



Flour Bluff Community Revitalization Plan

**Adopted by the City Council
_____, 2015**

FLOUR BLUFF COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The City of Corpus Christi is a beautiful bay front community with the one of the largest ports in the nation. As the City grows, it becomes increasingly important to ensure that certain older areas are not left behind to become blighted and detrimental to our residents.

Over the past fifteen years, the City, school district and others have been investing in an area of the City known as Flour Bluff and identified by the map shown on **Exhibit A** to this Plan. These investments have been intended to revitalize a deteriorating community. Despite a concentrated revitalization effort and a general understanding of the desired goals, a separate written plan for the Flour Bluff area has never been formally adopted. Thus, the purpose of this Plan is to seek public input as to the City's efforts to date along with additional efforts needed to provide a process for continued revitalization of the area known as Flour Bluff.

Sources for investment in the Flour Bluff neighborhood begin with the Flour Bluff Independent School District which, for the last ten years, has provided quality schools to the Flour Bluff area. In addition, the City of Corpus Christi has invested Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from HUD and the City's Capital Improvement Program. The City has used and continues to utilize bond financing approved by voters in 2008, 2012 and 2014 for various improvements. Federal spending in this area has spiked over the last four years. Additionally, as improvements have taken hold, the private sector has made increasing investments in the Plan area.

DESCRIPTION OF AREA

The Flour Bluff area, called the "Revitalization Area" for purposes of this Plan, is described by the map shown on **Exhibit A**. Flour Bluff is a neighborhood community of Corpus Christi with its own personality. It is on a peninsula that is separated from the rest of the City by water on three sides. It borders the Laguna Madre on the east, Oso Creek and Bay to the west, Corpus Christi Bay to the north and the King Ranch to the south, encompassing 13.64 square miles or 13,739 acres. To the east across the Laguna Madre from Flour Bluff is Padre Island and the two are connected by the Kennedy Causeway. Flour Bluff accesses the rest of Corpus Christi to the west predominantly via South Padre Island Drive (SPID) which traverses Oso Bay into the remainder of Corpus Christi.

The economics of the Revitalization Area have been significantly influenced by the Corpus Christi Naval Air Station (CC-NAS) which is outlined in orange on the map on Exhibit A. The Naval Air Station was built in 1941 as part of the World War II war effort. The Air Station houses Naval flight operations and these operations have shifted emphasis from Naval air flight operations to Army helicopter and related operations. Many of the areas in Flour Bluff with blight and deterioration are properties that housed the original military workers at the Naval Air Station. Activity at the Naval Air Station declined over time as a new Naval Air Station was built at Ingleside, Texas. This reduced activities at the Corpus Christi Naval Air Station until 2009 when

BRAC military restructuring at the Naval Air Station expanded Army operations. A master plan was developed in 2009 to improve and upgrade facilities at the Corpus Christi Naval Air Station for Army helicopter operations. In the last four years this has resulted in major improvements to the Naval Air Station, with continued planned improvements through 2040.

The population of the Flour Bluff area is 23,338. A majority of the population in the Revitalization Area is Caucasian (68%) with the remaining ethnic groups being 25% Hispanic, 5% African American and 7% other. The Revitalization Area includes all or parts of census tracts 29, 30.01, 30.02, 31.01, and 31.02. Over 22% of the population in the Revitalization Area has income below the poverty level and 78% of the population is under the age of 20.

CONSIDERATIONS IN IDENTIFYING THE AREA

The Revitalization Area for this Plan has been identified based upon a desire to improve and/or revitalize the following areas:

- ❖ **Infrastructure – Transportation, Drainage and Sewer.** Several roads in the Revitalization Area are main arteries to the center of Corpus Christi. Streets such as Waldron Road, Laguna Shores NAS Drive, and Flour Bluff Drive connect the Revitalization Area to Padre Island Drive which is the main access to and from the central city. Many of these roads have been in disrepair for years and are in need of rehabilitation and expansion. Many roads do not have curb and gutter and thus present stormwater and safety issues. Coastal flooding is common in certain parts of the peninsula and adequate stormwater controls are lacking off the main thoroughfares of Waldron Road, Flour Bluff Drive and Padre Island Drive. Some older sewer lines in the area are cast iron and have deteriorated and need replacement.
- ❖ **Lack of Social and Recreational Facilities.** The Area has limited recreational facilities and the community pool closed in 2013. Much of the peninsula shoreline is not developed for recreational activities. Public and private projects are addressing this issue.
- ❖ **Public Protection.** Crime rates in the area are well documented. Crime in Flour Bluff is improving but is still 13% higher than the Corpus Christi average. The average Corpus Christi crime rate is 33% higher than the State average.
- ❖ **Blight.** Many residential houses, apartments and businesses are vacant, deteriorated, or had noticeable deferred maintenance when this revitalization work was initiated. While conditions are improving, much of the 40-50 years old housing stock and older commercial buildings have noticeable deferred maintenance conditions. Many vacant properties have high grass, illegal encampments and illegal dumping or are generally in disrepair. Most of these conditions are related to the reduced activity at the Naval Air Station discussed above.
- ❖ **Schools.** The emphasis of the revitalization of the area has centered on making the schools and school system exemplary. School attendance was declining and the schools were old and in need of renovation when this revitalization work first began. Access to quality schools is a critical component of revitalizing the area, particularly for those residing in the

Flour Bluff area. Over the last four years and going forward it is contemplated that the emphasis on school quality will continue.

- ❖ **Inadequate Public Services.** The Flour Bluff area is in need of a disposal facility (transfer station) for solid waste, including discarded appliances and furniture as well as safe disposal of household hazardous waste. There is much dumping of these type items in the Flour Bluff area due to lack of such facilities. Providing these public services would reduce dumping in the Flour Bluff area.
- ❖ **Adverse Economic Conditions.** The Flour Bluff revitalization efforts are impaired by the fact that the property is bordered on three sides by water and the fourth side by undevelopable land. Access to the rest of the City from the peninsula is limited to a select number of routes including the Crosstown Freeway Bridge, Yorktown Boulevard Bridge or by boat. The cost to build and insure properties is very high due to its proximity to coastal waters (hurricane, wind, flooding concerns). These additional costs, along with no clear attraction to the area, negatively impact economic development.
- ❖ **Business Development.** To date the main factor affecting the improvement of the economy in the Revitalization Area has been the status of Corpus Christi Naval Air Station. Corpus Christi continues to be proactive in improving infrastructure and the activities of our local military installations by targeted improvements to the Flour Bluff area that surrounds the Naval Air Station in order to maintain the base as the Army Depot, which is the largest single employer in the Revitalization Area employing over 5,000 people. Naval Air Station retention and/or expansion will have the greatest impact on area economics. Focusing on additional business retention, redevelopment and expansion efforts is critical, along with access to retail and employment centers because they are both vital to improving opportunities for the community and its residents.

TARGETED COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL REVITALIZATION

Flour Bluff has many older single-family residential, multi-family residential and commercial buildings which are in disrepair, needing to be either renovated or demolished and reconstructed. Many buildings in Flour Bluff are over 50 years old. Though Flour Bluff desires to continue to attract new commercial businesses and housing projects, the emphasis of this Plan is on the renovation or demolition/reconstruction of existing older buildings. As a result the main emphasis of the plan is as follows:

1. Commercial – Attracting more new businesses and expanding and redeveloping existing businesses.
2. Residential – Because of the extent of existing affordable housing portfolio resulting from previously depressed economic circumstances, the focus going forward is for continued rehabilitation and redevelopment of the current affordable housing portfolio, both multi-family and single-family, along with attracting and promoting market based housing to the area.
3. Vacant properties – Working with property owners to maintain their properties and restore pride of ownership.

IMPROVEMENTS AND PROGRAMS ALREADY COMPLETED IN THE REVITALIZATION AREA

The following improvements and programs have already been implemented to assist the Revitalization Area. While the City has been working with the Flour Bluff Independent School District to improve the Revitalization Area over the past fifteen years, the projects below have been implemented since January 1, 2011 and reflect more than \$25 million of improvements.

1. Infrastructure – Transportation and Storm Water.

Project: Flour Bluff Drive, Phase I, SPID to Graham and Flour Bluff Drive, Phase II, Graham to Don Patricio shown as a light green line on the map on **Exhibit A** involves reconstruction and widening of existing unimproved two lane roadway with a turning lane where necessary. Other improvements include curb and gutter, sidewalks, ADA curb ramps, pavement marking, water lines, manholes and streets. The improvements were completed in 2012 and provide efficient major street systems for the feeder streets to North Padre Island Drive.

Source of Funding: Corpus Christi bond funds (2008 Issuance)

Funding Amount: \$7,371,346

Project: Flour Bluff Drive and SH358 intersection shown on the map on **Exhibit A** involves landscaping and various other improvements.

Source of Funding: Texas Department of Transportation Funding

Funding Amount: \$385,000

2. Recreational.

Project: Bluff Landing (Flour Bluff Marina) opened in March 12, 2011 and transformed a blighted area containing sunken boats, trash and other negative elements into a full service marina. This facility includes boat slips, pavilion, 23 room hotel, a restaurant, four corporate houses, and offers tackle and bait. It has become popular for kiteboarding, windsurfing and cookouts, in addition to fishing. See **Exhibit A**.

Source of Funding: Private

Funding Amount: Approximately \$10,000,000

3. Public Protection.

Project: The City's Police Department has located a police substation on Waldron to facilitate reducing the elevated crime levels in Flour Bluff. This substation opened in 2004 and has increased police presence in the area.

Source of Funding: City funding.

Project: The Flour Bluff Independent School System added its own district security force to complement the City police presence in 2012 and to mitigate the effect of area crime on the schools.

Source of Funding: School District funding

Funding Amount: Current annual security budget over \$550,000

4. **Schools.**

Project: Provide exemplary education for the youth of Flour Bluff. This began 15 years ago and today the schools of Flour Bluff Independent School District are exemplary at all levels.

Source of Funding: Flour Bluff Independent School District

5. **Military (Federal) Developments.**

Project: Expansion of the Naval Air Station with construction of an Aircraft Corrosion Control Facility (\$34.2 million) and an aircraft maintenance building (\$21 million) by the Army on the Naval Air Station. This facility will be completed in 2016. This is a significant increase in the existing Corpus Christi Army Depot maintenance capacity. See **Exhibit A.**

Source of Funding: Federal Military Funding

Funding Amount: \$55,200,000

Project: Construction of the Naval Air Training building (P450). This project was completed in 2014.

Source of Funding: Federal Military Funding

Funding Amount: Over \$20,000,000

6. **Business Development.**

Project: Walmart. On November 2, 2011 the new Walmart Super Store opened its new 24 hour facility in the Revitalization Area. See the location of this facility on the map attached as **Exhibit A.**

Source of Funding: Private

Funding Amount: In excess of \$11,500,000

IMPROVEMENTS AND PROGRAMS PLANNED FOR THE REVITALIZATION AREA

The following improvements and programs are underway or planned for the Revitalization Area. Over \$100 million of improvements and programs are expected to be implemented in the next two years.

1. Infrastructure – Drainage Project.

Project: Corpus Christi CDBG projects outlined in red on the map on **Exhibit A** involving installation of new underground drainage system and other drainage improvements to the northern area of Flour Bluff bounded by Flour Bluff Drive, Matlock Street, Military Drive, Jester Drive, NAS Drive and the undeveloped properties along Jester and Matlock. The design is underway and construction will start once the contract is awarded.

Source of Funding: Corpus Christi Capital Improvement Funds

Funding Amount: \$1,800,000

Project: Waldron Road – 2014 bond funds used for a road project from Caribbean Drive to Glenoak Drive designated as the yellow line shown on the map on **Exhibit A**. The road will be reconstructed, widened and rehabilitated into a five lane road with utilities. Improvements will include curb and gutter, sidewalks, ADA curb ramps, pavement marking and bikeway elevation design. Utility improvements will include underground stormwater system, water distribution and sanitary sewer system and various franchise utility relocations (as required). The improvements were approved by City voters in the November 2014 bond proposal and will be funded with bond proceeds.

Source of Funding: Corpus Christi bond funds (2014 issuance)

Funding Amount: \$7,937,999

Project: Laguna Shore Road – City funds for the Laguna Shores Road sewer line replacement designated as the dark blue line on the map on **Exhibit A**. There are two force mains. The 10 inch cast iron main has exceeded its useful life and is planned for replacement. Construction is to start in 2016 and completion is expected early 2017.

Source of Funding: Corpus Christi Capital Improvement Funds

Funding Amount: \$6,689,600

2. Blight. Since the revitalization work began, the City has noticed improvement to the neighborhood homes. However, deteriorated conditions continue off the main feeder roads to Padre Island Drive. This will only improve with more revitalization efforts focusing on

the deteriorated homes and business improvements. The City has implemented a program to address blight in specific problem areas of Flour Bluff. Beginning in 2012 the City implemented Operation Proud Partnership where police officers and city code enforcement staff meet with residents in neighborhoods to address code violations. Violations have included high grass, un-kept properties, illegal encampments and illegal dumping. This ongoing process aims at rebuilding neighborhood pride and is making marked improvements by increasing code compliance in these areas.

3. Recreation.

Project: Natatorium to be constructed by the Flour Bluff Independent School District on Waldron Road. The peninsula has no public swimming pool. The Natatorium will be available to the public. See **Exhibit A.**

Source of Funding: Flour Bluff Independent School District Bonds

Funding Amount: \$9,000,000 budgeted

Project: Parker Park Improvements – 2012 Bond Funding. Park improvement plan is to modernize and beautify the park including, but not limited to, irrigation, landscaping, etc. Work is expected to be completed by January 2016. See **Exhibit A.**

Source of Funding: Corpus Christi bond funds (2012 issuance)

Funding Amount: \$600,000

4. Schools.

Project: On May 10, 2014 the Flour Bluff School District \$48 million dollar bond fund was approved, which included the funding for the Natatorium detailed above. These funds are to be used to upgrade all the school facilities in the school system. Though the School District encompasses more than the revitalization area, these funds will be spent at the main campus on Waldron Road. All this funding will be funded inside the Flour Bluff revitalization area. See **Exhibit A.**

Source of Funding: Flour Bluff Independent School District

Funding Amount: \$39,000,000

5. Public Services.

Project: The City of Corpus Christi has planned the development of a Flour Bluff Citizens Collection Center in the area which will collect solid waste, discarded appliances and furniture and household hazardous waste. Timing of construction is contingent upon acquisition of the land and awarding contracts.

Source of Funding: Corpus Christi Capital Improvement Funds

Funding Amount: \$4,650,000

Project: Ethel Eyerly Senior Center - major remodeling and expansion. The Ethel Eyerly Senior Center is a city owned facility that provides activities for senior citizens during the week days. The center is located in the area as shown on the map on **Exhibit A**. Major remodeling of this center includes, but is not limited to, remodeling and expanding the restrooms including modification to meet ADA accessibility standards, HVAC replacement, and reconstruction of the entrance including new entrance canopy. Remaining improvements will be completed in the last 48 months.

Source of Funding: CDBG Block Grant

Funding Amount: \$329,465

Remaining Amount To Be Funded: \$201,500

6. Military (Federal) Developments.

Project: Substantial expansion and modernization of the Naval Air Station is underway by the military. There is a master plan in place to renovate or reconstruct a significant part of the facilities located at the Naval Air Station. This plan is expected to be ongoing through 2040. The biggest component of the plan is the demolition of Building 8 (approximately 1 million square feet) into the new Building 1700 (approximately 1.6 million square feet). This is a ten (10) phase project. The total cost of this project alone is budgeted at \$800 million to \$1 billion. This is expected to signal long term maintenance of the military presence in Corpus Christi. See **Exhibit A**.

Source of Funding: Federal Military Funding

Amount Funded: Phase I completed in 2013 at total cost of \$38,000,000.

Amount to be Funded: Phase II and III have been funded and are in design with an estimated cost of \$88,000,000

CONTINUED PLANNING FOR THE REVITALIZATION AREA

The improvements and programs described in this Plan are examples of previous and current activities implemented to revitalize Flour Bluff. However, the City's commitment to this Revitalization Plan is ongoing. The City will continue to identify opportunities to establish programs or provide improvements that will continue to revitalize the area, uplifting the residents of the neighborhoods and supporting the area businesses to continue the cycle of improvement and avoid future deterioration.

ANTICIPATED RESULTS

The City believes the initiatives described in this Plan will further stop and continue to reverse existing deterioration in the neighborhoods of the Revitalization Area, improve the aesthetics of the area, provide additional infrastructure for accessibility and development, increase the tax base, support existing businesses, and recruit additional businesses, which will lead to more opportunity for those living and working in the Revitalization Area.

Each initiative in the Revitalization Area, whether already implemented or planned for completion, supports a framework that will improve this neighborhood. By combining resources from the City, Federal, School District, and the private sector, the Revitalization Area will achieve major economic infusion. Because many of these resources have already been spent or allocated, the City is confident that the Plan will continue to be fully implemented as intended.

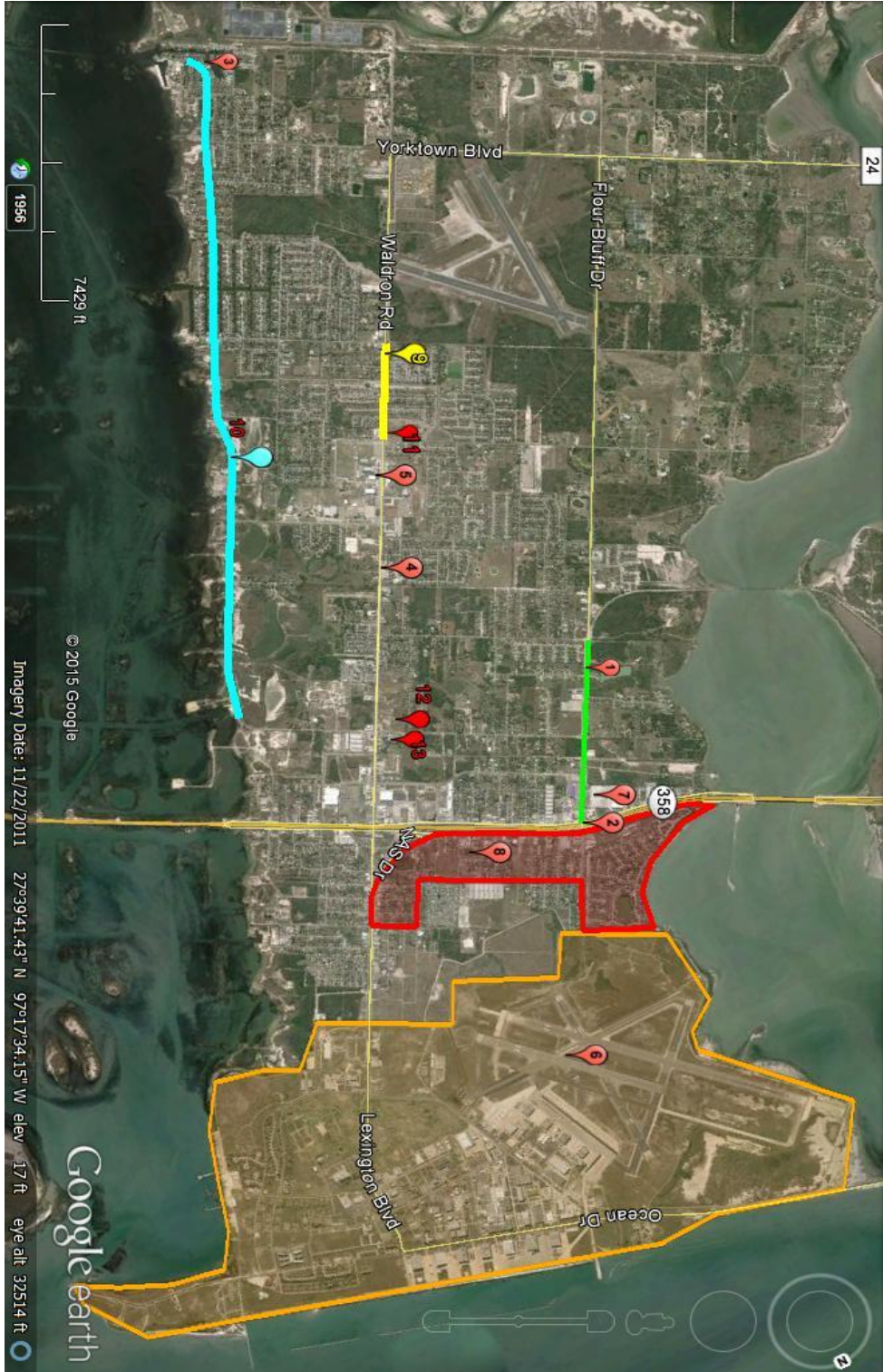
APPROVAL

For all these reasons, the City Council of the City of Corpus Christi hereby adopts the Flour Bluff Community Revitalization Plan, upon receipt and consideration of public comment and deliberation at an open public meeting.

Date of Adoption: _____, 2015

EXHIBIT A

Revitalization Area



City of Corpus Christi

Flour Bluff

Revitalization Plan

MAP NOTES

1. Flour Bluff Drive between Padre Island Drive and Don Patricio –
2. Transportation and Storm Water Project.
3. Flour Bluff Drive and SH358 intersection TxDOT landscaping project.
4. Bluff Landing (Flour Bluff Marina).
5. Police substation opened on Waldron Road.
6. Flour Bluff Independent School System - Campus.
7. Corpus Christi Naval Air Station.
8. Construction of the Walmart Super Store on Flour Bluff Drive.
9. Drainage project - Flour Bluff Drive, Matlock Drive, Jester Drive, NAS Drive and the undeveloped properties along Jester and Matlock.
10. Waldron Road between Glen Oak and Caribbean Drive approved bond project.
11. Laguna Shores Sewer Replacement.
12. Flour Bluff school system - Natatorium.
13. CPDI – Parker Park Improvement Project.
14. Ethel Eyerly Senior Center.