

FIGURE 9.2.4/WEST BILOXI COMMUNITY FACILITIES

## Housing

West Biloxi's housing stock is divided into single-family homes and condominiums/multi-family units that are largely oriented towards vacationers. Most of the single-family homes are located just east of Edgewater Mall and north of Pass Road in stable residential neighborhoods. A majority of condominium and multi-family units are located between Highway 90 and Pass Road. Many of the condominium buildings along Highway 90 were severely damaged or destroyed by Katrina and numerous permits for new condominium projects have been issued since the hurricane, although the actual pace of construction has been slow.

### *Key Issues*

- New condominium construction along Highway 90 will have a major impact on the visual character of one of Biloxi's prime assets.
- Undeveloped and underutilized land in West Biloxi provides the opportunity for new residential and mixed-use development (e.g., along Pass Road) that can serve to "knit together" the neighborhood's fragmented land use pattern and provide new housing opportunities for Biloxi residents. New housing should be located outside of designated flood risk areas wherever possible.

## Economic Development

The "anchors" of West Biloxi's economy are Edgewater Mall (a regional shopping destination); the Mississippi Coast Coliseum and Convention Center; Beauvoir; the Highway 90 and Pass Road commercial corridors; and the Veterans Administration Hospital north of Pass Road. Many condominiums, hotels, motels, and other visitor-oriented businesses along Highway 90 were destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. These have been slow to rebuild, resulting in a shortfall of hotel rooms to support the Convention Center, which is undergoing a major expansion of its facilities.

### *Key Issues*

- Keys to maintaining and strengthening West Biloxi's role as an "engine" of the City's economy include:
  - Promoting the sustainable and orderly redevelopment of its major corridors (Highway 90 and Pass Road);
  - Maintaining the viability of Edgewater Mall; and
  - Supporting the expansion of Mississippi Coast Coliseum and Convention Center (including development of additional hotel rooms).

## West Biloxi Concept

The neighborhood improvement concept for West Biloxi capitalizes on the regional assets—Edgewater Mall, Mississippi Coast Coliseum and Convention Center, Beauvoir, Highway 90, Sand Beach, and Pass Road—that define its identity and are its major contributions to Biloxi’s economy. The proximity of the mall, Convention Center, Beauvoir, Highway 90 and Sand Beach creates an opportunity to establish a new “Hospitality Business” district to replace the existing Convention Center Overlay District. Along with targeted physical (transportation and streetscape) improvements, enactment of this new district can promote a more attractive, accessible, and pedestrian-friendly place with its own unique identity to support the Convention Center expansion. Major transportation improvements (e.g., extension of Popp’s Ferry Road to Highway 90 and Highway 90 improvements) should be implemented in a manner that supports the character of the Convention Center District and provides multi-modal access (i.e., transit, walking, and bicycling in addition to vehicular travel).

Edgewater Mall’s position as a regional retail destination with major commercial uses should continue through supportive zoning and land use policies. Pass Road, currently West Biloxi’s main commercial corridor, can be developed into an attractive retail/mixed-use corridor through design standards and attention to the quality of redevelopment. Appropriate uses include neighborhood-oriented retail and services, low-density office and professional uses, multi-family, and institutional uses. Retail establishments on Pass Road can complement the regional uses in Edgewater Mall, offering a different type of shopping environment. Access management (control of driveways and curb cuts) is a major priority for Pass Road to improve traffic flow and safety.

## West Biloxi Vision

Build a stable residential community and quality regional destination district based on West Biloxi’s scenic, natural, historic, and economic assets.

## West Biloxi Strategies

### Strategy 1

Organize land use and development patterns around 1) a scenic destination district along Highway 90 and the Mississippi Sound with anchors at the Mississippi Coast Coliseum, Edgewater Mall, and Beauvoir; 2) an attractive, retail/mixed-use corridor along Pass Road; and 3) single-family residential neighborhoods located mostly north of Pass Road.

#### *Priority Actions*

- As a priority, enact a Beach Boulevard Corridor Overlay District with design guidelines for new development to maintain scenic character and views, provide pedestrian access (sidewalks), and control vehicular access (limit curb cuts) along the corridor.
- Develop a Pass Road Corridor Overlay District.

### Strategy 2

Establish a network of pedestrian and bike paths in West Biloxi, including an improved Sand Beach Trail that allows residents and visitors to recreate safely.

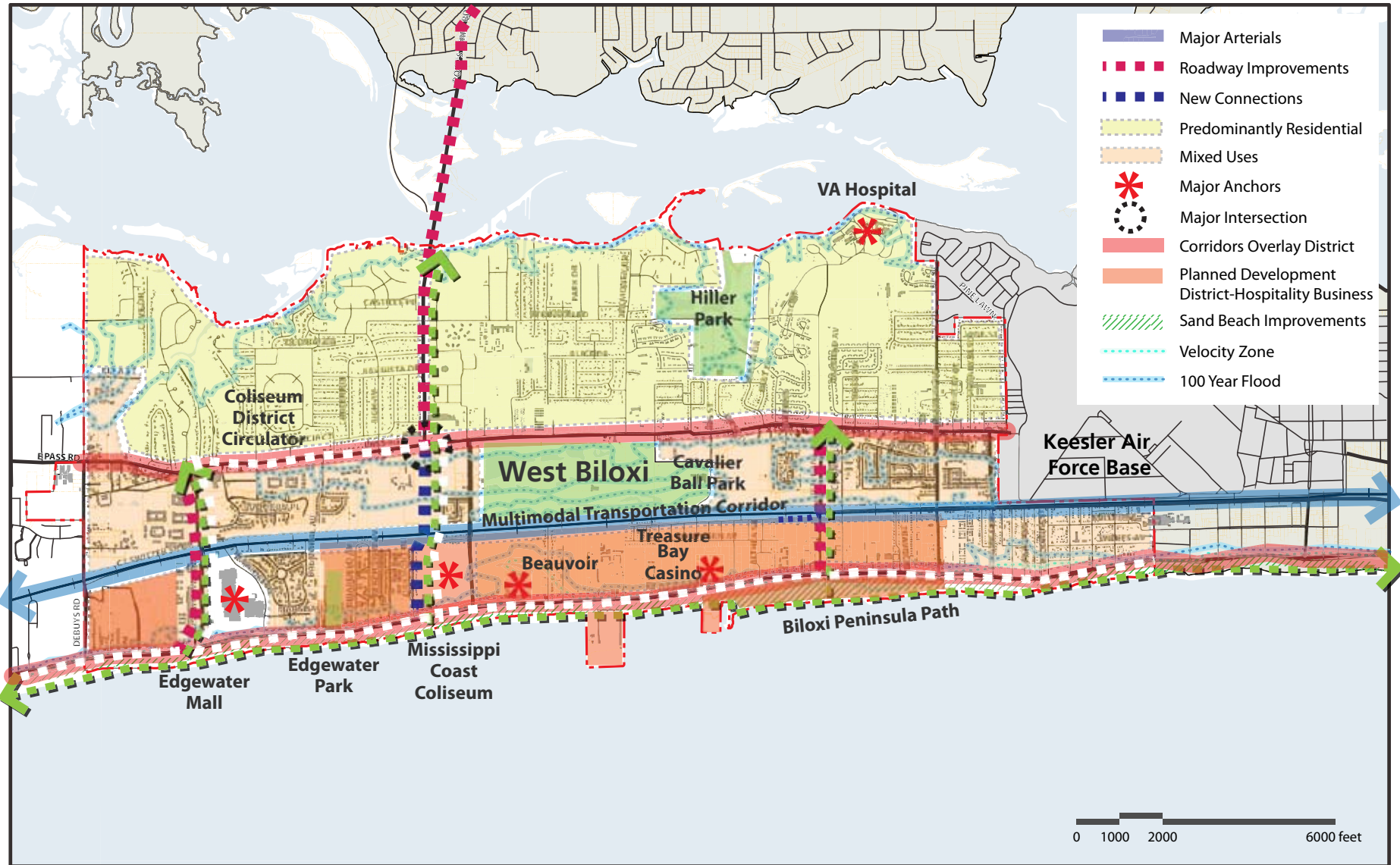


FIGURE 9.2.5/WEST BILOXI CONCEPT MAP

#### *Priority Actions*

- Maintain a continuous public pathway along the Highway 90 corridor (the Biloxi Peninsula Path).
- Create greenway connections from the Sand Beach and the Biloxi Peninsula Path to the interior of West Biloxi and the Back Bay of Biloxi as part of a citywide greenway system.
- Support implementation of the recommendations of the *2008 Sand Beach Master Plan* by the Harrison County Sand Beach Authority, including designated public open spaces (picnic areas, pavilions, splash pool, public pier), vegetated dunes that contribute to storm protection, and sensitively sited public parking lots.

### Strategy 3

Improve east-west and north-south roadway connections serving West Biloxi.

#### *Priority Actions*

Implement the following projects as priorities to improve major roadway connections to and within West Biloxi:

- Popp's Ferry Road/Popp's Ferry Bridge improvements
- Extension of Popp's Ferry Road to Highway 90 in coordination with the Mississippi Coast Coliseum expansion
- Intersection improvements/access management controls along Pass Road
- Widening of Veteran's Avenue from Highway 90 to Pass Road from a two-lane to a four-lane divided roadway
- Extension of Irish Hill Drive west from Veterans Avenue to connect to Greater Avenue

- Establishment of a multimodal transportation corridor along the CSX rail line (east-west corridor project) as a long-term objective

### Strategy 4

Implement multimodal street improvements serving residents, visitors, and employees in West Biloxi.

#### *Priority Actions*

- Construct pedestrian amenities (sidewalks, protected crossings at key points to access the Sand Beach, off-road pathways, etc.).
- Implement bicycle improvements (designated bike lanes or shared routes along major corridors) as part of a city-wide bicycle network.
- Work with CTA to improve transit service in West Biloxi, including the following long-term actions proposed in the 2007 Gulf Coast Transit Development Plan:
  - Streetcar service along Highway 90
  - A "Coliseum District Circulator"
  - East-west corridor bus rapid transit
  - Intercity high-speed rail passenger service using the existing CSX right-of-way

### Strategy 5

Support the expansion of the Mississippi Coast Coliseum as a visitor destination with high-quality supporting hospitality uses such as hotels in the surrounding area. Implement streetscape improvements to create a walkable, pedestrian-friendly district.

*Priority Actions*

- Enact a “Planned Development District—Hospitality Business” with design standards and incentives that encourage quality hotel and retail development within walking distance of the Coliseum and Beauvoir (to replace the existing Convention Center Overlay District).
- Work with the Convention and Visitors Bureau to implement streetscape and pedestrian improvements in coordination with Convention Center expansion.



**Strategy 6**

Support Edgewater Mall’s position as a regional retail destination through land use policies and regulations (i.e., through ongoing application of Regional Business to encourage regional retail uses in Edgewater Mall and Neighborhood / Community Business to encourage neighborhood-oriented retail and services along Pass Road).

*Priority Action*

- Manage retail uses in West Biloxi through consistent application of Regional Business zoning to Edgewater Mall and the Highway 90 corridor and Neighborhood / Community Business zoning to Pass Road.

**Strategy 7**

Develop an open space preservation and enhancement strategy for West Biloxi. Address open space or “green infrastructure” as an integral part of West Biloxi’s land use and development pattern providing benefits such as flood control, water quality treatment, recreation, and scenic quality.

*Priority Actions*

- Discourage development in the floodplain and other sensitive environmental areas, including portions of lands between the CSX rail line and Pass Road that are poorly drained and located within the 100-year floodplain.
- Establish Hiller Park as a major community park and recreational anchor, including establishment of a connection to Pass Road, development of the proposed Mississippi Renaissance Garden, and other community gardens.
- Improve neighborhood parks such as Edgewater and Cavalier.