military, 3,000 civil service and 1,500 contractor personnel, it appears that out of an estimated 17,500 persons employed in southern Okaloosa County over 77% of the area's employment is based directly on military operations. Inasmuch as a large portion of the military personnel are housed on the base, many with their families, the military contribution to the economy is not in direct proportion to the number of military personnel. By conservatively weighing the figures for military personnel in accordance with the proportion living off base

and more dependent upon the economy, which is about one-third, it appears that the area's economy is at a very minimum 65% dependent directly upon military payrolls. However, when the indirect effect upon retailing, construction and other service activities is considered, it is estimated that the economy of the southern half of Okaloosa County is based 80% or more on military activities.

The annual payroll in 1958-1959 at Eglin Air Force Base was approximately \$17,300,000 for civil service employees and was about \$15,000,000 for military personnel. This does not include salaries of contractor personnel. In addition, approximately \$16,000,000 in local purchases were made in 1957. Facilities at Eglin Air Force Base have been expanded to include a Strategic Air Command and a guided missile base. During 1959, some 900 military personnel and 400 contractor personnel were added, and this increase has continued to stimulate the local economy at a time when activities in the state as a whole began to level off.

OTHER BASIC ACTIVITIES

Other basic activities important to the economy of Okaloosa County are tourism, resort, retirement service, and commercial and recreational fishing. Agriculture and forestry are also significant aspects of the economic base but have remained at constant levels and have failed to contribute to the area's growth.

Tourism and resort activities benefit mainly the coastal area, centered about Ft. Walton Beach, along U. S. Route 98. In recent years many modern motel facilities have been constructed to accommodate the summer resort activities that attract visitors mainly from the Southeastern United States. In 1959 a survey revealed over 1,000 motel, hotel, cottage and apartment units available in the coastal area for the accommodation of tourists and seasonal residents. Additional construction, adding more units, have been observed within the past two years, indicating continued growth of this activity.

Commercial fishing contributes to the economy of the general area and over 80 persons are employed. At Niceville is located one of Florida's largest seafood packers, with an annual catch estimated at over 2,000,000 pounds. The combined catch at Destin is estimated at 1,650,000 pounds annually.

Agriculture and forest products contribute about \$1,300,000 cash income annually. There are 863 farms in Okaloosa County occupying about 104,000 acres, which represents about 17% of the total land area of the county. In agriculture the income derived in 1954 was distributed as follows:

TABLE 2 - 1954 INCOME FROM AGRICULTURE

Field Crops	\$460,000
Livestock and livestock products	331,000
Dairy products	107,000
Poultry and poultry products	99,000
	<u>\$1,047,000</u>

Since 1950 there has been a decline in the number of people supported and number of farms in agriculture, although the area in farm land has remained the same. In 1950 there were 998 farms run by 960 operators; in 1954 there were only 863 farms. Farming is important only in the northern part of the county.

Retirement contributes in a minor way to the economy in the southern part of the County, attracting people because of its recreational advantages.

A special type of retirement is evident in the southern Okaloosa County area. Military personnel, having been stationed at Eglin Air Force Base during their tour of duty, find the area to their liking and retire here upon termination of their military service. Military retirees frequently seek a location for retirement convenient to base recreational, medical, and post exchange facilities. Because many military retirees are comparatively young upon retirement, they also add to the labor supply of skilled and technical personnel. A recent estimate by the Commandant of Eglin Air Force Base indicates there are now about 1,100 retired military personnel living within southern Okaloosa County.

NON-BASIC ACTIVITIES

Basic economic activities, such as already discussed, support the trade, construction, business, professional, and other services. An increase in the basic activities will afford a corresponding increase in these servicing activities.

Valparaiso and Niceville have a limited number of commercial activities of a local servicing character. These facilities are not wide in their influence but are of a convenience goods and services variety. Because Valparaiso's population is small and there are few people living outside the cities of Valparaiso and Niceville in the tributary trade area, the commercial development is not great. Shopping facilities, even of the convenience type, are not as diversified as might be expected. Land use studies, discussed in detail in the next chapter, indicate only about $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of all developed area in the Valparaiso and Niceville area is used for commercial purposes, compared to 6 - 8 per cent for most Florida cities. One factor accounting for this is the military nature of the population. Many of the needs for goods and services are satisfied at the post exchange and at other base facilities. Because there is little variety in available shopping facilities, people living in the Valparaiso - Niceville area tend to make shopping trips to nearby cities with greater variety, such as Ft. Walton Beach or even Pensacola.

TRANSPORTATION, POWER, AND UTILITIES

The Gulf Power Company supplies the electrical service for Okaloosa County and its political subdivisions. Natural gas serves Valparaiso and Niceville.

Potentially a factor of some importance is the accessibility of Niceville and Valparaiso to the Intracoastal Waterway. At the present time barge service operates in the area, handling principally rock, gravel, sand and petroleum products.

Southern Airways provides air service from Atlanta and New Orleans to Eglin Field; passenger bus service operates through the area, but the nearest trunk line railroad (Louisville and Nashville Railroad) is some twenty miles away. A branch rail line extends southward from Crestview to Eglin Field. This branch line reaches but does not penetrate the corporate area of Niceville. Common carrier trucking facilities currently must provide for freight movement, but whenever there is sufficient need rail facilities probably could be established in Niceville.

POPULATION TRENDS

In the previous discussion it was shown that population growth and population characteristics are related to the economic activities and opportunities available to the community. These economic activities do not function only on the local level. Therefore, population trends for a larger regional area must be studied in relation to their effect upon future growth of Valparaiso and Niceville.

Florida is the fastest growing state east of the Mississippi River and one of the fastest growing states in the nation. Between 1950 and 1960 Florida's population increased by 2,180,255, or 78.7 per cent, over the 2,771,305 population of the state recorded in 1950.

West Florida counties enjoyed in this growth, but at a lesser rate of growth than for the state as a whole. Taking 15 counties west of the Apalachicola River, there was a growth rate of 45 per cent, compared with 79 per cent for the state as a whole. Within this west Florida area four counties are growing rapidly, one moderately, while three decreased in population and the remainder grew very little, as table 3 shows. Okaloosa County enjoyed the fastest rate of growth, and as discussed in the previous section about 80 per cent of this growth is attributed to the expansion of Eglin Air Force Base. The growth of Bay County (Panama City) is due to the expansion of tourist and resort activities; boat building, pulp,

petroleum, and diversified industry; and military operations. The growth of Escambia County (Pensacola) is attributed to naval and army activities; resort and tourist trade; and a very significant expansion of manufacturing, mainly chemical and paper industry. Santa Rosa County benefits from the growth of Pensacola and from resort activities of its beaches. Gulf County (Port St. Joe) has experienced considerable industrial development which contributed to a moderate growth. Therefore, the areas of West Florida that are growing are those strategically situated to benefit from military operations, tourist and resort activities, and industrial development. Those dependent upon agriculture and forestry are either not growing or are losing population.

TABLE 3
POPULATION TRENDS IN FLORIDA AND THE
WEST FLORIDA REGION

	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1950-1960</u> <u>Change</u>	<u>1950-60</u> <u>% Change</u>	<u>1940-50</u> <u>% Change</u>
Jackson	34,645	36,208	1,563	5	1
Calhoun	7,922	7,422	- 500	-6	-4
Gulf	7,460	9,937	2,477	33	7
Bay	42,689	67,131	24,442	57	106
Washington	11,888	11,249	-639	-5	-3
Holmes	13,988	10,844	-3,144	-22	-9
Walton	14,725	15,576	851	6	3
Okaloosa	27,533	61,175	33,642	122	30
Santa Rosa	18,554	29,547	10,993	59	15
Escambia	112,706	173,829	61,123	54	51
West Florida	292,110	422,918	130,808	45	
F L O R I D A	2,771,305	4,951,560	2,180,255	79	46

TABLE 4
1960 POPULATION OF OKALOOSA COUNTY AND
INCORPORATED PLACES, U. S. CENSUS 1960

	<u>1960</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>**</u> <u>1956</u>	<u>% Increase</u> <u>1950- 1960</u>
OKALOOSA COUNTY	61,175	27,533	53,014	122
Baker Division	4,052			
Crestview Division	10,974			
Crestview City	7,467	5,003	7,495	
Laurel Hill Division	1,368			
Laurel Hill Town	411	327	441	
SOUTHERN OKALOOSA COUNTY	44,781	14,693		204
Eglin Division	7,912			
Ft. Walton Division	12,396			
Cinco Bayou Town	643		746	
Mary Esther Town	780	332	509	
Shalimar Town	754	694	794	
Ft. Walton Beach Division	12,147			
Ft. Walton Beach City	12,147	2,463	9,456	
Niceville-Valparaiso Division	12,326			
Niceville Town	4,517	2,497	4,645	
Valparaiso City*	5,975	1,047	6,960	
Non-Military	2,593		2,074	
Eglin Air Force Base	3,382		4,886	

* Valparaiso's corporate limits includes a portion of Eglin Air Force Base, with some 3,382 in base housing.

** Special Census of 1956

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Okaloosa County was created by the Florida Legislature in 1915 from parts of Santa Rosa and Walton Counties; it first appeared in the U. S. Census of 1920 with a population of 9,360 persons. In the ensuing two decades (1920-1940) the growth of the county was relatively small, being 9,897 in 1930 and 12,900 in 1940 - an increase of less than 40% in twenty years. The military operations at Eglin Air Force Base during the 1940's were clearly reflected in the population of 1950, it being for that year 27,533 persons or 113% more than in 1940. By 1956, when a special Federal Census was taken, the population of the county had increased by

93 per cent to 53,014 persons. The 1960 Census shows 61,175, an increase over 1950 by 122 per cent.

CITIES AND TOWNS OF SOUTHERN OKALOOSA COUNTY

Niceville and Valparaiso first appeared in the U. S. Census Reports of 1940 with 948 and 221, respectively, although these communities were established much earlier. Ft. Walton Beach, Mary Esther and Shalimar just appeared in the U. S. Census Reports of 1950 with populations of 2,463, 332, and 694, respectively. All of these communities are located in the southern half of the county, which is the area of fastest growth. Table 4 reflects the final U. S. Census report for population in 1960, showing the growth since 1950.

In 1960, 73 per cent of the total population of the County resided in the southern half, compared to 53 per cent in 1950. The greatest growth has taken place in Ft. Walton Beach and the surrounding area. This reflects the availability of land, development advantages of the associated resort and tourist facilities, and the ability of the area, particularly the city of Ft. Walton Beach, to vigorously meet the challenge of that growth by providing the necessary public utilities and community facilities.

Eglin Air Force Base has accommodated a substantial part of the population growth by providing base housing for some 6430 persons, which includes some 3355 living within that portion of Eglin Air Force Base that is a part of the corporate area of Valparaiso.

A substantial population increase has taken place in both Valparaiso and Niceville, reflecting the ability of these areas to compete with other areas of southern Okaloosa County for the population growth that is attributed to Eglin Air Force Base expansion. These communities have one advantage over most of the others.-proximity to Eglin Field. Shortage of facilities - utilities, shopping,

professional service, good housing, and other community facilities - to accommodate the growth has probably limited the growth over what it might have been. Niceville in particular, is handicapped by the large number of poor housing accommodations that tend to impede additional growth. In 1956 the special census showed a population of 4,645 for Niceville, but the 1960 census records only 4,517, a loss of 128 persons. Evidently, during the 1956-1960 period when other communities continued to grow, the increase in vacancies exceeded the new construction in Niceville. Now that the housing shortage in the general area has been met and good housing accommodations are no longer a major problem, Niceville will probably continue to experience an increase in the number of vacancies, mainly in the sub-standard categories of housing. There is sufficient undeveloped areas within the corporate limits of Niceville to accommodate new, modern housing, and after an initial decrease of population the long range trend from new construction should more than compensate for the vacancies.

Valparaiso appears to have made spectacular gains in population, registering an increase in population from 1950 of 1,047 to 5,975 in 1960. However, most of this increase is reflected in military housing on Eglin Air Force Base. The non-base housing accommodates some 2,593 persons in 1960, compared with 2,047 in 1956. Taking the population as a whole, a loss in population of 985 persons was experienced between 1956 and 1960, but this resulted from a relocation of military housing from an area of the base within Valparaiso's corporate area to an area outside the corporate limits. Therefore, this loss of population was of little consequence to the City, and the overall growth trend is still upward. The population in February 1961, based upon house counts and building permits issued since the 1960 census, is estimated at 2,850 persons in the non-military area of Valparaiso.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POPULATION

The latest census figures available on age and racial characteristics are from the special census of 1956.

TABLE 5
AGE AND RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POPULATION
(Percentage of the Total)

	<u>FLORIDA</u>	<u>OKALOOSA</u>	<u>COUNTY</u>
<u>RACE</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1956</u>
White Race	78.2	92.0	93.3
Non-White Race	21.8	8.0	6.7
<u>AGE</u>			
19 Years and Under	32.3	39.8	41.5
20-39 Years	31.4	40.9	41.5
40-64 Years	27.3	15.3	14.1
65 Years and Over	8.5	4.1	3.0

In 1950 only 8.0 per cent of the population of Okaloosa County was non-white, compared to 21.8 per cent of the state as a whole. Since 1950 indications are that the non-white population is growing at a slower rate than the white. In 1956, only 6.7 per cent was non-white. Of this 3,561 non-white persons, about 36 per cent of the total is located in Ft. Walton Beach, 21 per cent is in Crestview, and 11 per cent is at Eglin Air Force Base. Most of the remaining 32 per cent is located in rural areas of the County. There is no significant non-white population living in Valparaiso or Niceville.

Table 5 shows a younger population characteristic for Okaloosa County, compared to the State as a whole. Since 1956, the trend has been for the population of the County to grow younger, reflecting the industrial and military growth requiring workers of the most active and productive age groups.

FUTURE PROJECTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

From the data presented here it is possible to make some future projections; however, such projections are less reliable than for an area having a larger population base and more economic diversification. Even after experiencing large

increases percentage-wise, the population of Okaloosa County and its various municipalities is still comparatively small. Predictions for the County as a whole can be made over a short projection period, and this can be indicated also for major growth areas of the County. However, any predictions for municipalities are made with considerably less reliability.

The population trends in the southern part of the county indicate approximately 80 per cent of the growth of the past twenty years is derived directly or indirectly from military operations. This is a factor independent of local control and future growth is far from certain; however, there is little doubt that military operations will continue for an indefinite period to provide a great measure of economic stability in the area. The strategic advantages of Eglin Air Force Base, which led to its present importance, have not diminished, apparently. While the future of many smaller military bases is questionable, Eglin, as the largest Air Force installation of the nation, probably will continue its importance into the missile age.

A safe assumption will be to expect some continued expansion but at a slower rate in the future.

Agriculture is not much of a factor in the economic structure of Okaloosa County, and Forestry maintains only a nominal position today. Because of mechanization trends and the generally poor position of agriculture in the nation, this will become even less important in the future in terms of numbers of people supported.

Tourism and retirement will probably continue at current levels, and as the leisure time and economic status of the population of the nation improves, particularly for the southeastern United States, a greater potential for the Gulf Coast of Florida will be realized in tourist and resort activities. Tourism and resort activities will contribute to the economy of Okaloosa County but only indirectly to that of Valparaiso and Niceville because these activities will be centered

THE EFFECT OF 100 NEW JOBS IN A BASIC INDUSTRY ON THE COMMUNITY

174

MORE WORKERS



296

MORE PEOPLE



112

MORE HOUSEHOLDS

107

MORE PASSENGER VEHICLES REGISTERED

MANUFACTURING	+ 100
TRADE	+ 38
CONSTRUCTION	+ 25
PROFESSIONAL	+ 14
TRANS.-COMM.-UTIL.	+ 13
OTHER	+ 19
LOSSES (AGRICULTURE)	- 35
	<hr/> 174



\$ 590,000

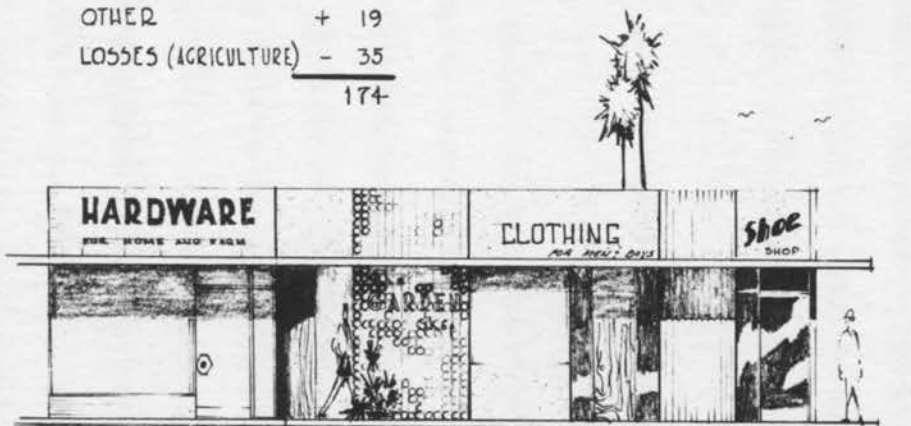
MORE PERSONAL INCOME

\$ 360,000

MORE RETAIL SALES

\$ 270,000

MORE BANK DEPOSITS



1

2

3

4

MORE RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS



1

2/3

MORE CLASSROOMS

SOURCE: U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

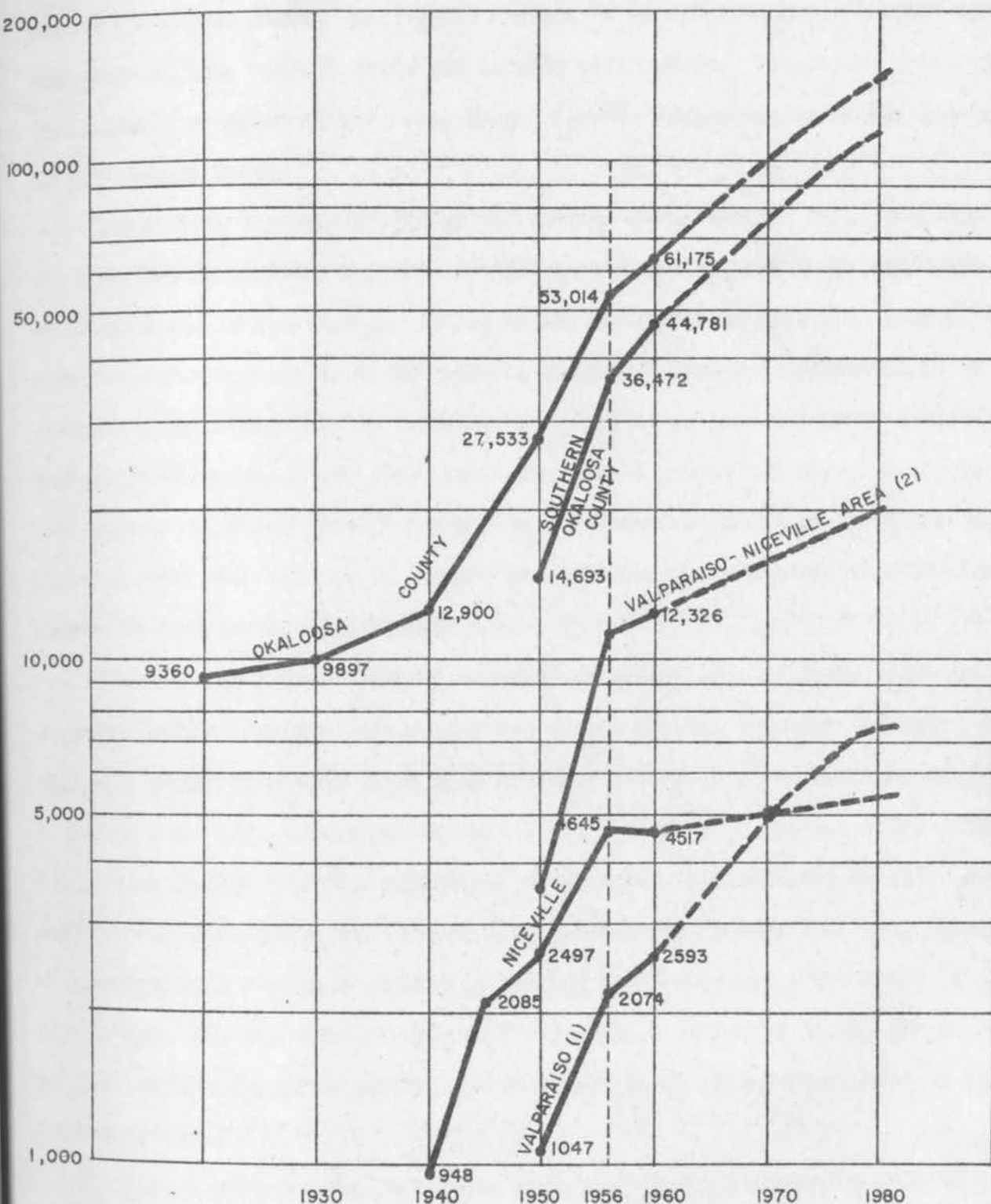
around Ft. Walton Beach. When State Highway 20 is completed as a through route to Tallahassee, some highway trade and tourism will result. Retirement activities, particularly of military retirees, should benefit Valparaiso and Niceville as well as the coastal areas.

Industry is a potential factor for greater development. This development in the past has been mostly related to military operations. In their "Economic Study of Rural Areas of Florida" the Arthur D. Little firm suggested that efforts for industrial development be concentrated in Okaloosa County on electronics, in connection with Eglin Field; furniture manufacturing; sporting goods manufacture, such as boat building; sea food processing; naval stores and petro-chemicals processing; and other "light" industries. Industries should be carefully selected, however, that they will be in harmony with the further development of the two cities as good residential communities.

Although the present economy is based primarily upon military operations and secondarily upon tourism, the population growth derived therefrom is rapidly providing a larger base upon which some economic diversification might develop. A larger labor pool and better community development with the necessary urban facilities should stimulate additional development, particularly in local servicing activities. Valparaiso and Niceville are both small communities, lacking many of the professional and trade amenities desired for the normal convenience of an urban population. Greater commercial growth should be experienced in the future because of the fairly substantial market now available in the local trade area of some 12,000 persons.

Figure 6 projects the population growth of Okaloosa County by 1956 to 80,000 in Okaloosa County, 60,000 in the Southern part, and indicates the possibility of a continued trend upward to 100,000 and 78,000, respectively, by 1970. Beyond

POPULATION TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS VALPARAISO AND NICEVILLE, FLORIDA



- (1) Valparaiso population, exclusive of military housing within corporate area.
 (2) Including military housing within Valparaiso's corporate area.

FIGURE 4

this period projections would be exceedingly speculative because of the low base and uncertainty of growth factors operating in the area.

Growth trends for Valparaiso are far from certain, but the growth projected for the southern part of Okaloosa County will undoubtedly afford a range of opportunity that is optimistic. Continued development in the Valparaiso-Niceville area, however, will not be at the same rate as averaged in the past 10 years. Furthermore, its rate probably will be lower than for that of southern Okaloosa County as a whole. Short range projections to 1970 indicate approximately 16,000 persons living within the Niceville-Valparaiso Census Division by 1970, with speculative projections to 20,000 by 1980.

Valparaiso's ultimate growth is limited by the non-military area available for additional development, indicating an ultimate population of some 8,000 persons, exclusive of the population accommodated at Eglin Air Force Base in military housing. However, these ultimate limitations on available land will not be felt for the next 15 to 20 years, according to growth rates projected.

During the past five years only 237 residential building permits were issued in Valparaiso, and construction levels for the immediate future should be in the vicinity of 80 to 100 units per year. In 1970 the projected population, exclusive of military housing, should be about 5,000 persons.

Niceville will not grow significantly during the next ten years in population gains. However, new construction will be required to replace much of the sub-standard housing in the city. As better housing from new construction is developed, vacancies will increase in the undesirable housing areas. The net gain will be slight within the present corporate limits.* A substantial amount of vacant land

*During the past five years only 153 residential building permits were issued. Construction levels for the immediate future may not exceed 20-30 units a year.

is available within the present corporate limits, and future growth will in no way be limited by the availability of land physically suited for development.

Through annexations a substantial population increase might occur. To the east of Niceville and west of Rocky Bayou is an unincorporated area, known as Rosemont, where approximately 1,000 persons now live. Much additional undeveloped land, well suited for development is available to the south and east of Niceville. A population increase of some 2,000 persons might be expected during the next ten years in the unincorporated areas that could become a part of Niceville some day.

CHAPTER III.

LAND USE ANALYSIS AND THE LAND USE PLAN

Land use planning looks ahead to the ultimate development of the area. The City's future land uses should be organized in the most efficient, functional, and aesthetic way for the conservation of the basic land resource.

Niceville heretofore has not been guided by a plan for development. Its growth consequently, has been without strong organization and direction for the best utilization of land resources. Residential areas are fragmented and without distinctiveness. The original business area, located along Bayshore Drive, is no longer the focal point of the community, and as a result, businesses have spread along Main Street (Route 20) forming a commercial strip. Four separate residential areas occur because of separation by other major land use divisions.

Figure 5 is a generalized map of existing land uses (1960) in the City of Niceville. A colored land use map in considerable detail was delivered to the City, showing the use of every lot at a scale of 400 feet to the inch.

Table 6 is an analysis of the land uses as developed at the present time. Of the total non-military land area of 1965 acres, some 1082 acres are vacant. This does not include that portion of Niceville included in the Eglin Air Force Reservation (Golf Course). Inasmuch as about 69 per cent of the total non-military land area is vacant at the present time, there appears to be no shortage of land to accommodate future growth. See figure 6, Map of Vacant areas. A substantial portion of the vacant area is unusable because of topographic conditions. The Boggy Creek drainage basin is the largest such area; approximately 190 acres within the City of Niceville are located in this swamp area. Nevertheless, figure 6 illustrates that only a small part of the unusable area within the existing corporate limits is developed.

TABLE 6
LAND USES OF NICEVILLE

	Niceville Areas	% of Developed Area	% of Total Land Area
<u>RESIDENTIAL</u>	<u>186.3</u>	<u>38.6</u>	
Single Family	174.4	35.2	
Duplex	9.8	2.0	
Multiple Family	2.1	.4	
<u>COMMERCIAL, RETAIL</u>	<u>12.4</u>	<u>2.5</u>	
<u>WHOLESALE & INDUSTRIAL</u>	<u>9.4</u>	<u>2.0</u>	
<u>TRAILER PARKS</u>	<u>25.2</u>	<u>5.2</u>	
<u>PUBLIC</u>	<u>45.4</u>	<u>9.4</u>	
Institutional	31.5	6.5	
Open Spaces - Parks	13.9	2.9	
<u>STREETS</u>	<u>204.5</u>	<u>42.3</u>	
<u>TOTAL DEVELOPED AREA</u>	<u>483.2</u>	<u>100.0</u>	30.9
<u>VACANT LAND</u>	<u>1082.1</u>		69.1
<u>TOTAL CORPORATE LAND AREA</u>	<u>1565.3</u>		100.0

* Land Area exclusive of Eglin Air Force Reservation

It is interesting to note that only 12.4 acres or 2.5 per cent of the total developed land area is utilized for all types of commercial activities. Only 9.4 acres or 2.0 per cent of the total is utilized for wholesale, commercial and industrial activities.

Comparisons of land uses in Niceville with some other small communities, including Valparaiso, provides some indication of the adequacy of land use allocations in the past and also indications of what future trends may be.

TABLE 7
COMPARISON OF LAND USE
(Percentage of Developed Area)

Class	33 Satellite	St. Augustine	Deland	Ft. Walton Beach	Valparaiso*	Niceville
TOTAL RESIDENTIAL	42.0	29.9	47.2	37.6	37.8	38.6
Single Family	36.2	35.2	42.5	35.3	33.4	36.2
Two Family	3.3	2.8	2.5	.8	2.9	2.0
Multiple Family	2.5	1.9	2.2	1.6	1.5	.4
COMMERCIAL	2.5	8.8	5.2	6.9	2.6	2.5
TRAILER PARKS					.0	5.2
TRANS. AND INDUSTRY	12.5	14.8	1.3	1.6	1.3	2.0
STREETS	27.7	21.4	29.6	34.6	43.0	42.3
PUBLIC, SEMI-PUBLIC AND OPEN SPACES	15.3	15.1	16.7	19.2	15.3	9.4
TOTAL DEVELOPED AREA	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(Existing Land Uses in Acres per 100 Persons)

RESIDENTIAL	3.51	6.44	5.19	6.15	4.12
COMMERCIAL	.78	.68	.96	.41	.27
TRANSPORTATION & INDUSTRY	1.30	.17	.23	.22	.21
PUBLIC & SEMI-PUBLIC	1.32	2.27	2.65	2.48	1.01
TRAILER PARKS	----	----	----	----	.58

*Non-military area in relation to the non-military population of 1960, estimated at 2,593 persons.

Table 7 compares the land uses of Niceville, Valparaiso, Ft. Walton Beach and 33 miscellaneous small cities of the United States and two other small Florida cities.

Most striking in the above comparisons is the small amount of Niceville's and Valparaiso's commercial area - 2.5 per cent - when compared with other Florida communities. However, this figure apparently is in line with requirements for most small communities in the United States. Many of the Florida cities are

VACANT AREAS WITHIN CORPORATE LIMITS OF VALPARAISO AND NICEVILLE, FLORIDA

PREPARED BY
GEORGE W. SIMONS, JR. PLANNING CONSULTANT



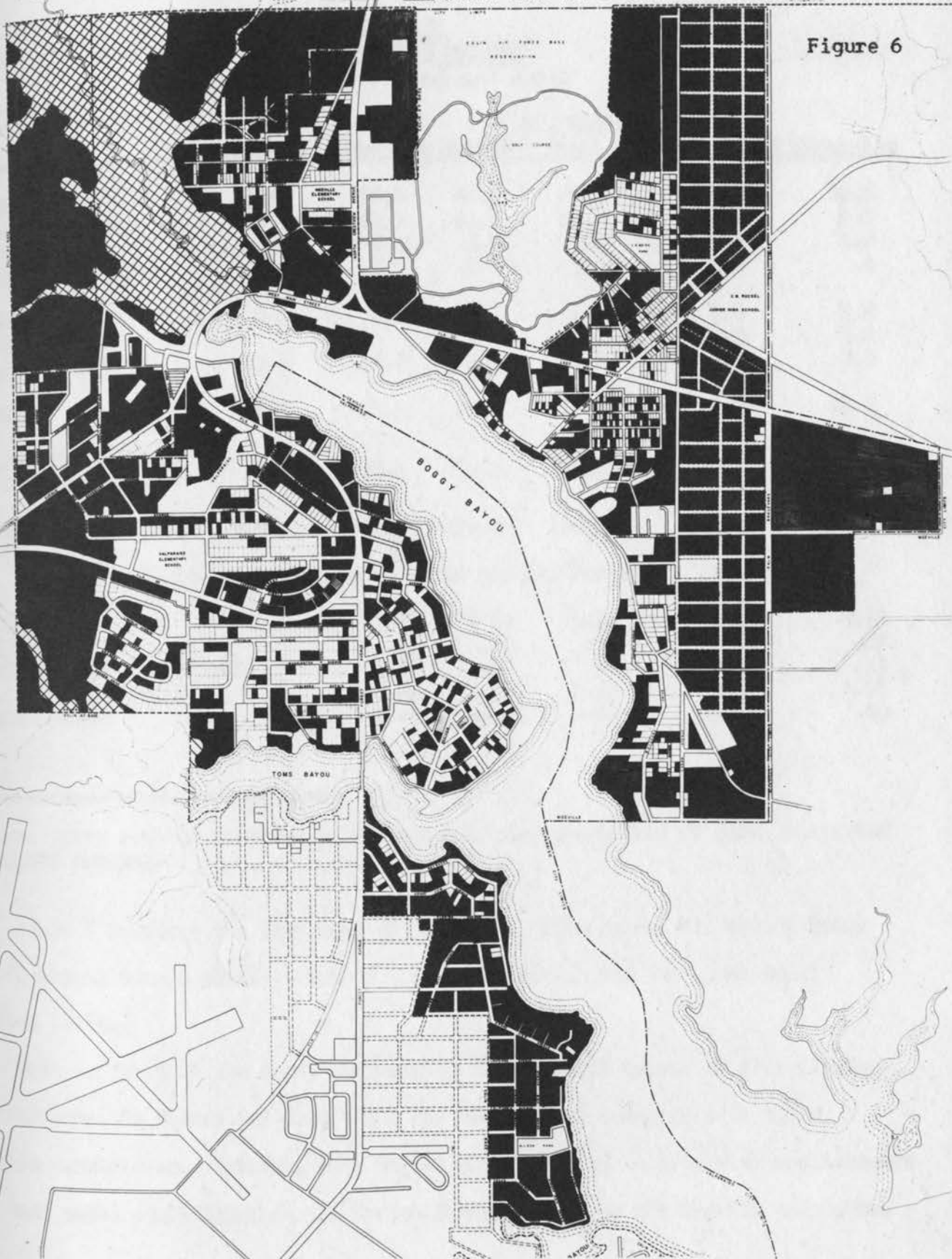
 VACANT LAND
 VACANT LAND NOT SUITED FOR DEVELOPMENT

Figure 6



heavily commercialized due to tourism, but this is not a factor in the economy of Niceville and Valparaiso.

Ft. Walton Beach, a neighboring but larger city provides an interesting comparison. Although the economic factors are alike in most respects regarding Ft. Walton Beach and Valparaiso, tourism is an important factor in the economy of Ft. Walton Beach. Consequently, the opportunities and need for commercial development are much greater and this is reflected in the land use. In the future, when Florida Highway 20 is extended for a more direct connection with Tallahassee and points east, some tourist traffic will be routed through Valparaiso and Niceville. Opportunities for this type of business, such as motels and restaurants, will increase moderately.

Further, because of the small population base, many shopping needs are not satisfied locally. As the population base of the Valparaiso-Niceville area increases, many additional business opportunities will be provided that are not now available for servicing the small local market.

The past experience has reflected little opportunity or need for industrial and transportational uses. This is in line with most small Florida Communities, with notable exceptions such as St. Augustine and Sanford, but it is very low compared with small communities distributed over the United States.

An assessment of the industrial potential for Niceville does indicate some advantages, which if promoted in the right direction, may produce some local industry. Convenience to Eglin Air Force Base for industry related to the military needs, availability of large tracts of excellent industrial sites, availability of a good water supply, good highway access, and access to barge facilities of the Intracoastal Waterway are physical advantages this area enjoys.

Further, when the need develops, rail facilities can be extended into the area to serve local industry.

The percentage of developed area of Niceville that is in streets is very high - about 42 per cent of the total. This is explained by the large number of lots that are vacant. All street right-of-ways in platted areas that are particularly developed were included in the street calculations although many of the streets have not been developed. As the partially developed areas are utilized near their potential the percentage of land devoted to streets should decline to about 30 per cent of the total.

In the eastern part of the City there are substantial areas of the city that are platted but undeveloped; these areas are indicated on the base map, which shows the streets with broken lines. These areas were platted many years ago on a subdivision pattern that is now obsolete. Inasmuch as these lands are held under one ownership, they should be replatted. However, some through streets as now platted should be continued on the replats, and these are indicated on the Major Street Plan.

LAND CONSUMPTION RATIOS

Also included in Table 7 are land uses in areas per 100 persons of the population compared for various communities. The land consumption rates of Niceville contrast considerably with those of most Florida communities. These contrasts reflect the smaller lots and crowding of land in the built up areas of Niceville. Apparently this is a product of the period of the housing shortage when many lots were crowded with two or more dwellings. This contrast indicates the need for larger lots, as recommended in the Zoning Plan. In particular, the provisions of the zoning ordinance prohibiting more than one principal structure on a lot should be rigidly enforced. This ordinance defines a lot as:

"A parcel of land (Not necessarily a platted lot) occupied or to be occupied by one main building and its accessory buildings with such open spaces (dealing with lot areas, lot widths, front and rear yards) and parking spaces as are required by the provisions of this ordinance and having its principal frontage upon a street."

The effect of this provision is to eliminate overcrowding of the land through the development of rear lot dwellings and other uses not having frontage upon a street.

The land use consumption ratios points to a very poor allocation of land to public and semi-public institutional and open space uses. Most of the 45.4 acres of public and semi-public land is in the two school properties. More land should be allocated to parks and playgrounds, in which Niceville is especially deficient.

As a guide to the future planning of land uses, the following ratios of land consumption to population are recommended:

Table 8

LAND CONSUMPTION IN ACRES PER
100 PERSONS, EXISTING AND
RECOMMENDED FOR NICEVILLE

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Recommended</u>
Residential	4.12	6.00
General Commercial	.27	.60
Wholesale, Heavy Commercial and Light Industrial	.21	.60
Public and Semi-Public	1.01	2.30
Trailer Parks	.58	.50

If, over a period of years, Niceville is able to redevelop and rehabilitate substantial existing areas of the City and develop additional vacant areas according to the above recommended ratios, a more spacious, attractive city would result. If we assume the population level at 5,000 persons, as indicated in the discussion on population projections, pages 20-21 and Figure 4, the following use of land would result:

	<u>Acres</u>
Residential	300
General Commercial	30
Heavy Commercial and Industry	30
Public and Semi-Public	115
Trailer Parks	25
Streets	250
Total	750

Because the population base is small and without much growth projected, the land consumption rate could be quite different if some substantial industry were induced to locate in the City. Large industrial sites are generally desired today; furthermore, the many new jobs a new industry would produce would greatly modify the population projection and the need for additional homes. The possibilities regarding industry are speculative at this time; however, the Zoning Plan reserves two well located areas for this use, which are adequate in size for most industrial development contemplated.

THE GENERAL LAND USE PLAN

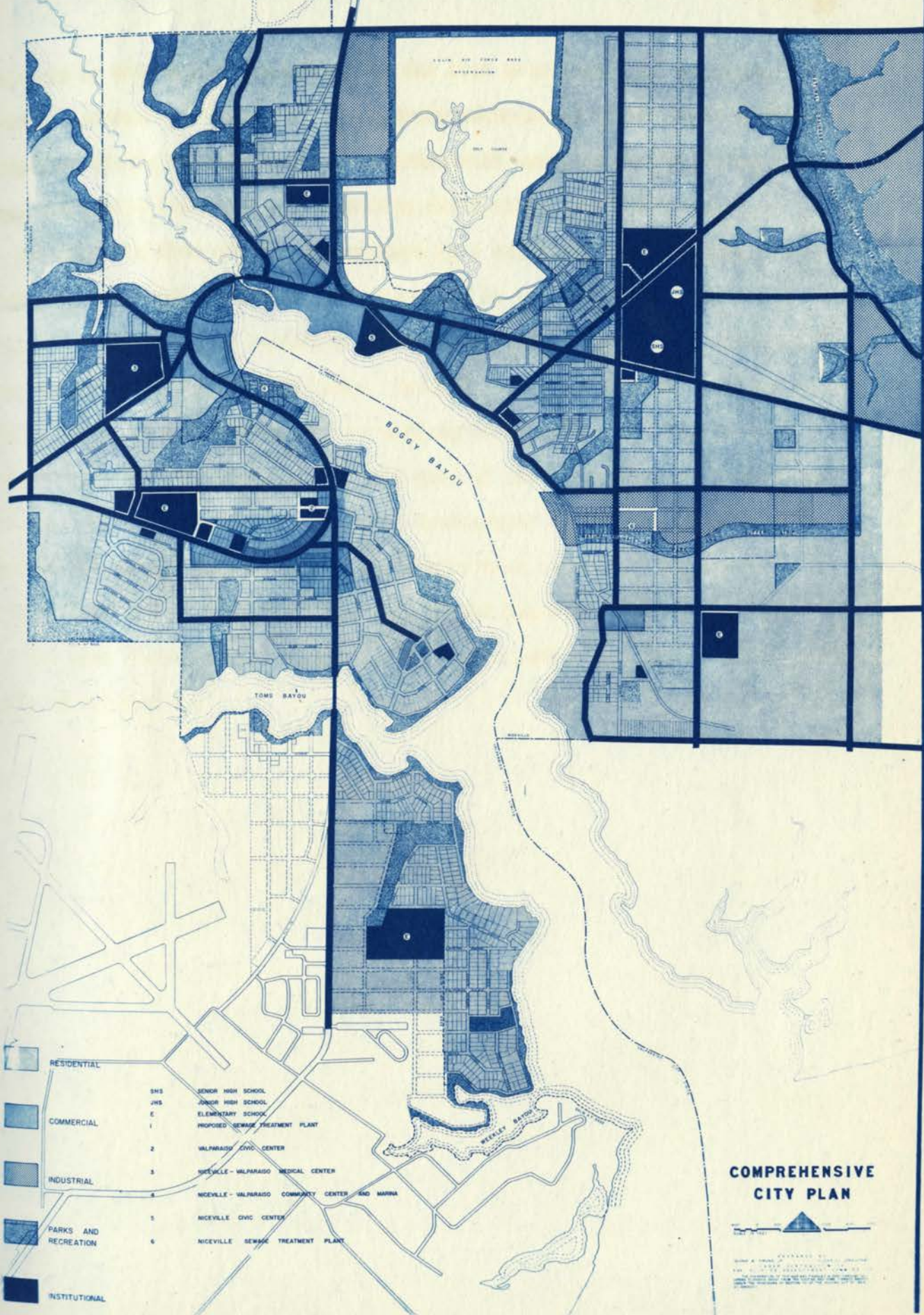
The Land Use Plan considers the ultimate development of the entire area to be planned, without limitations of population growth by a particular target date. Because it is a guide for ultimate development, the Land Use Plan is generalized, making it more flexible to future conditions that cannot be anticipated. It is a plan of objectives for the guidance of officials and

developers in making wise decisions for the best development of the area. It provides a general picturization for orderly arrangement of the major streets, residential areas, commercial centers, industrial uses, parks and recreation areas, and public buildings and community facilities. See Figure 6.

The Land Use Plan can be accomplished in a number of ways. First, its validity as a general guide must be recognized by all public officials in a position to effect policy regarding the various public works, i.e., streets, parks, schools, and public buildings. Secondly, the plan must be accepted as a guide by developers, and they must be willing to sacrifice at times maximum short-run gain for the ultimate, overall good of the community. To ensure the application of the Land Use Plan to land development the City's regulatory powers are exercised through zoning and subdivision controls. Economic realities will aid in the shaping of many of the desirable features of this plan, but some features will depend entirely upon public acceptance and cooperation as well as regulation.

LAND USE PLAN MAP OF VALPARAISO AND NICEVILLE, FLORIDA

Figure 7



LAND USE PROBLEMS

Figure 8 is a map identifying certain problem areas requiring careful control for harmonious development in accordance with the Land Use Plan.

Area No. 1. This is a vacant area that lies in a clear zone of one of the Eglin Air Force Base runways. Although the area ultimately is most suited to residential development it should remain undeveloped pending technological changes in aviation. With rapid changes being made in aviation there is little reason to believe the land cannot some day be utilized for its best purpose. It would be extremely unwise to permit this area to develop with low grade industrial and commercial uses because of the above factor. Such development would blight an adjacent residential area.

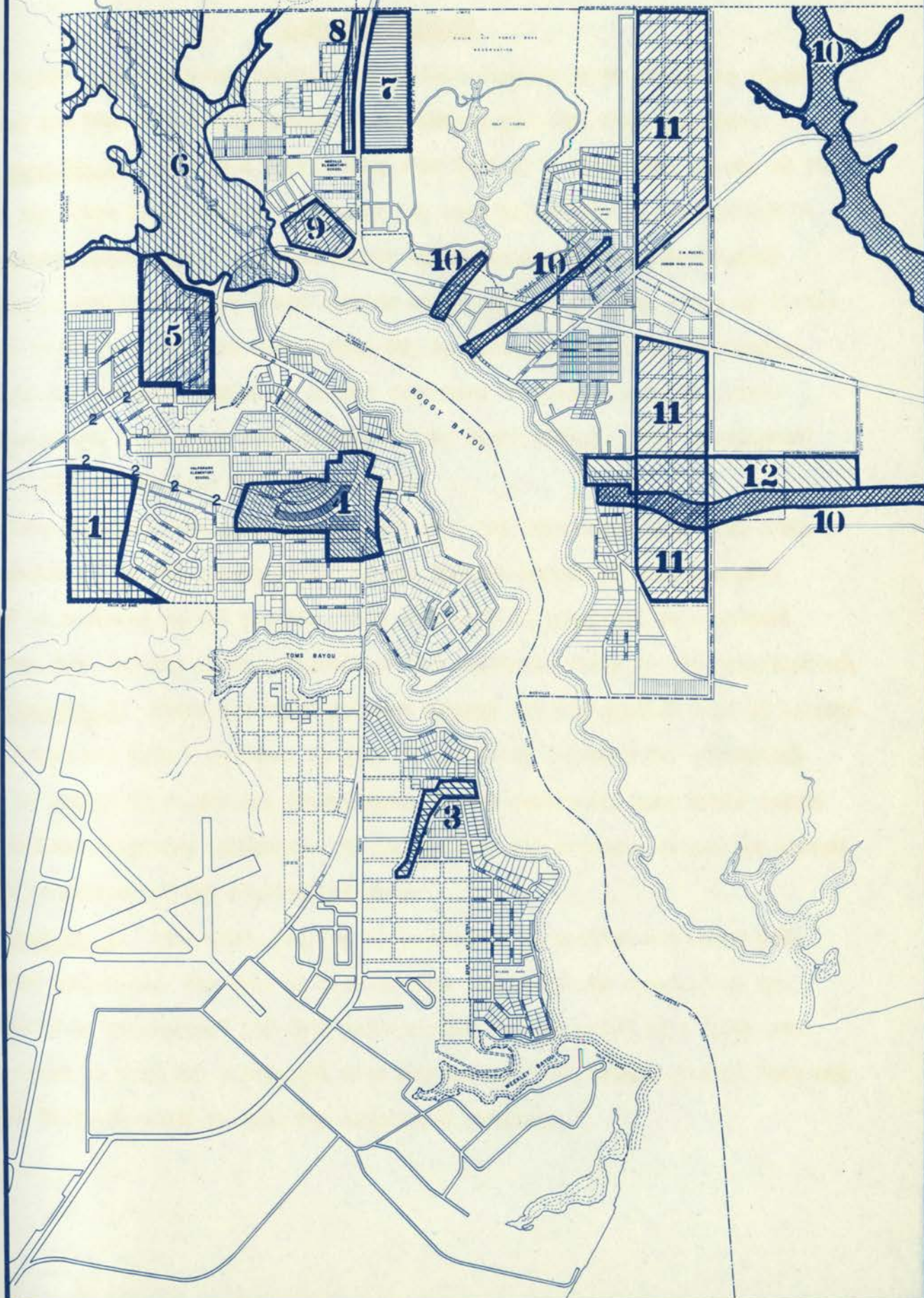
This area was platted years ago, but part has been replatted. The large park dedicated on the original plat on the western margin of this property should be included in the replat. This park will be important as a natural drainage area and may offer recreational and aesthetic value to the neighborhood.

Area No. 2. These are major streets through the residential area of Valparaiso; there has been a tendency to look at adjoining property for commercial use. If permitted to develop accordingly, spotty commercial uses would result as a serious blighting influence. In particular, all property around the school should be maintained for residential uses.

Area No. 3. This area, located in Niceville, is spotted with many sub-standard dwellings. The area is best located for continued residential use and should be redeveloped for that purpose with the exception of a large part which could be used for a hospital site and another part between Howell Road and Florida 85 which could be used for commercial purposes.

LAND USE PROBLEM AREAS
MAP OF VALPARAISO AND NICEVILLE, FLORIDA

FIG. 8



Area No. 4. This area is centrally located and best suited to form Valparaiso's future Central Business District. A nucleus has already commenced development, and a detailed plan for the use of this area will be given in a subsequent chapter. Pending the ultimate use of the area in accordance with an overall plan, the vacant land should be held in reserve.

Area No. 5. This area was designated Fern Dell on the original plat, intending its use as a park. The property includes a ravine which forms a natural drainage channel. Any subdivision should require the re-establishment of this property as a park.

Area No. 6. This is a large swamp area, known as Boggy Creek Swamp. The creek provides a large flow of clear, spring fed water. This area should be reserved for future recreational use. Some day it may be economically feasible to turn this area into a large fresh water lake, which could be a tremendous asset in promoting these two communities for retirement and limited resort development. At present costs are probably prohibitive, but steps should be taken to obtain title to all the lands that would be required for a future project of this type.

Area No. 7. Area No. 7 has a good potential for industrial use, primarily because of highway and road access. This area should be reserved in large tracts and residential use should not be permitted to spread further in this area.

Area No. 8. This area should be reserved for commercial and perhaps some light industrial use, but the use of this strip must be carefully designed to prevent blighting the residential area planned to the west of the highway.

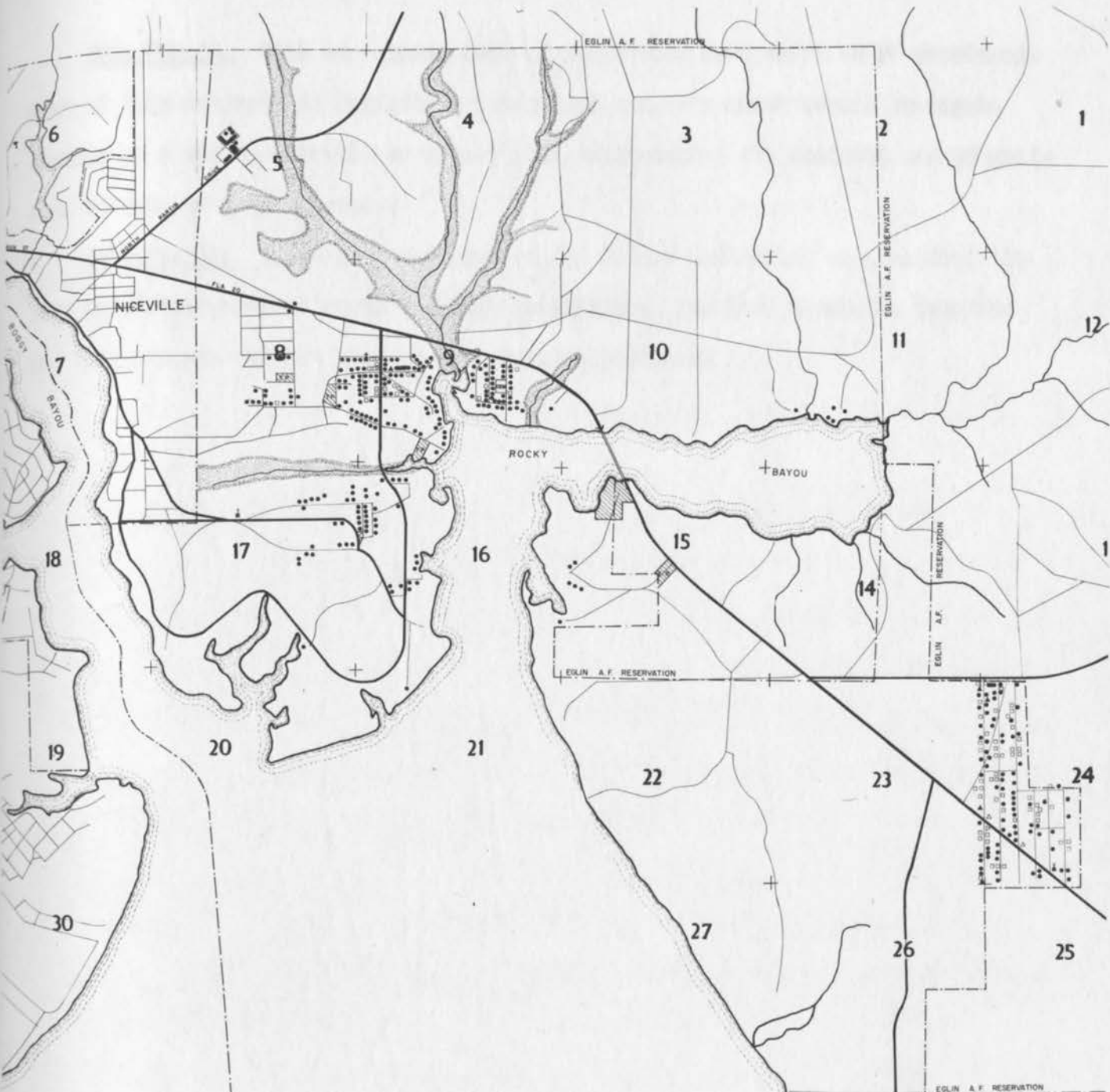
Area No. 9. This is an area for future expansion of commercial areas along Route 85. A number of sub-standard and low cost housing spots this area.

Area No. 10. These are natural drainage areas that should be acquired and designated as drainage parks.

Area No. 11. This is a large area of subdivided land which never developed. Most of this property is desirable residential property which should be resubdivided on a modern subdivision street plan, eliminating the wasteful use of grid-iron streets of short blocks.

Area No. 12. This is an area suited for future industrial use, pending the need and development of barge and rail facilities. The land should be reserved for this purpose and not spotted with residential uses.

Figure 9



EXISTING LAND USES

VALPARAISO AND NICEVILLE REGIONAL AREA



- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| • SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL | ▲ COMMERCIAL |
| ○ TWO FAMILY RESIDENTIAL | ▨ OPEN COMMERCIAL |
| □ TRAILER | ▩ INDUSTRIAL |
| ✙ CHURCHES | ▧ SWAMPS OR RAVINES |
| △ GAS STATION | ▤ TRAILER PARK |
| | ▥ CEMETERY |



CHOCTAWHATCHEE BAY

CHAPTER IV.

A STUDY OF THE EGLIN URBANIZING AREA

The Eglin Air Force Base surrounds the twin communities of Valparaiso and Niceville on all sides except the east. Consequently, Valparaiso's limits for growth are set by the Base and by Niceville. However, Niceville has no limits for lack of space to its future growth.

Figure 9 is a map of the urbanizing area that lies to the east of Niceville. The non-military area comprises some 8,642 acres of land, of which about 667 acres or 8 per cent of the total have taken on some urban characteristics.

The land has the same desirable characteristics for urban use as is found in Valparaiso and Niceville. But for want of a market some of the best subdivision land in Florida lies undeveloped. During the 1920's hundreds of acres of land in these environs were subdivided by developers from Chicago, first John B. Perrine and later James E. Plew. Little of the land was developed and there was a population in 1960 in the non-incorporated area of the Valparaiso-Niceville Census Division of only 1834 persons.

Development outside the corporate limits of Niceville is concentrated in two areas, one known as Seminole and the other known as Rosemont. There are several other small areas of development but these are of little significance at this time.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EXISTING DEVELOPMENT IN THE URBANIZING AREA

	<u>Seminole</u>	<u>Rosemont</u>	<u>Other</u>
Total Area in Acres	240	240	187
Acres Developed	46	64	35
Single Family Houses	79	140	87
Duplex Houses	---	12	---
Individual Trailers	53	9	1
Trailer Parks	---	2	2
Commercial Uses	6	2	---
Population	460	700	350

The community of Seminole lies astride Florida Highway 20. It is a trailer and small home community, with trailers located on individual lots. The population is estimated at 460 persons. Lots are of adequate size but subdivisions lack street paving, water or sewerage. Shacks spot the area.

The community of Rosemont is south of Highway 20 just east of Niceville, but an area of vacant land lies between the two communities. The area defined as the Rosemont Community also includes the Benton Subdivision. The population is estimated at 700 persons. Quality of development varies; lots are generally of adequate size but many shacks spot the area and are intermingled with areas of standard, new construction. There is a strong community spirit among residents, which motivates some thought of incorporating a new city in this area.

THE FUTURE OF THE AREA

The non-urbanized land is utilized mainly for the growing of pine trees. Agriculture apparently is not suited to the sandy soils. As estimated in the chapter on economy and population the future projections indicate poor prospects for the urbanized development of the area. Consequently, any plan for utilization of the entire study area must consider the extensive (forestry) as well as the intensive (urban) use of the land. This study does not attempt to anticipate any extraordinary promotion of the area, which, if done, might result in a far different growth pattern.

Inasmuch as Valparaiso and Niceville are organized together in an area Chamber of Commerce to promote industrial development, this study does consider the suitability of certain areas for industrial use.

THE LAND USE PLAN

Figure 10 is a plan for ultimate land utilization of the area. This plan is based not only on the meagre prospects for growth but also upon the suitability of the land.

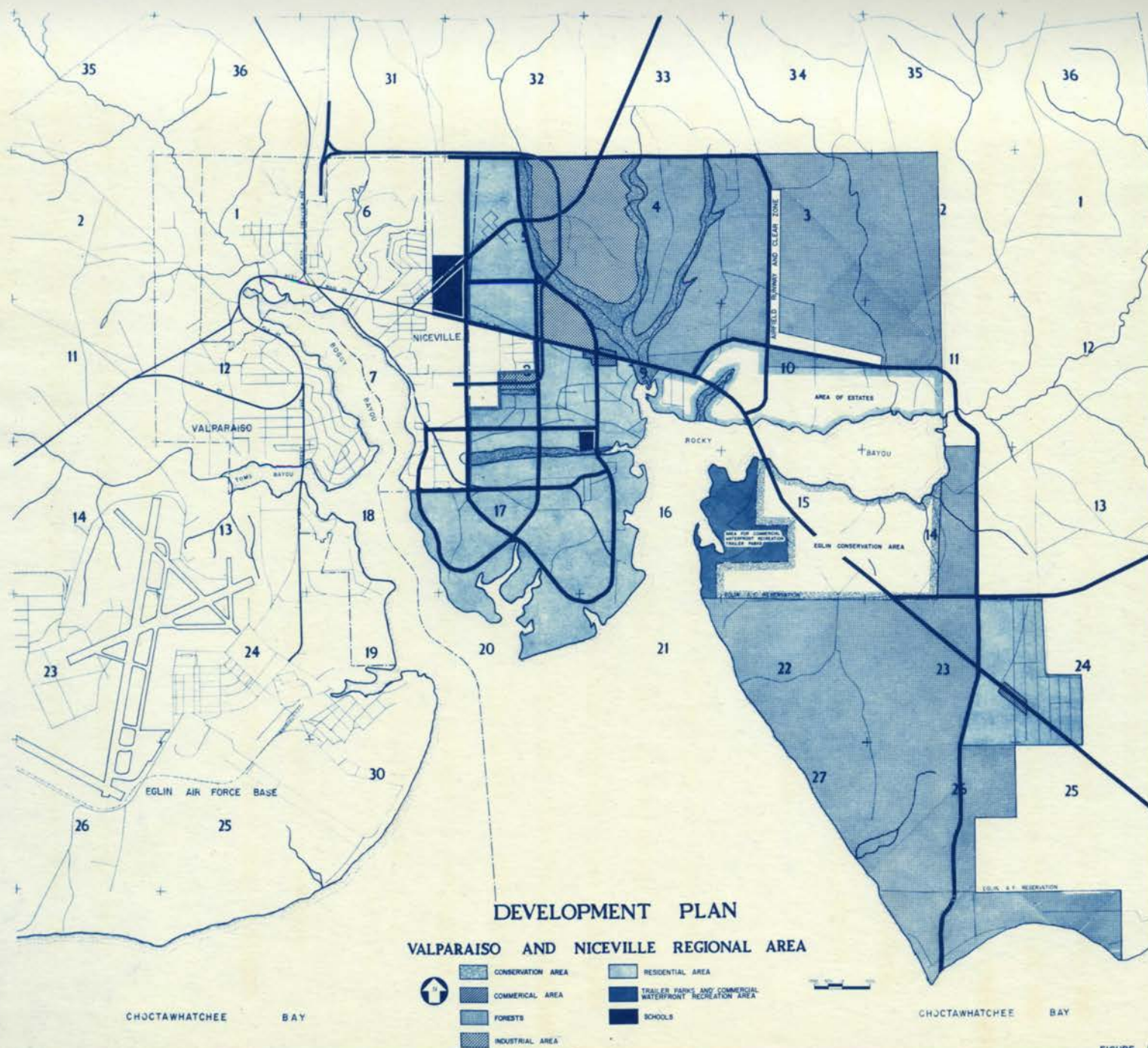


Figure 10

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Growth, although slow, will proceed in the two established communities of Seminole and Rosemont. The Land Use Plan indicates the ultimate extent of these areas and shows an orderly arrangement of land uses to service the residents with schools and shopping facilities.

South of Niceville and Rosemont is a large peninsular area of desirable land for subdivision and estate development. Because of the desirable topography, several miles of indented coastline, and accessibility via good roads, this area appears to have the best potential for development. Unfortunately, parts of this large area are already spotted with low grade development; however, this is a small part of the potential. If future development could be carefully controlled through subdivision regulations, trailer park regulation, and deed restrictions on subdivisions, the area could achieve a high standard and prestige. This problem requires considerable study because its development will be influenced greatly by the prevailing standards of the surrounding area.

In other areas there are good prospects for estate type developments of one to three acres. Additional subdivision areas are not advised on a dense settlement pattern because of the problem of providing sewerage and water to isolated areas. The growth potential of the area as a whole does not justify isolated, piecemeal subdivision development of the conventional type. Estates of one to three acres would not result in problems for utilities, as septic tanks and individual water supplies would be adequate.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

If efforts to promote industrial growth prove successful in the Valparaiso-Niceville area, much of the industrial development must take place outside the corporate limits of Valparaiso and Niceville. There are large vacant tracts of

desirable land available within the Eglin Urbanizing Area for this purpose. Considerable land suited for industrial use are indicated on the Land Use Plan.

IMPLEMENTING A PLAN FOR THE EGLIN URBANIZING AREA

The Land Use Plan shown in figure 10 provides the major planning features that are required to guide an orderly development of the area. However, there exists no means by which any plan can be effected. Large tracts are held under one ownership and when selling individual property owners can consult the plan and try to promote harmonious development. However, there is considerable land under many small individual ownerships, and cooperative development would be hard to achieve.

Several choices appear for control of parts of the area:

(1) Large areas surrounding Niceville could be annexed. Such annexation should be effected primarily for the purpose of land use control, and taxes should be nominal until such time as the annexed area begins to develop. This could help in the control only of a limited area and would not be practical for control of the entire planning area.

(2) Several incorporated municipalities could be created in those areas already partially developed. The creation of additional municipal governments is costly at this time, when considering the small populations involved, and might ultimately make far more difficult the problem of directing the best growth of the entire area.

(3) Creation of a special planning district, known as the Eglin Development District. Such a district would be directed by a Development Board which would provide additional study, more detailed plans, and administration for the entire study area that is not included in any municipality.

THE EGLIN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

The latter choice, discussed above, is preferred by the Consultant and is proposed for further study. A special legislative act would be required to create this special county district, administered by a board elected by the people or preferably appointed by the governor. The powers of the Board would be similar to those of the Board of Public Instruction, a Mosquito Control or Flood Control Commission, except their functions would be the study, promotion, and regulation of the area for orderly development.

The function of the District might be financed by an ad valorem tax limited to one or two mills. The Board would employ professional assistance or staff to conduct studies, prepare plans, and administer zoning, subdivision, trailer parks, and minimum housing, and mapped street regulations. Further, the Board should be authorized to acquire parks and recreation areas and engage in promotional activities for the development of the area.

When an area begins to develop it should be permitted to leave the jurisdiction of the District only by annexation to an established municipality, which would then exercise the required land use controls.

CHAPTER V.

CONSOLIDATION AND ANNEXATION

Consolidation of Valparaiso and Niceville is a subject that waxes and wanes. This planning study will not provide a direct answer as to whether the two communities should be consolidated. That question should only be decided by a majority vote of residents of both communities.

This report will, however, point out certain advantages to be derived from consolidation and certain disadvantages that might result. These are general points that should be considered and studied in more detail before consolidation is put to the voters in a referendum.

ADVANTAGES OF CONSOLIDATION

Consolidation would bring a large population under one political jurisdiction. More and better services can be provided at a lower unit cost. On many services and political functions each city requires duplicate facilities, but consolidation into one city would require capital investment for land, buildings, equipment and personnel at a reduced per capita rate.

At this time both communities are small and find it difficult to finance many of the growing needs and desirable services. A larger tax base would make possible a better program of municipal services, such as professional, better equipped police and fire departments.

DISADVANTAGES OF CONSOLIDATION

The long run disadvantages are small, but many problems would be created in the initial stages. First, and basic to all the other problems, two separate though contiguous, distinctive though similar communities would be merged and their separate identity lost. Differences in attitude toward consolidation by people within both communities would make administration difficult. At the

present time Valparaiso has an ad valorem tax but Niceville does not. With consolidation, there should be an immediate reassessment of property against which the ad valorem tax should be levied. Adjustments would have to be made against capital improvement debts already outstanding, such as sewerage facilities in Niceville. An election should be held to establish one municipal government representative by majority vote of the people of both communities.

AN ALTERNATIVE TO CONSOLIDATION

If the people should decide to preserve the separateness and distinctiveness of the two communities and forego any economies of governmental administration, there remains an alternative worthy of study.

A special legislative act could authorize the creation of the Valparaiso and Niceville Administrative District. This District would be administered by an administrative authority comprised of two representatives of the elective bodies of each city. This authority should not be constituted as a super government with powers over both city governments. It is envisioned only as an administrative agency to advise both communities in matters of mutual interest and to act in certain fields upon authorization of the City Council of Niceville and the City Commission of Valparaiso. It would administer only those programs specifically assigned to it. Each project should be voted on by both elective bodies before the authority is permitted to act. The authority would recommend to the elective bodies a budget and suggest equitable means of taxation to finance each project.

For example, the District might function as a special district and levy an ad valorem tax to finance and administer: (1) Professional fire service with modern equipment; (2) joint recreation and park development; (3) housing redevelopment; (4) sewer and water development; (5) hospital servicing; (6) area promotion; among others.

ANNEXATION

Niceville has ample undeveloped land within its existing corporate area to accommodate any reasonable expectation of growth, as pointed out in the studies on land uses. Therefore, no extensive annexation program appears justified at this time. Furthermore, those areas of the City already developed require so many capital improvements, such as streets and sewers, that it is recommended the city undertake no additional major obligations of this type through annexation.

Because there are adjacent areas to the east and south that are taking on some urban characteristics and are well suited for development, it may be desirable in the future to consider their annexation for land use control. By this means development should be delayed until the need arises. If, in the process of annexation, land uses are not controlled and premature, spotty subdivision development takes place, the costs of serving the areas with sewers, water and other services would be excessive. The City, therefore, should encourage the development only of those areas that can be served economically. If, for the purpose of land use control, extensive vacant areas are annexed the City should refrain from applying a heavy ad valorem tax on undeveloped lands.

The annexation of areas obligates the City to furnish services, protection, and certain capital improvements. Some of these, such as fire and police protection, garbage collection, etc. can be furnished immediately. But other items, particularly capital improvements such as street paving and sewerage, will take longer, several years in some cases. The proposed subdivision regulations require minimum standards for improvements in the development of all new subdivisions, and no subdivision failing to meet these requirements should be annexed.

DETAILED ANNEXATION STUDIES

The scope of annexation studies do not result in individual analysis of each area considered for annexation. Some generalizations are supplied, as discussed

in the foregoing section. However, at the time annexation is proposed for an area the City should carefully assess its suitability at that particular time, based upon the following considerations:

- (1) Is the area suited to the proposed development?
- (2) Is the area unsuited for subdivision because of local topographical or other physical conditions which might result in excessive problems to the city for storm drainage and other utilities?
- (3) Because of existing physical, economic and other conditions, does the area have a low development potential such as would make the extension of utilities and the provision of other municipal services uneconomical?
- (4) Is the area sufficiently contiguous to the existing City as to be properly within the economic and cultural orbit of the community. Further, could utility mains, police and fire protection be economically extended at this time?
- (5) What would be the immediate costs to the community to extend protection, services, and minor capital improvements compared with the anticipated ad valorem taxes and revenues from all other sources?
- (6) What are the long range capital improvements required to service the area compared with projected tax contribution from all sources, based upon anticipated growth?
- (7) What is the value to the community as a whole derived from bringing the area under the jurisdiction of the City in order to guide its development?

Figure 11 indicates those areas most suited for annexation in the event subdivision development continues in the fringe area. Also is indicated an area which, geographically is more a part of Valparaiso than of Niceville. Some thought might be given to excluding this area from Niceville and annexing it to Valparaiso. Then Boggy Creek and Boggy Bayou would form a geographical as well as political separation between the two communities.

Other urbanizing areas, not recommended for annexation, could nevertheless be supplied with certain services and facilities on a contract basis where found economical to the City. Such services as sewerage, water, and fire protection are occasionally offered fringe areas by a City, for which service charges and contract fees (fire protection) defer all operating and capitalization costs to the City.

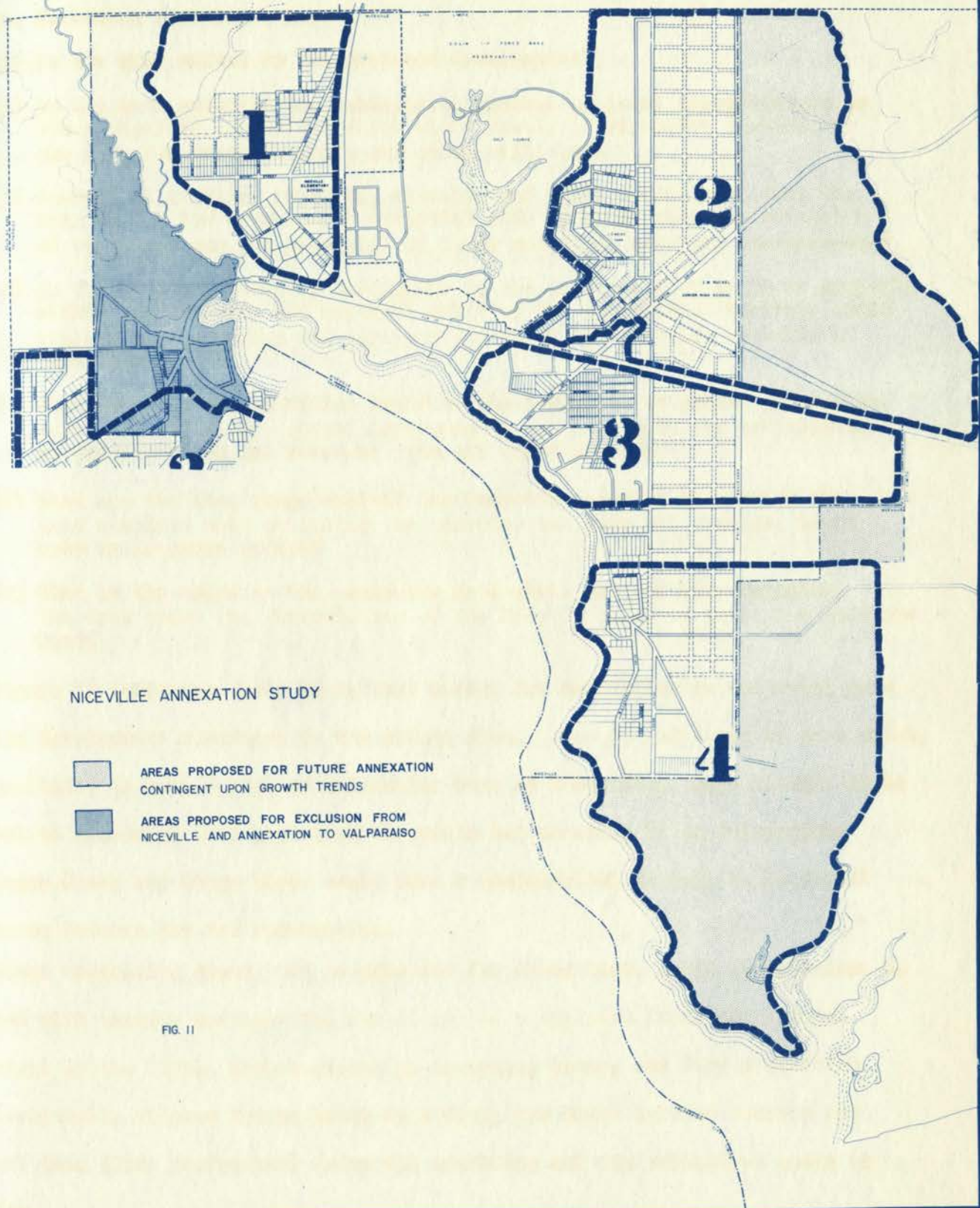


FIG. 11

FIG. 12



CHAPTER V.I

THE MAJOR STREET PLAN

Through every urban area there exists a skeleton of major streets which carry the heaviest volumes of traffic. In larger cities and metropolitan areas this skeleton consists of Federal highways, State and County roads, supplemented by a network of city-maintained arterial streets. In smaller communities the major street framework may be reduced to a single state highway.

Fortunately for Niceville and Valparaiso, State Routes 20, 285, 10 and 85 intersect in and serve as the primary street system of the urban area. These three important state highways are supplemented by several secondary State-County roads. Because of these State and County roads, both cities today are very well served by the primary elements of a major street system.

Not all streets in a major street plan, however, are intended to be state and county roads for the servicing of through, long-haul traffic. Traffic volumes generally increase along the major through routes in an urban area as one approaches the center, and this reflects the large volumes of local traffic moving within the urban area. Usually it is necessary to develop supplemental connecting arteries and collector streets to serve the needs of local traffic.

Figure 12 is the proposed Major Street Plan for the Niceville - Valparaiso area. It is important that both communities approach jointly the development of their major street system. It is recommended that this plan be adopted officially by both cities.

Although no major traffic problems are anticipated, with the completion of work on Florida 85 the continued development of the area in future years will require widening of additional state roads through the area. Projects anticipated over the next five years are: Government Avenue (Florida 85A), North Crestview

PLANNING FOR MAJOR STREETS

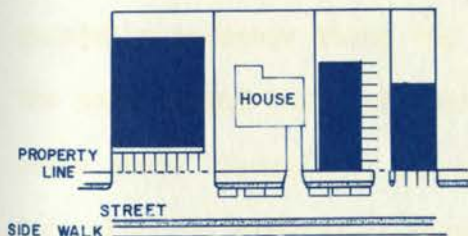
UNPLANNED

MAJOR STREETS TOO OFTEN EVOLVE WITH NO FORETHOUGHT. EXISTING 50 OR 60 FOOT STREETS DEVELOP INCREASING TRAFFIC VOLUMES ALONG WITH NORMAL GROWTH OF THE COMMUNITY. PROGRAMS FOR STREET WIDENING REQUIRE THE ACQUISITION OF ADDITIONAL RIGHT-OF-WAY, AND OCCASIONALLY THE CONDEMNATION OF ABUTTING STRUCTURES. WITHOUT PLANNING, STREET WIDENING MAY REQUIRE REMOVAL OF STORE FRONTS, ELIMINATION OF PARKING, AND COSTLY RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION.

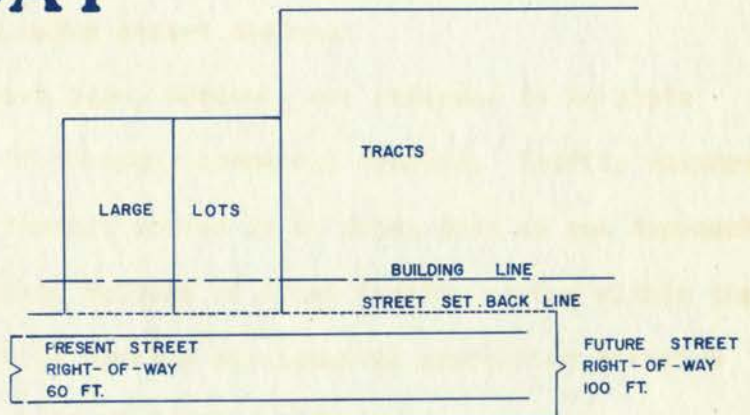
PLANNED

WHERE MAJOR STREETS ARE PLANNED, STREET SET BACK LINES SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED FOR FUTURE ACQUISITION OF RIGHT-OF-WAY. FURTHER, THE BUILDING LINE OFTEN SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED WITH AN ADDITIONAL SET BACK FROM THE FUTURE RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE. THIS WILL FACILITATE OFF-STREET PARKING AND FUTURE ADAPTATIONS ENABLING A FREE FLOW OF TRAFFIC. LARGE BUILDING LOTS ARE REQUIRED FOR MODERN COMMERCIAL SPACE REQUIREMENTS.

TODAY

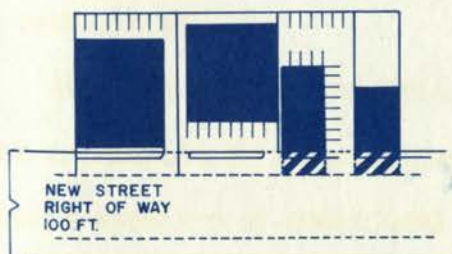


A. WITHOUT BUILDING SET BACKS

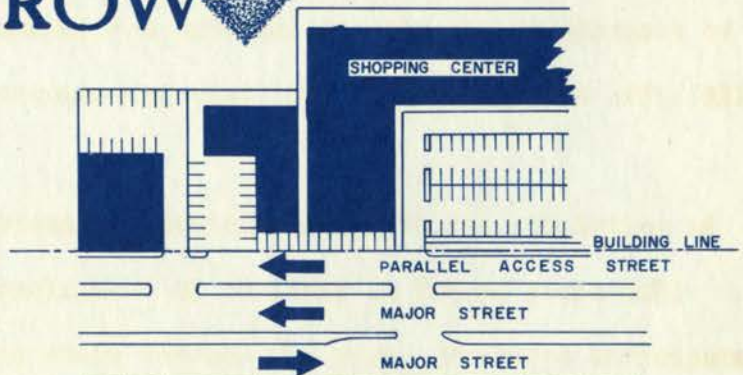


C. WITH PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

TOMORROW



B. FUTURE STREET WIDENING COSTLY, TAKING OF BUILDINGS REQUIRED, PARKING SPACES ELIMINATED



D. FUTURE STREET WIDENING COSTS ARE MINIMIZED, AND SUFFICIENT RIGHT-OF-WAY IS AVAILABLE FOR EFFICIENT MOVEMENT OF TRAFFIC

Avenue (Florida 85), and East Main Street (Florida 20), all to be widened to four lanes through the two cities.

Secondary thorofares are also indicated in figure 12; most of right-of-way required for these routes is already dedicated, although some, such as Cedar Avenue are only partly developed. The secondary thorofares at this time appear to require only two traffic lanes, but right-of-ways of 80 feet are indicated on the plan to provide adequate width for future widening, where necessary, to four lanes.

Additional collector streets are indicated on the Plan with right-of-ways of 70 feet. Although these collector streets are not major through streets, they serve a desirable function of collecting neighborhood traffic for the secondary and primary system.

SETBACKS FOR FUTURE RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION

Figure 12 indicates the minimum right-of-ways recommended for all streets forming a part of the system of through streets. Fortunately, not many of these improvements are needed now. But as the urban area development intensifies, one by one the need for street widening projects will appear over the next twenty years. Furthermore, most of the elements of the major street framework and the right-of-ways established today probably must endure for the life of these communities. Figure 13 illustrates the advantages of recognizing the need for setbacks and applying them early.

For extensions of the Major Streets through unsubdivided property where no streets now exist, there should be no problem in establishing the minimum right-of-way widths proposed.

The establishment of setbacks on existing streets for future street widening is a subject for continuing planning by officials in both cities. Each street shown as a component of the Major Street Plan should be studied individually.

SUGGESTED STREET CROSS-SECTIONS FIG. 14 FOR NICEVILLE AND VALPARAISO

MED - MEDIAN STRIP AND LEFT TURN LANE AT INTERSECTIONS
 ML - MOVING LANE
 P - PARKING LANE
 ML or P - PARKING LANE ALSO ADAPTABLE AS SECOND MOVING LANE
 PKW - PARKWAY
 S - SIDEWALK

INITIAL
STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT
LATER

PRIMARY THOROFARE



SECONDARY THOROFARE



COLLECTOR STREET



The location of existing buildings and the percentage of development will determine the practical setback that can be established for each section. Public hearings should be held and the setbacks imposed by ordinance.

STREET CROSS-SECTIONS

Figure 14 suggests pavement design standards adapted to the needs of the Niceville - Valparaiso area for the next twenty years. These designs are modified from designs in widespread use, dimensions are indicated with enough flexibility to meet a range of right-of-way situations. In application further refinement is required, because these are only general guides. Two drawings are indicated for each category of major street. Sufficient right-of-way must be reserved for ultimate needs, but in the early stages of development only a small part of the right-of-way may be needed. Consequently, figure 14 indicates a pavement design for the initial development stage and also a design for the ultimate situation. Two moving lanes are expected to serve the needs for traffic on most streets of Valparaiso and Niceville for many years to come without undue inconvenience.

TREATMENT OF ABUTTING PROPERTIES

The efficiency of streets for moving traffic varies widely according to the design of the roadway for servicing abutting properties. Such features as curb parking, numerous driveways, turning movements, and intersections should be minimized on the primary thoroughfares. Property owners should provide adequate off-street parking. Figure 15 suggests various treatments for the development of property abutting primary thoroughfares.

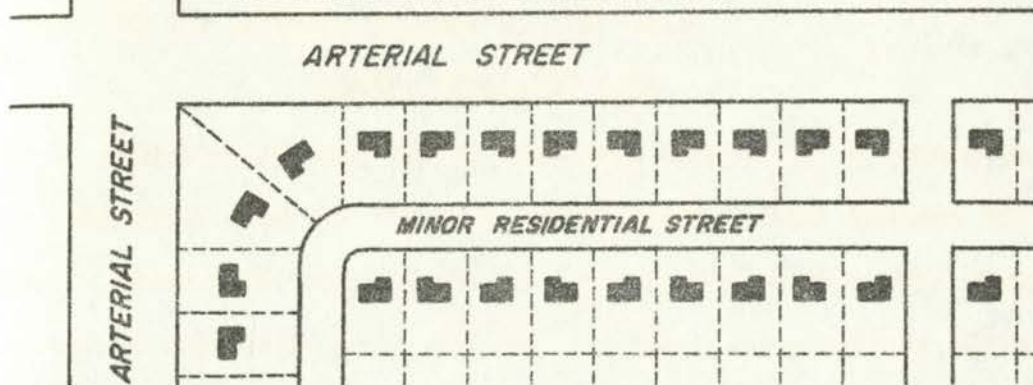
Example A indicates how quality residential areas can be developed using "reverse frontage; houses face a quiet residential service street instead of the thoroughfare. Homes can be screened from the noise and sight of highway traffic by heavy screen plantings along the rear of the lot and parkway of the thoroughfare.

SUGGESTED TREATMENT ALONG ARTERIAL STREETS IN SUBDIVISIONS AND COMMERCIAL AREAS

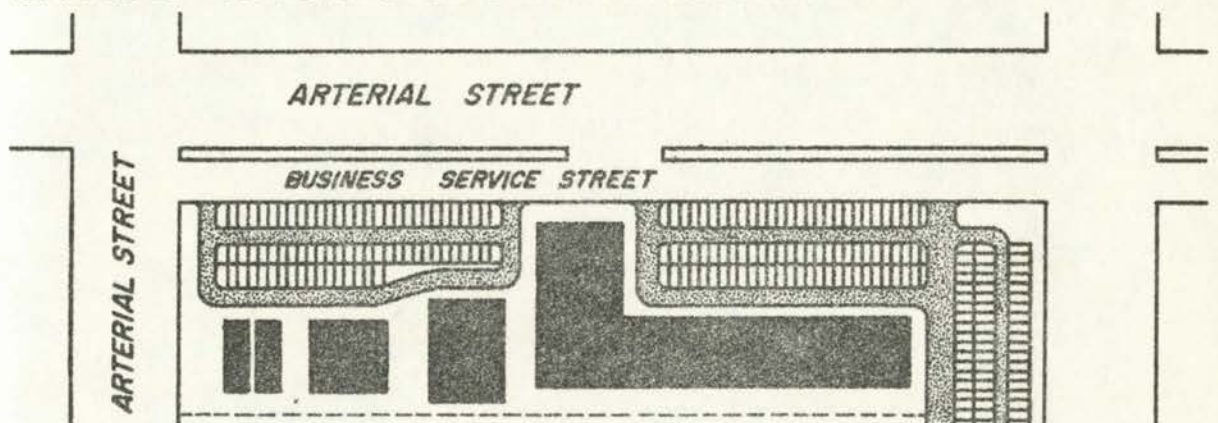
Figure 15

EXAMPLE "A"—RESIDENTIAL AREAS WITH REVERSED FRONTAGE

HOUSES FACING ON THE MINOR RESIDENTIAL STREET



EXAMPLE "B"—COMMERCIAL AREAS WITH PARALLEL SERVICE STREET



EXAMPLE "C"—RESIDENTIAL AREAS WITH RESIDENTIAL SERVICE STREETS PARALLEL TO ARTERIAL STREETS OR INTERSECTING ARTERIAL STREETS

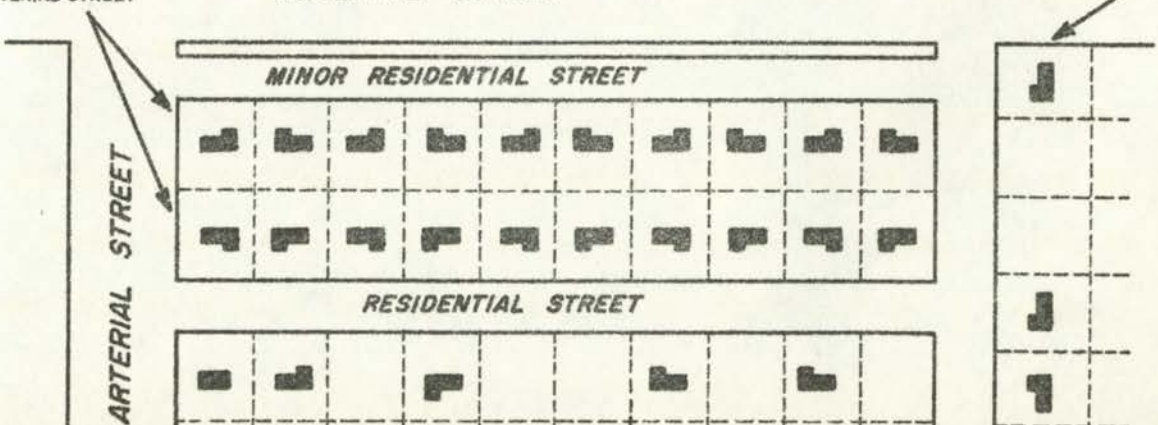
NOTE: SIDE YARD FACING
ARTERIAL STREET

ARTERIAL STREET

MINOR RESIDENTIAL STREET

RESIDENTIAL STREET

NOTE: SIDE YARD FACING
ARTERIAL STREET



Example B shows how commercial properties can be separated from the through traffic by a parallel service street with restricted points of access. This design has the advantage of separating slow moving traffic from the faster moving traffic and prevents the parking of vehicles from interfering with through traffic movements.

Example C indicates another means of developing residential frontage along major thorofares, utilizing the parallel access street.

STREET PAVING PROGRAM

Niceville is very fortunate that the primary elements of the Major Street Plan are state roads. Further, these state roads have adequate right-of-ways and are currently under reconstruction along modern pavement standards.

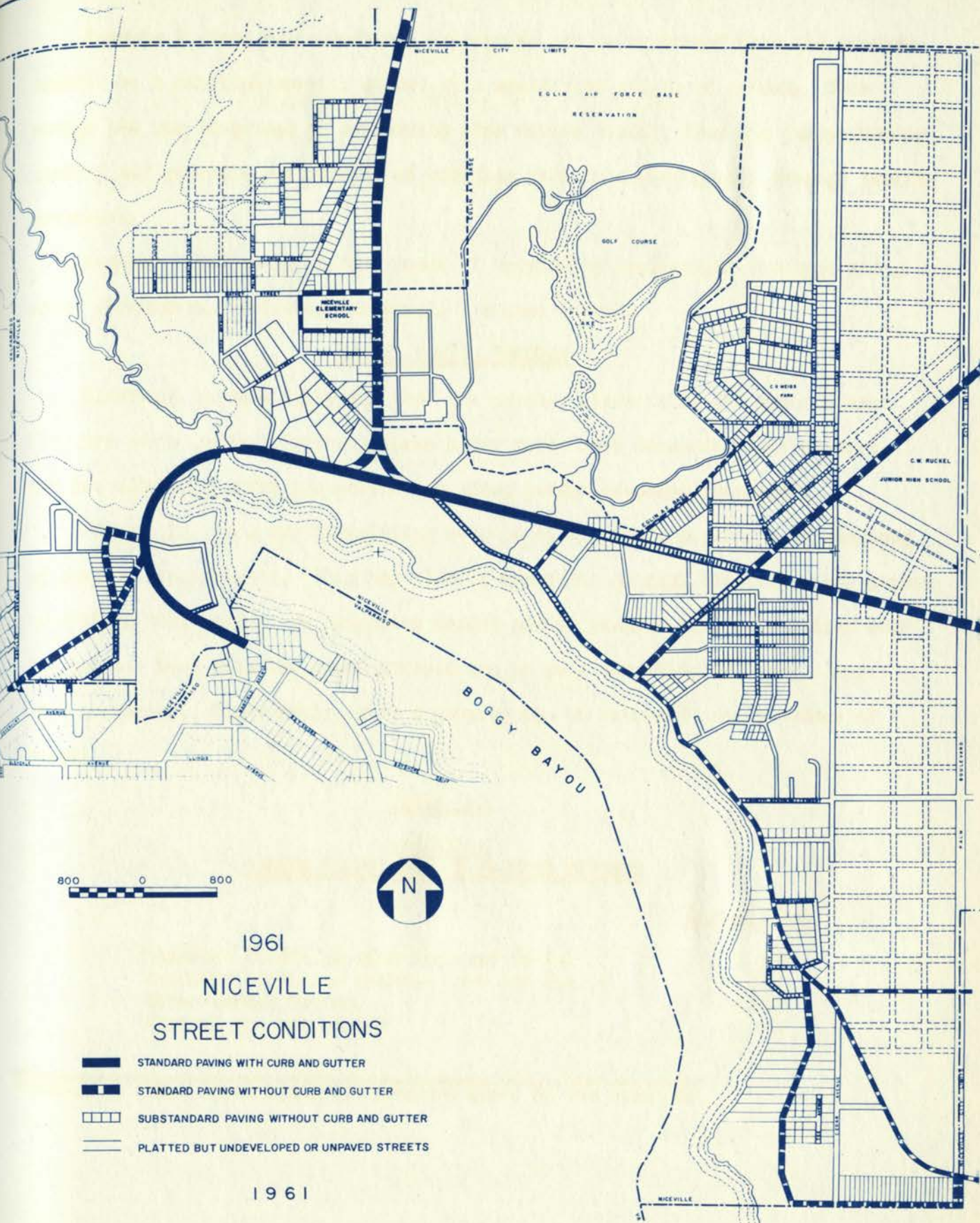
Figure 16 is a map classifying streets of Niceville according to adequacy of surface improvements. This map clearly shows the general unsatisfactory street conditions that exist. An extensive street paving program will be required over the years. Many existing paved streets are in poor condition and many others have no paving. Fortunately, such a program can be extended over a number of years.

TABLE 10

NICEVILLE PAVING CONDITIONS OF PLATTED STREETS

	<u>Lineal Feet</u>
Standard Condition with Curb and Gutter	3,600
Standard Condition without Curb and Gutter	16,000
Sub-standard Paving	8,800
Platted but not paved*	33,600

*Excluding those areas shown with dashed lines on the base map



CHAPTER VII

THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND AREA TREATMENT PLAN

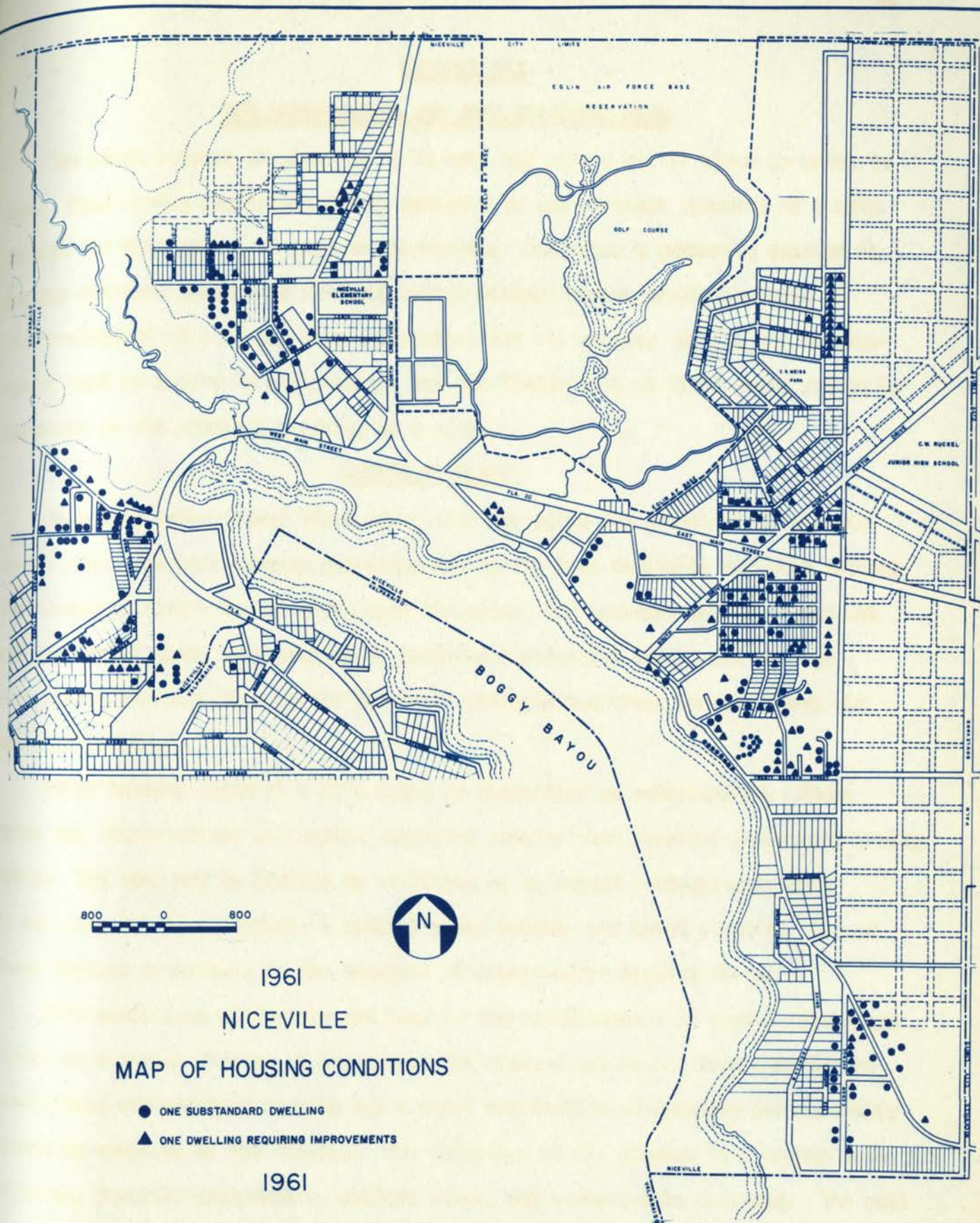
The basic purpose of planning is to make the city a better place in which to live. Good living conditions can be achieved in the physical planning of a city through the development of good neighborhoods. Too often a community aspires to further economic growth and diversification without giving proper emphasis to the development of a better home environment for its people. By far the greatest use of land in a city is residential, and the liveability of these areas should be paramount in the physical planning of a city.

CAUSES OF BLIGHT

As a city ages, change takes place that may alter the stability of certain areas. Once adequate housing districts may become less desirable and then various influences of blight may encroach upon the area. The encroachment of commercial and industrial uses, overcrowding of existing residential structures through conversion, and poor maintenance generally characterize these areas. These are areas of blight.

Other housing areas of a city might be classified as sub-standard. These areas are characterized by unsafe, unhealthy housing that provides inadequate living space. The area may be lacking on utilities or be served inadequately, such as sanitary and storm sewers, a central water system, and paved streets. All of these factors contribute to the creation of sub-standard housing areas.

Such conditions ultimately can lead to the establishment of slums. Slums are viewed as a social disease of the city. The disease may result from poor living conditions; sub-standard housing and a sorry residential environment are generally viewed as symptoms of the disease. The infection of the disease is a higher rate of crime, juvenile delinquency, welfare cases, and communicable diseases. The cost



of the disease to the community is a proportionately higher expenditure of public funds on these areas in services, policing, and welfare, with a much lower yield in taxes.

Because so much of the past growth of Niceville has been defense impacted within a relatively short growth interval, overcrowding and construction of inadequate housing structures resulted in the absence of controls. Apparently most of Niceville's present sub-standard housing conditions could have been prevented through the enforcement of an adequate building code. Mixing of land uses, which has added additional blight, was not prevented soon enough by the adoption of a good zoning plan and ordinance.

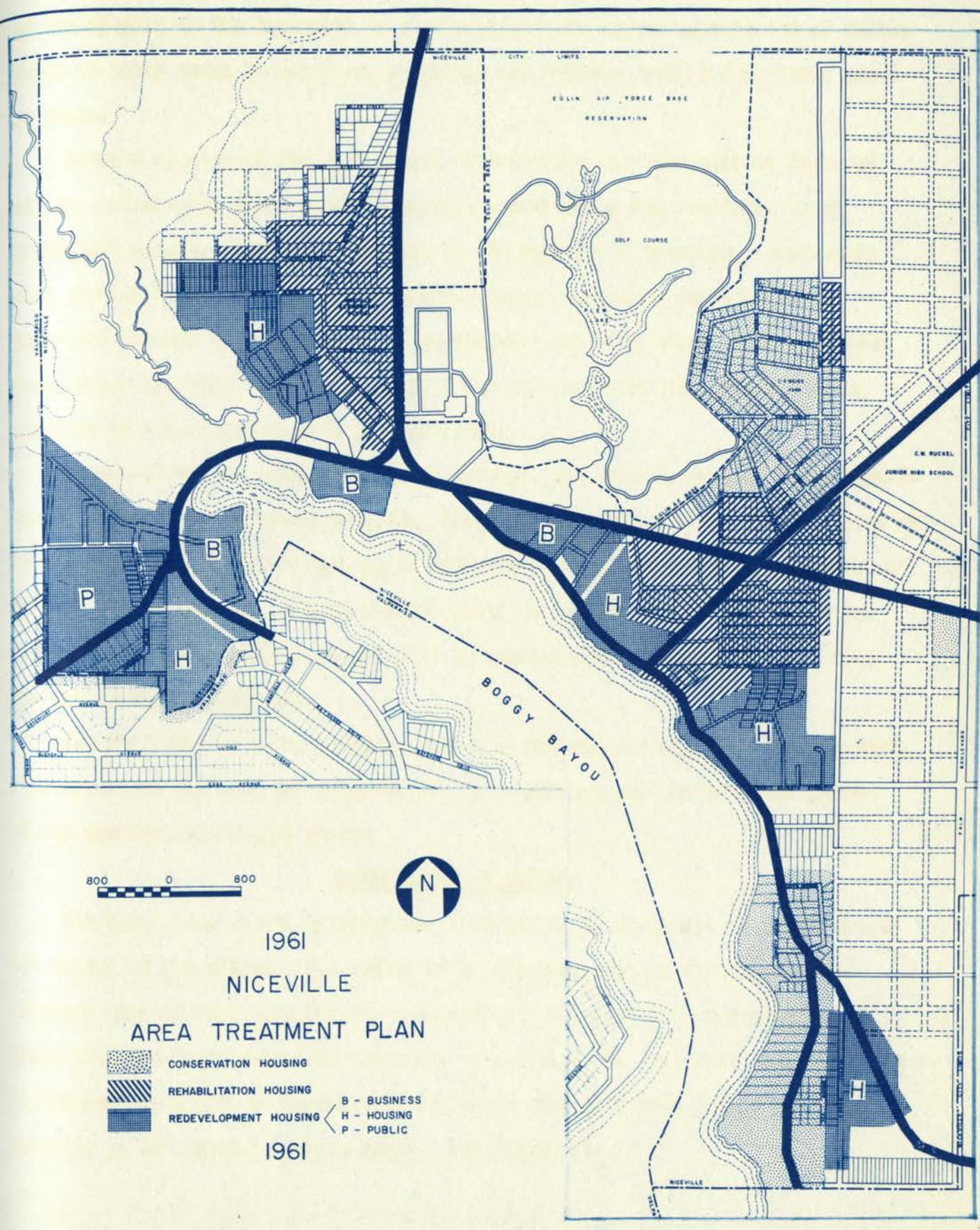
Niceville has an extensive housing problem, and this is viewed by the Consultant as their major planning problem. Figure 16 is a map showing the incidence of sub-standard and deficient housing in Niceville. No housing area of Niceville is free of these problems. Unless forward steps to overcome these conditions are forthcoming soon, Niceville may develop an overburdening problem of slums with all the attendant problems.

Not the least of these problems, which is already evident, will be a general retardation of the over all progress of the community, particularly the growth of new quality residential areas.

ELIMINATION OF BLIGHT

The first step in the elimination of blight is to recognize the problem and the extent of its effect. See figure 16 . The next step is to determine an ultimate plan of land uses for the community toward which the redevelopment of these blighted areas should be directed. See figure 7. An Area Treatment Plan is designed as a plan of implementation, which plan indicates public policies relating to the various housing areas. See figure 17.

FIG. 17



Conservation Areas are those housing areas of a city that are considered sound; these are preserved through good zoning administration, subdivision regulation, and the administration of building and housing codes. Rehabilitation Areas will require the rigid enforcement of a building code, and a minimum housing code; a model minimum housing code was given the City for further study. Redevelopment Areas will require rebuilding from the ground up in most cases. In some cases the area might be indicated on the Land Use Plan for redevelopment into commercial or industrial uses, but the opportunity for such projects is generally small. Most redevelopment areas should be continued as housing areas and resubdivided and rebuilt with adequate streets, utilities, and homes of standard construction.

REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN NICEVILLE

Most sub-standard areas of Niceville will require redevelopment. Figure 17 indicates several approaches to redevelopment according to the suitability of each area. Some of these are indicated for redevelopment for housing. Through urban renewal measures, entire blocks should be razed and rebuilt. Some would lend themselves best to new subdivisions of single family and duplex homes. Others might better be turned into public housing project areas.

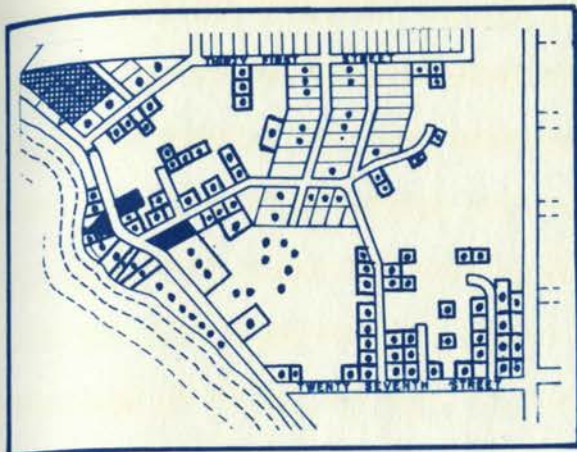
Figure 18 is a design for a public housing redevelopment area. This design indicates in general terms the principles involved, but it is not intended as a final, detailed redevelopment plan.

Because of the extent of the housing redevelopment areas in Niceville, every effort should be made to utilize public building projects as instruments of redevelopment:

1. There is no justification for considering any "open land" public housing projects in Niceville. Public housing projects should be employed as a means of directly eliminating areas of sub-standard dwellings.

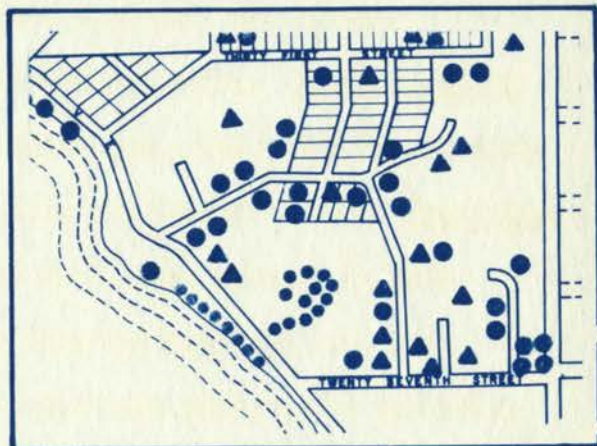
PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT AREA

EXISTING CONDITIONS



LAND USE

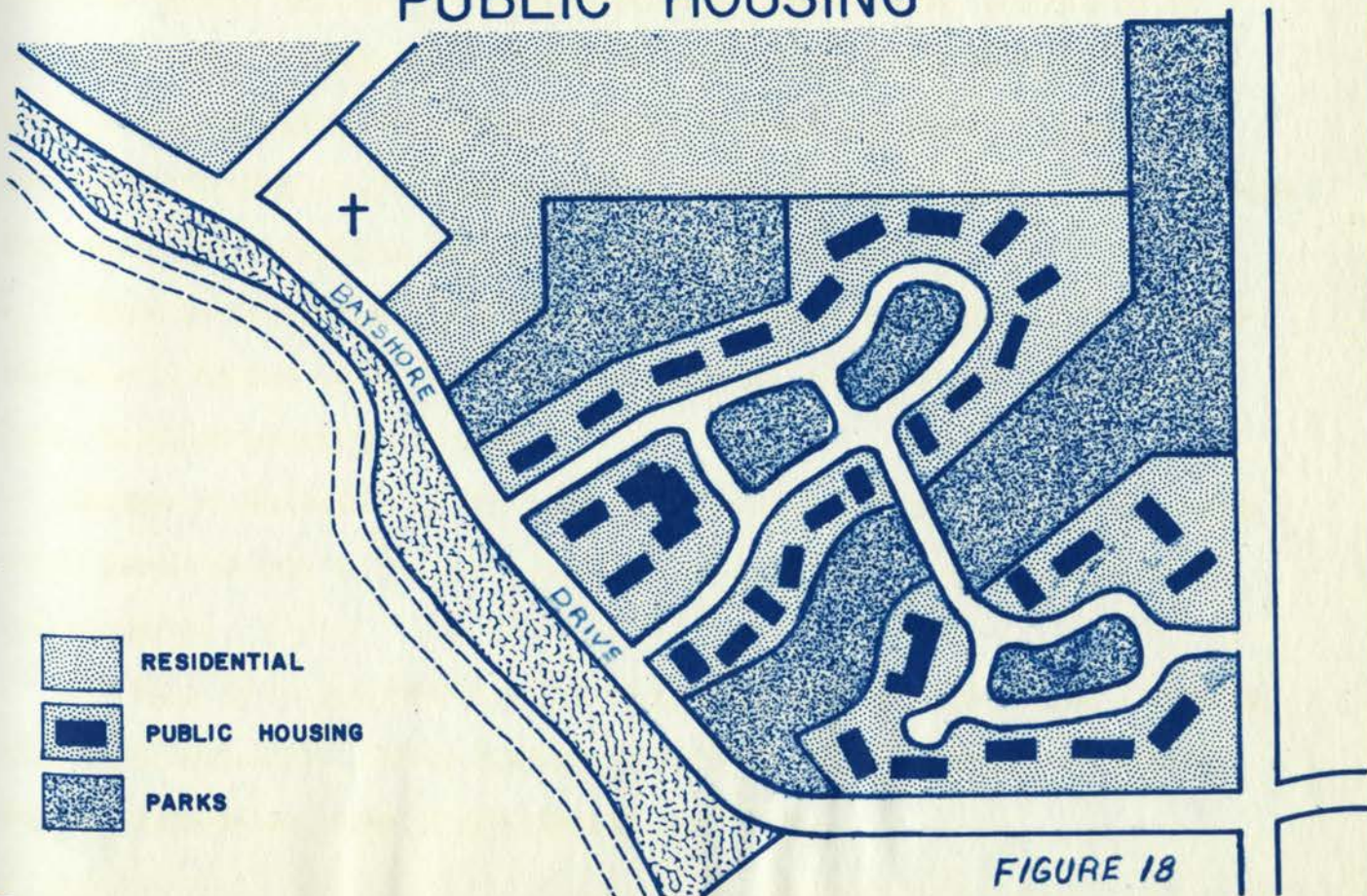
- ONE DWELLING
- COMMERICAL USE
- CHURCH



SUBSTANDARD HOUSING

- ONE SUBSTANDARD DWELLING
- ONE IN BORDERLINE CONDITION

PROPOSED RE-USE FOR PUBLIC HOUSING



- RESIDENTIAL
- PUBLIC HOUSING
- PARKS

FIGURE 18

2. Major public building projects such as a hospital site, can be used as an instrument of redevelopment. Because a public re-use of the land is involved, less difficulty would be met in the condemnation and acquisition of properties.

3. Other redevelopment areas could be used for parks, particularly those areas fringing the waterfront.

The limited opportunities for public projects will not totally eliminate the problem of sub-standard housing in Niceville. The others must be redeveloped into standard housing areas; a very few might be used for business and industrial area expansion.

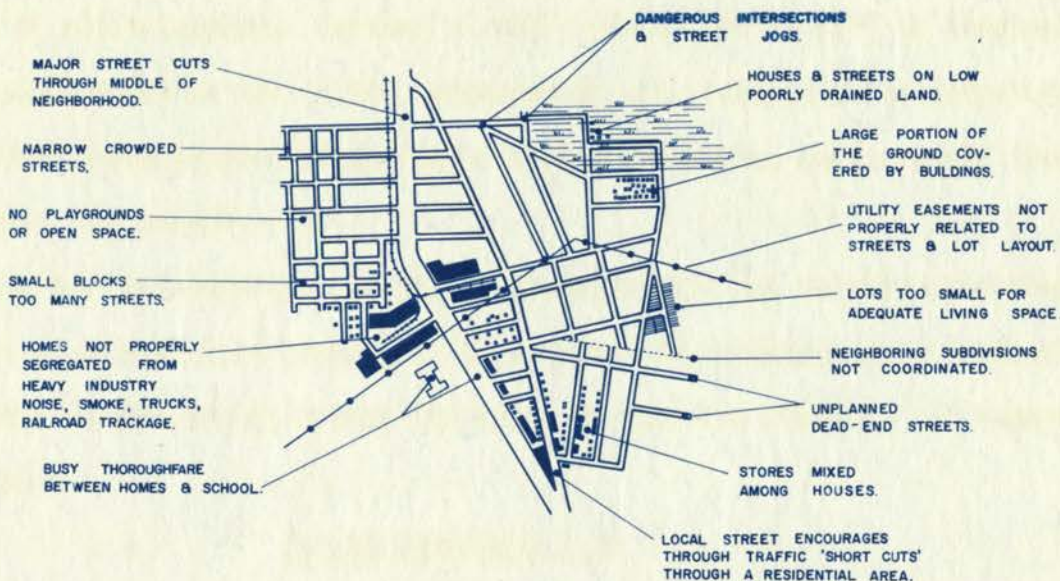
THE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

The Neighborhood Plan divides the city's residential areas into community service areas. Usually these areas are arranged according to physical boundaries or major streets and are centered around an elementary school or some community facility of common interest. Larger cities may have several neighborhoods, but some smaller cities may not be divided into distinctive neighborhoods.

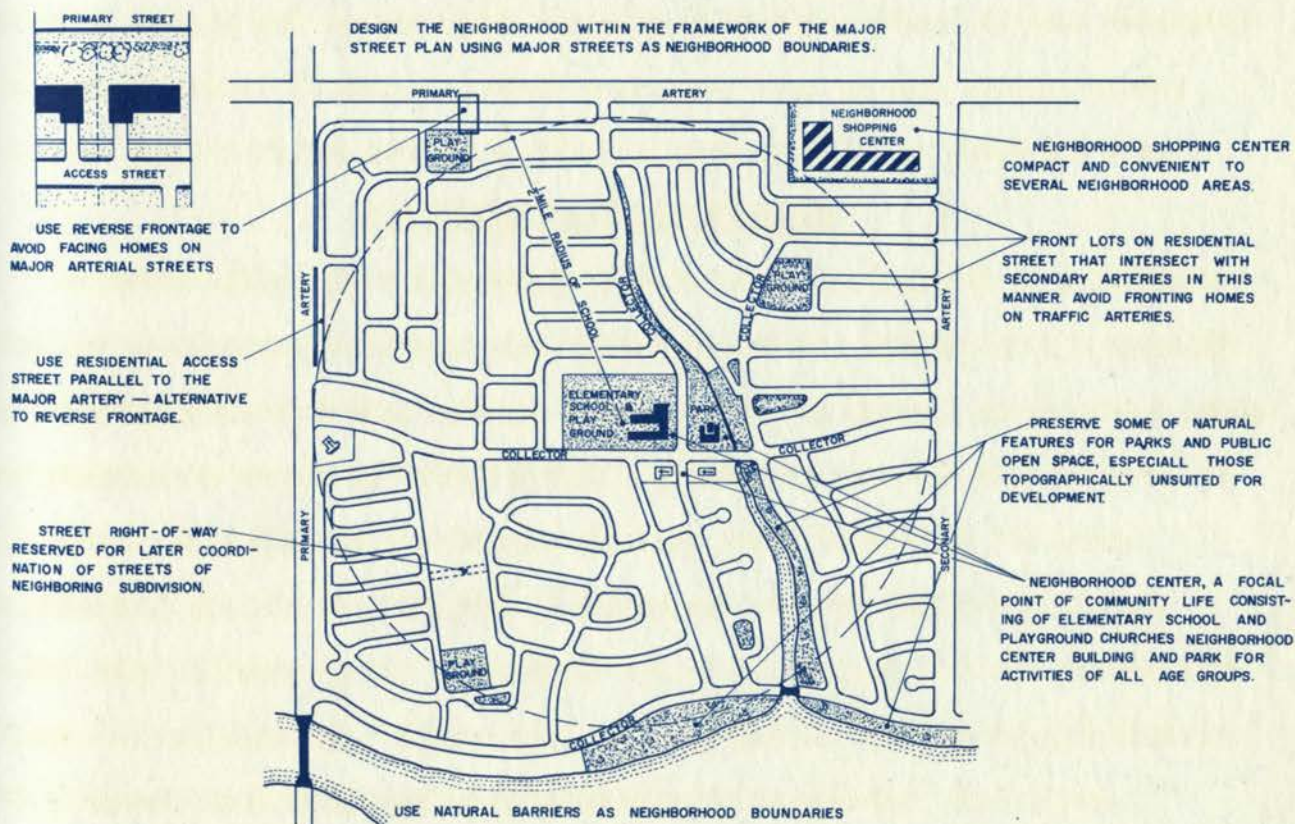
THE THEORETICAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Theoretically, the neighborhood planning unit is designed of a sufficient size and arrangement to support one elementary school, usually within one-half to three-quarters of a mile walking distance. One or several neighborhood parks and playgrounds should be spaced within a quarter to one-half mile distance of all homes. Churches and convenience shopping facilities serve the area. Neighborhood streets are designed to discourage through traffic, providing access only to homes in the area; major thoroughfares by-pass through traffic and fringe the neighborhood. Figure 19 is an idealized design indicating standards for a theoretical neighborhood meeting Florida development conditions.

POOR ENVIRONMENT



DESIGNING GOOD NEIGHBORHOODS



NEIGHBORHOODS IN NICEVILLE

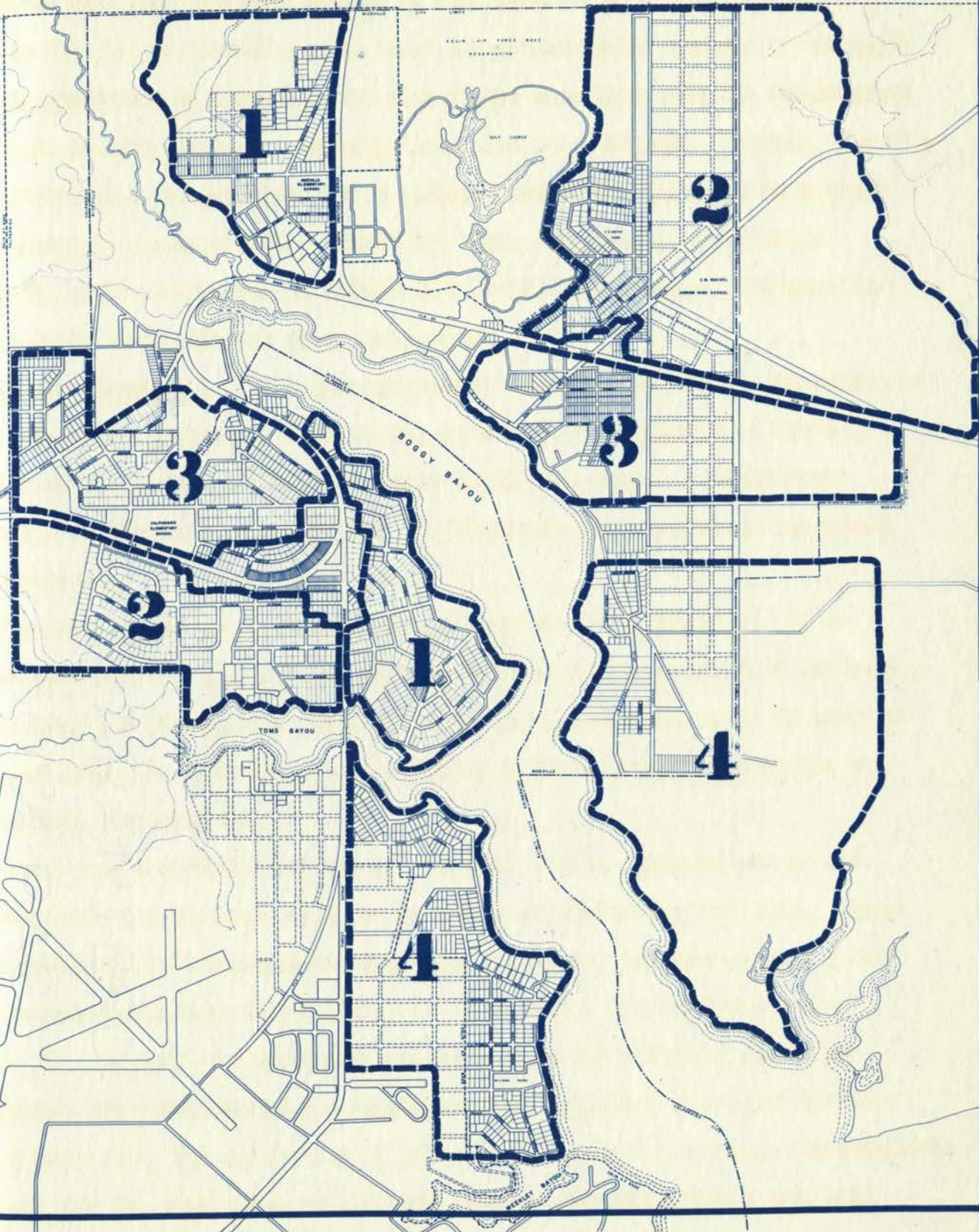
Based upon this idealized concept of what constitutes a neighborhood, it is apparent that all of Niceville makes about one neighborhood. Because of the small size and population of Niceville, the city should constitute only one neighborhood insofar as schools and other community facilities are concerned. However, Niceville's residential areas are separated into a number of physically separated areas which form convenient planning units. Eventually these four areas, identified in figure 20, could approximate the ideals of a neighborhood design. Following is a discussion of these planning units as proposed:

Sub-Neighborhood 1. This area approaches a neighborhood unit in the possibilities offered for planning. It is served by the Niceville Elementary School, which is fairly central to the surrounding residential area. A neighborhood playground is located on the east side of Highway 85, which separates the school and playground.

The neighborhood is spacious; lots sizes are generally adequate. At the present time there is a population of about 788 persons accommodated in 169 single family homes and 14 duplexes. Some 139 vacant lots remain plus about 78 acres of unplatted land. An additional 1500 population could be accommodated within this area without overcrowding.

There is a substantial portion of this area that is characterized by sub-standard dwellings and many others in generally unsatisfactory condition. Figure 16 indicates about 54 sub-standard dwellings and 13 that are borderline. A part of this sub-neighborhood is designated a redevelopment area for housing (See figure 18). In such a redevelopment project streets and utilities should be redesigned. The remainder of the neighborhood is classified as a rehabilitation area (Figure 17). The application of good zoning to maintain the area for residential uses and also the application of a minimum housing code and building code will

RESIDENTIAL PLANNING UNITS MAP OF VALPARAISO AND NICEVILLE, FLORIDA



gradually improve the quality of this area. Street improvements are especially needed, as indicated in figure 15 page 54. Sidewalks would help to up-grade the area.

Sub-Neighborhood No. 2. This is one of the better housing areas of Niceville. It contains one subdivision of uniformly good housing, but throughout the rest there are some 18 substandard and 31 borderline dwellings that blight the area. Here there is less mixing of non residential uses than occur in some other residential areas of Niceville. The area is convenient to the junior high school, and it is served by a neighborhood shopping area. There is a neighborhood playground that is well located to serve the developed part of this proposed neighborhood.

Figure 20 proposes the ultimate neighborhood area to be greatly enlarged over the existing developed area. At the present time there are some 265 single family dwellings, 16 duplexes, and 3 multiple family dwellings accommodating an estimated population of 1235. When the vacant area. (of the corporate area) is developed, an additional 2,600 persons could be accommodated.

Rehabilitation measures should be applied, as suggested above, to preserve and up grade this area. A new elementary school, proposed for Niceville, should be located in this proposed neighborhood. Additional neighborhood parks and playgrounds will be needed as additional areas are developed. Street improvements are especially needed (see figure 15). There is a large area that is undeveloped although platted, lying between Cedar Avenue and Palm Boulevard that should be resubdivided on a modern subdivision pattern with fewer streets and more spacious lots. This proposed resubdivision should be done within the framework of the proposed major street plan. See figure 12. Ultimately this area should approximate the standards of the idealized neighborhood.

Sub-Neighborhood 3 is the oldest section of Niceville. Consequently there is more mixing of land uses and a smaller lot pattern. Within this area there are

some 66 substandard dwellings and 40 of borderline condition. (See figure 16). Extensive redevelopment is required to upgrade the area as a standard housing area. Figure 17 indicates the extent of redevelopment and rehabilitation problems that exist in this area, and figure 18 is a redevelopment plan for a substandard housing area proposing the re-use of the land for a public housing project, which is badly needed in Niceville. This plan indicates general design principles and is not intended as a final, detailed plan. The plan includes playgrounds, a circumlinear intra-project street pattern, and park areas that utilize natural, topographic features to best advantage. Duplex and multiple family housing is suggested.

Taken as a whole the population density of this area is not excessive, but there is one subdivision, indicated in figure 20, that is developed to medium density on a small lot pattern. There is sufficient vacant land available to accommodate all of the potential population growth on a more spacious lot pattern. It is proposed that one area, platted but not developed, be resubdivided on a more spacious lot pattern. See the report on Subdivision Analysis, page b.

Additional rehabilitation measures and some redevelopment projects will be required to up-grade the area for standard housing. Instead of broad redevelopment projects, many sub-standard housing problems could be solved in this area on a lot by lot basis, replacing individual substandard dwellings with new duplex and single family dwellings (also public housing properties). Street and sidewalk improvements are badly needed plus neighborhood parks and playgrounds.

At the present time there are 224 single family, 13 duplex, and 4 multiple family dwellings accommodating a population of 1036 persons. The potential population can be expanded in vacant areas by some 2,600 within the existing corporate area.

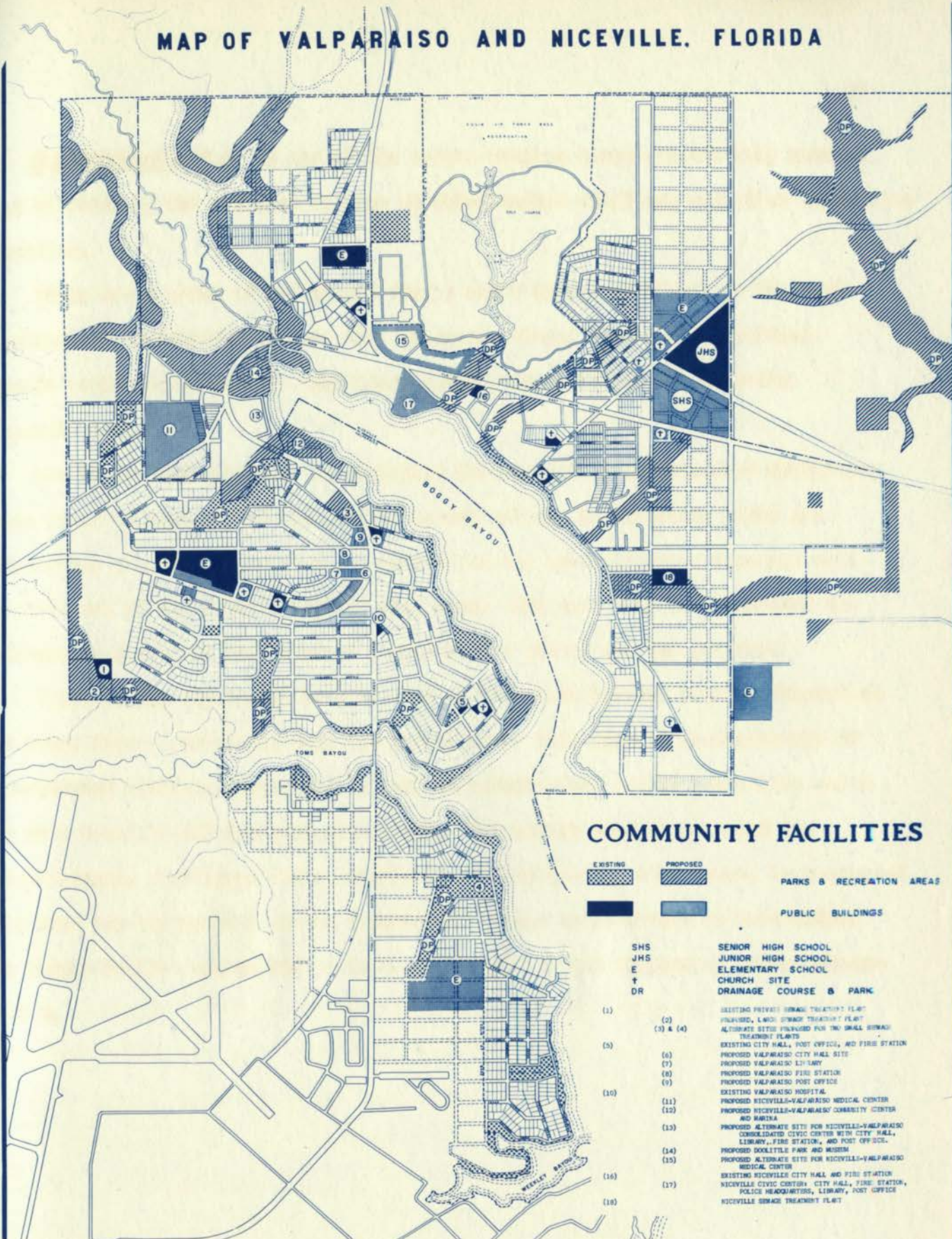
Sub-Neighborhood 4 is one of the better housing districts but this area is also blighted by the presence of some 22 sub-standard dwellings and 12 of borderline condition.

There are a total of 152 single family and 7 duplex dwellings in this sub-neighborhood, accommodating some 664 persons. Vacant lots and undeveloped parcels could accommodate an additional 1,400 persons within the existing corporate area.

Lot by lot redevelopment is suggested for removal of sub-standard dwellings; these could be replaced by new public housing units. Neighborhood parks and playgrounds should be developed. Conservation and rehabilitation measures will correct most of the deficiencies of this area. One area that is subdivided but undeveloped should be replatted on a more modern street and lot pattern.

There is one additional housing area of Niceville located between Valparaiso and Boggy Bayou, containing some 400 population. This area is predominately of sub-standard housing, consisting of some 48 sub-standard and 20 borderline units out of a total of 101 dwelling structures. The entire area is proposed for redevelopment. One large tract, mostly vacant but spotted with homes, is suggested as a site for the medical center (hospital). Other areas should be redeveloped for single family housing and could become a part of the Valparaiso sub-neighborhood 3.

MAP OF VALPARAISO AND NICEVILLE, FLORIDA



CHAPTER VIII.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Cities are created to provide protection and urban services and facilities to people. The need for some is essential to the well being and safety of the citizens of the city: police and fire protection, sewerage, water, garbage collection, storm drainage, street improvements, and schools. Others, such as library service, recreation and park facilities, and other cultural facilities may not be so necessary but are, nevertheless, desirable facilities that make the city a better place in which to live and have become established as regular functions of local government. As the city grows in population, the number and diversity of community facilities and services increase.

Figure 21 is a general plan for the location of various community facilities and following is a discussion of the various elements of a community facilities plan.

Because of the interest in economy of operation, which may be possible through joint endeavor by the City of Niceville and the City of Valparaiso, various elements of the Community Facilities Plan will be discussed showing the possibilities for joint projects.

SECTION A

PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS

Parks and recreational facilities form an important part of those beneficial community facilities that enhance the urban way of life. In some cities there is almost no importance placed on these facilities, but in others they are emphasized, particularly in communities identified with tourism, resort and retirement activities. Regardless of the emphasis, every city should enhance its appearance with parks and offer a minimum amount of recreation facilities, especially for the younger age groups.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAYLOT

AN AREA INTENDED FOR ACTIVE RECREATION FOR PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN. ITS MAJOR USE IS AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR BACK YARDS WHERE PLAY OPPORTUNITIES ARE RARELY AVAILABLE, SUCH AS IN CONGESTED DISTRICTS AND IN THE APARTMENT DEVELOPMENTS.

THE SIZE OF A PLAYLOT SHOULD BE ABOUT 1,500 TO 2,000 SQUARE FEET. ABOUT THE SIZE OF AN AVERAGE SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL LOT.

A PLAYLOT SHOULD BE LOCATED ONE TO EACH BLOCK IN CONGESTED AREAS - ONE FOR EVERY 300-700 PEOPLE.



FACILITIES

Figure 22

LARGER HOME GROUNDS
NEARBY CHILDRENS NURSERIES
PLAYLOTS

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAYGROUND

AN AREA FOR ACTIVE RECREATION FOR CHILDREN 5 TO 15 YEARS OLD. IT MAY, IN ADDITION, PROVIDE A SMALL AREA FOR THE EXCLUSIVE USE OF PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN, AND FACILITIES WHICH MAY BE USED UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS BY YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS.

THE SIZE OF A PLAYGROUND SHOULD BE 3 TO 7 ACRES. THE SITE SHOULD NOT BE LOCATED ALONG HEAVILY-TRAVELED STREETS OR RAILROADS. CHILDREN SHOULD BE ABLE TO REACH THE SITE WITHOUT BEING EXPOSED TO ANY SPECIAL HAZARDS.

CHILDREN SHOULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO WALK MORE THAN 1/2 MILE TO REACH A PLAYGROUND.



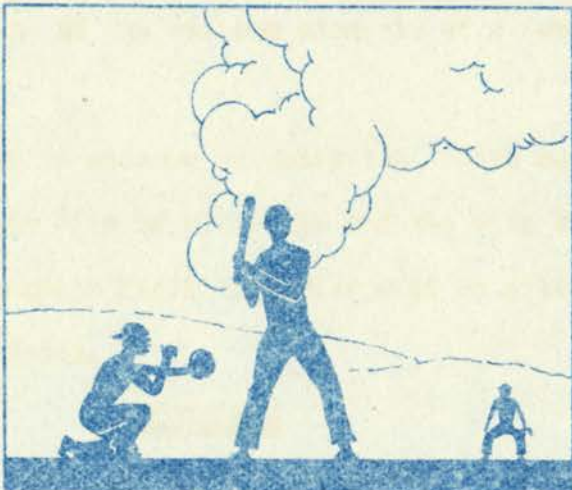
PLAY AREAS IN PARKS
SWIMMING POOLS
HOME GROUNDS
ZOOS
BOY & GIRL SCOUT CAMPS
SCHOOL PLAYGROUNDS
PLAYGROUNDS FOR ATHLETICS
COMMUNITY CENTERS
OUTLYING NATURALISTIC PARKS
MUSEUMS

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAYFIELD

AN AREA FOR ACTIVE ORGANIZED PLAY FOR OLDER CHILDREN AND ADULTS, AGES 15 AND OVER. A SMALL SECTION SHOULD BE DEVELOPED AS A CHILDRENS PLAY AREA.

THE SIZE OF A PLAYFIELD SHOULD BE 10 TO 30 ACRES.

PLAYFIELDS SHOULD BE LOCATED WITHIN 1/2 TO 1 MILE WALKING DISTANCE FROM EVERY HOME.



NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

AN AREA FOR PASSIVE RECREATION FOR ALL AGES. A RELATIVELY SMALL NEIGHBORHOOD PARK AREA AND PRIMARILY INTENDED TO PROVIDE AN ATTRACTIVE NEIGHBORHOOD SETTING AND TO AFFORD A PLACE FOR QUIET, PASSIVE RECREATION.



SCENIC DRIVES
PLAYFIELDS
SWIMMING POOLS
NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS
COMMUNITY CENTERS
LARGE PARKS
RESERVATIONS-Forest PRESERVES
MUSEUMS & ZOOS
FISHING & BOATING
BRIDLE & NATURE TRAILS

LOCATION AND SITE STANDARDS

Figure 22 summarizes the site needs and location of parks and playgrounds in small communities. In application to the needs of Niceville, the requirements for a neighborhood playfield can best be satisfied at the C. W. Ruckel Jr. High School. Neighborhood playgrounds of 3 to 5 acres should be provided in each of the Residential Planning Units (See figure 20), preferably at the elementary schools. In addition to those located at the schools, several playgrounds and playlots are indicated on figure 21; these are intended to provide recreation areas for children convenient to all homes, preferably within $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile walking distance. The C. G. Meigs Park is a good example of a well located neighborhood playground.

One large community center is proposed as a recreation and park area. This center should be established to serve all age groups as a multi-purpose facility.

Niceville has few playgrounds and almost no parks. Ample good sites are available at reasonable prices and efforts should be made to obtain well located playgrounds as suggested in Figure 21. Very attractive parks could be obtained in the areas indicated as water drainage courses, and these would be useful for conservation as well as aesthetic purposes. These areas should be very reasonably priced because they are unsuited for development. Especially needed for aesthetic enhancement is the acquisition of some of the bay front for public use as parks and recreation areas.

The water resources of the area represent one of the distinctive recreational assets and contribute greatly to the relaxation and pleasure of all. The sanitary condition of the Bay should be carefully protected from sewer pollution and industrial wastes in order that future generations can continue to enjoy this natural asset for fishing, boating, and swimming.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Figure 21 indicates the location of existing and proposed park and recreation sites. It is not intended that properties be exactly as shown on the map; if an adjacent site is available on more advantageous terms it will usually serve as well.

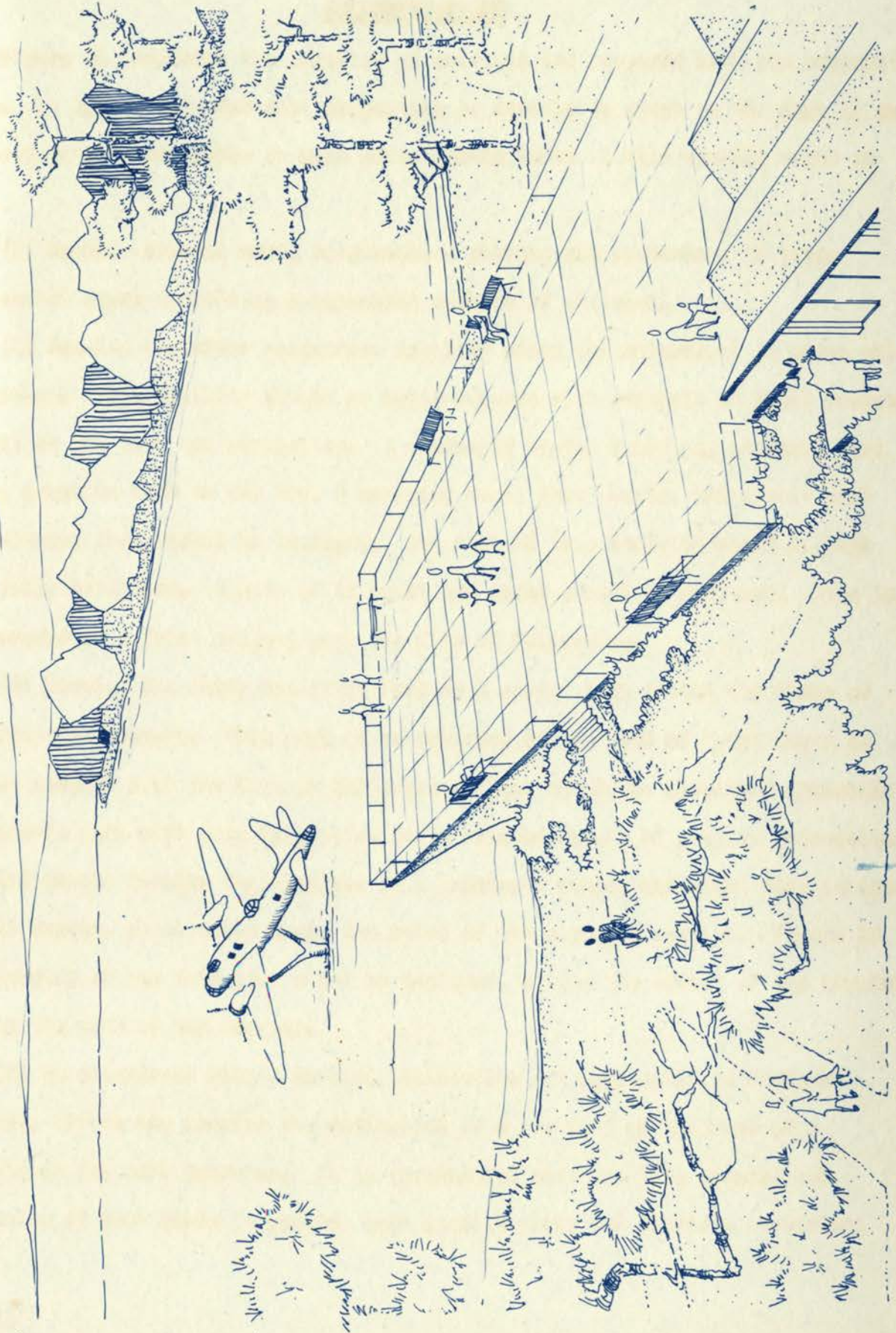
(1) Develop several small neighborhood playgrounds convenient to those residential areas containing substantial numbers of children.

(2) Develop one major recreation facility along the waterfront to serve all age groups. This facility should be multi-purpose with emphasis on adult recreation as well as the teen age population. A community center building, pleasure boat docks, swimming area on the bay, a swimming pool, game courts, and picnic park are features that should be included. The cost of this facility would be high when fully developed. A site of at least ten acres should be acquired. This is recommended as a joint project with the City of Valparaiso.

(3) Develop the Jimmy Doolittle Park as a scenic park around the theme of the Doolittle raiders. This park is recommended at the head of Boggy Bayou as a joint project with the City of Valparaiso. This should be developed primarily as a scenic park with only facilities for a limited amount of passive recreation. The park should display the airplane in a prominent manner and might also contain a small museum, which would house the model of the aircraft carrier. Figure 22 is a drawing of how this park might be designed, giving the effect of the airplane leaving the deck of the carrier.

(4) In accordance with a special legislative act applicable to Okaloosa Counties, cities may require the dedication of 4 per cent of the area of a subdivision for park purposes. It is recommended that the City require the dedication of such lands to provide well located parks and playlots convenient

FIG. 23



JIMMIE DOOLITTLE PARK

to the homes of the subdivision. This feature is included in the proposed subdivision regulations.

(5) A major conservation and recreation resource may some day be obtained by developing the Boggy Creek basin into a fresh water lake. This project is beyond the present ability of the two communities to finance, but perhaps as a long-range project this can be accomplished as a state and county recreation and park project.

(6) Extensive park beautification should be carried out over the years. After properties are obtained perhaps their development could be entrusted to the Garden Club with financial assistance from the City for purchase of shrubs and materials.

SECTION B

SCHOOLS

The City Plan should include the problem of providing adequate sites for schools. Although the County Board of Public Instruction is primarily responsible

for the administration and construction of schools, there should be a spirit of cooperation between County school and local officials in the selection of school sites. As a result of planning studies, the City is able to provide school officials with information on population potential and age characteristics, street projections that might affect the location of a school, and trends in future residential development.

Located in the Valparaiso-Niceville Area are the following school facilities:

The Valparaiso Elementary School, located on a 12 acre site, was constructed in 1958 and enlarged later. This school is centrally located to its residential service areas. Membership in 1960-61 is 466 pupils.

The Niceville Elementary School is located on a 12 acre site which is divided into two separate parcels; the playground is located east of the highway. An underpass between the two areas was recently constructed. The main school building was constructed in 1936, but additional facilities were constructed in 1942. There are also some temporary buildings. This school is well located to serve one neighborhood service area of Niceville, but it is not centrally located to serve the major populated areas. Membership in 1960-61 is 809 pupils.

The C. W. Ruckel, Jr. High School is located on a 20 acre site in Niceville, which is central to the surrounding residential areas of Niceville. This school also serves Valparaiso and surrounding areas of the County. The school was constructed in 1957. Membership in 1960-61 is 900 pupils.

The State Department of Education completed a School Plant Survey in November 1959. This survey projected school population growth to the 1963-64 school year and recommended an expansion program by areas of the County. This projection has been revised upwards by the County Board of Public Instruction as follows:

TABLE 10SCHOOL MEMBERSHIP TRENDS

<u>Grade</u>	<u>1960-61</u>	<u>1961-62</u>	<u>1962-63</u>	<u>1963-64</u>
<u>Okaloosa County (White)</u>				
1-6	6896	7448	8184	9010
7-9	3277	3501	3519	3628
10-12	1927	2368	2775	3164
<u>Valparaiso-Niceville Area</u>				
1-6	1272	1411	1590	1787
7-9	927	1010	1051	1070
10-12	----	----	----	399

Accordingly, the following recommendations were made in the 1959 School Plant Survey:

- (1) The Valparaiso Elementary School is highly rated for long term service and should be expanded according to need. The site should be expanded over the existing twelve acres.
- (2) The Niceville Elementary School is highly rated for long term service. No expansion of the site was recommended.
- (3) The C. W. Ruckel, Jr. High School is highly rated for long term service and should be expanded according to need.
- (4) Proposed Elementary School. A new elementary school was recommended south or southeast of the C. W. Ruckel Junior High School to provide for growth and to relieve the overload at the Niceville Elementary School and the Valparaiso Elementary School. It should be planned for an ultimate capacity of 720 pupils.
- (5) New Senior High School. A new senior high school was proposed in the vicinity of the C. W. Ruckel Jr. High School to provide for the senior high age group of the Valparaiso-Niceville area. The initial capacity of 1963-64 should be 399, but the school should be planned for an ultimate capacity of 1200 to 1500.

SCHOOL RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the Comprehensive Plan studies, particularly the land use studies, the following recommendations are made pertaining to size of sites and location of new schools.

(A) Size of Sites:

Elementary School: Not less than 10 acres for schools of 480 pupil capacity and about 15 acres for schools of 720 to 840 capacity.

Junior High School: from 20-30 acres.

Senior High School: from 30-40 acres.

Combined Junior High-Senior High School: 50-60 acres.

Location of sites

Elementary School: Ideally there should be an elementary school located within one-half to three-quarters of a mile walking distance of every home in an urbanized area. However, this standard can only be realized in areas that are fully developed. Because Niceville has a below average population density - taking the areas as a whole - this standard cannot be realized for all residential areas. It will be necessary to transport a considerable number of children to schools from the sparsely settled areas. Therefore, the new schools should be located within the residential areas of best development potential in order to serve within walking distance the maximum number of pupils with the least number transported by bus.

Junior and Senior High School: Because high schools should serve a larger number of pupils, in order to offer the most diversified program, fewer are needed. Their locations ideally should be central to the greatest number of pupils, but large numbers must be transported. The C. W. Ruckel Jr. High School is well located, and ultimately an adjacent site should be developed for a senior high school.

(B) It is recommended the Valparaiso Elementary School site be expanded, as indicated in Figure 21. This site is well located to accommodate the growth of Valparaiso, when the population reaches 8,000, but a maximum site should be reserved now.

(C) The Senior High School proposed for the Valparaiso - Niceville area should be located in Niceville adjacent to the present C. W. Ruckel Jr. High School. See Figure 21. By developing these schools on adjacent sites, certain facilities can be used jointly and economy of land and buildings should result.

(D) It is recommended the Niceville Elementary School not be expanded. It is well located to serve the northwestern residential area (Residential Planning Unit 1) but this area has a low potential for growth. Future school capacity should be provided elsewhere in Niceville within other developed residential areas of satisfactory potential for future growth.

(E) The new elementary school for Niceville is recommended on a 10 acre site located in the vicinity of the C. W. Ruckel Jr. High School (See Figure 21). This site is proposed because it is within the Residential Planning Unit 2, which contains the largest concentration of population in Niceville, some 1235 persons within the corporate area plus about 120 persons in the fringe area. This site would also be within walking distance of Residential Planning Unit 3, which contains a population of about 1036 persons, plus about 100 persons in the fringe area. Together these two areas would contribute today about 375 pupils. As these two areas grow, in five to ten years an elementary school of 480 to 600 pupil capacity will be needed. Additional capacity could be added for those pupils transported from areas to the east of these two planning units.

(F) An additional elementary school might be justified in Niceville in about ten years to serve the slowly growing area to the south. A site is proposed to be reserved for this purpose in Residential Planning Unit 4. At the present time

there is a population of about 664 persons in this area, but over the years there is a fair potential for growth to support a school. This site would also be convenient to serve the fringe areas outside the city, whose pupils can be transported.

(G) An additional elementary school for Valparaiso is proposed as a long range possibility in the area south of Tom's Bayou. This is contingent upon developments, as discussed in the chapters on land uses and neighborhoods. This school probably will not be needed in less than ten years, but some thought should be given earlier for site selection. (See figure 21).

SECTION C

PUBLIC BUILDINGS

The administration and servicing of municipal government requires the establishment of a minimum number of buildings and plants. For small communities, such as Valparaiso and Niceville, these are usually limited to a city hall, police and fire station, library, schools, hospital, and post office. Others of a semi-public nature, such as churches and civic clubs, add to the list. As the city grows in population and complexity of services, other public buildings, such as recreation facilities, might be added.

On the Comprehensive Plan public buildings are considered in their location and design, convenience to the public, and also as public symbols of the community. Public buildings should not only be useful but they should reflect the personality of the community and enhance its appearance. Their location on attractive sites, with good vistas, therefore is very important.

CITY ADMINISTRATION BUILDINGS

The Niceville City Hall is wholly inadequate; in this small structure is housed the entire administrative, police, and fire protection facilities of

the City. The building cannot be expanded into an adequate facility, although some recent remodelling provides a temporary improvement.

Figure 21 suggests a new site of sufficient size to take care of present needs and future expansion. This site would be fairly central to the entire city and also have the advantage of an attractive site, one that could be expanded into a multi-purpose civic center later on. Because of the limitations on growth over the next ten to twenty years there is no need to think in terms of a large building, but a modern plant functionally arranged with more adequate space is greatly needed.

With reference to the possibilities of consolidation, considerable economy could be gained by the operation of one municipal administration and the construction of one city hall, police station, and jail. In the event the two cities decide to consolidate a different location is suggested as an alternate site for civic building in figure 21, which would be convenient to both communities.

FIRE STATIONS

The National Board of Fire Underwriters suggests in their rules that no part of a built up residential area be farther removed than one and one-half to two miles from an engine company.

The present fire station of Niceville is inadequate, both in location, equipment, and operation. Considering the small size of the community and resources available, credit is due for the quality of protection made available. However, with future growth it will be possible to think in terms of a new station better located, equipped, and professionally manned. A site in the proposed civic center is suggested and the fire station might be combined with the City Hall and Police Headquarters.

However, the limitations upon future growth might restrict the ability of the City to finance an acceptable fire department. An alternative, viewed as most practical from the present viewpoint, is a joint endeavor on the part of Valparaiso and Niceville to establish one fire department to serve both communities. The site most central to both communities would be at the head of Boggy Bayou on Highway 85. The means of financing and administering a joint fire district are suggested in Chapter V, page 44. Should consolidation of the two cities take place in the future, the fire station could be planned as an element in a civic center.

LIBRARY

The American Library Association suggests that library facilities be provided at the rate of one-half square foot of floor area per person of the population to be served. Based upon this standard, Niceville can justify about 2,500 square feet of floor space. One library should be established to serve both communities, and this should be a joint project as suggested in page 44, even if the two cities do not consolidate.

Supplementing the library one bookmobile would be of considerable service in serving the remote neighborhood areas of the two communities and fringe areas of the county as well.

HOSPITAL

The hospital should be established to serve the two communities and the surrounding area of the County. Figure 21 suggests two sites. One is recommended as a site central to both communities that also offers the opportunity for an urban renewal project. The site is 70 per cent vacant but it is spotted with many sub-standard dwellings that should be eliminated. An alternate site is suggested in Niceville adjacent to the golf course. A minimum site of ten

acres should be acquired, but if related professional offices are included also as a medical center, the site should be increased up to 20 acres.

The urban renewal site appears particularly attractive for the development of a medical center, including the hospital, doctors clinics, nursing homes, and related professional and business offices. In such a redevelopment project, Federal funds could be obtained for site acquisition.

CHURCHES

Churches are an important community facility which greatly enhance the appearance as well as add to the spiritual life of the community. Because of their importance in the physical design of the City, some general design considerations are discussed; whenever possible the planning board should attempt to influence the orderly location and site development of churches in conformance with the general objectives of the Comprehensive plan.

Churches can be located either in business districts or in residential areas. When located in business districts they should be placed not in the middle but on the fringe. Sites should be large enough to provide for off-street parking and accessory uses plus a small set back for landscaping. Prominent sites should be selected, which are viewable and display advantageously the distinctive architecture of churches.

When located in residence districts churches should have larger sites in order that they blend in with the more spacious character of residential areas. Two acre minimum sites are recommended; this provides room for off-street parking, educational and recreational uses, and adequate set backs for landscaping. Churches in residence districts should be permitted to exceed the height limitations of the residence district (Zoning Ordinance) if they provide additional set back from abutting properties. These features are included in the proposed zoning ordinance.

As general recommendations only, figure 21 indicates several prominent sites that could be effectively utilized for churches.

SECTION D UTILITIES

The Valparaiso-Niceville area is served with natural gas by the Okaloosa County Gas District. Electric service is supplied by the Gulf Power Corporation.

STORM DRAINAGE

Neither community has a system of storm sewers, except a few provided by the State Road Department on state highways. However, an excellent system of natural drainage courses exist and because of the rolling topography, both communities are well drained. However, the system of natural drainage has limitations; it works best in areas such as Valparaiso and Niceville that are sparsely populated and possess good topographic conditions with adequate natural water courses. As a sparsely settled area intensifies its development, more run-off surfaces are provided. Unfortunately, there is an increasing tendency on the part of developers to fill low areas that formerly provided natural drainage. A densely developed community may contain 40 per cent of its total area as run-off surfaces. Some areas, such as business districts, may develop 100 per cent run-off surfaces. Flash floods are the result if such conditions are not anticipated and carefully controlled.

Valparaiso and Niceville should be able to avoid such problems by judiciously reserving parks along the natural water courses. Figure ²¹~~19~~ indicates some of these areas; others should be located through engineering studies.

WATER

Valparaiso owns its own water system. The source of water is two deep wells, and the artesian water supply is adequate for all future needs. Two tanks provide a combined storage capacity of 170,000 gallons. Bonds have been validated to provide for additional expansion. The water system is, therefore, considered adequate.

Niceville has one well and one storage tank, which has a capacity of 60,000 gallons. Although the water supply is adequate, an additional storage facility will be required to serve the expanding area to the southeast. Only the corporate area is served.

SEWERAGE

Niceville has a new sewage treatment plant with a designed capacity of 500,000 gallons. The plant has both primary and secondary treatment. At this time there are about 700 connections using 120,000 gallons per day, but 1350 total connections are planned. Only part of the corporate area is served at this time.

Valparaiso has no sanitary sewer system to serve all of the City. Marion Heights and a nearby subdivision are served by a private sewer system. This system is designed for a capacity of about 70,000 gallons per day to accommodate about 300 customers.

A modern sewage treatment plant and sewer system is the major capital improvement need of Valparaiso. A system should be planned for an ultimate capacity of 8,000 connections. It should be designed to serve all of the city and replace the private plant which cannot be expanded. The City should undertake this program only after carefully considering the several choices available, based upon engineering studies.

(A) One possibility is to take over the existing private system and to construct one additional small plant in another area, which might be located along Highway 85 north of Bayshore Drive. In the future another small plant would be required to serve the area south of Tom's Bayou.

(B) Another possibility is to construct one large plant, which would replace the private small plant and serve the entire city. Sewerage from the various segments of the City would be pumped to this central plant.

(C) Another possibility is to join with Niceville in a sewer district.

Sewage from Valparaiso would be pumped across Boggy Bayou, a distance of only one-quarter mile to the Niceville Plant; or perhaps Valparaiso could most economically contract with Niceville for sewage disposal.

The above are general considerations which should be determined only after detailed study by a sewer engineering specialist. Comparative costs should be studied, and if found more economical Valparaiso and Niceville should join together into a joint sewer district.

CHAPTER IX

COMMERCIAL AREAS

The land use analysis, Chapter III, discussed the needs of commercial development to service an urban population. While noting that Valparaiso and Niceville's commercial land use is relatively small, it was pointed out that as communities grow in size a larger and more diversified commercial area or several commercial areas will be required.

Prior to the automobile's ascendancy, commercial areas were highly concentrated and small. The old business area of Valparaiso along Westview Avenue and the waterfront business area of Niceville strongly reflect this pattern of the past. Today, however, the primary factor in commercial design and location is the automobile. Although Niceville and Valparaiso were founded prior to the automobile they are growing up in the modern period and making the necessary adjustments.

The old system evolved over the centuries; although not without shortcomings, it nevertheless, represented the order and convenience derived from long experience and application in many situations. The business district was not just a commercial center, it was the site of the local governmental administration. Churches and other cultural facilities also had their place. Usually the business district formed the most distinctive area most representative of the personality of the city.

The new pattern of commercial area design is still evolving. The awful, unplanned, haphazard strip development of the early stages is now giving way to some orderly thinking. The strip commercial development evident in the newer areas of Valparaiso and Niceville represent this early phase of readjustment to the needs of the automobile. Each business site is developed as an independent entity with no thought to the overall design, the appearance of the community,

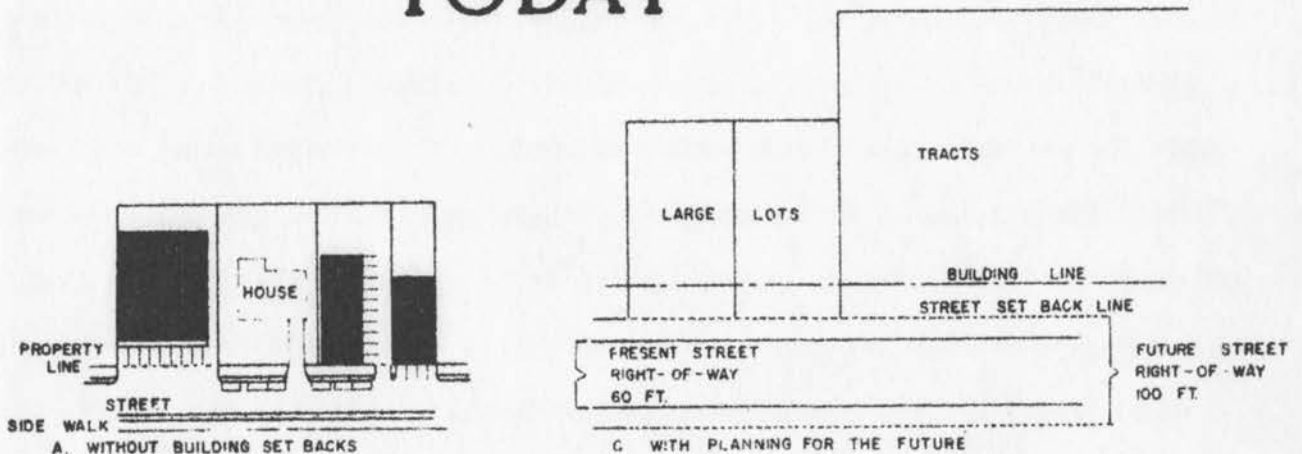
or ultimate needs of the community. Although desiring a location convenient to the highway traveler, many of these businesses still failed to comprehend the importance of parking. Curb parking was relied upon and little or no off-street parking was provided. Most unfortunate of all, many business structures were constructed abutting the highway right-of-way line, with little thought to future growth and the need for widening the highway that contributes to the success of the business. The value of a uniform building line for orderly appearance was completely lost; signs became rampant in an effort to attract the motorist's attention as he approaches the establishment. In this thoughtless commercial growth the impact on abutting residential areas was scarcely considered.

Fortunately, this type of strip development has not gone so far in either community that its worse effects cannot be overcome in most areas abutting Highway 85 and Highway 20. Particular care should be exercised to prevent the spread of promiscuous business development along Government Avenue (Highway 85A) when it is improved. In Valparaiso there still remain substantial areas along Highway 85, particularly around the school, that could be saved from the blight of strip development. In Niceville most of W. Main Street (Highway 85) has already been blighted by spotty low grade commercial development, and the best use of considerable land will never be realized. West of Partin Drive, however, E. Main Street (Highway 20) can be protected. Highway 85 north of Main Street (Crestview Avenue) runs through a residential area but has a few commercial uses. The commercialization of this section should be halted. Likewise, Partin Drive (Highway 285) is an important street that runs through a residential area and should be protected from commercial spot "zoning".

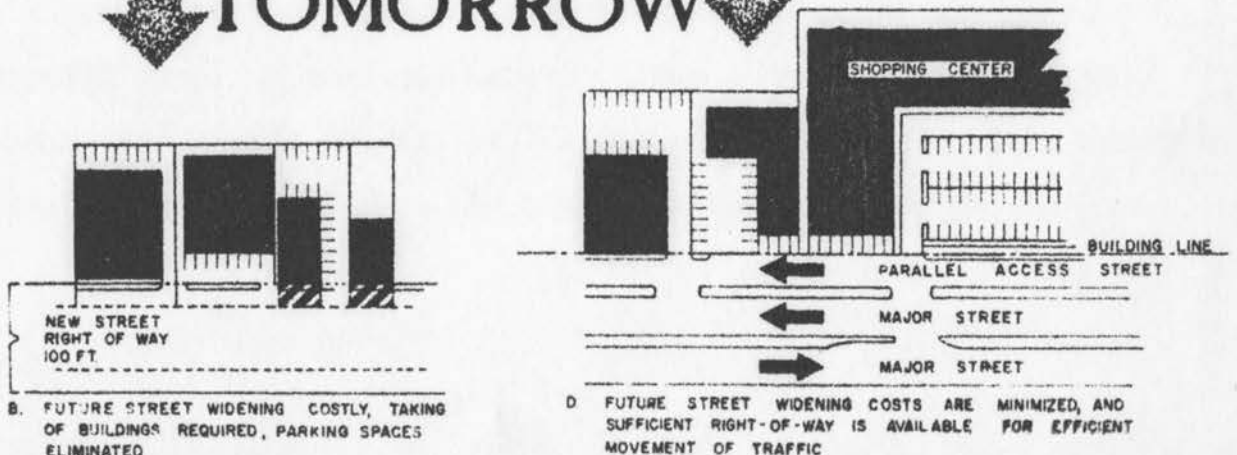
Henceforward the communities should endeavor to guide this commercial redesign into a more orderly pattern which is more representative of the advance thinking available today. The proposed zoning ordinance includes provision for off-street parking and sign controls; setbacks for future street widening is discussed in the chapter on the Major Street Plan; the Zoning Plan attempts to limit the strip commercial development to reasonable amounts. Following are some design considerations to effect ample parking, separation of through and circulating traffic, and ample right-of-way for traffic movement.

FIGURE 24
SETBACKS IN COMMERCIAL AREAS

TODAY



TOMORROW

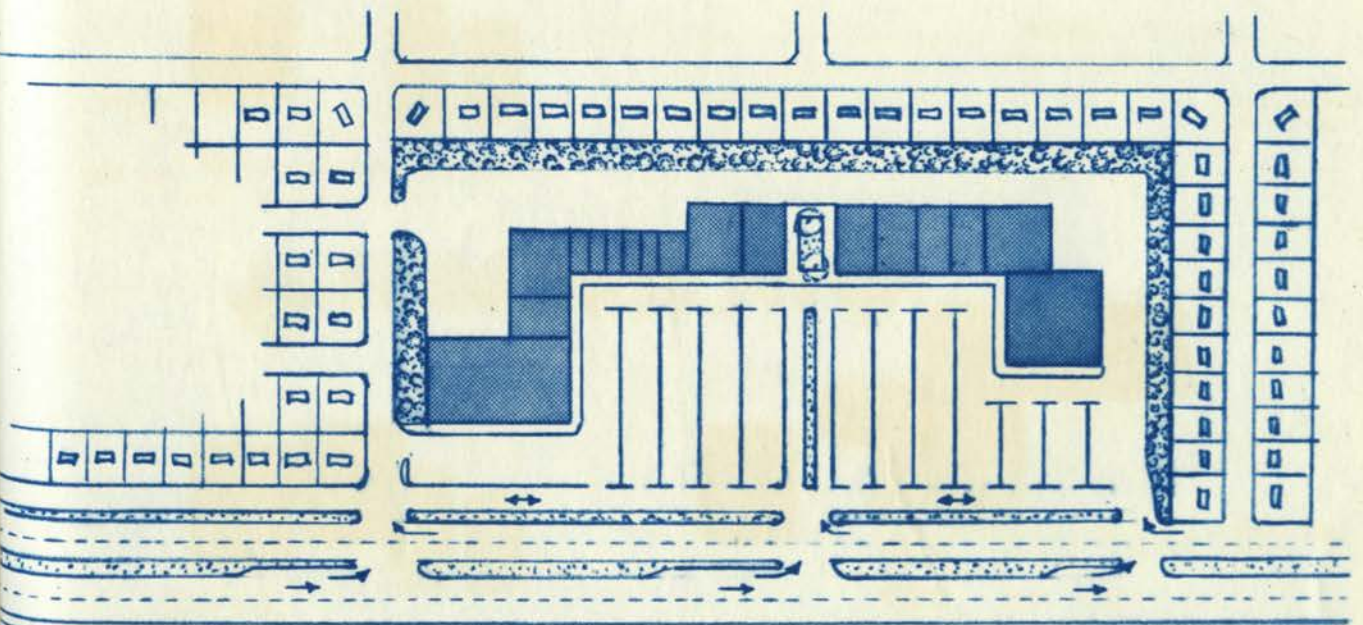


To overcome some of the disadvantages of strip development, retail shopping can be grouped into centers with a common parking lot to serve all uses. More convenience, variety, and enjoyment is offered by modern shopping centers. Whether large or small these centers should give careful thought to traffic ingress and egress, buffer strips protecting adjacent residential properties, good design and landscaping to effect beauty in the community.

FIGURE 25

DESIGNING SHOPPING AREAS

- PLANTING SCREEN BETWEEN ABUTTING RESIDENTIAL USES
- PLANTED AREAS
- SEPARATE UNLOADING SPACE



- AMPLE OFF-STREET PARKING
- CONTROLLED TRAFFIC MOVEMENT

Figure 24 is a proposed plan for a small shopping center in Niceville. This plan attempts to redesign an existing strip business district of nondescript character into something larger, more convenient, and of pleasing design. This is a worth while objective which fits into the overall land use plan.

Figure 25 is a proposed plan for the development of a central business district in Valparaiso. This plan provides for the relocation of the old business district along Westview Avenue to a more central, accessible location along Forest Avenue. Ample off-street parking is indicated in the plan, fringing existing and proposed businesses. To the northwest of Highway 85 is suggested a general design for a shopping center which would supplement the existing business area. A concentrated business development in this area would have greater "pulling" power than would the development of several small "shopping centers" along Highway 85. Included in this plan is a prominent site for the city hall, fire station, and library. This plan attempts to combine the advantages of the former compact business district and the more spacious characteristics of the modern shopping center.

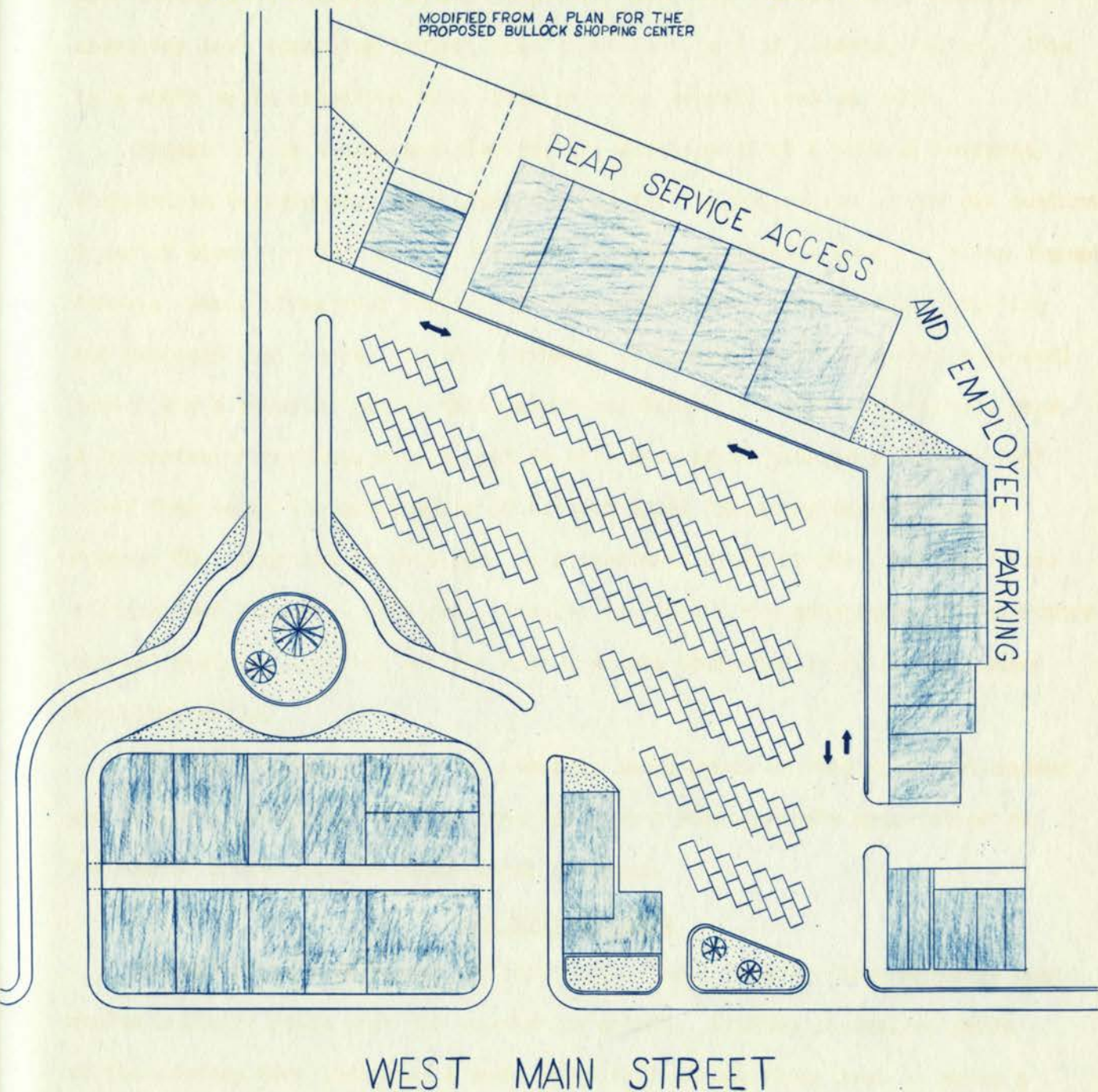
In order to promote the best possible development of this area businessmen and property owners should join together into a businessmen's association to formulate improvement and promotional programs.

HOW MUCH BUSINESS

The above plans represent ultimate objectives; however, these projects must evolve indirect ratio with the population growth. Studies in various parts of the country have indicated a wide range in business floor area to serve a community - from 20 to 40 square feet per person. In Deland, Florida, for example, a small community of 11,000 persons, there is an average of about 30 square feet of commercial floor area per person. Because of factors already

NICEVILLE SHOPPING CENTER PLAN

MODIFIED FROM A PLAN FOR THE
PROPOSED BULLOCK SHOPPING CENTER



VALPARAISO

A PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

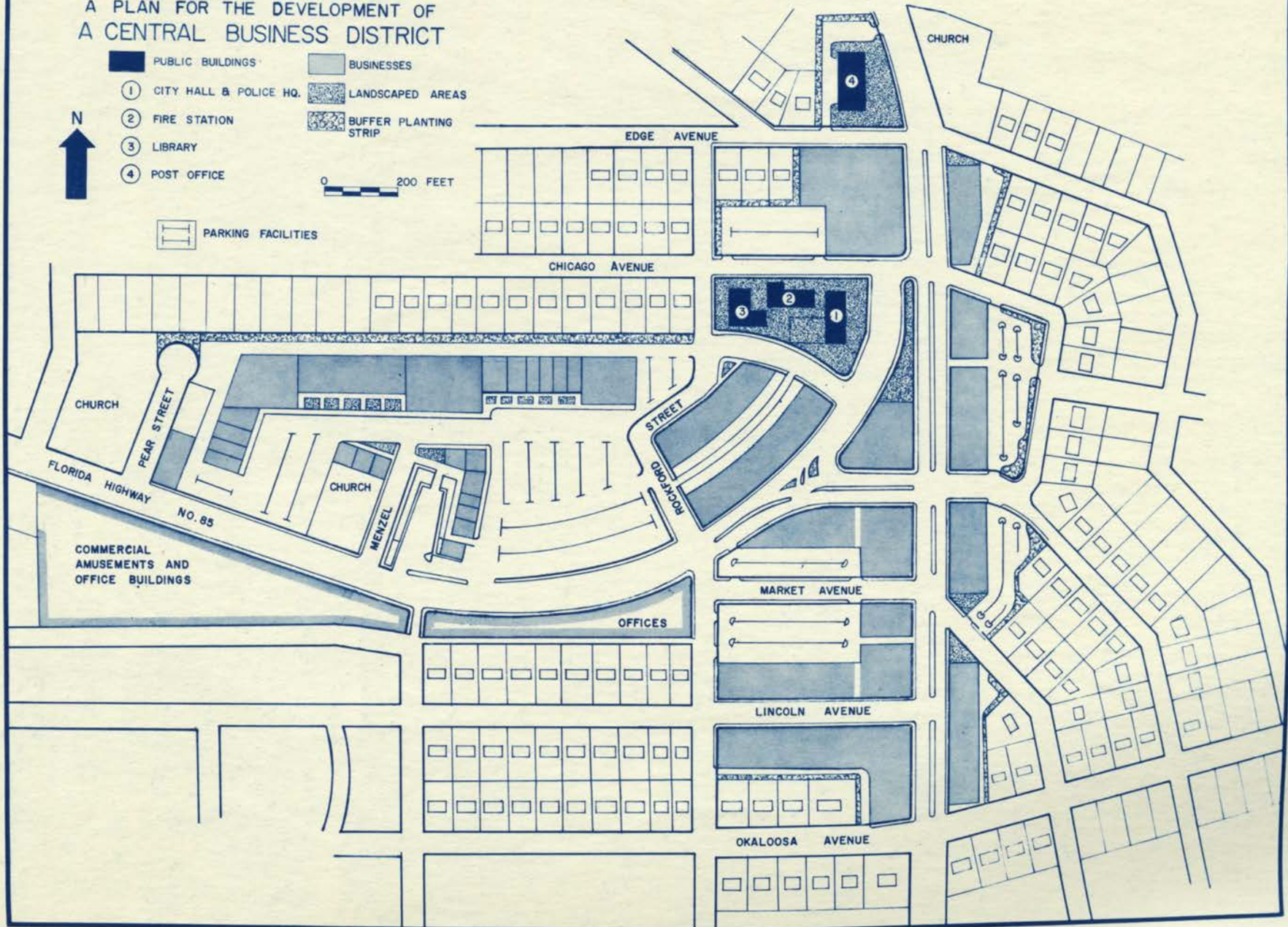


Figure 27

discussed on the relatively low commercial potential, a figure of 20-25 square feet of floor area per person seems more reasonable for the Valparaiso - Niceville area. Based upon a 1970 projection of 16,000 persons living in the Niceville - Valparaiso Census Division, there appears to be a need for an additional 80,000 to 100,000 square feet of commercial floor area over the next eight or ten years. However some of the present commercial buildings must be replaced by larger, more modern, better located facilities, so the total business activity will be increased considerably by business redevelopment.

PARKING

At the present time there are no serious parking problems in Valparaiso and Niceville. To forestall the development of future problems of this nature the proposed Zoning Ordinance included provisions for minimum requirements for off-street parking in connection with all future development. If enforced, these requirements should avoid any major parking problem, but many business developments will find it advantageous to exceed these requirements. Many shopping centers, for example, provide three times as much area in parking as in retail floor area.

It would be advantageous for Valparaiso to increase its competitive retail position through the development of a central commercial center, as proposed in figure 25. Ample off-street parking in free lots would be an effective means of promoting the development of this area. To be effective in small towns parking must be very convenient, within 300 feet of the stores to be served. Convenient sites that fit into the overall development plan of this area are indicated in figure 25. These should be purchased by the city or by a businessmen's association in advance of development and an increase in property values. When such city parking lots or common private lots are developed, businesses within 300 to 400 feet could be exempted from the off-street parking

provisions of the zoning ordinance.

DEVELOPMENT OF
HEAVY COMMERCIAL AND
INDUSTRIAL AREAS

The chapter on Land Use discusses the present industrial and heavy commercial (warehousing, building trades, construction, etc.) development and considers some of the advantage of the area for additional development. The Land Use Plan recommends two areas be reserved in Niceville for industrial use. One area is located west of the golf course along Highway 85, which has accessibility to the highway and rail facilities. Another area is indicated along 27th Street with access to barge facilities. This plan also indicates the need for accessibility via good streets.

In addition to these areas there is ample acreage outside the corporate area of either community to accommodate those modern industries desiring unusually large sites. The Land Use Plan of the Eglin Urbanizing Area indicates those areas best suited for industrial use, with adequate safeguards for the development of abutting lands.

CHAPTER X

PLANNING PROCEDURES AND IMPLEMENTATION

The preparation of the Comprehensive City Plan marks only the beginning of the planning process.

During the course of the preparation of this report meetings were held with the City Council, and Planning Board of Niceville. A strong interest in planning was evident and in the following pages are suggestions intended to make planning a more functioning part of the every day administration. It will be up to the Planning Board to make the people of the community more planning conscious in order that the implementation of the plan will be understood and supported.

Niceville should have established a legally constituted planning board with certain defined review powers. A copy of such an act, patterned after the Standard Enabling Act recommended by the U. S. Department of Commerce, will be supplied. Functions, powers, and duties may be defined generally as follows:

(1) It should become familiar with the broad objectives of the Comprehensive plan and urge action by the proper political group. The Board should initiate studies resulting in more detailed plans.

(2) Review and make recommendations on all decisions by other agencies, public or private, dealing with the subject matter of the comprehensive plan.

(3) Review and make recommendations on all subdivision plats, being guided by subdivision regulations that may be adopted by the governing body.

(4) Review all amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Plan.

(5) Plans for public works, such as streets, utilities, parking facilities, parks and other community facilities, should be reviewed by the Planning Board for recommendations involving the coordination of these plans with the comprehensive plan.

(6) Develop general plans and review all specific projects dealing with urban development where such a program is being undertaken by the City.

(7) Prepare or review the city's capital improvements program, based upon the Comprehensive Plan, and recommend an extension each year to the capital improvements budget.

(8) Devise ways and means of public education to stimulate and stir to action the public consciousness. Endeavor to coordinate the thinking of various public groups with those of the governing body.

(9) All proposed purchases or sales of city property should be studied by the Planning Board, which should make recommendations regarding the effect of such action on the General Land Use Plan.

Periodically the Planning Boards of Valparaiso and Niceville should meet together to discuss the broader aspects of planning for the entire area. Many problems are of mutual concern not only in the planning phase but also in the financing and administration phases. The creation of an administrative authority, proposed earlier, offers the machinery for area planning projects and their financing and administration.

Through committee work the Planning Board of each community can accomplish much of the additional planning required to implement the Plan. But this procedure involves more time and experience than most lay boards possess. To realize the maximum benefit from the plan it is strongly recommended that continuing consulting services be contracted. In this manner detailed implementation plans can be prepared and the plan can be kept up-to-date. Records on land uses, economic trends and population, and other information should be maintained in current form. Visits to the community every three to six months should be sufficient for the consultant to provide this service.

Many of the broader aspects discussed in this Comprehensive Plan report will require detailed plans of implementation by specialized consultants, such as engineers skilled in sewerage design. Any urban renewal projects, for example, will require additional housing surveys and detailed plans by a planning consultant.

Every three to five years the zoning plan and ordinance should be re-studied

to consider the need for modernization and revision. The impartial review of a consultant is especially beneficial.

MEANS OF IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan is summarized with major features shown in the general Land Use Plan. However, many detailed plans of implementation, such as the Major Street Plan, the Zoning Plan, the Area Treatment Plan, and Commercial Development Plan, are required to effect the broad, long-range objectives of the Land Use Plan.

THE ZONING TOOL

Zoning is the most potent tool available to implement the major objectives of the Land Use Plan. However, there are features that appear on the Land Use Plan which differ with the Zoning Plan. To understand these differences one must look at the Land Use Plan as a broad, generalized guide for the entire urban area, which must be implemented over a period of many years through the employment of many planning tools. Zoning is only one of these tools; subdivision regulations are another.

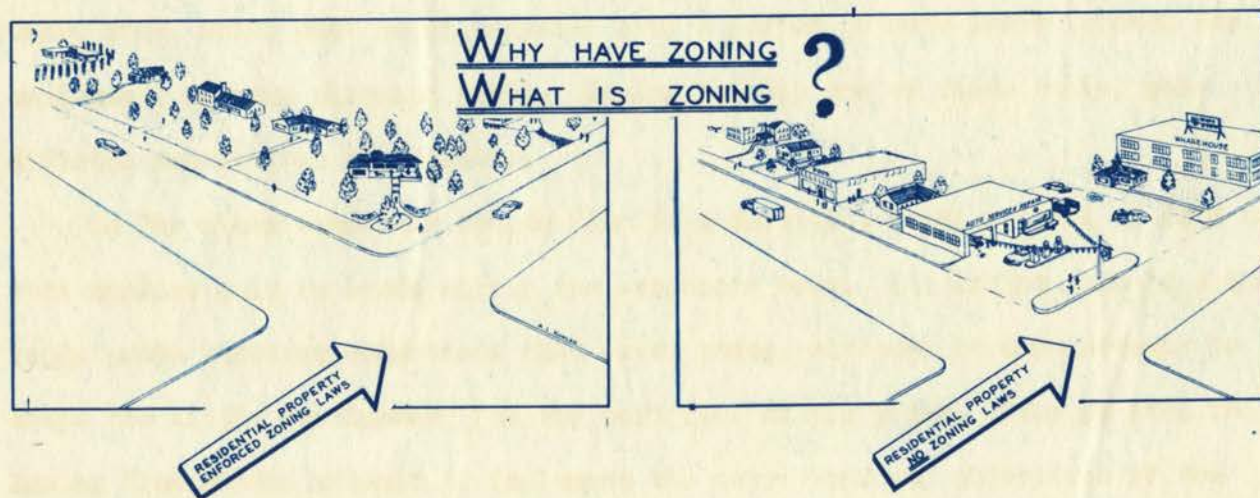
On the other hand, the Zoning Plan is a detailed, legal control of land use that applies only to lands within the corporate area. The Zoning Plan is a short range guide treating conditions that exist today, although it does attempt to shape the city's development for the next five or six years. Step by step the Zoning Plan should attempt to implement the major land use objectives of the Land Use Plan, insofar as it controls the amount and location of lands used for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

There are certain limitations to zoning as a tool in effecting the Land Use Plan. Zoning cannot legally reserve future areas for parks, schools, and other public purposes. Zoning can seldom accomplish the redevelopment of substandard

housing areas by rezoning for commercial or industrial uses. Zoning, however, can accomplish many additional goals besides those incorporated in the Land Use Plan. Some of these additional goals are: Lessening of congestion in the streets through off-street parking provisions, aesthetic improvement through sign regulation, the protection of property rights to light and air through the preservation of open space and control of building heights, the control of population density through lot size and lot coverage, etc.

Niceville is currently operating under zoning, and a revised zoning plan and ordinance have been proposed as a part of the Comprehensive Planning Program. It is strongly recommended that the proposed zoning plan be passed and strictly enforced, avoiding the past practices of "spot zoning".

FIGURE 28



The revised Zoning Plan, when adopted, must not be viewed as a static, inflexible plan. It would be impractical to attempt to implement in one step all of the objectives of the Land Use Plan. As the land area develops and economic opportunities unfold over the years, there will be many requests for rezoning. Although "spot zoning" should be avoided, each request should be considered on its merits and evaluated in the light of the general Land Use Plan.

If consistent with the Land Use Plan, the particular property and all others of similar circumstances in the vicinity of the request may be rezoned after public hearing. Every 3 - 5 years the zoning plan and ordinance should be given a general review for revision and up dating.

SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

The second most useful devise for the implementation of the Land Use Plan is the review and regulation of subdivision developments. Through this devise the City can establish orderliness by requiring the subdivision of land and sale of property only by recorded plats; recognition of the major street framework can be required; parks, recreation, and school sites can be reserved. Subdivisions can be reviewed and suggestions made for the development of good residential street patterns with adequate provision for drainage and utilities. Suggestions can be made in the process of review for additional protection of subdivisions through deed restrictions.

Because of topographic conditions, there are some areas of the City which should not be developed. The Planning Board in reviewing subdivision plats should be careful to point out the hazards involved.

A separate report on subdivision analysis and a proposed subdivision ordinance was submitted.

ISSUING BUILDING PERMITS

Prior to any construction a building permit should be required. Prerequisite to the granting of a building permit the City administrative official should check the proposal for consistency with various elements of the Plan. If contrary to the Zoning Plan, setbacks imposed according to the Major Street Plan, requirements of the subdivision ordinance, minimum housing code, or building code, the building permit should not be issued.

URBAN RENEWAL

A considerable task of re-planning is required in Niceville in order to overcome the mistakes of the past. Much of the future development in Niceville should be directed toward the redevelopment of existing properties. Some business properties that are strategically located will be redeveloped because of economic advantages. Unfortunately, many old, rundown and obsolete properties will continue to yield a good return because of the low investment, and economics will not help in the redevelopment of these. "Urban Renewal" is a term that has come into widespread use, which applies to a program of federal assistance for urban renewal and redevelopment of blighted and slum properties.

Niceville can justify extensive projects of this type, and it is recommended that enabling legislation be sought as soon as possible. Without some outside assistance it is doubtful that Niceville can accomplish any significant amount of redevelopment.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

Many of the planning objectives can be realized by adhering to plans for regulation, which involves little cost. However, some objectives, such as the acquisition of a new civic center site or development of a sanitary sewer system will require the expenditure of considerable funds over a period of years. In the following chapter a capital improvements program is discussed.

CHAPTER XI

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

The previous analysis and plans indicate the need for projects, many of which require the expenditure of considerable funds. A capital improvement is defined as a major improvement to the physical plant of the city, as differentiated from ordinary repairs or maintenance. Included are such items as expenditures for construction, replacement, major repair, addition or modification to public buildings, highways, bridges, parks, and utilities or any expenditure for the purchase of land, buildings, structures, or major equipment.

It is generally helpful to classify the capital improvement projects according to a priority and time of scheduling. Some projects are more necessary than others; on this basis a priority is indicated: A, B, or C. Some are more urgent than others; some can be deferred until later pending more advantageous financing.

A few capital improvement items can be included in the annual budget, but their number and amount must be small. Most major improvements, such as extensions to the sanitary sewer system and street paving, will require bond financing, either general obligation, revenue, or special assessment. General obligation bonds apply to an ad valorem debt against all real property of the city. Revenue bonds are used where customers pay a service charge sufficient to cover operation and administration or where income from special tax sources, such as the cigarette tax, are pledged. This type of financing should be used for sewer and water improvements. Special assessment bonds can be used to pave streets and sidewalks.

A. UTILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Water service is financed from monthly service charges, which are adequate at this time for operations and extensions. As new areas develop, water lines

should be installed according to City specifications at the expense of the developers and taken over by the City. These improvements carry an A priority and are scheduled on a continuing basis.

Niceville recently completed a sewage treatment plant and is in the process of extending sewers. These facilities should be financed from revenue bonds backed by monthly service charges. However, it may be necessary in the initial stages to pledge other tax sources, such as the cigarette, utility or franchise tax. Priority A, Year 1 on.

B. STREETS

As discussed in Chapter VI, extensive street improvements are needed in Niceville. The scope of the problem is such that these projects must be extended over many years. A policy decision is required to determine the most equitable means of financing: (1) Special assessment bonds, whereby the City pays one-third and abutting property owners pay two-thirds of the cost; (2) general obligation bonds against the entire city's taxable property.

In the future the City should apply rigid specifications for street improvements in order to avoid such extensive sub-standard paving conditions as now exist. Developers should install at their own expense streets in all new subdivisions, according to City specifications. Priority A, Year 1 on.

C. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

A number of policy decisions are required before a definite community facilities program can be formulated. The voters should decide the question of consolidation or the City Council should decide to what extent various projects discussed in Chapter VIII can be jointly financed with the City of Valparaiso.

(1) Hospital. A new hospital should be constructed to serve both cities and the surrounding area. Site acquisition should be a responsibility of both communities; one site is recommended as an urban renewal project, which would qualify for federal assistance. From 10 to 20 acres should be acquired for a medical center. Priority A, Year 2 for site acquisition. Construction should be financed as a special county hospital district. Priority B, Year 2 or 3.

(2) Civic Center. The present city hall is inadequate and should be replaced on a new site. Site acquisition - \$30,000, priority A, Year 2.

<u>City Hall:</u>	Priority B, Year 3	\$ 25,000
<u>Fire Station:</u>	Priority B, Year 3 for building	
	and equipment	45,000
<u>Library:</u>	Priority C, Year 5.	15,000

(3) Community Center and Marina. This should be undertaken as a joint project with the City of Valparaiso. A general purpose community center building, waterfront park, and marina should be constructed:

Priority B, Year 2 for site acquisition	\$ 50,000
Priority C, Year 5 for building and marina	100,000
Priority C, Year 5 for swimming pool	50,000

(4) Parks and Recreation Areas. A number of park and recreation areas are suggested for acquisition. Some of these should be obtained through dedication as areas are subdivided. However, substantial areas are already subdivided, although undeveloped, and the City probably must purchase these. For site acquisition it is proposed that a general obligation bond issue be considered for an expenditure over the next five years of about \$100,000 for the purchase of neighborhood recreation areas. A sum of \$1,500 - \$2,000 should be budgetted annually for park and recreation area improvements. Priority B.

(5) Doolittle Park. As a joint project, the City of Valparaiso and the City of Niceville should each budget about \$10,000 to get this project underway. Over the years additions can be made out of current income. Priority B, Year 1 - 3.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS BUDGETTING

After further study of the general items discussed above, the Planning Board should undertake to arrange projects into a 6 year schedule. This type of budget must be worked out by City officials after various policy decisions are made, as discussed in various phases of this report. After these policy decisions are made projects can be refined and classified with greater accuracy and detail according to costs, scheduling, and financing. Each year the Planning Board should revise the list and extend it another year.

After all projects are scheduled it will then be possible to determine the amount and type of bond issues for a given year. Probably, one issue should be made, but bonds could be sold as needed over a period of several years.

