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INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT

Executive summary

INFRASTRUCTURE ~ SUMMARY

The infrastructure in the Twin Forks Rising District is not fully developed and is less developed in this district than in other parts of the city. In some instances, the under-development is problematic; where storm sewers are inadequate, water stands after heavy rains. This same under-development presents an opportunity. New approaches to handling surface water include “green” strategies which dissipate surface water in a more local way, directing it into underground gravel holding areas which have the added benefit of watering landscaped areas. Clearly much infrastructure is needed in this district. What is needed should be prioritized with the most important needs being filled first, and carefully considered so that the benefits of employing non-traditional solutions may be realized.

Infrastructure elements

Water and sanitary sewer service
Storm sewers
Curbs and gutters
Streets
Sidewalks
Streetlights

BUILDINGS ~ SUMMARY

The buildings in this district are largely residential. Most buildings are small scale single family homes. Churches, schools, and small commercial buildings pepper the area. A smattering of larger scale commercial, industrial, and large civic buildings dot the district. The northern arm of the district is more industrialized than the southern district resulting in a

less fine-grained neighborhood fabric, however the neighborhoods in both arms have a comfortable residential scale. There are nine neighborhoods in the district represented by neighborhood associations and over thirty churches or places of worship. Multistory buildings of three or more stories are rare, but a few are present within the district.

Buildings elements

Housing stock

Commercial

Industrial

Schools and civic structures

Cultural and community buildings

Churches

LANDSCAPE ~ SUMMARY

The district has a surprising number of parks, large and small, but there are many opportunities for more. The riverfront is largely undeveloped and represents a tremendous opportunity for parks which would support both recreation and commercial development. Abandoned lots offer ample opportunity for small infill parks where children can safely play, or communal gardens begun. Streets lack well developed streetscaping, but “green” solutions to surface water treatment invite and would support better-developed landscaping along roads and sidewalks. Street-side trees and flowers provide both beauty and the comfort of shaded walks.

Landscape elements

River front

Parks: large parks, vest pocket parks, playgrounds

Streetscape

Abandoned property

TRANSPORTATION ~ SUMMARY

The majority of roadways are small two-lane streets appropriately scaled to the neighborhoods, although a few wider, busier roads bisect the district. A high number of train tracks traverse the district. The northern arm of the district has a higher concentration of train tracks, with rail spurs supporting area industries. Sidewalks are few, indeed large swaths of the district do not have them, but given the small scale of the streets they are not needed in all areas. Sidewalk development should be concentrated along busy streets. Bike paths are only just emerging in the city as a whole; few exist anywhere. Buses are an important mode of transportation, supporting residents who do not own cars. Taxis and shuttles are less often used, although developing city-supported shuttles from the district to the shopping areas west of town should be explored. Trains pass through but are not used. Boat traffic is virtually non-existent.

Transportation elements

Roads

Sidewalks

Bike paths

Buses

Taxis and shuttles

Trains

River/boat

DEMOGRAPHICS ~ SUMMARY

Twin Forks Rising is a predominantly black district with a disproportionate number of low income residents having a per capita income of \$10,778 that is over 40% below the city average of \$18,361. A significant number of residents rely on federal subsidies. Because the district is located in the low-lying portion of the city adjacent to the river, regular flooding has limited the district's appeal for commercial development. It is quite literally on the other side of the tracks from more affluent areas and is historically the poor part of town. The tax base is not well developed due in part to the low level of commercial development in

the district. While some houses in the district are large and well-maintained, many are not, with many abandoned houses throughout, making property values low relative to other parts of the city.

Demographics elements

Property value / tax base

Population

Per capita income

Age / race / gender / ethnicity

Family composition

EMPLOYMENT ~ SUMMARY

Employment within the Twin Forks Rising district is limited by the number of businesses located there. The major metro employers, including Forrest General Hospital and the universities, draw from the entire city putting TFR residents in competition with the city-wide pool of workers. Large employers within the district are few. Small and medium-sized employers are more predominant, many being family-owned “mom and pop” businesses. The city employs many TFR residents as teachers, police and fire fighters, and in other areas of civil service. There is an abundance of low-paying unskilled jobs west of town in the plethora of big box stores and fast food restaurants, but the wages are low, and transportation for residents without cars is difficult.

Employment elements

Major metro employers – USM, Forrest General

Municipal employers (city) – teachers, fire fighters, etc.

Large employers within the district – Marshall Durbin

Medium-sized employers – Bill’s Dollar Store

Small employers – Mom and Pop shops

SERVICES ~ SUMMARY

The amenities available in Twin Forks Rising are more limited than in other areas of the city. The low per capita income of the district does not support a wide variety of businesses, and many amenities are simply not available at all. Like residents from other parts of the city, TFR residents must travel west of the city for many goods and services. Like other parts of the city, TFR does not have a movie theater. Unlike other areas, TFR does not have a bank. While TFR cannot be classified as a food desert, the quality and variety of fresh fruits and vegetables falls short of what is available in other parts of the city. There are few restaurants. There are some services which abound in the district, hair and nail salons and auto repair shops are among them.

COMMERCIAL GOODS AND SERVICES

Groceries and food stores
Restaurants
Dollar stores and sundries
Drug stores
Service businesses: laundromat, shoe repair, etc.
Banking: banks, ATM's
Automotive: gas stations, car repair
Medical clinics

MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Libraries
Schools
Community Center
Police protection
Fire protection/EMT
Trash pick-up/recycling
Building and landscape Maintenance

INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT

Engineering summary

ENGINEERING ASSESSMENT ~ THOMPSON ENGINEERING

Regarding drainage, the TFR Community can be characterized as almost level land, while about 50% of the area lies within the 100-year flood plain. Most of the existing roadways have open-ditch two-lane sections, while only a few roadways have curb-and-gutter. These conditions lead to poor drainage and frequent flooding. There are many areas where the side-ditches along the streets do not drain and water stands for long periods of time. There are other areas where the water floods the streets and backs up into yards during even modest rain showers. There are still other areas that suffer from frequent flooding, even where curb-and-gutters have been installed. Finally, there are some areas where the sewer lines appear to be connected to the storm drains, since sewer odors are evident around storm inlets in several locations. Making the drainage improvements that are needed in the area will take many years and be very expensive.

Regarding utilities, the TFR community includes the North Main Historic District, the Newman-Buschman Historic District, and a portion of the Hattiesburg Historic District. As such, most of the area can be characterized as having aging or obsolete water and sewer utilities, which are sometimes even difficult to locate and cut off during new construction or maintenance activities. The most serious issue facing the community is the overloaded South Lagoon. The 360 acre lagoon provides wastewater treatment for most of the City, and the odor from the lagoon is often overwhelming for days and weeks at a time. This problem has existed for many years, and it will take many years and huge investments to address the sewer treatment needs of the City.

Regarding the water and sewer systems, the poor drainage conditions noted above also contribute to and exacerbate the problems with the sewer

system. There are many vacant lots in the area, where abandoned sewer service lines allow the rainwater to enter the sewer system. The old sewer lines are also cracked and leaking badly in most of the area, which allows more rainwater and groundwater to enter the sewers. These conditions cause the sewers to overflow into streets and yards, and to sometimes back up into homes and businesses. The old water lines in the area are mostly cast iron, which are brittle and which crack frequently with the changing of the seasons and temperatures. The old and mostly undersized water lines in the area also leave much of the area without adequate fire protection, with low water pressure, and with smelly or discolored water from time to time. Correcting the water distribution and sewer collection deficiencies that exist will also take many years and will require significant investments.

Regarding lighting, the TFR community also suffers from inadequate street and security lighting facilities. The absence of appropriate lighting in most of the area contributes to the crime problems in the area, which in turn discourages investors and depresses property values. In addition, without adequate water, sewer and drainage infrastructure, new businesses and residents are not going to be attracted to the area. Finally, the lack of appropriate infrastructure has resulted in the loss of many historic structures and in the multiplication of vacant lots. All of these conditions only serve to further depress the TFR community and to continue the decline of the area.

INFRASTRUCTURE

WATER AND SANITARY SEWER SERVICE



INVENTORY:

From the City of Hattiesburg website:

In September 2009, The Water and Sewer Department was separated from the Public Works and Engineering Departments with the desire to give the citizens of Hattiesburg and its businesses a dedicated service department. The city created a new department with the specific goals of maintaining quality water production and distribution along with wastewater collection and treatment. The department is divided into 4 divisions: Water Plants, Water Transmission, Sewer, and Sewer Lagoons.

2011 water and sanitary sewer projects:

- 592 Sewer Project— This Gravity sewer reconstruction project will include areas in the Dabbs, Kamper-Avenues, Grace Avenue-Northhills Drive, and East Jerusalem neighborhoods. Construction is expected to start in spring of 2011.

Commenced or Completed 2010 water and sanitary sewer projects:

- James Street Water Plant – This project includes the rehabilitation of 4 of the existing gravity filters, renovation of the aeration system, repairs in the filter galley, new electrical controls and chemical mixing equipment. It is designed to produce more efficient and effective water treatment at the treatment plant.
- South Lagoon Aeration— Construction was begun to replace 52 aerators with energy efficient air diffusers to enhance the sewage treatment process at the South Lagoon.

For more information, visit hattiesburgms.com. There is a wealth of information on this site, including descriptions of each division within the water and sewer department, staff listings, and contact information.

From the Shows, Dearman and Waits, Inc. website:

201 Facilities Plan ~ Hattiesburg

The 201 Facilities Plan for the City of Hattiesburg addressed evaluation of all existing sanitary sewer distribution lines, all interceptors and lift stations and the existing treatment facilities. Hydraulic and organic loading were also addressed in the report along with infiltration and exfiltration. Effects on the environment, water and noise mitigation were also examined. Conceptual Plans for improvements were presented based on 20-30 years.

Inventory Documents: (on the attached disk)

Water service map (30"x42" pdf / 1"=60')

Sewer service map (30"x42" pdf / 1"=60')

592 Program sewer rehabilitation, 12/15/08 (24"x36" pdf / 1"=1000')

592 Program sewer rehabilitation, 10/21/10 (24"x36" pdf / 1"=1000')

Hydraulic Analysis Summary Report (pdf)

2000 - Bouie River Water Supply Study (pdf)

2009 Water Quality Report (pdf)

2011 Water and Sewer Bond – Proposed projects list, 7/13/11 (pdf)

ASSESSMENT:

The water and sanitary sewer system city-wide is generally well administered and maintained. Refer to the Engineering Assessment by Thompson Engineering in this document for a summary of water and sanitary sewer issues in the TFR district. Improvements are ongoing as with any large system that is both growing and aging. The engineers that produced the latest hydraulic analysis report utilize powerful, "state of the art" pipe network computer modeling to ensure that all improvements result in optimum system performance. Water service was reported to be adequate to all areas of the city. Water quality is regulated by the Mississippi Department of Health. No adverse water quality samples were present during preparation of the latest hydraulic analysis report.

As with any established area of significant size, it is expected that engineering, service, and maintenance issues exist or will arise from time to time in the TFR district. The city has capable department staff to deal with problems when they arise. Citizens can call the Department of Water and Sewer staff directly or they can contact the city Neighborhood Development Coordinator at 601-545-1005 for assistance. They can also get assistance from the Action Center at 601-545-4500.

INFRASTRUCTURE

STORM SEWERS



INVENTORY:

From the City of Hattiesburg website:

The mission of the Hattiesburg Department of Public Works includes the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of drainage structures within the city. The Public Works Department continued to make drainage improvements throughout the city in 2009. Approximately 3500 linear feet of storm drain was installed along roadways to improve the draining and aesthetics of the neighborhoods.

For more information, visit hattiesburgms.com. There is a wealth of information on this site, including descriptions of each division within the Department of Public Works, staff listings, and contact information.

Inventory Documents: (on the attached disk)

LIDAR topographic map (AutoCAD .dwg file)

City of Hattiesburg flood zone map (24"x36" pdf / 1"=1000')

Google Earth "Street View" keyed and captioned photos

ASSESSMENT:

A well designed and properly functioning storm drainage system is essential to the quality of life and property values in the district. It is expected that engineering, service, and maintenance issues exist or will arise from time to time in the TFR District as well as in other parts of the city. The city has capable department staff to deal with problems when they arise. Citizens can call the Department of Public Works staff directly or they can contact the city Neighborhood Development Coordinator at 601-545-1005 for assistance. They can also get assistance from the Action Center at 601-545-4500.

Much of the TFR district is subject to flooding in low-lying areas. It is important for all citizens to understand that it is not good to block drainage paths with debris, leaves, grass clippings, etc., or in any way encroach upon the entrances to storm grates and curb inlets, storm sewers, etc. It is also very important that the storm sewers are not used to dispose of waste that will end up in local waterways.

There are time-tested and more innovative solutions for capturing and re-using runoff water for various purposes; those should be examined in both the TFR district and city-wide.



INFRASTRUCTURE

CURBS AND GUTTERS



Standing curb and gutter at street access to sidewalk: Mobile Street Business District

INVENTORY:

Most of the streets in the TFR district do not have curbs and gutters, but many do. Many smaller neighborhood streets that are not densely developed and are adequately drained may never need curbs and gutters. In addition to conventional curb and gutter details, we observed a number of streets with roll-type curbs that do not require curb cuts at every driveway. We also observed some curbs without gutters that were older work, typically in the historic areas. Curbs and gutters were typically more common at denser and busier arterial streets leading to the downtown area, around the state highways, and in more recently developed neighborhoods.

We observed some areas where the ground had been roughed up, and it appeared that new curb and gutter work was going to be installed soon. Junction boxes with grate inlets had been located near future curb inlets.

In many of the areas where curbs and gutters were present, they were very overgrown with grass and weeds, sometimes so completely that it was difficult to see them.

Inventory Documents: (on the attached disk)

Hattiesburg Complete Streets Ordinance (pdf)

Google Earth “Street View” keyed and captioned photos

ASSESSMENT:

Curbs and gutters are necessary details for some streets in the TFR district, to define street, landscape, and sidewalk edges, direct storm water from streets into curb inlets, and to help make transitions and approaches from streets to off street pedestrian and vehicular areas. Damaged, broken, overgrown or missing sections of curb and gutter are unsightly and can diminish the aesthetic and real value of property in the district.

The Public Works Department of the City of Hattiesburg has authority over the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of city streets, curbs and gutters. To address problems, contact the city Neighborhood Development Coordinator at 601-545-1005 for assistance, or call the Action Center at 601-545-4500.

Some curb designs at street crossings require accessible curb cuts and transitions to sidewalks and accessible routes to meet the current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. These designs are especially important for residents with accessibility needs that need to visit commercial and other service locations in the district. These details are also addressed in the adopted “Complete Streets” city ordinance.

The aesthetics of the entire TFR district could be improved significantly by simply keeping the existing curbs clear of debris, grass, and weeds. The curbs would be much easier to maintain with street sweeping equipment once all of the overgrown vegetation is removed.

INFRASTRUCTURE

STREETS



Commercial node: North Main Street at 4th Street, looking north

INVENTORY:

The streets in the TFR district include much of what you would expect to find in a large municipality with a large population in Mississippi. There are neighborhood streets of varying ages, widths, and amenities. There are secondary and major arterial streets, and there are state highways. There are gridded streets, cul de sacs, and circles to access all types of land uses.

Some parts of the district have a cohesive network of streets that is navigable and convenient both within the district and to neighboring parts of the city. Other parts of the district have streets that, for better or worse, make them extremities that stand apart and are less connected to the rest of the district and to the city as a whole.

The Public Works Department of the City of Hattiesburg has authority over the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of city streets, curbs and gutters.

To address problems, contact the city Neighborhood Development Coordinator at 601-545-1005 for assistance, or call the Action Center at 601-545-4500. The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) has authority over the state highways in the district.

From the City of Hattiesburg website:

The Engineering Department is pursuing the following endeavors in 2011:

- Establishment of a right-of-way permitting system.
- Submission of a Complete Streets Ordinance. (adopted)
- Initializing a road rating system for street paving prioritization.

Inventory Documents: (on the attached disk)

Twin Forks Rising map (11" x 17" jpeg)

2012 Proposal for paving city streets (pdf)

Hattiesburg Complete Streets Ordinance (pdf)

ASSESSMENT:

The street grid is a defining element of the TFR district. Buildings may come into existence and age into ruin within existing patterns of travel and land use that are long established and will remain. The street grid is the two dimensional framework that leads to the three dimensional city. It contains within it the potential for architecture, space, place, and culture. Beyond and aside from all of that, streets are a primary concern of public works in any city, and they are also the organizing element for most of the other infrastructure described in this section.

Street patterns may evolve. In the case of the TFR district, the existing grid is not limitless in size, or irreducible either, but it is very established. Changes to existing patterns, even small ones, have to be carefully considered in terms of the

costs and benefits, and should only proceed from an understanding of *what is already there*.

In the neighborhoods where the TFR district wraps itself around Downtown Hattiesburg, there is a good network of streets to the north and south of the Depot area. The renovated Depot building and the rail yard there form the demising line between the north and south parts of the district.

North TFR district

Mobile and Main Streets are the major arterial streets leading into Downtown from the north part of the district. Bouie Street is the main north/south connector for the north part of the district near the river. Major east/west corridors within the north part of the district are 4th Street and 7th Street. Highway 49 forms the western boundary of the district. Pritchard Road forms the north boundary of the district as currently developed, and Old Highway 42 is the other main road running east and west through the north district and across the river to Petal.

South TFR district

River Avenue is a short but important connector from the Depot to all of the south part of the district. After crossing Gordon's Creek, River Avenue forks into East Hardy Street, a major east/west corridor, and Williams Street, a major north/south corridor. East Hardy leads across the river to south Petal. Williams Street leads south to the rest of the south district. Williams Street terminates into James Street, which continues as a major north/south corridor. Edwards Street is another important north/south corridor in the south part of the district. Hall Avenue is an important east/west corridor that borders the district and eventually crosses the railroad and transitions to 6th Avenue beyond the district. Katie Avenue and Tuscan Avenue are also important east/west corridors that run through the south district from Edwards Avenue within the district to Martin Luther King Avenue beyond the district.

Quality issues and summary

Many of the city streets in the TFR district were built before modern road detailing and quality control were common. Improvements that have been made over time have often been of the small and incremental, piecemeal variety. The majority of streets are not striped in any way. Street signs are absent over large

portions of the district. The city-wide road rating system for prioritizing street paving projects is a good step in the right direction for addressing street repairs. A holistic approach to street improvements and maintenance is needed.



Unstriped streets in the south district: Dabbs Street at Pauline Avenue

INFRASTRUCTURE

SIDEWALKS



West 5th Street sidewalk near North Main Street

INVENTORY:

Sidewalks vary throughout the district and are sporadic in their consistency and continuation of traffic flow. The major thoroughfares are typically lined with sidewalks that have a green space between the street curb and sidewalk. The width of the sidewalk and the width of the green space vary from block to block. The CBD (central business district) has a wide sidewalk with no green space. Moving away from the center part of town, the sidewalks narrow and the green space appears at the residential neighborhoods. The side streets off of the major thoroughfares are usually lined with sidewalks on one or both sides of the street. The more interior residential streets narrow and the sidewalks cease, yet there are clear pedestrian-made footpaths lining these streets.

Major community buildings often have sidewalks that surround their block. The schools and city owned properties may have sidewalks that extend several blocks in all directions. Most churches have a sidewalk that covers the entire block or at least the boundary of the church property. Some businesses and residents have added sidewalks that define their property boundary limits. This leads to a sporadic appearance and access for pedestrian traffic where one will often find footpaths cut through the grass.

Many of the residential sidewalks are in disrepair, with cracking, disintegrating concrete, and plants growing through the expansion joints and cracks. Few of the residential sidewalks are universally accessible. The business areas are in better shape with only the newest installations being universally accessible.

Inventory Documents: (on the attached disk)

Pine Belt Pathways:

Overall Proposed Sidewalk Map – March 2010 (36” x 48” pdf)

Progress Report with maps - March 2010 (pdf)

ASSESSMENT:

Foot traffic is a major means of transportation in the TFR district. The sidewalks are a necessary part of foot traffic and they create a safe environment for pedestrians. They also enhance the street aesthetic appearance, define property boundaries, and give visual cues to aid traffic safety. Consistent sidewalk design guidelines from the city will aid the overall street appeal.

All concrete has a time-limited use and needs periodic replacement. Scheduled replacement of sidewalks should be a part of maintaining the city fabric just like the re-paving of asphalt streets. Weeding and repair where plants have deteriorated the sidewalks will make a safer environment. Where sidewalks are interrupted, they should be infilled for continuous flow of pedestrian traffic. New and replaced sidewalks should be universally accessible. All pedestrian-made footpaths deserve a second look by the city for possible new sidewalk locations for safety's sake as well as for aesthetics.

The work of the Sidewalk Committee that is described in the March 2010 Pine Belt Pathways progress report is an excellent approach and should continue. The TFR district should develop its own priority list similar to the one in this report.

INFRASTRUCTURE

STREETLIGHTS



Street light on power pole, Arledge Street, across from the police station

INVENTORY:

The streets of the TFR district are sparingly lit in the business areas along the major thoroughfares and nearly non-existent in the smallest residential areas. Large commercial property, churches, and civic buildings may have adequate lighting. Off of the major streets the lights appear to be wherever property owners wish to install street lights on utility poles. The residential lighting is sporadic and sometimes appears only where individuals have installed personal street lighting. There is the occasional city street light on the smaller residential streets with no regularity. One new neighborhood at Vicker's Circle & West 5th Street has stylish street lamps with underground electrical service throughout the neighborhood. This installation is an anomaly in the TFR district. There is a program implemented in 2011 to install decorative light fixtures with banner holders throughout the downtown CBD that touches on portions of Ward 2.



New street light with banner installed throughout the downtown CBD and Depot area



Train Depot decorative street light

From the City of Hattiesburg website:

The Engineering Department is pursuing the following endeavors in 2011:

- Downtown Street Lights – decorative light fixtures in the CBD

The Urban Development Department is also pursuing the following endeavors:

- Hattiesburg Comprehensive Plan 2008-2028 and land Development Code

Inventory Documents: (on the attached disk)

Downtown Lighting Plan (24” x 36” pdf / 1”=200’)

Hattiesburg Complete Streets Ordinance (pdf)

ASSESSMENT:

More city street lighting will enhance the aesthetics and safety of the TFR district. The Engineering Department can include the TFR in scheduled maintenance and new construction projects. The Urban Development Department can include street lighting as part of their Comprehensive Plan 2008-2028 for “walkable communities” and for planned projects like upgrading/replacing span wire traffic signals.

When street lights need repair call Mississippi Power Company 800.532.1502.

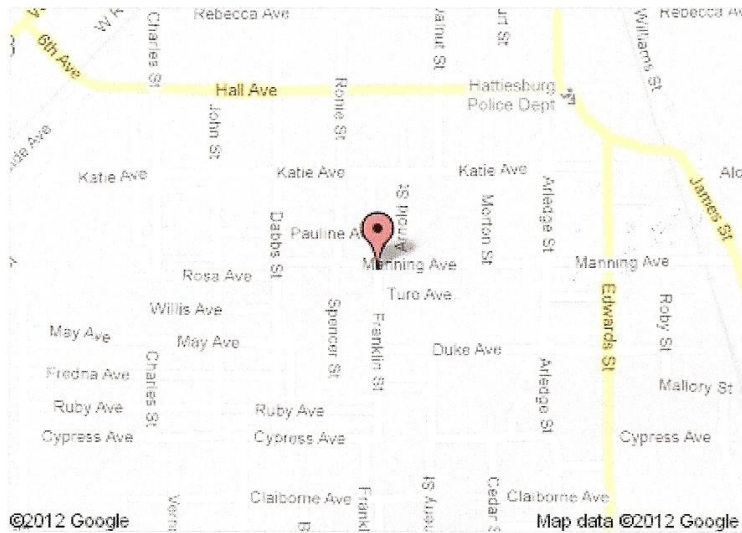
BUILDINGS

HOUSING STOCK



Address **221 Franklin Street**

Address is approximate



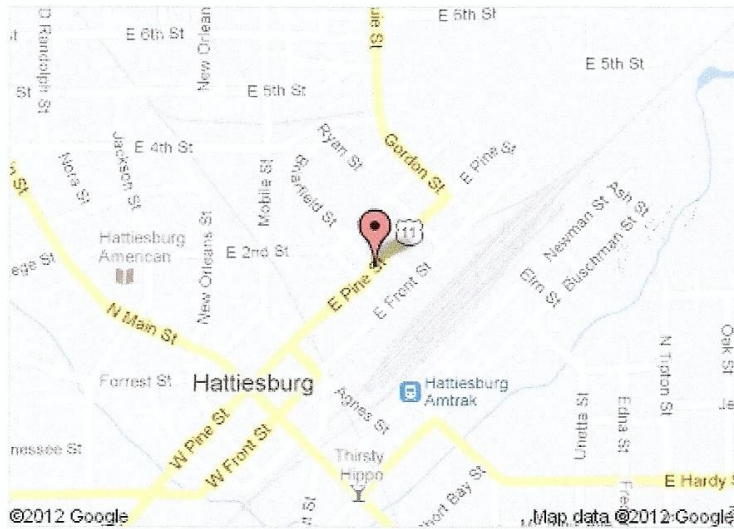
BUILDINGS

COMMERCIAL



Address **East Pine Street**

Address is approximate



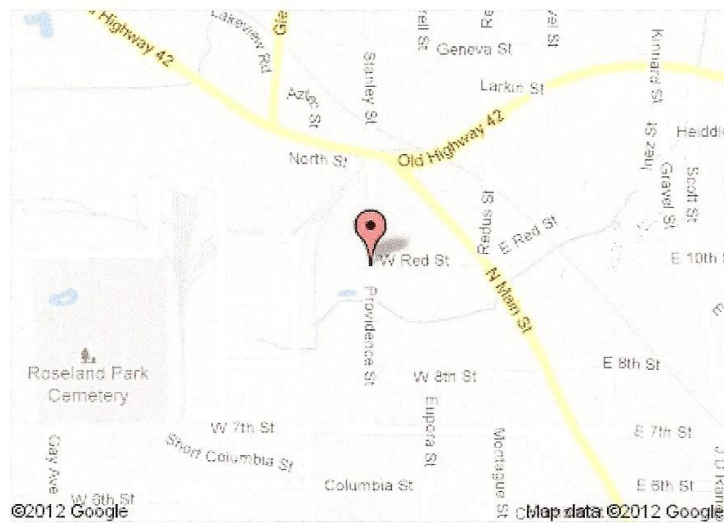
BUILDINGS

INDUSTRIAL



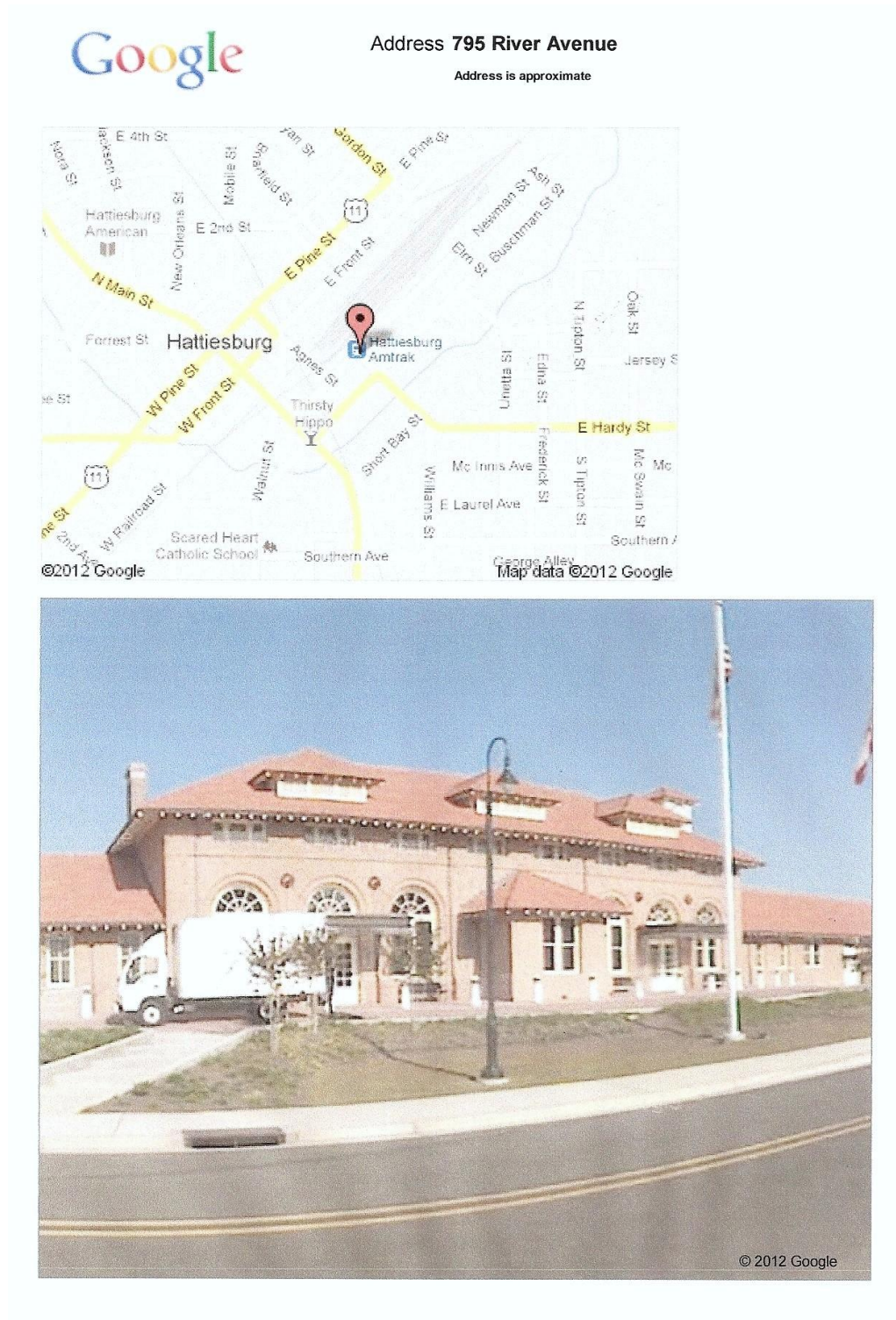
Address **Providence Street**

Address is approximate



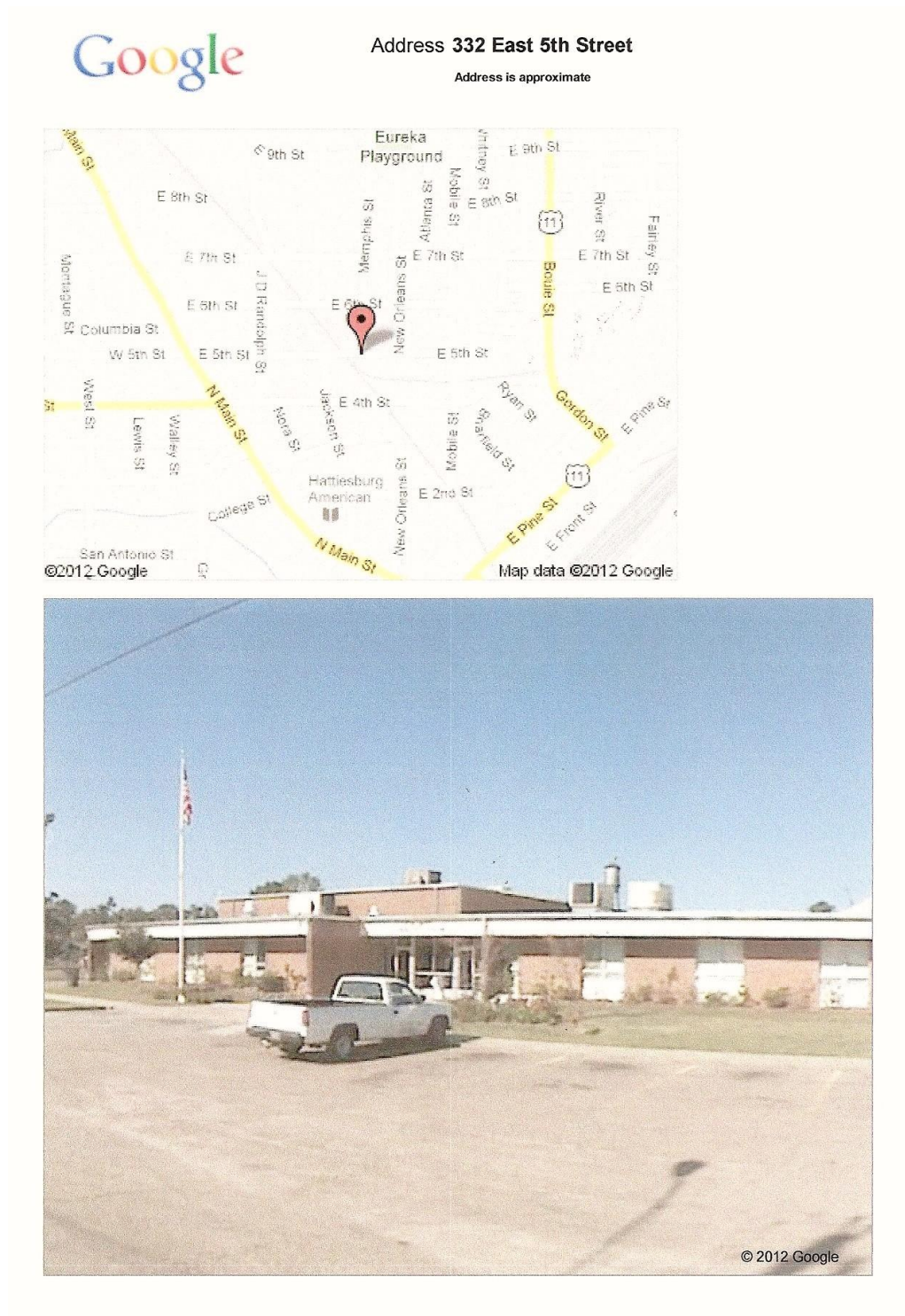
BUILDINGS

SCHOOLS AND CIVIC STRUCTURES



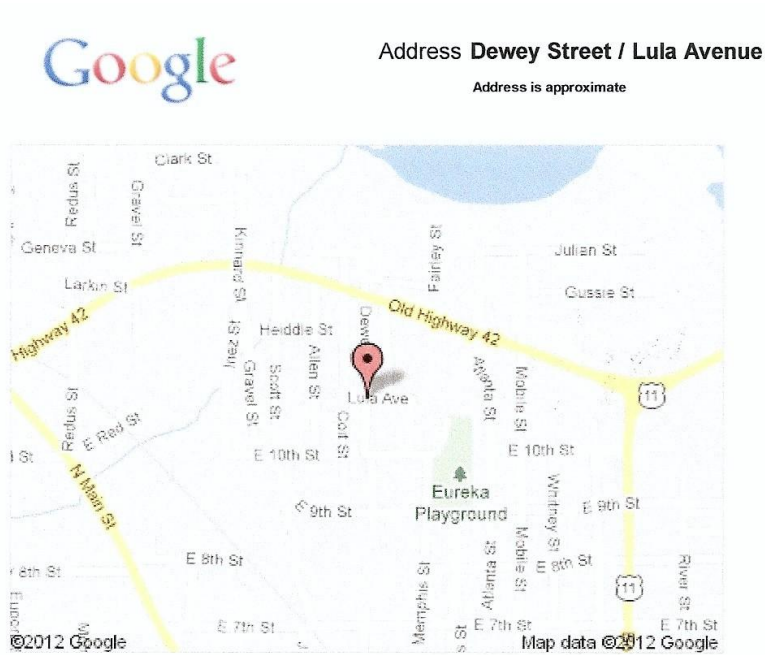
BUILDINGS

CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY BUILDINGS



BUILDINGS

CHURCHES



LANDSCAPE

RIVER FRONT



Hardy Street Bridge view of Leaf River

INVENTORY:

The Leaf River front is accessible on the northern edge of the TFR district from streets off Old Highway 42. From the eastern edge access streets are off the Highway 11 connector Bouie/Gordon Street. And to the south access is off East Hardy Street at Lagoon Road and Morgan/Currie Street. These access roads are short narrow residential roads with no city drainage systems or curbs and gutters. All drainage appears to be sheet drainage across the properties and down the streets to the river. Any government or commercial vehicles such as trucks accessing gravel pits have to run through these neighborhood streets to connect to the river front. The north / south rail line runs along the five hundred year flood line parallel to North Main Street creating a distinctive visual line that is experienced when descending down a cross street into the flood plain. This line continues to the south of town almost exactly on the rail line parallel to Bay/James Street & Old Highway 49. Most homes across the tracks are in the

one hundred year flood zone and a few closest to the river in the area of Currie/Morgan Street are actually in the floodway area.

Inventory Documents: (on the attached disk)

LIDAR topographic map (AutoCAD .dwg file)

City of Hattiesburg flood zone map (24"x36" PDF / 1"=1000')

ASSESSMENT:

Anyone living “across the tracks” is in the 100 year flood zone and will have access to the riverfront in their yard eventually. Trying to develop commercially along the river seems to be a huge undertaking that would involve a major investment with the Army Corps of Engineers and the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program. A more realistic approach might be to extend the existing waterway parks to emphasize their natural beauty. This could create a destination spot for outdoor recreation activities. It is an amazing untouched wilderness right at the city limits just minutes from downtown even on foot. The richness of this natural treasure could be explored by the city or in partnership with the private sector.



Glendale Street Bridge view of the Leaf River

LANDSCAPE

PARKS:



Duncan Lake Park is an example of the cities large parks

INVENTORY

Large Parks ~ There are several large parks in the TFR district. Including the play areas around city schools, there are many sport fields for use. Near the district are several major school yards with sports facilities and playgrounds. The western edge does not have any parks but is near several school yards. The largest new park, Chain Park North, is on the riverfront at the end of E. 8th Street. Duncan Lake Park at James Street is comparable in size located at the southern end of the district. In the center of the district are the 9th street ball fields at the W.H. Jones Elementary School.

Playgrounds ~ Eureka Playgrounds is also at the 9th Street Ball Fields. Miller Street Playground at West Street is in the middle of the district not far from the Roy Community Center and the Ruth Brown Community Park. A Rebecca Avenue playground is at Tipton Street serving the Katie/John/Dabbs neighborhood.



Miller Street & West Street playgrounds

Vest Pocket parks ~ Across from the police station at Edwards Street is the Katie Avenue playground tucked into an abandoned corner of the block. On Mobile Street north of East 5th Street is a memorial park on an abandoned lot between two businesses.



Memorial Park on east side of Mobile Street north of East 5th Street

ASSESSMENT:

The vest pocket park is an opportunity to make small gestures to the community throughout the district and city as a whole in both abandoned existing lots as well as new developments. One lot in the middle of any neighborhood can be designated for community park use. Across from the Mobile Street vest pocket park is a green space corner that might be available for park space. There are many similar green spaces throughout the district that the Urban Development Department of the city could plan for future use. The River Side Park at E. 8th Street could be expanded north and south to the district limits to create a wilderness area for recreation and fishing. This could be developed with the state or federal governments similar to the Pearl River parks in Jackson at Mayes Lake. This Jackson park includes fishing, golf, nature trails, playgrounds, and the Natural History Museum. The wilderness side of the Leaf River could be enhanced for a fishing destination, especially when paired with private sector magnets like Bass Pro Shop. Tourism is an area of growth not to be overlooked in community development.

From the City of Hattiesburg website:

The Urban Development Department is also pursuing the following:

- Hattiesburg Comprehensive Plan 2008-2028 and land Development Code

Inventory Documents: (on the attached disk)

Future Land Use map (pdf)

Flood Zone Book page 4 (pdf)

City Map Index Zoning 36x48 (pdf)

LANDSCAPE

STREETSCAPE



I think that I shall never see a poem as lovely as a tree. Poems are made by fools like me but only God can make a tree.

INVENTORY:

Street trees are typical along major thoroughfares extending from the CBD. These streets have a green space median buffer between the curb & gutter and the sidewalk edge. This provides a grass edge for the urban streetscape.



North Main Street at East 3rd Street looking south towards the downtown CBD

In the narrower residential back streets, streetscape is left to the individual home owners. Most have at minimum grass grown out to the street edge with some street trees.



Nora Street at East 3rd Street is one block over and parallel to North Main Street

The mild weather of Hattiesburg allows a wide variety of plants including tropical palm trees. Some have taken this as an opportunity to install picket fences along the property lines out at the street with flowers and shrubbery.



Miller Street at Walley Street ~ broad green median with street trees, picket fence & sidewalk edge plantings

In a few cases, there is only a sand lot or nature has provided volunteer trees and shrubbery over grown and unchecked by property owners or the city maintenance.



East Short 7th Street ~ Nature has provided some volunteer shade trees across from a sand lot

From the City of Hattiesburg website:

The Urban Development Department is also pursuing the following:

- Hattiesburg Comprehensive Plan 2008-2028 and land Development Code

Inventory Documents: (on the attached disk)

Hattiesburg Complete Streets Ordinance (pdf)

ASSESSMENT:

The city Urban Development Department has planned growth for the city with their comprehensive plan which includes areas for streetscaping. Following the departments guidelines, the city along with property owners can continue to improve the esthetic qualities of the walkable communities. Plants visually soften the hard lines of the urban environment as well as providing shade and clean air. The economic impact landscape adds to the city is often overlooked. Some of the more ancient trees of the older neighborhoods are priceless and irreplaceable.

Adding more landscaping along the city streets is a bonus to the value of property versus the cost of the investment. The more communities embrace their garden city the greater return will be seen from their efforts. It is also an advantage that Hattiesburg is situated along the border of the tropical plant zone where almost any plant will grow in the mild climate.

LANDSCAPE

ABANDONED PROPERTY



Green Space ~ view south on Mobile Street of available green space on west side across from Memorial Park

INVENTORY:

Throughout the TFR district is a variety of open space for development. The City owned property map shows a majority of the land publicly owned is within the floodplain. Much of this property is zoned residential. Along the rail road lines is another major source of available property that is commercially zoned and mostly privately owned. To the north west corner of ward 2 off Old Highway 42 is a large tract of land along the Leaf River that is largely uninhabited wilderness. This wild border land forms the eastern border along the riverfront and varies in depth and usefulness. The southernmost riverfront is owned by the city and is used for the city's waste treatment plant septic lagoons.



Abandoned house along East Short 7th Street near the Leaf River

Inventory Documents: (on the attached disk) under Base Data is a map of City owned property in Ward 2 that shows City owned, County owned and State owned properties.

From the City of Hattiesburg website:

“Reference Links” has Brownfields Assessments
Urban Development Department has many links including:
Floodplain Management; the Hattiesburg Land Development Code and
Hattiesburg Comprehensive Plan 2008-2028

ASSESSMENT:

Some of the properties that have gone undeveloped for the longest time may have many hurdles to jump before an owner can make use of the land. The Brownfields Assessment documents property that is scheduled for toxic waste removal. This should not be viewed as all inclusive. There are probably much hidden toxins that have not been discovered or verified on many property sites being used or abandoned. All gas station sites should be suspect for tank leakage until proven otherwise. Existing or abandoned factories, especially those older

than the EPA or DEQ should also be suspect of contamination. The entire floodplain zone is another major barrier to development. FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program has guidelines for constructing in this area. Certification in this program is a necessary step towards insurance and construction loans. The City of Hattiesburg's Urban Development Department can assist with overcoming many of these impediments to development.



Brownfield Assessment waste site at Bouie Street and East 4th Street bordering the rail lines at the riverfront